

NOT BY MIGHT NOR BY POWER, BUT BY MY SPIRIT, SAYS THE LORD *Pentecostal*

evangel



Love

Truth

christlike convictions

**Balancing
Love & Truth**

Sin and Salvation • Meeting With God • Mark Lowry



The next generation is well-connected,

but connected to what?

Children ages 4-14 spend an average of 7.5 hours a day connected to the digital world, researchers tell us.

For our Assemblies of God Fellowship to reach and disciple our children, grandchildren and the next generations for Christ, it is imperative that we enter the digital world with them!

But today we don't have that capability. We need your help!

The Assemblies of God Trust is partnering with My Healthy Church Resources to produce a digital curriculum that will enable the local church and Christian educators to connect with their students wherever they are, by whatever electronic means they have, and whenever they want access.

Wherever! Whatever! Whenever!

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We need you to be a part of the Family Plan to go digital! We need gifts of \$10, \$100, \$1,000, \$10,000 or even \$100,000.

The theme for AGTrust is

OUR CHOICE

THEIR FUTURE

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vantagepoint



Ken Horn
 Editor

“IN GOD IS OUR TRUST”

Independence Day is right around the corner. Less than three decades after the end of the Revolutionary War that won the United States that independence, the former colonies once again found themselves embroiled with Great Britain. Two years into the conflict we now call the War of 1812, the British marched into Washington, D.C., nearly unopposed.

The U.S. Army and government abandoned the capital, escaping to Virginia. The humiliating British onslaught climaxed with the torching of the Capitol building, the White House and other structures. It took a providential storm to drive the British from the city.

Francis Scott Key was a devout Christian who started thousands of Sunday Schools in his role with the American Sunday School Union.

During the following assault on Baltimore's Fort McHenry, lawyer Francis Scott Key found himself aboard the admiral's ship of the British fleet in order to negotiate the release of a medical doctor friend. The release terms attained, the two were temporarily detained while the bombardment of the fort

continued. The darkness caused Key to wonder how the fort — and the flag — fared.

When the morning dawned, Key peered anxiously through the early mist that shrouded the ship. The flag was still flying! Quickly he scribbled some words on an envelope he'd been carrying. They were the lyrics of "Defense of Fort McHenry," later to be called "The Star-Spangled Banner." The last verse, which is seldom sung today, is significant. It read in part: "Then conquer we must, when our cause it is just, and this be our motto, 'In God is our trust.'"

Key was a devout Christian who started thousands of Sunday Schools in his role with the American Sunday School Union. That final stanza was based upon Psalm 143:8: "Cause me to hear thy lovingkindness in the morning; for in thee do I trust: cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; for I lift up my soul unto thee" (KJV).

It wasn't until 1931 "The Star-Spangled Banner" became the national anthem. But 50 years after Key penned his tribute, "In God we trust" first appeared on U.S. coins — and in 1956 Congress declared it the national motto. By faith, Francis Scott Key saw that as the motto of our nation in 1814.

Trust in God is our heritage, our motto ... and in our national anthem. ■

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letters

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¶ the Bible is the inspired and only infallible and authoritative written Word of God (2 Timothy 3:16). ¶ there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit (Deuteronomy 6:4; Matthew 28:19). ¶ in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, in His personal future return to this earth in power and glory to rule a thousand years (John 1:1). ¶ in the blessed hope — the rapture of the Church at Christ's coming (Titus 2:13). ¶ the only means of being cleansed from sin is through repentance and faith in the precious blood of Christ (John 14:6). ¶ regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential for personal salvation (Titus 3:5). ¶ in water baptism by immersion (Matthew 28:19). ¶ the redemptive work of Christ on the cross provides healing of the human body in answer to believing prayer (1 Peter 2:24). ¶ the baptism in the Holy Spirit, according to Acts 2:4, is given to believers who ask for it. ¶ in the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a holy life (Galatians 5:16-25). ¶ in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost, the one to everlasting life and the other to everlasting damnation (Revelation 20:11-15).

Digital Kids

While I don't have children at home anymore, I still found the March 24 news feature, "Digital Kids" by Christina Quick, enlightening. Each generation will have its challenges, and I know God will continue to lead and guide our parents and leaders in maintaining a balance, no matter what the subject material is.

TRELLA NYGAARD
VIA EMAIL

A Colossians 3 Kind of Life

The March 17 *Pentecostal Evangel* article "A Colossians 3 Kind of Life" by Gary Tyra was quite a blessing to me. I share all the *Evangel*s that come my way with my pastor. Our church doesn't receive the magazine, but our son does at his home church and shares the issues with me.

The article was such a blessing I copied it and tucked it in my Bible for future use in private devotions.

Thank you so much for the publication of the *Pentecostal Evangel* over these many years. I am 75 years old and have enjoyed them since my early youth.

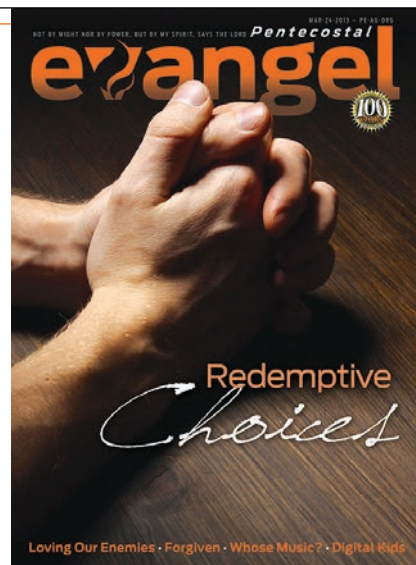
SHIRLEY JACKSON
SUMMERS, ARK.

Daily Boost

I really appreciate the *Daily Boost* devotional by Hal Donaldson from April 15, "Treading Water — Spiritually." It's a real challenge not to spend my life treading water.

PEARL CONAWAY
VIA EMAIL

Amen to the comments in the *Daily Boost* for April 11, "Respecting Age" by Ken Horn. We older ones don't really want things to remain the same. We can look back and remember we were the "young ones" once. I like a "blended" church where we old ones are considered by the young and are also



considerate of the younger ones ourselves. There's a lot each of us can bring to the table of blessings.

NELL HEARD
FALLBROOK, CALIF.

Wow! What a refreshing and "right on" *Daily Boost* by Ken Horn. "Respecting Age" from April 11 states some very important advice for our country and the Assemblies of God.

Thank you for bringing truth for all to read. I read your articles every day.

PAT DAVIS
DES MOINES, IOWA

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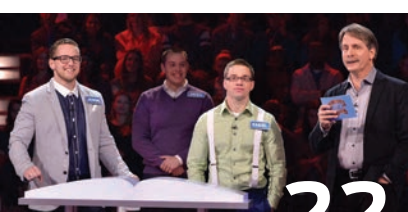
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Love

Truth

CHRISTIAN CONVICTION

Reflections

Balancing Love & Truth

By Jerry D. Scott

The young man was passionate, stating his convictions in unambiguous terms. To him, it was an issue of stark black and white, no room for compassion!

Then I pointed out a person sitting about 5 feet away who was living out what the young man condemned. Thankfully, my friend was not so self-righteous as to be unaware of how his words were heard. He blushed as he realized how judgmental and condemning he was being.

Truth and love — are they in conflict or are they complementary? Need we toss our convictions about what is right and true overboard in order to be loving and accepting? Or, flipping that around, need we jettison love and respect for others to remain committed to our convictions about the truth?

Christians living in a culture of tolerance find themselves in this struggle all the time. Those with a high view of scriptural authority do not have the luxury of rewriting passages that deal with sexual behavior, with divorce, with roles in the family, with discrimination, with materialism, even with the exclusive claims of Christ as Savior.

The Word speaks to these issues, compelling us to yield our will to God's will. There is truth to be found, and the Lord promises we will find His highest purpose when we submit ourselves to Him. Yet, in the middle of this, the Gospels show us a life of love, illustrated clearly in the Man who is Truth personified, yet One full of deeply authentic love for all.

In John 8, we learn about the powerful transformation that comes when truth and love act in concert. A woman was dragged before Jesus by men who claimed to love the truth! "She is a sinner," they said without thought for her. "What are You going to do about it?" they challenged Him.

The woman was an adulterer. There was no question about her guilt. But the Lord saw more than a "sin" standing in front of Him. He saw a person.

"Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger in the dirt. They kept at him, badgering him. He straightened up and said, 'The sinless one among you, go first: Throw the stone.' Bending down again, he wrote some more in the dirt" (John 8:6-8, *The Message*).

Why did Jesus doodle in the dirt? Where was His sense of urgency?

I believe our first mistake in our love of the truth is feeling like we have to fix all the wrong in others and in ourselves today. But salvation is really a kind of healing, and it's a process. Need we wade into somebody's life, swinging the sword of truth, when we barely

Christlike Convictions

Need we wade
into somebody's
life, swinging
the sword of
truth, when we
barely know
them or their
situation?

know them or their situation? Jesus called on these men to recognize their own need too.

