

# Old Paths

Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. Jeremiah 6:16

The secret of the LORD is with them that fear Him; and He will show them His covenant. Psalm 25:14

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Straight and Narrow

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## Illinois Bible Conference Report

As noted last month, a Bible conference and camp meeting was recently held in Illinois, hosted by the New Burnside SDA Home Church.

The Bible conference preceded the camp meeting and went very well. All who were able to attend were challenged with many new thoughts. For myself, I can say I learned many new things for which I am very thankful to God.

The Bible conference was true to its title in that we focused primarily on what the Bible has to say about the subjects discussed. The Bible was used as the final authority to prove or disprove all doctrine.

Every presentation was well thought out, and the speakers did a very good job in their discourses. I would like to thank each of the speakers for their contributions.

As noted in the September, 1999 issue of *Old Paths*, we discussed the following subjects:

- What is God's Participation in the Destruction of Sinners? (Does God destroy?)
- The Godhead Clarified
- Feast Days
- The Usage of God's Name (Sacred Name)
- The Sanctuary
- Bible Prophecy
- Proper Christian Music

There were many in attendance at the conference and, as you could imagine, not everyone was in agreement on all of these issues, yet the general spirit of everyone who attended was very pleasant. There was not a condemning or harsh spirit present among any of those who attended. I thank the Lord for His work in the lives of each one.

We started each morning at 6:30 with a devotional study. Each day of the conference was dedicated to the discussion of certain subjects. The three main subjects we focused on were "What is God's participation in the destruction of sinners? (Does God destroy?)," "Feast Days," and

*(Continued on page 2)*

### A Special Prayer Request

#### An Update on Hans

"You must be devastated," a close relative said to me. "That hardly describes it," I replied. Ben Carson, the famous neurosurgeon wrote:

"I know how I would feel if one of my own sons had a brain tumor. I'd feel as if I were out in the middle of the ocean sinking, pleading for somebody, anybody to throw me a life preserver. There is a fear beyond words, beyond rational thought." (*Gifted Hands*, p. 165)

As close as Dr. Carson has been to some of his patients, I am not sure that even his descriptive thoughts really portray what goes on in the mind of a parent when their child is in the operating room having brain, or, as in our case, spinal cord surgery. As he admits, the experience is "beyond words." As broad as the

*(Continued on page 10)*

#### Also in this issue:

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“The usage of God’s name (Sacred Name).” For each of these subjects we had someone present reasons in favor of them, then had someone present reasons against them. Each speaker was given fifty minutes to present his position without any interruptions. After both messages, we had an hour and a half of open discussion where everyone could participate. This proved to be a great blessing, as we could ask the speakers questions as well as present our own thoughts on the matter. We asked each person to limit themselves ten minutes so that others could share in the discussion.

This conference was a new experience for me, as I believe it was for all those who attended. I have never attended a meeting in which both sides of a controversial issue were presented, and then the floor opened for general discussion. I really enjoyed it and left with many thoughts I had never considered before.



### In-between Meditations

The following are simply summaries of the discussions. We will be printing some of the studies that were presented at the Bible conference in *Old Paths* within the next few months. Cassette tapes are available for most of the meetings. For information on the tapes currently available, and the cost, you may contact The New Burnside SDA Home Church, 1210 Birdwell Road, New Burnside, Illinois 62922. You may also call: (618) 996-2525 and ask for Crystal. The e-mail address is: [mercercs@accessus.net](mailto:mercercs@accessus.net).

### Does God Destroy?

The first day of the conference we examined the issue of “What is God’s participation in the destruction of sinners? (Does God destroy?).” Our scheduled speaker for the presentation was not able to attend, so

Harold Webb from Jamaica was glad to fill in and we are glad he did. He presented reasons in favor of the idea that God does not destroy. He shared his thoughts on how he understood it to be contrary to God’s character of love to destroy sinners and that all destruction comes from Satan. He stated, “God is on trial for murder,” and he wished to vindicate God’s character. Harold did a very nice job of presenting his thoughts. He is a very dynamic speaker.

I had the privilege of studying a 28-page paper on this subject written by Bill Stringfellow. This paper presented the understanding that God does accept responsibility in the destruction of the wicked. (*You can obtain a copy of this paper by writing to Concerned Publications, HC 69 Box 817, Spencer, Tennessee 38585, and requesting the paper entitled “A Critical Correction.”*)

I learned a lot from this paper and prepared a Bible study on the subject which I presented after Harold Webb made his presentation. I shared that God is not on trial for murder, but rather is being presented by those who espouse this theory, as one who will not punish transgressors. I shared the verse where God said, “I kill, and I make alive.” (Deuteronomy 32:39) I shared that the Hebrew word *מוּת* (*muwth* - Strong’s number 4191), which is translated “kill” in this verse, is used 835 times in the Old Testament, and means “to die (as penalty), to be put to death.” (*Brown Driver and Brigg’s Hebrew Lexicon*) This word is different from the one used in the ten commandments. In the ten commandments God said, “Thou shalt not kill.” (Exodus 20:13) The Hebrew word *רָצַח* (*ratsach* - Strong’s number 7523), which is translated “kill” in this verse is used 47 times in the Old Testament and means “premeditated, intentional murder.” (*Brown Driver and Brigg’s Hebrew Lexicon*) There is a big difference between premeditated murder and putting someone to death as a penalty.