Truth is much more complex when we see it in the context of our own duplicity of nature!

After the men's hearts were pierced by the Spirit's conviction and they wandered off quietly, Jesus turns to the woman. He does not minimize her choices to sin. Instead, He offers her love and a challenge.

"Jesus straightened up and asked her, 'Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?' 'No one, sir,' she said. 'Then neither do I condemn you,' Jesus declared. 'Go now and leave your life of sin'" (John 8:10,11, NIV).

Sometimes the most loving thing we can do is take some time to doodle in the dirt. While we're at it, we pray, we think, we listen, and we learn to be led by the Spirit.

The glory of God's judgment is that it is not set "in the moment" but emerges from the full context of our lives. Yes, God holds us accountable for our choices. The Man who hung on the cross in love is also the One who sits on the Judgment Seat. But, in His infinite wisdom, He weaves all the threads of our lives together. He sees the whole picture, knowing why we did what we did and knowing how we might have made a better choice. Ultimately, He is our Advocate! It makes me want to shout, "Hallelujah! What a Savior!"

Here's a word from the Word. Notice the uncompromising truth set in contrast to the amazing love. I pray it will give you the same kind of hope I find in the promise of salvation and that it causes both you and me to be people who know how to

take some time to doodle in the dirt before we take on all those "sinners" who live around us.

"If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make Him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives.

"My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense — Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world. We know that we have come to know Him if we obey his commands. The man who says, 'I know Him,' but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in Him. But if anyone obeys his Word, God's love is truly made complete in him" (1 John 1:8 through 2:5). ■

JERRY D. SCOTT is senior pastor of Faith Discovery Church (Assemblies of God) in Washington, N.J. He writes regularly for *Daily Boost*, the free *Pentecostal Evangel* electronic devotional available Monday through Friday. Sign up for *Daily Boost* at pe.ag.org.

Email your comments to pe@ag.org.

Past, Present, Future

By William King

Abbreviations! There are so many abbreviations that, except for the familiar ones, I often don't know what they stand for. However, sometimes the context in which they appear reveals their use.

Since the sixth century A.D., the letters B.C. and A.D. have been used to designate two specific periods of time: B.C. (before Christ), from creation until the birth of Christ; and A.D. (anno Domini, Latin for "the year of our Lord," for ensuing years. (Though secularism has made a major push to replace these with B.C.E. and C.E. — before the common era and the common era.)

Besides B.C. and A.D., Christians might wish to adopt one more abbreviation, which would point to the next era in God's timetable — W.J. — with Jesus. In Ephesians 2:7 the apostle Paul speaks of the "ages to come" (KJV). At the present time Christ lives within a believer's heart by the Holy Spirit. But the day is coming when God's people are going to be with Jesus in their new glorified bodies.

First John 3:2 says, "When he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory" (Colossians 3:4). The Rapture, or return of Jesus Christ, will mark the beginning of this new era. This was in God's plan from the beginning — B.C., A.D., W.J.

We don't know when W.J. will begin; it's not a matter of if, but only when Jesus will return to claim His bride. Believers already have been granted heavenly citizenship. As citizens, we have, by divine grace, been given a clear title to our heavenly home.

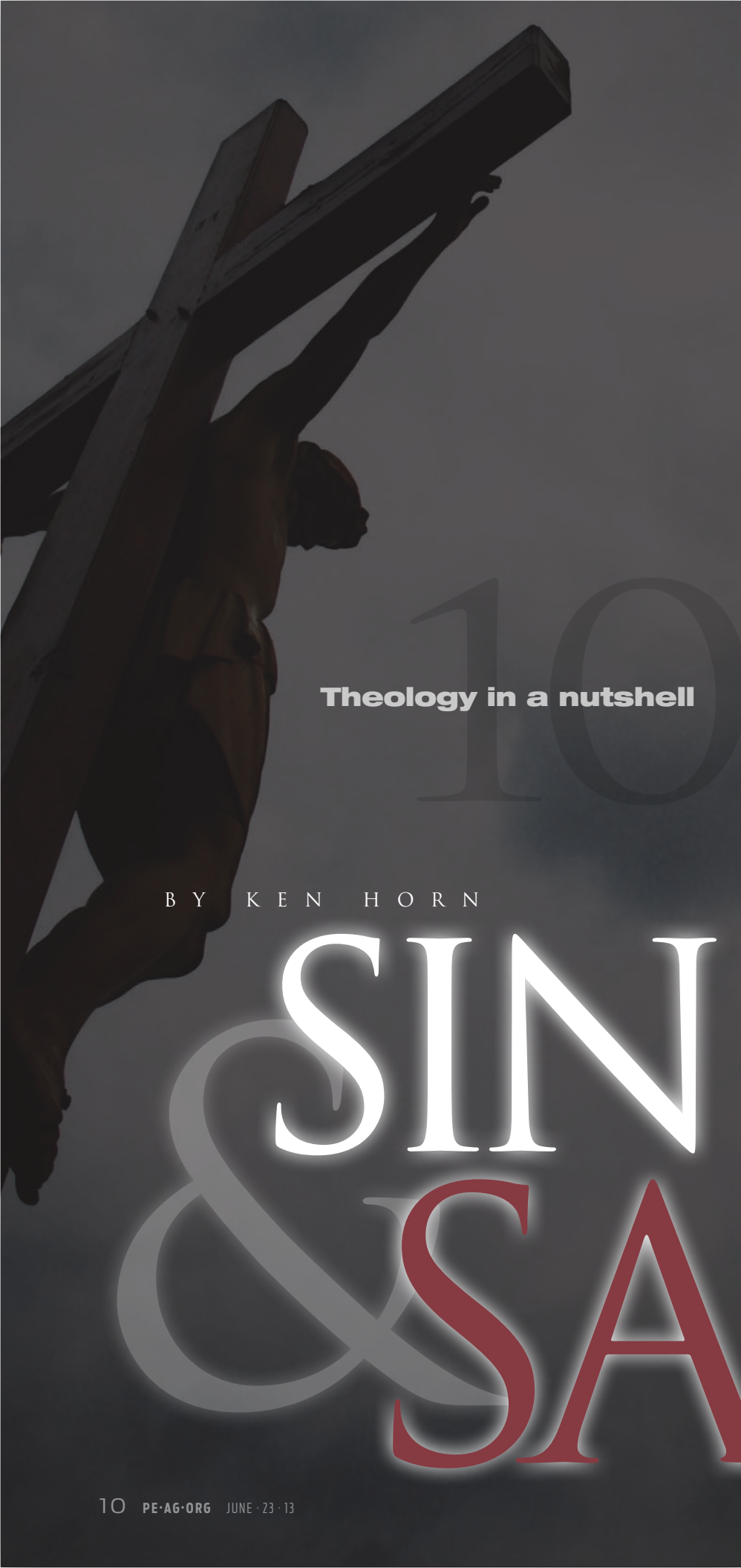
Hebrews 13:14 assures us, "For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come." And 1 Thessalonians 1:10 describes the believer's life as a season when we "wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come."

No passport other than the salvation freely given to us through God's grace will be needed as the righteous are escorted by Jesus himself to His Father's house. It is with great anticipation that the Church awaits its rendezvous with our Redeemer. The tombs of believers will be evacuated, and the living saints will accompany them in this departure. With excitement, we look ahead to the unending joy of the "ages to come"! B.C. ... A.D. ... W.J. ■

WILLIAM KING, a retired Assemblies of God minister, lives in Princeton, Minn.

Email your comments to pe@ag.org.

B.C.
A.D.
W.J.



Theology in a nutshell

BY KEN HORN

SIN

& SALV

Editor's note: This was the 10th article in a Pentecostal Evangel series, eventually published as a book, *Theology in a Nutshell*.

Chen* was being difficult. I sat in my study speaking to this agnostic graduate student. I was pastoring in a university city, and I frequently had the opportunity to discuss the claims of the gospel with skeptics and cynics. This was our third or fourth meeting, and I was frustrated. He wouldn't budge.

To my mind, I had used flawless logic and impeccable apologetics; I had answered every argumentative question; I had drawn on my reservoir of knowledge and proved my case. But Chen still wouldn't budge.

On this occasion, as he spoke, my mind was racing for yet another answer when a still, small voice interrupted my thoughts. *Try the simple gospel*, said the voice.

But God, I know the answer to this.

Try the simple gospel was His reply.

I interrupted the young man in mid-sentence. "Excuse me for



During the Pentecostal Evangel's centennial this year, we revisit some of the historic articles that received awards from the Evangelical Press Association.

interrupting. We can return to that thought later if you like. But I need to share something with you.”

I proceeded to share the simple plan of salvation. It turned out he had never heard a clear presentation of the gospel. The wall came down ... and I led him in the sinner's prayer. We never returned to the thought I had interrupted. A short time later he was baptized in water as a new believer in Christ.

Let's look at *why* Chen needed Christ and *how* he became a Christian — the same why and how every human being must deal with.

SIN

Sin is the problem. Salvation is the solution. Salvation solves humanity's greatest problem, the sin that separates everyone from God.

God did not create sin.

The Bible teaches that God is holy and there is no unrighteousness in Him (Isaiah 6:3; Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalm 92:15). God equipped His created beings with freedom of will. Worship would be meaningless if we were forced to do

it. So the intelligent beings God created — angels and humans — were given free will.

It was misuse of this gift that introduced sin, first in the angelic realm when Satan and the other fallen angels chose to rebel against God, and second in humanity.

Mankind fell; God didn't push them.

Adam and Eve fell. Perfect beings, created in God's image, exercised their God-given will to make poor choices. Eve, tempted by Satan, fell first, then offered the forbidden fruit to Adam (Genesis 3:1-8). It appears that Eve was deceived, but Adam knew what he was doing (1 Timothy 2:14). Someone has said, "Eve fell; Adam jumped."

Theology calls this original sin. It originated in the human heart, setting a pattern for all sin to follow: People sin when they are so selfish they put their desires above God's.

All people are sinners.

In some way this original sin affected/infected all of mankind. Theologians have used the term "original sin" to refer to the state of each of us when born. It

is also called a sin nature.

The sin nature is greatly debated by theologians. What's important is the Bible clearly says we are all sinners. We all make the decision to give in to sin: "Through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned" (Romans 5:12, NKJV). "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).

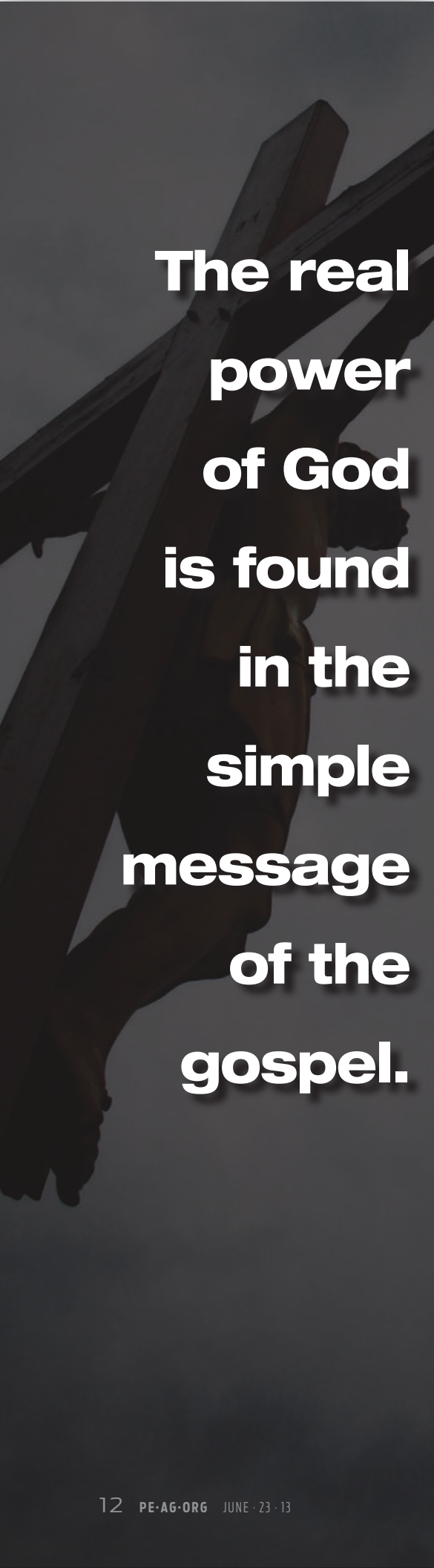
DEFINITIONS OF SIN

Sin is missing God's standard. The Greek word for "sinned" in Romans 3:23 literally means "to miss the mark." Sin is missing the mark of God's standards.

Sin is disobeying God's Law. "Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness" (1 John 3:4). It is transgressing or violating laws God has put in place. As a permanent attitude, lawlessness is rebellion against God (James 2:10,11; Galatians 3:10).

To the contrary, "love is the fulfillment of the law" (Romans 13:10).

ATION



The real power of God is found in the simple message of the gospel.

Sin is worldliness. John Piper said, “Sin is what you do when your heart is not satisfied with God” (in his book *Future Grace*). Romans 12:2 says, “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”

Even Christians are susceptible to worldliness. H. Richard Niebuhr said, “The crisis of the church ... is not the crisis of the church in the world, but of the world in the church.”

Sin is a state of ungodliness, living apart from God. Even “good” people can be in this state. This is the state everyone is in before receiving Christ. “As it is written: *‘There is none righteous, no, not one’*” (Romans 3:10). Though people may do good deeds, apart from Christ, these are just “filthy rags” (Isaiah 64:6).

There are degrees of sin.

The person apart from God is in the highest degree of sin, living as a captive to his sin and being an enemy of God. Only receiving Christ can rectify this.

Individual sins range from willful sins (Psalm 19:13; Isaiah 5:18) to sins of weakness, like Peter’s denial of Christ.

Sin is not just what you do; it can also be what you don’t do.

A sin of neglect is called a sin of omission. A high school religion exam included the question “What is a sin of omission?” One student’s creative answer was: “A sin I should have com-

mitted but didn’t.”

Nice try, but not quite right. James 4:17 describes such a sin: “Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.”

Failing (refusing) to do good when the opportunity presents itself is the sin of omission.

Sin brings consequences — death, or separation from God.

Sin brings the most dire consequences: “For the wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23).

SALVATION

But there is hope for deliverance from the consequences of sin. Romans 6:23 concludes, “But the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Although every one of us deserves death, through Jesus we can receive the gift of eternal life.

Salvation is not a feeling.

Martin Luther said there were times when he didn’t feel saved. But he knew he was.

There are some living in false confidence, believing they are saved, but they are not. There are others who fear they are lost, but they are saved indeed. Full assurance can be found in knowing one has obeyed the Scriptures’ direction for obtaining salvation.

There is one way to receive salvation: through Jesus Christ.

The tolerant position is pluralistic: “All paths lead ultimately to God.” A true Christian has virtually no common ground with people holding this view, and will almost al-

abc's of salvation

ways be seen as narrow-minded and inflexible. And you know what? We are. Jesus said, "Narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life" (Matthew 7:14). On an issue as big as eternal life, we dare not bend.

John 14:6 defines the way to salvation: "Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me'" (NIV). A Christian should never apologize for being "narrow-minded." Apologize only if you keep the truth to yourself.

The plan of salvation (the gospel) is simple.

When I departed from complex arguments and presented the simple gospel to Chen, the graduate student, he eagerly came to Christ. God often takes our complex, intricate solutions and pares them down to humble size. The real power of God is found in the simple message of the gospel.

There is nothing you can do to earn salvation.

In the words of George Whitefield: "Works? Works? A man get to heaven by works? I would as soon think of climbing to the moon on a rope of sand!"

Jerry* had been coming to our church with his wife for a few weeks, and I felt it was time to give him a personal, direct invitation to come to Christ. His response: "Pastor, I'm not good enough. As soon as I can give up my drinking, then I'll get saved."

I was clear with him: "You don't change so you can get saved; you come to God with

To know God and be ready for heaven, follow these steps:

a. Admit you are a sinner.

"There is no one righteous, not even one ... for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Romans 3:10,23 (See Romans 5:8; 6:23.)

Ask God's forgiveness and repent of your sins.

"Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." Romans 10:13 (See Acts 3:19.)

b. Believe in Jesus (put your trust in Him) as your only hope of salvation.

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16 (See John 14:6.)

Become a child of God by receiving Christ.

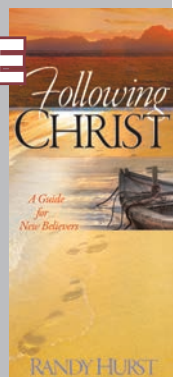
"To all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God." John 1:12 (See Revelation 3:20.)

c. Confess that Jesus is your Lord.

"If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." Romans 10:9 (See verse 10.)

For further help, contact an Assemblies of God church near you.

FREE



all your sins and let Him do the changing."

STEPS TO SALVATION

The ABCs of Salvation above include the biblical steps necessary. Repentance means turning away from sin and turning to God. It means being sorry for your sin and being willing to let God turn your life around.

When Jesus has become your Lord and Savior, you have a whole new way to deal with sin.

Christ breaks sin's grip; you are no longer in bondage to it. However, since Christians are not made perfect, they still find the need to ask Christ for forgiveness when they sin. First John 1:9 has been called "the

Christian's bar of soap": "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (NKJV).

The person who has received salvation can look forward to a life of victory and an eternity in God's presence. ■

*Names have been changed.

This article originally appeared in the Sept. 24, 2006, *Pentecostal Evangel*.

KEN HORN is editor of the *Pentecostal Evangel*.

Email your comments to pe@ag.org.

THE TENT OF MEETING

BY
TIMOTHY KRUZAN

How can a believer fan the flames of spiritual renewal while resisting the influences of this secular age? The answer is found in Exodus 33:11 — “Inside the Tent of Meeting, the Lord would speak to Moses face to face, as one speaks to a friend” (NLT).