The Bible states that “the wages of sin is death.” (Romans 6:23) I shared that since all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, then God would be perfectly just and fair to put us all to death. Yet, God is more gracious than that. He longs to give us mercy; which is treating us better than we deserve. There are many instances in the Bible where God put people to death as a penalty: whether He did it Himself, by an angel, or by having His people go to battle, in every case He is perfectly just and fair and, even beyond that He is merciful; even to the wicked.

One serious danger, I shared, which I see in the teaching that God does not destroy, is that it removes the fear of God from people and in its place puts the fear of Satan. With the fear of God removed, man no longer has the ability to depart from sin. "By the fear of the LORD men depart from evil." (Proverbs 16:6)

These are some of the thoughts I shared during my presentation at the Bible conference. At the end of the discussion on this subject everyone came to a consensus in favor of printing a study similar to the one I presented at the Bible conference in *Old Paths*. There was not complete agreement as to whether my presentation was correct or not, but there was complete agreement that we should print the study in *Old Paths*.

## **The Godhead**

In the afternoon we had an open discussion regarding the Godhead. We did not have a presentation in favor of the trinity doctrine, as this issue is pretty well settled among all those in attendance that the trinity doctrine is false and that life eternal is found in the "only true God, and Jesus Christ." (John 17:3) Most of us had already heard many sermons and read many articles regarding this, so it was not necessary to hear another one.

We clarified some terms and biblical thoughts during the discussion and emphasized the importance of using biblical terms and expressions when approaching this subject. If we keep to biblical phrases, they cannot be used against us. Anyone who would wish to argue with us would be arguing with the Bible.

The discussion went well and we were able to learn some new principles and thoughts concerning the

Godhead. We certainly do not know everything there is to know about the subject. It is our privilege to know what God has revealed through His word. Beyond that, we dare not go. "The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever." (Deuteronomy 29:29)

## **A Welcomed Sabbath**

On Friday evening David Clayton shared a beautiful message on the Sabbath. The principle text used was



**David Clayton preaching with his usual enthusiasm!**

Exodus 31:17, which says, "in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was *refreshed*." (Exodus 31:17)

David brought out the importance of realizing that God is the one who is to be refreshed on the Sabbath. On the first Sabbath God was not refreshed because He was physically tired, but because he was able to have fellowship with Adam and Eve. God wishes to have fellowship with us on the Sabbath.

May the Lord be refreshed by His fellowship with you next Sabbath. Let's keep that in mind as we enter into the Sabbath rest.

The rest of the Sabbath we were blessed by many wonderful presentations. It was truly a refreshing Sabbath for me, and I hope it was for the Lord as well.

## **Feast Days**

On Sunday morning we again resumed our Bible conference. Sherman Moreland from Tennessee was kind enough to come up to Illinois and share some Bible reasons in favor of keeping the feasts. Sherman did an excellent job in presenting this issue from the Bible.



**Bob and Richard trying to make a point to Jim and Albert**

He presented some thoughts that were new to many people there.

Sherman shared that in Genesis 1:14 the Hebrew word מועֵדָה (*mow`ed* - Strong's number 4150) that was translated "seasons" can be translated "appointed time" or feast days. Sherman said "the feast days began at creation." [Editor's note: Of the 223 times *mow`ed* is used, it is translated "congregation" 150 times and "seasons" thirteen times.]

Sherman shared that Abraham was said to have kept God's statutes. God said, "Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws." (Genesis 26:5) Sherman said that God's statutes include the feast days, and therefore Abraham kept the feast days. He said that Abraham left his homeland on the 14th day of the month Abib, otherwise known as the Passover. He shared Exodus 12:40-41 to verify this. "Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years. And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt."

Sherman handed out a copy of his study to everyone so they could take it home and study it more thoroughly for themselves.

After Sherman's study David Clayton shared a study presenting reasons against keeping the feasts. True to his opening discourse, David presented the subject in a different way than most would approach it. He shared some principles behind why God had given the feasts, and some spiritual lessons they contain. He shared how people can get caught up with righteousness by works, rather than righteousness by faith. He demonstrated the danger of being one who

believes that he can add something to his salvation by doing a particular set of works.

He also presented some ideas why he thought Christians were no longer obligated to keep the feasts. He shared the verses in Colossians 2:16-17 stating that the feasts are a "shadow of things to come." David shared the context of these verses showing that they must be referring to the feast days.

He shared in part; "And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words.... Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." (Colossians 2:4-8) The context of Paul's statement in verses 16 and 17 is a warning to Gentiles of people who would try to deceive them by tradition and the rudiments of this world.

Paul wrote, "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an *holyday*, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ." (Colossians 2:16, 17) The Greek word εορτη that was translated "holyday" is used 27 times in the New Testament, and 26 times it is translated "feast," having direct reference to the feast days in every case. Paul says that these feasts were shadows of things to come.

Paul goes on to write, "Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances." (Colossians 2:20) Paul directs our minds heavenward to the reality which the shadows represented. He wrote, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." (Colossians 3:1-3)

David's presentation was very thought provoking. During the discussion many questions were put to David and Sherman, and others shared their thoughts on the subject. It went very well. The general consensus was that Christians are not required by God to keep the feasts, but that there is no harm in doing so for those who wish to do it. Yet there is a danger in believing that by keeping the feasts we merit salvation, or by not keeping the feasts we will be lost.

Again we came to a consensus that we should publish the Bible study David shared in *Old Paths*. This was not a vote as to whose presentation was right, but a decision to print it.



**More discussions outside**

## Sacred Name

Monday morning we examined whether it was necessary to use God's sacred name in our worship. Unfortunately, we were not able to get a speaker to present in favor of the sacred name, so I used the fifty minutes to read an eight page article entitled "Let's not break the third commandment," written by Rabbi Moshe Koniuchowsky. In the article he made reference to many verses but very few were included, so we also read each verse that was referenced. This reading took up the entire fifty minutes.

The article stated that after God revealed His name to Moses "The Jewish leaders adapted a pagan practice found in Babylon known as ineffability. The pagans gave false reverence and respect to pagan mighty ones such as Marduk and Baal by refusing to use their real names and by substituting titles to show these false deities a form of perverted honor. Even in Egypt, the name of Osiris was said and taught to be ineffable. Ineffable means unspeakable. As an example, Baal the great sky deity was first called Lord-Gad and was the Babylonian god of good fortune and luck. Thus was born Baal-Gad or in English Lord-God."

The article endeavored to trace the use of the name Jesus to pagan gods. It stated, "When translated into Greek, Isis becomes Iesus which becomes Jesus in English."

The article continues with an appeal for Christians to use the proper names; YHWH for God the Father, and Yahshua for the Son of God. He wrote, "In the light of this prophetic teaching, one can legitimately question whether a person can even be saved by knowingly calling on the substitute names of pagan deities." Rabbi Moshe obviously sees this as a salvational issue.

The article did a very good job presenting the reasons in favor of using the Sacred Names. One sister said it was the most convincing article on the subject she had ever read.

After this article was read David Clayton presented a Bible study showing why he thought Christians are not required by God to use His sacred name. He shared that historically names had meaning, but today most people use names because they have a nice sound to them. He said, "It isn't the sound of a word that matters, but the idea that the word brings into your mind."

David shared that in the English language everybody knows that Jesus means "Saviour." Yet if you

would go up to most people and ask them what Yahshua means, they would have no idea. When we insist upon a particular sound of a word we are con- tending for a sound, and not the meaning of the word.

David said, "It is legalism to insist on a sound. It is obedience without knowledge." He said, "Witch doctors make the right sounds, and the right amount of turns and motions with the hands, and something happens—their god hears them. Let's not let our worship for God come down to that level."



### Another "think-tank" at work!

David admitted, "I think it was wrong for the translators to leave out the proper names of God." He went on, "I don't have a problem with those who wish to use the sacred names, but I do have a problem with those who insist on using the name as salvational." He explained, "In English the only word we have for deity is God. There are many English words that have strange roots, but it is the meaning of the word that is important."

David brought out that the article stated, "The point is that when you walk around your own home and have your kids say HEY YOU! or YO POPS! to gain your personal attention, after a short while you no doubt would be fed up with that irreverent behavior and justifiably so." David said, "How many of you in your home have your children call you by your first name? Daddy or Father is more respectable than using the first name. It has reference to a close personal relationship. If my children began calling me David, I would wonder if there was something wrong with our relationship."

David shared many verses where it is clear that God's name is representative of His character. Here

are some of the verses he shared: Revelation 14:1; 3:12; 7:1-4; Hebrews 8:10; John 17:6, 26.

David brought out that the article stated, “In John 17:26 our Messiah openly declares that He was obedient to His Father by re-instituting, through divine revelation, the covenant Name of YHWH that had been lost through ineffability.” John 17:26 reads, “And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.” Christ came to manifest the character of His Father. This verse says that Christ declared unto His disciples His Father’s name *so that* the Father’s love might be in them. It is through a revelation of God’s character of love that enables that love to dwell in His disciples. This verse would make no sense if it were referring to the pronunciation of a name, for pronouncing that name correctly would in no way enable the Father’s love to dwell in His disciples. Also, there is not a single verse in the Greek New Testament where the divine name, YHWH, is used by either Christ or the apostles.

John wrote, “No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.” (John 1:18) Christ came to declare His Father, not to explain to Hebrews how to pronounce His Father’s name. Jesus came to reveal His Father’s character to a world that knew Him not. John also wrote, “And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true.” (1 John 5:20) Christ came to reveal His Father’s character so that we might know what He is like and have a close personal relationship with Him.