Moses knew what we need to understand: In order to make it spiritually in this life, to draw close to God, to lead well, and to live a holy and empowered life before men, we must establish our own “Tent of Meeting.”

The “Tent of Meeting” is the place of divine encounter.

“[Moses] went into the tent” (33:9). Moses initiated contact with God. It was the place of personal encounter with God.

Do you have a place of divine encounter set aside in your life? For each individual, the place will be different. Some will prefer being outside near nature, while others might prefer a certain spot in their home or office. The key is to create a place where you can meet with God free from all distraction.

The “Tent of Meeting” is the place of conversation with God.

“The Lord spoke with Moses” (33:9). The “Tent of Meeting” becomes the place of conversation between God and the believer. There, you listen to Him, hear His voice, gain His wisdom, and follow His instruction, as well as unload all your cares, concerns and troubles. It is the place where answers and direction come, but also the place where you and God can just talk.

The “Tent of Meeting” is where relationship takes place.

“Inside the Tent of Meeting, the Lord would speak to Moses face to face, as one speaks to a friend” (33:11).

This wasn’t just the place Moses received help. This was where a friendship with God begins, grows and thrives.

The “Tent of Meeting” is where intimacy with God is developed.

The “Tent of Meeting” is the place where friendship with God is experienced, but intimacy with God is developed. It was in this tent that Moses made this request of God and received His answer:

“Now therefore, I pray thee, if I have found grace in thy sight, show me now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight: and consider that this nation is thy people. And he said, My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest” (Exodus 33:13,14, KJV).

Moses said, “That I may know thee.” He asked God to take him into a deeper place, to allow Moses to go beyond all limits and experience a deeper, more intimate relationship with God — and God honors this request.

It shows us the desire of God is to move His children into deeper relationship. Those who are in covenant relationship with God, those who have become His children, have the privilege of intimacy with Him, and it will be found in our “Tent of Meeting.”

The “Tent of Meeting” is the place where revelation occurs.

People often wonder how some Christians manage to hear more clearly from God than others. How is it one has a revelation of who God is and what He wants to do? How is it God speaks to some, giving them direction, but others have not yet experienced such?

The answer is found in the “Tent of Meeting.” “And he said, I beseech thee, show me thy glory” (Exodus 33:18). Moses had a strong desire to know God more deeply. God honored this desire and request.

For some Christians it comes more easily to find new direction from God, an increase in confidence, and increase in knowing the will and mind of God, when they leave their prayer closets. They have discovered their “Tent of Meeting” as the place where the voice of God is recognized, the way of the Spirit is discerned, and direction for life is disclosed.

The “Tent of Meeting” is where obedience takes place.

“And the Lord said unto Moses, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first: and I will write upon these tables the words that were in the first tables, which thou brakest. And be ready in the morning, and come up in the morning unto mount Sinai, and present thyself there to me in the top of the mount” (Exodus 34:1,2).

Moses was obedient to this heavenly directive. It’s much easier to submit to God’s direction when our hearts have been softened by being in His presence.

The “Tent of Meeting” is where depth in God is attained.

Increase of depth in God is rooted through intimacy with God, and of course, the study of His Word. The apostle Paul said, “Let your roots grow down into him, and let your lives be built on him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness” (Colossians 2:7, NLT).

Those who spend time in their “Tent of Meeting” will discover their lives are firmly planted, deeply rooted, and sure-footed on the strong foundation who is Jesus Christ.

The “Tent of Meeting” is the place where all other voices fade away.

The camp of Israel had to be a noisy place. The multitude of people and herds of animals would guarantee a din of background noise. Yet, as we peek in on this conversation between God and Moses, no other voices are heard, and it tells us something significant: In the “Tent of Meeting” all other voices fade away.

The one voice we need to hear above all others is the voice of God; and the more time spent with God in our “Tent of Meeting,” the more easily His voice can be heard in the streets of the city. The direction needed for life, the leading of the Holy Spirit, and the ability to recognize God’s voice at the most crucial times comes by spending time alone with God in the “Tent of Meeting.”

Moses did what we need to do. He established a place in his life where he could get away from all distraction, meet with God, talk with Him, hear from Him, love on Him, and be loved BY Him. These encounters strengthened Moses’ walk, emboldened his spiritual backbone, deepened his relationship with God, and gave him the ability to stand strong in the midst of a failing generation. If all of that occurred for Moses, how much more should we erect our own “Tent of Meeting”? ■

TIMOTHY KRUZAN is lead pastor at Jacksonville (Ill.) Assembly of God.

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BEYOND : *the unreachable*



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GOD IS CRAZY ABOUT YOU!

Mark Lowry has had audiences laughing their way into a serious consideration of the gospel for more than 30 years. His singing career includes 17 years with the Gaither Vocal Band, and he continues to appear at Gaither Homecoming events. Lowry spoke in 2005 with Scott Harrup, Pentecostal Evangel managing editor, about his concert tour and the amazement he continues to feel over God's love for all of us.

evangel: *Your comedy is nationally appreciated, but behind the punch lines you pursue a very serious faith. How would you describe the impact Jesus Christ has had on your life?*

MARK LOWRY: He's the best friend I've ever had. I've always known He loves us, but the fact that He likes us is a wonderful thing. A lot of people I love, I don't like. I go through Thanksgiving and Christmas, and there's always one in the family who you would cry at their funeral but you wouldn't want to go on vacation with them.

But anybody who loves you enough to die for you is in your corner. He's on your side. When I was growing up, I heard a lot of sermons that made me think that God loved me but He really didn't

like me very much. He crucified His Son because He was mad at us. But that wasn't the case. He crucified His Son because He loved us.

God understands that we're broken, that we're all sinners. As Christians, we can't take an "us and them" attitude toward the world around us. Because it's really "us and Him." God gave us a free will, and He'll let us walk away. But He left the light on so we could find our way home.

evangel: *As a musician, what has been your most gratifying ministry opportunity?*

LOWRY: When I wrote "Mary, Did You Know?" — I wrote the lyrics, and Buddy Greene wrote the music. A number of people have recorded "Mary," and I guess one of my favorites would be Gary Chapman.

Comedy has a short shelf life. It's a great tool to reach people with the gospel. But all comedy turns to corn eventually. "Mary, Did You Know?" is the one thing that will probably outlive me.

evangel: *How do you keep yourself spiritually energized as you travel and sing with the Gaithers and other groups?*

LOWRY: I love to talk about my faith. I think talking about it increases it. The more you talk about what God's teaching you and showing you and the things He's taking you through, the more it strengthens your faith.

And reading the Word — I love reading Eugene Peterson's *The Message*. It's made the Word of God come alive for me, and I love to memorize it. You know the passage where Jesus says, "Come unto me all who are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest"? *The Message* says it like this:

"Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me — watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly" (Matthew 11:28-30).

I memorized that the other day because I love that line "Learn the unforced rhythms of grace." I think, as Christians, we need to learn those unforced rhythms. We need to learn, for example, not to rank sin. All sin separates us from God. The sin of arrogance. The sin of gluttony. You don't hear very many preachers preach on gluttony even when most of us have a problem with it.

You know that old saying "Love the sinner. Hate the sin"? I think it should be, "Love the sinner. Hate your own sin." I don't have time to hate anyone else's sin. I'm too busy hating mine. The Psalmist said, "My sin is ever before me." I think if we could learn to love the sinner and hate our own sin we could be more effective in reaching people

who are struggling and hurting and who feel left out.

We ostracize the very people Jesus died for, the very people we're supposed to reach out to with God's love and grace. That's why I'm doing the whole "God Is Crazy About You" tour.

evangel: *Let's talk about that tour. What kind of response are you seeing?*

LOWRY: It started a couple of years ago when I began touring again after leaving the Gaither Vocal Band. It evolved. My road manager actually came up with the title. "God is crazy about you" is the message that comes across throughout the evening. Anybody who loves you enough to die for you is in your corner. And I try to find stories from my own life to prove that point.

If people go to marklowry.com they can read the e-mails we've been getting from people who've been to the concert. It's really been a life-changing event for some people. I love to hear about people who thought God couldn't use them, that He was through with them because of their circumstances, and then they discover this whole side of who God is.

God has always used freaks, frauds and failures. He never picks people who have it all together. Look at who Jesus chose to be His disciples! A bunch of lowlifes — and they turned the world upside down.

evangel: *You get a lot of comedic material from observing the church. Despite salvation's transforming effect, Christians can still be pretty strange. What are some idiosyncrasies you've observed?*

LOWRY: We love to eat. We look for the buffet. The Lord's going to have a challenge in the Rapture getting us off the ground. But the biggest thing I wish we'd work on isn't our waistline. I wish we'd just be more accepting of people. Let everybody in! Let everybody get next to Jesus, and He'll fix what's broken in all of us. But if we keep people away. ...