David’s presentation went very well. I learned several new things I had not considered before. After his presentation we took an hour and a half for everyone to present their thoughts on the matter and to ask questions. Unfortunately there was nobody there who maintained that Christians must use God’s “sacred name,” so we were not able to ask questions or get feedback from them, yet we still had a very good discussion time. Again we came to the consensus that we should print David’s study in *Old Paths*.

## **The Sanctuary**

On Monday afternoon we had a discussion on the sanctuary. David Clayton led out in presenting some very interesting concepts from the Bible on the two-apartment sanctuary in heaven, and the investigative judgment. We examined the necessity of

having a correct view of the sanctuary in heaven and how it applies to our Christian experience.

One thing I learned was the fact that Paul, in the book of Hebrews, made it very clear that there is a two-apartment sanctuary in heaven. In Hebrews chapter nine Paul described each apartment and applied a particular word to each. This is very important to notice because, later in this chapter and in the rest of the book of Hebrews, Paul used these same words to describe the sanctuary in heaven.

Please take particular notice of the Greek words Paul used in the following verses.

Paul wrote, “Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly *sanctuary* [Greek: *αγιον*—*hagion*]. For there was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the shewbread; which is called the *sanctuary* [Greek: *αγια*—*hagia*]. And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the *Holiest of all* [Greek: *αγια αγιον*—*hagia hagion*]; Which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron’s rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant.” (Hebrews 9:1-4)

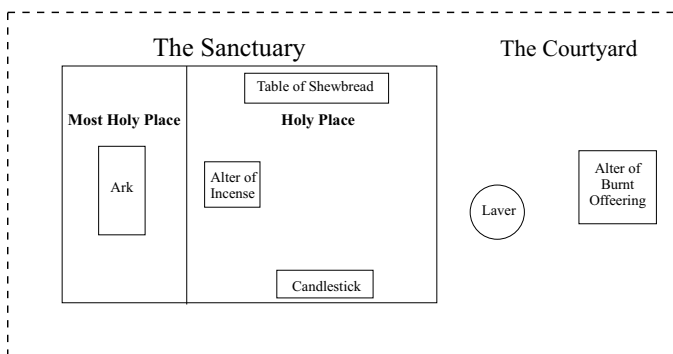
Paul was a learned man and he was very particular in his use of words. In verse one Paul said that there was a sanctuary on this earth, and he called it *hagion*. That is the Greek word Paul used to describe the entire sanctuary. This would be equivalent to our English word “sanctuary.” In verse two Paul went on to describe the first apartment of the sanctuary, even describing the furniture in this apartment, and called it *hagia*. This is the Greek word Paul used to describe the first apartment, or the holy place of the sanctuary. This is equivalent to our English term “holy place.”

Paul didn’t stop here. He went on to describe the second apartment of the sanctuary, describing the furniture in this apartment, calling it *hagia hagion*. This is the Greek term Paul used to describe the second apartment, or the most holy place. This is equivalent to our English term “most holy place.” The Greek term, *hagia hagion*, which Paul used to describe the most holy place, is not found in any other verse in the New Testament. Hebrews 9:3 is the only verse that uses the Greek term *hagia hagion* which is equivalent to our English term “most holy place.” This is very important to understand because there are certain places in the King James Bible where the translators translated the Greek word *hagia* “the holiest of all,” or “the holiest,” yet Paul used the Greek word *hagia* to

refer to “the holy place” and never to “the most holy place.”

Unfortunately you will not be able to verify this fact by using the *Strong’s Concordance*. If you look these words up in the *Strong’s Concordance* it will give you only one Greek word—*αγιον* or *hagion*—from which each of these terms—“sanctuary,” “the holy place,” “Holiest of all”—were translated. But if you look each of these verses up in an Interlinear Greek-English Bible you will be able to see how Paul used the different Greek words. In English there are only a few Bible translations that translated these terms correctly. The *Young’s Literal Translation*, the *New American Standard Bible*, and the *American Standard Version* all translate these words correctly in the book of Hebrews.

Another fact that should be noticed is Paul used the term “after the second veil” to describe the position of the most holy place. Just as Paul never used the term “most holy place” in any other verse in the Bible, he also never used the term “after the second veil,” or “second veil,” in any other verse in the Bible. This is the only verse in the entire New Testament where you will find the Greek terms that mean “second veil,” and “most holy place.” There are other verses where Paul used the terms, “within the veil,” and “through the veil,” but in no other verse did he use “the second veil.” It is logical to conclude that the other two times Paul used the word “veil” he was referring to the veil that separated the courtyard from the holy place of the sanctuary, rather than “the second veil” that separated the most holy place from the holy place. Please see the diagram below.



## The Tabernacle

Now, you may ask, “Why is this important?” It is important because Paul wrote in Hebrews that when Christ ascended to heaven He entered into “the holy place” of the heavenly sanctuary. Yet if we just accept the way many Bible versions read we would think that Christ entered into “the most holy place” of the heavenly sanctuary as soon as He ascended. However, Paul plainly stated in the original Greek that Christ entered into the “holy place” at this time. If Christ had entered into “the most holy place” at His resurrection the cleansing of the sanctuary, and the day of atonement, would have begun at the resurrection rather than at the end of the 2300 days prophesied by Daniel the prophet.