We're all uninvited guests standing at the door keeping other uninvited guests out. If it hadn't been for that sheet falling from the sky

lovely He is, how wonderful He is, and that He knows we are all broken. We're sinners, but He's going to get us home if we'll just follow Him.

evangel: *What are some of the painful life issues you believe your comedy and music help to alleviate for your audiences?*

LOWRY: I've got ADD. I used to have ADHD, but my age is starting to eliminate the hyperactivity. It gives moms hope when they think I turned out all right.



in Acts 11, none of us would know God. Peter had all those laws from the Old Testament convincing him that Gentiles shouldn't be allowed into the family of God. And God told him, "What I've called clean, don't you call unclean."

If we can just get people next to Jesus, we'll discover again how

I'm not so sure about myself; God's still working on me. This is boot camp. I've told God, "As soon as You're done working on me, just take me home. I'm ready." This is where we walk by faith.

All my eggs are already in one basket. I'm not trying this God out to see if He's for real. He is for real.



connections: Mark Lowry

He loves me. Jesus proved that on the cross. And when He rose from the dead, He assured our ticket out of here to spend eternity with Him.

evangel: *What does Christianity offer that the self-help books don't?*

LOWRY: Help when you can't help yourself. Self-help is one thing, but God's help is another thing entirely. I admire people who can pull themselves up by their bootstraps, but I need the grace of God.

The wonderful thing about God is He gives grace; He helps you when you can't help yourself. And after you've tried all the self-help books — and that's fine, go down that rabbit trail if you need it — you'll come to the end of your rope and you'll find Him standing there waiting to catch you.

evangel: *You stand up and share your faith with thousands of people at a time. Do you find it any harder to talk with someone about Christ one on one?*

LOWRY: Oh no. It's much easier, and I love it so much more. I enjoy standing and sharing with a crowd. But I love sitting on my back porch with somebody who may not know anything about me. They may be an atheist, or struggling with something. And I love it.

I never force it. It just happens. God will always crack a door, and I'll push it open. When you force it, it isn't natural. But if you look for the Holy Spirit to crack the door and if you'll just gently push at it, you'll discover that people are interested in eternal things.

I think there's something in our DNA that remembers Eden ... remembers walking in the cool of the

"If you look for the Holy Spirit to crack the door and if you'll just gently push at it, you'll discover that people are interested in eternal things."

day with God. We're all trying to get back there, regardless of whether we're using alcohol or drugs or anything else. We're just drinking at the wrong well. It's like the Samaritan woman. She was thirsty; she just needed to find the right well.

evangel: *If you were to name three people who have impacted your life the most, who would they be?*

LOWRY: Gloria Gaither, Chuck Swindoll and my pastor, Stan Mitchell. Gloria worked on me for 13 years to turn me from a rabid fundamentalist into a person living by grace. Chuck Swindoll's book *The Grace Awakening* was a turning point for me that really showed me that God loves me. Stan Mitchell's sermon series on Henry Nouwen's book *Life of the Beloved* was almost like getting saved again.

Those people have created "glory to glory" experiences for me along the way. You know, every time I'm with Gloria I get some new revelation from God through her. She's an amazing, insightful woman. I'd love everyone to be able to read *The Grace Awakening*. You can listen to Stan Mitchell's six-part series on *Life of the Beloved* for free at marklowry.com in the

"oratory" section (under the "outside the mind" button at the top) where I have some of my favorite preachers. That series turned my life upside down.

evangel: *What's a thought you'd want to leave with someone reading this interview?*

LOWRY: I wish I had the words to tell you how much God loves you. I pray every night before I go out on stage, "Lord, please help me make it clear." I don't really think words can convey it, but they're all we have.

I wish you could see yourself the way God sees you. If you have children, the way you look at your children is only a broken image of how God sees us. Jesus told us that if we, being evil, know how to give good gifts to our children, how much more God loves us and wants to take care of us.

God is rarely in our plans. But He's always in the interruptions. And sometimes those interruptions don't feel like God is on your side. When you get that doctor's report, perhaps, or you go through a divorce, it doesn't feel like God is anywhere around. But He is there. He's using those things to draw you to himself. ■

This interview originally appeared in the May 22, 2005, *Pentecostal Evangel*.

Email your comments to pe@ag.org.





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Quizzing for Life

Bible memorization ministry to teens is more than just a game

By Christina Quick

There is no shortage of Bibles in America. Four copies of the Scriptures can be found in the typical U.S. household, according to a study published earlier this year by American Bible Society and the Barna Group.

One in six people polled said he or she had purchased a Bible in the past year. Yet many don't bother to read it. Respondents ages 18–29 reported opening the Bible on average fewer than three times a year or never.

Against this backdrop, Bible Quiz stands in stark contrast. A discipleship ministry of the Assemblies of God, Bible Quiz encourages teens not only to study the Scriptures but also to commit entire books of the New Testament to memory. And every year, students across the nation take up the challenge.

Daniel Wagner, a high school senior who attends Owasso (Okla.) Assembly of God, is among them. In his seven years of quizzing, Wagner has memorized 14 books of the Bible. He and his three brothers, along with their teammates, have collectively won four national championships since 2008.

Wagner is passionate about the gospel. He travels the globe preaching with his parents, who

serve as independent missionary evangelists. But Wagner admits it's the competitive aspect of Bible Quiz that motivates him to spend hours each week memorizing, quoting and poring over Scripture.

"I love the competition," says Wagner, who garnered the Male Quizzer of the Year Award at last year's national tournament in Columbus, Ohio. "I don't want to walk away thinking I could have done a better job if I had worked harder. The possibility of winning drives me."

Bernie Elliot, national Bible Quiz coordinator, estimates about 3,000 students participate in the ministry nationwide. With an academic quiz bowl format and all the intensity of a high school sporting event, Bible Quiz appeals to the youthful compulsion to strive for perfection.

"If it weren't for the Bible Quiz ministry, many of the students would not have dug as deep as they did in studying and memorizing God's Word," Elliot says. "I constantly hear the competition helps initially motivate them to memorize as they realize they

will be held accountable at a Bible Quiz match. The quizzers are then challenged to go even deeper in the Word and in their relationship with the Lord."

"Life doesn't always permit you to pull out a Bible on the spot, but when God's Word is locked into your mind, it's always with you." — Abby Rogers

Each year, Bible Quiz focuses on one or more books of the New Testament. The quiz season begins in the fall and culminates with the top 40 teams competing at National Finals in early July. This year's national competition starts Saturday, June 29, in Chicago. Students will answer questions drawn from the 1,068 verses of Matthew, one of the longest books in the New Testament.

The more difficult queries could ask students to quote five different verses scattered throughout the Gospel or rattle off a list of 47 individuals — all in 30 seconds. Scholarships will be awarded to top individuals and teams.

Rod Whitlock, who oversees Bible Quiz for Assemblies of God National Youth Ministries, says the ministry's focus on memorizing Scripture makes Bible Quiz a uniquely powerful discipleship tool.

"Imagine the endless possibilities with a generation of students having hidden God's Word deep within their hearts," Whitlock says. "Bible Quiz affords students the opportunity to learn Scripture, and then live it, so they can lead from it. What could happen if individu-



Larry Mullins

Abby Rogers competes at a 2011 tournament.



Jesse, Josh, and Daniel Wagner (left to right) of Owasso (Okla.) AG appear with Jeff Foxworthy on *The American Bible Challenge*.

als were equipped with His Word in every workplace and community in America?"

At 16 years of age, Abby Rogers has an impressive Bible Quiz résumé. She led her Wesley Chapel (Fla.) Victorious Life Church (AG) team to a national championship in 2010 and has been both the Female Quizzer of the Year and the top-ranked national quizzer by points the past three years. But Rogers says she has garnered more than just trophies and titles.

"I absolutely love competition of any kind, so the quiz aspect really appeals to me," says Rogers, who now quizzes at Cedar Park Assembly of God in Bothell, Wash. "However, becoming so well-versed in the Bible is what ultimately makes Bible Quiz worthwhile for me. Life doesn't always permit you to pull out a Bible on the spot, but when God's Word is locked into your mind, it's always with you. This means you have constant access to the very words of God, which are free to guide, inspire, reassure and instruct you at any time."

The skills and knowledge fostered in Bible Quiz have helped participants achieve success in

other competitive venues as well. Isaac Ward, a recent high school graduate who quizzed multiple years at First Assembly of God in Binghamton, N.Y., won the Junior Division of the National Bible Bee in 2009, earning a \$50,000 scholarship. The National Bible Bee is a nondenominational contest unrelated to Bible Quiz.

Owasso's Daniel Wagner and his two older brothers, Josh and Jesse, were contestants this year on *The American Bible Challenge*, a television program on the Game Show Network hosted by comedian Jeff Foxworthy and featuring musical co-host Kirk Franklin. Contestants compete for more than \$100,000 in cash for their favorite charities.

Kevin Wagner, the brothers' father, coaches the Owasso Bible Quiz team and says developing a habit of Scripture memorization has benefited his entire family.