Many Christians believe that there is no need for a cleansing of the sanctuary in heaven, yet Paul wrote, “It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.” (Hebrews 9:23) Paul made it very clear that it was necessary for the heavenly sanctuary to be purified or cleansed.

## Bible Prophecy

Later that day Doug Goslin led out in a discussion on prophecy. He shared some thoughts on America in prophecy in Revelation 13. Much of it was similar to what most of us have learned about this prophecy, but one aspect was different. He shared his understanding that the forty-two months of Revelation 13 were to take place after the beast’s deadly wound was healed.

Here are the verses: “And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast. And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him? And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months.” (Revelation 13:3-5)

To our understanding the deadly wound of the papacy was healed in 1929, so for the 42 months to begin sometime after that would mean that they cannot be prophetic days, or 1260 years, but literal days, or three and half years. This was a new concept for many. Most of us seemed to retain the pioneer understanding of the forty-two months as being in the past. We had an interesting discussion on the matter, and agreed that we do not know all there is to know about the

prophecies, so we must be open to examine them more thoroughly and ask God for more light.

## Proper Christian Music

The following day Malcolm McCrillis shared some things about proper Christian music. He shared portions of a video presenting the differences between an emphasis on the second and fourth beat of a four-four time song verses the emphasis on the first and third beat in the music. It was presented that if the emphasis is placed upon the first and the third beat in a song, the effect it has upon your body is similar to a marching song. As an example, "Onward Christian soldiers, marching as to war." That song places the emphasis on the first and third beats and makes you feel like marching. It was presented that if the emphasis is placed upon the second and fourth beat that it will make your body feel like dancing.

Also the importance of having the proper balance between melody, rhythm, and harmony were discussed.

Malcolm shared some portions of a video entitled "Are you Ready for Church?" that showed some music being played at a Seventh-day Adventist camp meeting in Oregon and then at certain Seventh-day Adventist churches elsewhere. It was very similar to a Rock and Roll concert, quite disturbing to our understanding of what church should be like.

Malcolm discussed the necessity of having proper Christian music, and warned us against the danger of improper "Christian" music. An emphasis was placed on the thought that one small compromise by the believer would lead to another, and then another, till the standard in

music moves from unquestionable to questionable, to finally the worldly.

The issue was presented with the idea that music standards are not merely subjective, but rather objective. The issue is not what I or others think is fine, but



Bessie & Perry

rather what does the Lord think. As a theme for his presentation, Malcolm shared the importance of "Proving what is *acceptable unto the Lord.*" (Ephesians 5:10)

We had a very interesting discussion on the subject. At times it got a little spirited, but the Lord gave each of us a Christian heart to deal with one another in love. We learned many things about music and walked away with some interesting thoughts on how to identify good Christian music.

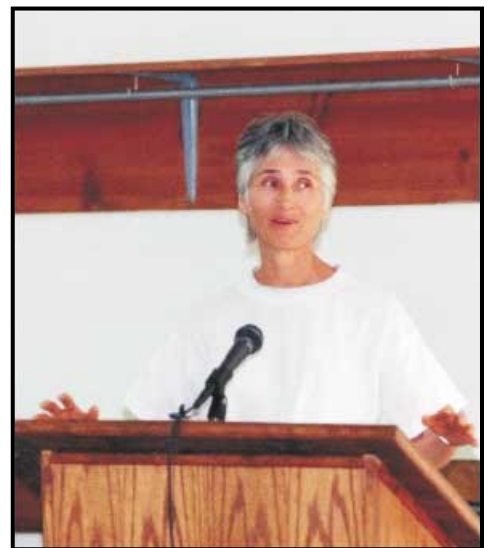
## Testimonies

The Bible conference ended with some very moving testimonies. Many shared their appreciation for being able to attend the Bible conference and learn so many new things. I personally appreciated being able to learn new concepts and ideas on all the subjects that were presented.

As noted earlier, within the next few months we

will be printing in *Old Paths* some of the studies that were presented at the Bible conference. Cassette tapes are available for most of the meetings. For information on the tapes currently available and the cost, you may contact The New Burnside SDA Home Church, 1210 Birdwell Road, New Burnside, Illinois 62922. You may also call: (618) 996-2525 and ask for Crystal. The e-mail address is: [mercera@accessus.net](mailto:mercera@accessus.net).

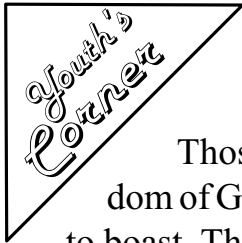
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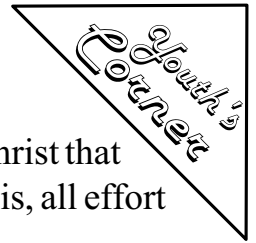
Sister Brown sharing

**"For all the law is fulfilled in one word, *even* in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."**  
(Galatians 5:14)





# Repentance a Gift of God



Those who are saved in the kingdom of God will have nothing of which to boast. The praise and the glory will all belong to God, and to him it will all be given. Sometimes young people who really desire to be children of God, are putting their trust in something besides the blood of Christ. They have faith in what they themselves can do. "I have a great deal to do before I can come to Jesus," they say. "When I have done all that I can do, then I will go to him for help." They think that when they have done what they can do to save their souls, Jesus will supply what is lacking, giving the finishing touches to their salvation.