"I never did any legitimate memorization until I was in my 40s and started memorizing with my boys in Bible Quiz," says Wagner, who has committed nine books of the New Testament to memory. "Bible Quiz is the best thing any family can be involved in. It's the best hobby you

can have. It deepens your relationship with the Lord and keeps your heart and mind filled with the Word of God."

Many former Bible quizzers now serve in ministry, including James T. Bradford, general secretary of the Assemblies of God.

"Bible Quiz got me memorizing and studying God's Word an hour a day as a teenager," Bradford says. "It laid a substantial foundation for a life of ministry at a time when

I was not headed for vocational ministry."

Scott Berkey, national director of the Children's Ministries Agency for the Assemblies of God, competed in Bible Quiz from 1992 to 1997 at Faith Assembly of God in Orlando, Fla.

"The verses I memorized and the friendships I formed while quizzing have had a tremendous impact on my life," Berkey says. "I am so thankful for my time and experience with quizzing."

Bible Quiz is open to students in sixth through 12th grades. The season beginning this fall will include eight books of the Bible: 1 and 2 Timothy, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, Titus and John's three epistles. ■

CHRISTINA QUICK is a freelance writer and former *Pentecostal Evangel* staff writer. She has been involved with Bible Quiz for four years and coaches a national team from Central Assembly of God in Springfield, Mo.

Email your comments to pe@ag.org.



FAITH HARVEST HELPERS

Local Food Bank Blossoms Into Worldwide Ministry

By Gail Wood

Paul Shorb had no idea what he was getting himself into. In 2008, following the advice of some friends, he opened a food bank at Faith Assembly of Lacey (Wash.). He handed out food from the back of his pickup truck on Sundays after church.

"If someone had told me five years ago what we'd be doing today, I'd have said, 'You're crazy,'" says Shorb, a retired soldier and now an Assemblies of God pastor.

From those modest beginnings where a handful of people received help, Faith Harvest Helpers has grown into a worldwide

Shorb's outreach fed 280,000 people last year.

"It's about sharing food and giving hope," Shorb says.

And it's also about discipleship. With 400 volunteers, Faith Harvest Helpers doubles as a food source for the needy and an outreach connection for Christians.

"We want to be spiritually mature, reproducing Christians," Shorb says. "Washington is one of the least-churched states. We're trying to change that."

Volunteers at Harvest Helpers come in different shapes and ages. There's



Paul and Rose Shorb believe they are in the discipleship business.

ing food from grocery chains' distribution centers (sometimes 7,000 pounds of oatmeal or 1,000 pounds of flour at a time), Shorb procures surplus salmon from local American Indian hatcheries. With the help of volunteers and a dozen pressure cookers, Harvest Helpers has canned as much as 60,000 pounds of salmon in one year.

By partnering with 26 local churches, Shorb has expanded the outreach of Harvest Helpers and of congregations in the area.

"We're trying to get the churches active," Shorb says. "For a small church, it's hard to have a food program. But if we can help by giving food, that changes the whole thing."

Shorb has found that attendance increases in churches that offer food to congregants and neighborhood residents.

"If befriended they start

coming to church," says Paul's wife, Rose Shorb, who helps with the outreach. "We also found people in the church who really need it. But we want them to know that they're receiving this food because of the love of God."

In addition to filling stomachs, the Shorbs hope to fill spiritual needs.

It's an outreach that follows a simple equation — hunger plus food equals opportunity.

"The food opens the door to share the good news with others," Rose Shorb says. "We're not just a humanitarian outreach. We're also wanting to feed spiritual needs."

The Shorbs just completed Youth With a Mission discipleship training and hope to open an agriculturally based YWAM center on 44 acres near Yelm, Wash. ■



Gail Wood photos

Faith Harvest Helpers receives surplus salmon from local Native American hatcheries for canning.

outreach. With three food banks, a distribution center, and a partnership with more than two dozen local churches,

the bushy-haired teen and the gray-haired senior.

"It's all about being willing to help," Shorb says.

In addition to obtain-

TEXAS

Prison Ministry Receives Volunteer Service Award

The “Day With Mom Program” operated by Calvary Commission of Lindale, Texas, has been awarded the 2013 Governor’s Criminal Justice Volunteer Service Award.

Calvary Commission, led the past 36 years by Assemblies of God endorsed chaplain Joe Fauss and his wife, Charlotte, started the program at the Lane Murray Unit women’s prison in Gatesville, Texas, in 2010.



Texas official Brad Livingston (back row, from left) honors Joe and Charlotte Fauss for their volunteer efforts. Day With Mom Program volunteers who now are on the outside after serving time are (front row, from left) Julie Menasco, Maggie Grisso and Arquilla Greenhouse.

The program involves children of incarcerated women visiting for a day of food, games and prayer. For instance, older children play board games with their moms while younger ones play musical chairs and color. Calvary Commission students, staff members and volunteers bring in pizza and

homemade cookies. The outreach is designed to provide families the opportunity to develop and strengthen relationships.

“The older teenage boys cry just like the little kids when they run to see their mamas,” Fauss says.

Texas Department of Criminal Justice Executive Director Brad Livingston said the Day With Mom Program personifies “a selfless dedication to helping offenders succeed both while incarcerated, and once they’re released.”

Calvary Commission runs a similar Day With Dad Program annually. The ministry provides an environment that enables parolees to achieve their quest to stay out of prison, although many return for volunteer ministry. ■

“Oftentimes in the Christian conservative community, we are not expressing love of our fellow man. We can come across very harsh, too harsh. And I think these are lessons that we’ve already seen written about in the New Testament, when the religious leaders of the day, when Jesus was on the scene, ... had a very condescending view of sinners, people [who] didn’t measure up. We’ve got to be very careful now not to repeat that same mistake, because from where I sit there are two billboards that come out of the New Testament: salvation through Jesus Christ, and don’t become a Pharisee, a religious bigot.”

— *Focus on the Family* President **Jim Daly** on Religion & Ethics Newsweekly

“We quickly found that prominent motel owners wholeheartedly welcomed and supported this program and that their guests were appreciating finding the Gita.”

— **Vaisesika Dasa**, founder of the *Motel Gita* project, which has distributed 150,000 copies of the *Bhadgavad-Gita*, a Hindu holy book, to 1,100 hotels and motels, on CNN

“Covert racism is alive and well. I see it every day in subtle ways.”

— *The Gloucester Institute* President **Kay Cole James** in World



The opinions expressed in this column do not necessarily represent the views of the *Pentecostal Evangel* or the Assemblies of God. This column contains quotations from a broad spectrum of people, including non-Christians.

EVANGELISM

Vocalist Shea Dies at 104

George Beverly Shea, the booming baritone who sang to millions during evangelist Billy Graham’s crusades, died April 16 at age 104 in Charlotte, N.C.

Shea was well known as a gospel soloist before he joined Graham’s crusade team in 1947. He contin-

ued until Graham’s declining health ended most of the evangelist’s public



appearances nearly 60 years later.

Besides his distinctive voice, Shea was known for his trademark rendition of “How Great Thou

Art” and his inspirational “The Wonder of It All.” He performed live before an estimated 200 million at crusades and recorded more than 70 albums.

Graham said at Shea’s 100th birthday celebration in 2009 that he couldn’t have had a ministry without Shea.

Shea received a Lifetime Achievement Grammy in 2011. At age 23 he composed the music to one of his best-known solos, “I’d Rather Have Jesus.” ■

CAMPUS MINISTRY

Dennis Gaylor Retires as National Chi Alpha Director

Dennis Gaylor retired as national director of Chi Alpha Campus Ministries in April after 35 years.

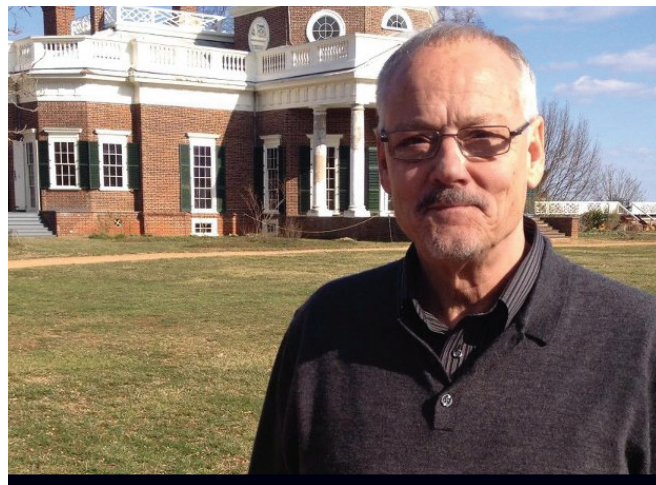
During Gaylor's tenure, Chi Alpha grew from 67 chartered college campus ministries to 304, and from fewer than 60 campus staff to 554 paid missionaries. While 5,866 students were involved in Chi Alpha in 1978, the number has risen to 24,254 today.

Gaylor's dream in the early going was to see young single men and women, married couples,

and families be able to conduct campus ministry as a full-time calling.