But no one can be strong in God until he acknowledges his helplessness, and comes to Christ as the only one who can save him from the power of sin.

In Egypt the Israelites were required to sprinkle the lintels of their doors with the blood of a slain lamb, that when the angel of death went through the land, he might pass over their homes. But if, instead of performing this simple act of faith, they had barricaded the doors, taking every precaution to keep the destroying angel out, their efforts would have been in vain; for they would have testified to their unbelief. The blood on the lintel was enough. It secured the life of the firstborn. So

it is today. It is the blood of Christ that cleanses from sin. Without this, all effort to gain salvation is in vain.

It is the work of the sinner to accept Christ as his righteousness. Thus he is reconciled to God. Only through faith in Christ can the heart be made holy. Many think that repentance is a work which men must carry forward themselves before they can come to Christ. They think that they have something to do before they can find Christ a mediator in their behalf. It is true that there must be repentance before there is pardon; but the sinner must come to Christ before he can find repentance. It is the grace of Christ that strengthens and enlightens the soul, making repentance possible.

Peter has made this matter clear. He says of Christ, "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." Repentance is as certainly the gift of Christ as is forgiveness. He whom God pardons he first makes penitent. Repentance can not be found without Christ. From him comes the grace of contrition, as well as the gift of pardon. Only through his atoning blood can either be obtained.

(Mrs. Ellen G. White - *Youth's Instructor*, March 26, 1903)

## Why do the leaves fall?

As days get shorter and nights get colder, hardwood trees undergo changes that help prepare them for winter. During the summer, leaves collect light and make food for the plant. Leaves also give off or transpire water in a process that helps

pull water from the soil into the roots, up to where it is needed in the tree.

In winter, the ground often freezes and halts the transport of water into the roots. If leaves remained on the tree, the leaves would continue to lose moisture

into the air without any way to replace the water being lost. Instead, many trees and plants drop their leaves for the winter to keep from drying out. (Reprinted from *WV Nongame Wildlife & Natural Heritage News*, Fall 1999, p. 1)

## A Special Prayer Request, From page 1

English vernacular is, “devastated” nor any other word or words could express the anguish upon the heart of Charmaine, Heidi, or myself as we waited for word from the surgeon.

Our ordeal began on the first of October this year. Hans, our seventeen-year-old son got up feeling fine. Within a few hours his neck was in pain and he quickly started to become paralyzed below the neck. He was rushed to a trauma center in Charleston, West Virginia where the problem was discovered. A tumor was *inside* his spinal cord running from the top of his fourth cervical to the bottom of his sixth cervical vertebrae. After several MRI scans and other tests on Friday afternoon and Sabbath, he went into surgery early Sunday morning.

The partial paralysis occurred when the tumor began to bleed. By God’s grace, the bleeding did not continue past a fatal point. Before surgery we were kindly, but frankly warned of the seriousness of the surgery. The partial paralysis might not be relieved. In fact, the paralysis could become complete and total. Hans could lose his ability to breathe and be forced to have a ventilator breathe for whatever would be the rest of his life. It was with much prayer and hope that we waited for word from the surgeon

Sabbath afternoon, the day before the surgery, we followed the counsel given in James 5:14, 15 and humbly asked God to honor His word. Hans’ courage and faith was strong, trusting in his Lord Jesus Christ knowing that “all things work together for good to them that love God.” (Romans 8:28)

Just before taking Hans in the operating room to be anesthetized, we had one last prayer and wished Hans, and all those involved, God’s blessings.

The surgery had two goals: First, to remove as much of the tumor as possible without paralyzing Hans and second, to ease some of the pressure on his spinal cord. Within these goals, the surgery was successful. About three fourths of the tumor was removed. The pathology report from John Hopkins is challenging, but we are hopeful in the Lord knowing that He know best. Hans’ surgeon, Dr. Sherry Apple, is credited to be one of the best neurosurgeons in the eastern part of the country. She was very kind, helpful, and even a little humorous where it could help. We thank the Lord that He allowed her to be Hans’ surgeon.

Shortly after Hans was moved to the recovery room we received word that he was breathing on his own. Later, as they moved Hans through the hallway into the neuro ICU, my eyes made contact with his. I gave him the “thumbs up” sign. Words cannot express my heart’s joy as I saw him able to return the sign back to me!

Hans was in neuro ICU till Monday evening and then moved onto the regular floor since he was doing well. The next day he went to rehab to learn to walk and do the normal things of life. As noted before, the doctors told us before the surgery that Hans might never walk or breathe on his own after the surgery. Also, the possibility of not coming out of the surgery at all was there. However, God had other plans. Few things are faster than the “Adventist grapevine” (especially with e-mail). Word quickly spread of our situation and I know that literally thousands of people were praying for Hans.