During the 1970s and early 1980s, newly graduated and radically saved individuals determined to stay on campus to share the good news with any who would listen and emerged as the first Chi Alpha ministers.

When these campus ministers, most without credentials at the time, started Chi Alpha they were often misunderstood and marginalized by the church. Out of necessity,



Dennis Gaylor spent 35 years in Chi Alpha ministry.

most were single, lived frugal lifestyles, drove used cars, and typically shared housing with roommates. They were seen as a motley crew wearing overalls and sandals, with long hair and beards.

There was campus unrest and youth rebellion against government, family, corporate America, and religion. This led to suspicion and disdain for young people who didn't dress and behave like typical church people. After the Jesus Movement and Charismatic Renewal swept across America and brought revival to college campuses, youth and the church, Chi Alpha came of age.

In 1986, Chi Alpha left National Youth Ministries, where it had been since 1947, and moved to Assemblies of God U.S. Missions. This change accelerated the growth and expansion of Chi Alpha. The national appointment of missionaries in

1992 opened the way for men and women called to university missions to plant Chi Alpha ministries on campuses and in states where they had never been.

When Gaylor, 63, joined national Chi Alpha the budget was less than \$100,000 per year. Today \$15 million in annual revenue supports campus missionaries. In the past two years, more than 100 recent graduates have participated in Chi Alpha internships.

Zollie Smith, AGUSM executive director, says he appreciates Gaylor and his wife, Barbara, tremendously.

"They both have exemplified a loyal dedication to Chi Alpha, and they have never been without zeal and passion for healthy, successful ministries on the campuses of our country and beyond," Smith says.

Smith has announced that Bob Marks, a longtime member of the national Chi Alpha staff, will be the interim director. ■

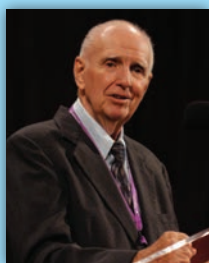
acrossthefellowship

Southern Missouri: Frank Miller Reynolds, the first national Teen Challenge representative and the man who started the first Teen Challenge training center, died April 9 in Springfield, Mo., at the age of 91.

In 1962 at Rehrersburg, Pa., Reynolds developed the men's discipleship program that would become the model for Teen Challenge centers. Eleven years later, Reynolds moved to Springfield, Mo., at the request of the Assemblies of God Executive Presbytery to coordinate the development of Teen Challenge centers across the country and to create training for leaders. As the first national representative, he traveled extensively to train Teen Challenge staff. He retired from national leadership in 1987.

"He was a very quiet and humble sort of a guy, but he had a love for the Lord and a love for people," says Jack Smart, president of Teen Challenge USA.

At the 50th anniversary celebration of Teen Challenge in 2008, ministry founder David Wilkerson told then national president Mike Hodges that without Reynolds, Teen Challenge never would have spread across the country the way it did. ■



U.S. MISSIONS

MAPS Volunteers Serve in Multitude of Ways

Missions America Placement Service, a division of Assemblies of God U.S. Missions, provides opportunities for volunteers to become involved in ministry.

“RV Volunteers are dedicated Christian men and women from a wide variety of professional and vocational backgrounds who desire to use their skills and talents and are willing to give a few days or weeks each year to help with construction needs at Assemblies of God churches and related ministries all across the United States,” says Jerry Bell, U.S. MAPS director.

However, Bell notes that the volunteering goes beyond construction.

“On many occasions

they help out with local outreaches such as food and clothing distributions, or office or clerical work, or sometimes just be there to help out, no matter what the need is,” Bell says.

For the most part, MAPS volunteers have retired from the paid workforce but they still are working in project after project. They travel across the country with tools and supplies in their RVs.

These volunteers pay their own expenses and receive no remuneration for their labor.

“But most will tell you, the benefits of offering their services to help others, of investing themselves in the building of the kingdom of God, of

“Most Religious” Metropolitan Areas

Provo-Orem, Utah: **77 percent**

Montgomery, Ala.: **64 percent**

Jackson, Miss.: **64 percent**

Birmingham-Hoover, Ala.: **56 percent**

Huntsville, Ala.: **55 percent**

Holland-Grand Haven, Mich.: **55 percent**

Greenville-Mauldin-Easley, S.C.: **55 percent**

Augusta, Ga.-Richmond County, S.C.: **55 percent**

Ogden-Clearfield, Utah: **55 percent**

“Least Religious”

Burlington-South Burlington, Vt.: **17 percent**

Boulder-Colo.: **17 percent**

Manchester-Nashua, N.H.: **22 percent**

Portland-South Portland-Biddeford, Maine: **22 percent**

Santa Rosa-Petaluma, Calif.: **23 percent**

San Francisco-Oakland-Fremont, Calif.: **24 percent**

Eugene-Springfield, Ore.: **24 percent**

— Gallup poll, citing Americans who say religion is important part of daily life and they attend religious services regularly

the friends and relationships they establish across the country, far outweigh any of the expenses,” Bell says. “They travel with

a purpose. Their motto is ‘Building Churches – Changing Lives.’”

June 23 is U.S. MAPS day in the AG. ■

ENTERTAINMENT

Movie Ratings Expanded

The Motion Picture Association of America has announced changes to its movie rating system, saying it wants to help parents make informed decisions at the multiplex.

The new system, rolled out as the “Check

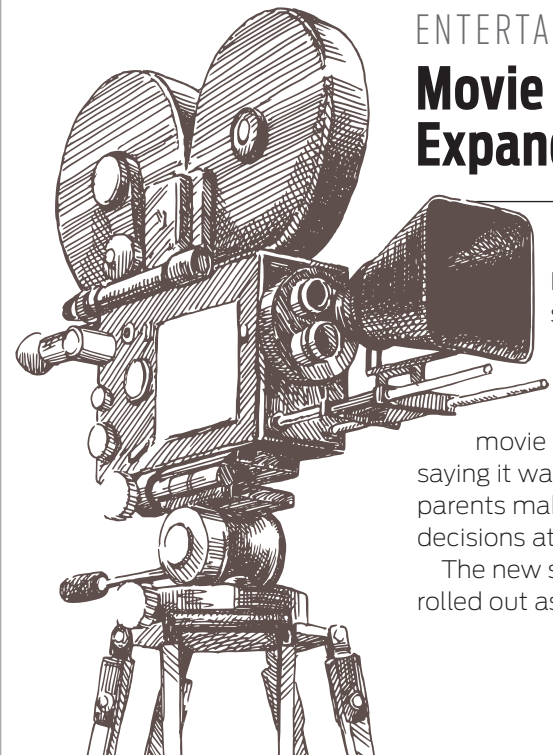
the Box” campaign, will include prominent and detailed descriptions explaining why a movie received its rating. Films that might previously have been stamped PG-13 with a throw-away sentence beneath the rating will now feature extensive descriptions in large font next to the ratings code.

The MPAA began issuing ratings descriptions for every film rated PG or higher in 1990.

Conservative groups have for years accused the MPAA of “ratings

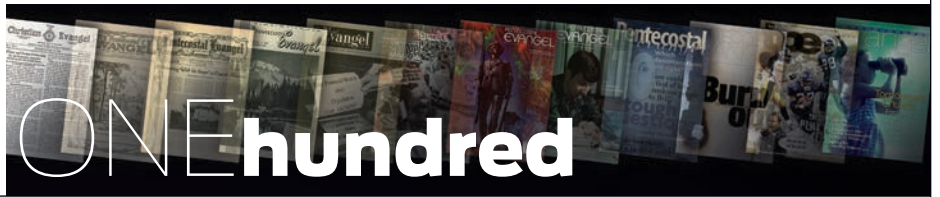
creep,” a ratcheting down of ratings in the interest of profits, so that material once considered a PG-13 now gets a PG and what once was an R is now a PG-13.

“I am not moved,” said Tim Winter, president of the Parents Television Council. “A cynical view of the announcement is, ‘How can the MPAA protect themselves and continue a toxic level of violence, especially in PG-13 movies, while providing themselves cover from all the scrutiny?’” ■





the first ONE hundred



with **Christ**

Ministers

George P. Brown, 92
Bakersfield, Calif.

Herman E. Cunningham, 87
Lewiston, Idaho

Edwin E. Eliason, 88
Grass Lake, Mich.

Sara B. Escobedo, 84
Bastrop, Texas

Calvin Gruetzmacher, 86
Pasadena, Texas

Anatolio Jaruczyk, 71
Clark, N.J.

Agward L. Land, 88
Ripley, Tenn.

Bob E. Potter, 85
Bixby, Okla.

Carl S. Walker III, 77
O'Fallon, Mo.

Orville F. Whitacre, 89
Phenix City, Ala.

Missionary

Lillie S. Musgrove, 84
Paradise, Calif.

Each week, The First One Hundred collects archived material from the Pentecostal Evangel's first 100 years of publication. The following excerpts echo this week's examination of sin and salvation.