Hans’ rehabilitation was supposed to take ten days. This was not to totally rehabilitate Hans as before, but to get him started where he could walk some and do most normal functions, at least with a minimum of help. With a great personal effort and the help of God, Hans was able to achieve that goal in five days. We came home the evening of October 13 with Hans using a cane to aid his walking. He is still not real steady in many things, but the progress has been really great. He is eating well and able to rest. He is still very sore in the back of his neck due to the incision. Charmaine, Heidi, and I humbly ask you to pray for Hans and the rest of us as well. We are quite tired. Twelve nights sleeping (or rather not sleeping) in a hospital chair, when coupled with the stress of the matter, has taken its toll. We went from having a fairly normal child on Friday morning to one in major surgery less than forty-eight hours later. However, we praise God for His faithfulness and goodness to us.

This experience, while being very traumatic, has also been a blessing to us. Our family has learned to pray as never before. In fact, I must admit that I was ashamed of myself. I realized that I had never wept and prayed for a sinner like I had for Hans. Here I was so concerned about Hans’ temporal physical well-being but not as concerned about the eternal well-being of souls for whom Christ died! We have learned to appreciate the sufferings of others as never before. We have begun to look for the hand of God working in small ways as never before. Hans is my “only begotten son.” The thoughts of perhaps losing him horrified

me. In a small way, I felt I was understanding what the Father must have felt when His “only begotten Son” was on the cross!

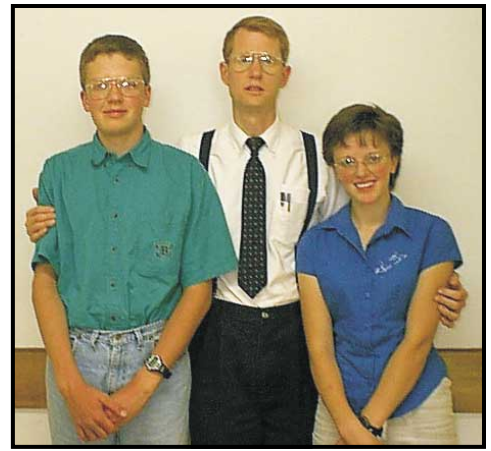
We praise God for His goodness also in allowing Hans to be so calm and contented through this whole ordeal. His contentment would put the Carnation cows to shame! I am so thankful that Hans has had no bitterness nor anger towards God in any manner; but only thankfulness for God’s goodness.

Charmaine, though in poor health herself, seemed to receive special strength from the Lord. In the hospital, she stood as a rock for me and the rest of the family. Her loving devotion for her son was very beautiful to behold. When at times we received discouraging news from the doctors, she was able to rise above the despair and draw me with her. Hans’ sister Heidi has grown spiritually strong in leaps and bounds during this experience. Her cheerfulness and encouragement was invaluable to me and her mother. At times, when I wondered if I could hold up, she was used of the Lord in a special way.

At the beginning of this article I quoted from Dr. Ben Carson’s book, *Gifted Hands*. By providence I believe, Charmaine bought a copy of his recent book, *The Big Picture* a few months ago for me. I found it as interesting as when I heard Dr. Carson speak at a camp meeting several years ago. Shortly thereafter, I was in a Bible book store and noticed his first book *Gifted Hands*. I had wanted to read the book for a long time and now I had the interest renewed and I purchased the book. Reading these books and the miraculous stories of God’s interventions into the lives of people who seemed to have no hope was inspiring to me, and was later to be a source of strength to me.

I will be taking some time off from work to help with and be with Hans at this time. Please excuse me if my mail becomes slow or stops altogether. If you need something from the ministry, please contact Lynnford. If I owe you a letter, please understand that

I will not be able to work on back mail, but you may contact Lynn for that also if it is a matter he can help with. Lynn says he will be glad to help you, but be patient with him as his work load



**Hans with his dad and sister at the camp meeting**

is of course increased because of his helping take some of my load at this time. Lynn, and all our Smyrna family who have helped out so much and been such a support, have truly fulfilled the command of Galatians 6:2, “Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.”

Again, to all who have been praying, thanks a lot and please keep it up. If you have sent a card or help that has not been acknowledged, please forgive our slowness. All of your thoughts and prayers have been greatly appreciated. For those who are just now finding out about Hans, please pray for him and us daily. By God’s grace we have won some battles, but we are still engaged in a fearful war against this illness. We claim God’s promise, “Them that honour me I will honour.” Please claim this and other Bible promises with us.

When you pray for us, please also remember two other very special brothers who are having health problems. Bob Talios and Perry Santaloci would greatly appreciate your prayers at this time.

*Allen Stump (Psalm 34:1)*


## Christmas Card Tracts

The Christmas season will soon be here. Most of the world will be spending money for gifts and decorations. Some will attempt to ignore it because of its pagan ties. We believe that this is a time of year when many hearts are open to receive the gospel who would never listen any other time. We have published a tract in the form of a Christmas card. We have found this to

be the easiest tract to share that we have ever seen! While many people will not accept a tract, almost everyone will accept a Christmas card and a season greeting when offered with a sincere smile!