The blood-bought children of God need to know this glorious secret. It is in truth an *open* secret to all who are taught of God, and yet it is veiled to so many who are true believers, and go on living a sad up and down life of "sinning and repenting," day after day, when the knowledge of the "secret" would admit them into constant victory, unbroken peace, deep satisfaction and rest!

But what is the secret? It is summed up in two brief sentences — In Him all the fullness! "Christ IN YOU ... glory!" (Colossians 1:19,27).
— *Author Unnamed; Feb. 1, 1936; "The Glorious Secret"*

The Scripture speaks of the blood as *washing* — the washing of the blood that cleanses away every stain, every blemish of sin until it is absolutely erased. It speaks of *redemption*. We are redeemed out of the slave market of sin and we become God's servants. God's children, God's heirs through the blood of Jesus Christ. That precious blood speaks of *peace*, for without it there could be no reconciliation between God and His estranged creature. Man has been defiant, rebellious, belligerent, disobedient, and has run far from his Creator, but that sacrificial blood brings us back into reconciliation with our Heavenly Father. As He looks upon the blood that was spilled on Calvary, He forgives us.
— *Wesley R. Steelberg on Revivaltime; June 24, 1951; "The Speaking Blood"*

"Instant salvation" is a term some use with disdain. "As though one

could be a sinner one moment and a saint the next!" they object.

But without fear of contradiction, we assert that one may be without eternal life at one moment, and possess eternal life at the next. For the Bible says, "He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life" (John 3:36) — has it the moment he believes. That is to say, he has it in principle and in germ. As by taking the acorn in my hand, I have the oak that is to be, because the tree is wrapped up in the seed, so the moment I accept Christ I have eternal life which is in Christ. "And this is the record, that God hath given unto us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life" (1 John 5:11).

— *A.J. Gordon, Messenger of Peace; July 12, 1970; "Saved in 3 Minutes"*

People sometimes ask, "How much faith must I have to become a Christian? Must I understand all the Bible?"

I think we can find an answer in the words Jesus spoke to Bartimaeus, the blind beggar. He said to him, "Thy faith hath made thee whole" (Mark 10:52).

Bartimaeus knew Jesus was passing by, though he could not see Him, and he cried out, "Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me." When Jesus asked him what he wanted, he replied, "Lord, that I might receive my sight."

Jesus granted his request and said, "Thy faith hath made thee whole."

Was Bartimaeus a Bible scholar? Did he understand all about Christ and His divine mission? No, he probably knew very little about Jesus except that He was a miracle worker who claimed to be sent from God. Bartimaeus had just enough faith (1) to believe that the Lord could help him, and (2) to cry out. ■

— *J.P. McCamey; March 8, 1981; "How Much Faith Does a Man Need?"*

By Christina Quick

Sponsored in part by



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Bicycles

Two-wheel riding

Can you ride a bicycle? Today there are bicycles for kids of all ages — big bikes, small bikes and bikes with training wheels. But in 1817 the bicycle hadn't yet been invented. Around that time Baron von Drais built a two-wheeled wooden machine to help him get around his garden in Germany. Though it looked like a bicycle, it had no pedals. Instead, it had to be pushed along with the feet. It was called a hobbyhorse, and it wasn't very fast or useful.

Pedals were added in 1865 to create a machine called a velocipede. That word means "fast foot." But the speedier ride had its problems. There were no rubber tires in those days. Imagine taking a wooden bike with metal wheels for a spin on a bumpy cobblestone road. No wonder some people called this new invention "the boneshaker."

Around 1870 metal bikes with rubber tires were built. But they didn't look much like today's bicycles. The huge front wheel was high off the ground, and the rider sat directly above it. This was a dangerous arrangement. Any small bump in the road could send the rider tumbling headlong toward the ground. Most people couldn't afford to ride anyway. The bike would have cost the average worker six months' wages.

A later design was advertised as a safety bicycle. The huge wheel was located in the back with a smaller one in front. It was still quite a balancing act, but the new bike didn't tip forward as easily.

By the end of the 1800s bicycles looked more like today's models. They also became more affordable. Soon people everywhere were zipping around on bikes.

In many parts of the world today, bicycles are as common on the road as cars and trucks. Some missionaries use bicycles to travel from place to place and tell people about Jesus. A ministry called Speed the Light provides vehicles missionaries need to get around. Speed the Light buys cars, motorcycles, bicycles, airplanes, boats, and even donkeys and camels for missionaries to use.

You can be a missionary in your neighborhood. Wherever you go — on foot or by bike — you can tell other kids about Jesus.

"[Jesus] said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation'" (Mark 16:15, NIV).



Try this!

Use a plain index card to make a custom license plate for your bicycle. Print your name or plate number with a marker. Laminate your plate with clear adhesive paper. Use chenille wire to hang it from the back of your bike. Practice below.

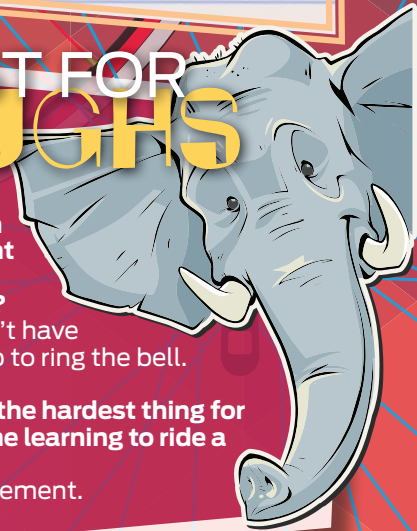
JUST FOR LAUGHS

Why can't an elephant ride a bicycle?

It doesn't have a thumb to ring the bell.

What's the hardest thing for someone learning to ride a bike?

The pavement.



Prize!

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did you know?

Sem Abrahams holds the record for riding the tallest unicycle. He rolled 28 feet on a giant unicycle that stood more than 114 feet tall.

Christian tightrope performer Nik Wallenda once rode a bicycle across a 235-foot-long high wire suspended 128 feet above the ground.



WARNING AND PROMISE

Whenever you are arrested and brought to trial, do not worry beforehand about what to say. Just say whatever is given you at the time, for it is not you speaking, but the Holy Spirit. (Mark 13:11, NIV)

Jesus never promised His disciples immunity from trouble or deliverance from trial. But He does give us two anchors that steady us in the turbulence.

First, we are not to be anxious. “Don’t worry beforehand,” Jesus says. How do you do that? How can you not be anxious when facing dreadful circumstances? Because you are there for a higher purpose — to represent the King of kings and Lord of lords. You’re not there just for your own honor or safety. You are on assignment for Him. It’s not what happens to you that is paramount, it’s whether what happens to you honors Him and advances His kingdom!

We need to take seriously Jesus’ words about anxiety. I know for many of us this is not an easy thing to do. But if we have not discovered the means to have peace in our everyday life (Matthew 6:25-34), then we will really have high distress in more horrific moments.

The prophet Jeremiah put it this way: “If you have raced with men on foot and they have worn you out, how can you compete with horses?” (Jeremiah 12:5). Jeremiah knew a greater trial was coming than a race on foot.

Second, we are to be confident the Holy Spirit will give us the words to say. Look at what happened to Pastor Mehdi Dibaj, martyr for the gospel in Iran in 1994. See how the Holy Spirit helped him with the words to say.

Dibaj had spent over nine years in prison solely because he was

a Christian. For two and a half of those years, he was in solitary: a space no larger than 4 feet by 4 feet.

Near the end of his time of imprisonment, Dibaj was told by his prison commander, “You are an old man. You are 60 years old. You have gray hair. You have been here 10½ years. Once say ‘no’ to Christ, and we will release you. Once. Only once with your words. You may keep your Christian faith in your heart.”

Dibaj answered: “There is a long time until I become 120 years old. And if you keep me another 60 years, I’m not going to deny my Lord.”

This same commander asked him on another occasion: “If you see Jesus in a dream and Jesus tells you that ‘After Me another prophet will come. Follow him.’ What would you say to Jesus?”

Dibaj answered: “I’ll fall on my knees. I’ll cry and I’ll say, ‘Lord Jesus. If You want to send me to hell, please do so. If You want to execute me, please do so. Do whatever You will. But, please don’t send me away from You to another person.’”

How could Dibaj say things like that? Because Jesus’ promise was true for him — the Holy Spirit gave him what to say in the moments he needed it.

It’s the same for you. Are you going through a trial right now? Would you take some moments to shut yourself in with Jesus and ask the Holy Spirit to give you a word to speak to your situation at this very moment? He will! ■

DR. GEORGE O. WOOD is general superintendent of the Assemblies of God. Visit On Your Mark at pe.ag.org for a link to On Your Mark video and audio podcasts.

Email your comments to pe@ag.org.

Lord Jesus, help me to rely on You today, trusting the Holy Spirit to give me the right words at the right time for every need I face.

A prayer of response

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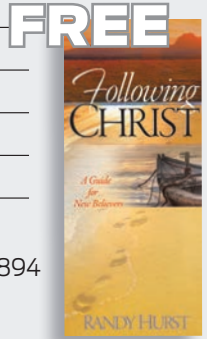
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