The first two paragraphs of the tract are taken from a section of the *Adventist Home* entitled, “Christmas is Coming.” This is followed by a short Bible study on God’s love in giving His only begotten Son for our sins. The tract

ends with an appeal to the reader to give their life to the Lord and an offer for a free copy of *Steps to Christ (Shelter in the Storm* version).

The cost of production and mailing is \$7.50/100. Envelopes are available for mailing. Those interested should let us know as soon as possible so it will enable us to get your cards to you before the season starts. 

# Reflections of Camp Meeting

By Malcolm McCrillis

My reflections of the September 1999 camp meeting are the kind that leave a lasting impression on the brain and soul of an individual. The environment, the church (people) and the messages combined to emphasize God's great and marvelous love for His created beings.

The setting was a large country location in southern Illinois. Our hosts were the Mercers and their relationship to the guests reminded me of 1 Peter 4:9-10 "Use hospitality one to another without grudging. As every man hath received the gift, *even so* minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." I believe every attendee can unite their voices with a big thank you. We want to remember Randall, Lucy, and Blanca for all the effort put forth to insure the comfort and security (dogs) of those who attended.


As the church arrived we recognized old familiar faces and many new faces, all of who are searching for truth that will strengthen them for the last events preceding Christ's return for His faithful children.

Some of the geographical areas represented were, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Florida, Georgia, Alabama, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan,

Mississippi, North Carolina, Ohio, South Carolina, Tennessee, Utah, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and we don't want to forget our friends from Jamaica who were so much a part of the spiritual environment of this gathering.

There were some who were not able to make it for one reason or another, and we would like to say you were missed. We can only hope and pray that we will all be united in that great and final convocation after which we will never be separated again.

The spiritual food was very nourishing and at the conclusion we were filled and ready to share the knowledge gained from this experience.

It may be, with the type of laws that are being passed in Washington, D.C. restricting our freedoms in the areas of expression, that we will be unable to have another gathering of this type. If so we must all take an uncompromising stand in our respective geographical areas as did Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, and refuse to bow to any false gods or images of those gods. May the one and only true God of heaven grant us the grace to subject ourselves to His commands of love. 

## Camp Meeting Photographs



**Eager Learners**



**The Ever Intense David**



**The "Three Mousketeers"**



**Esther playing for Brother Bob**



**Mac & Sandy**

**"I will sing  
unto the LORD,  
because he hath  
dealt bountifully  
with me."  
(Psalms 13:6)**



**Angel playing  
a Spanish song**



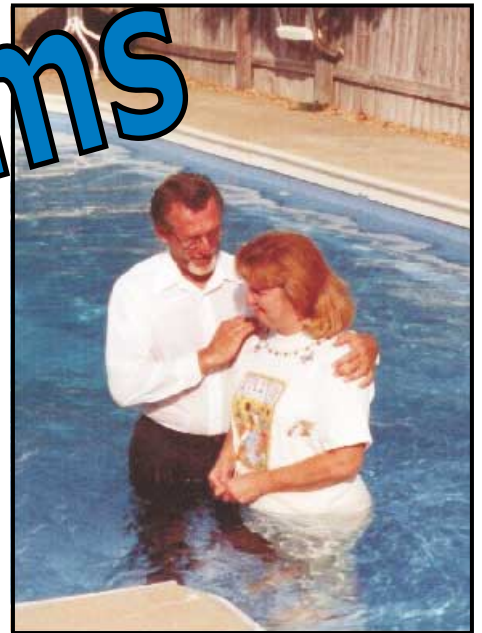
**David & Silvia Stickney**



**Jennifer, Terri, & Doug  
Praising God in Song**

# Baptisms

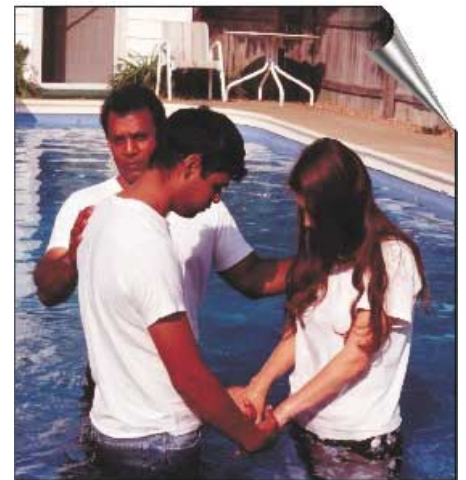
Jennifer being baptized by Randall



**Donna renewing her experience**



**Jennifer and Traci after their dedication to the Lord**



**Joe, Trevis, and Karen**



**Group picture from Randall's roof**



**Friends are forever**



**Ben & Bob discussing the finer points of theology**



**Leon giving a testimony**

**Many said that this was the best camp meeting yet!**



**Bessie enjoyed it all!**



**Albert telling it like it is!**



**Happy Campers!**

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**Even the haircuts were fun**



**The Quartet**

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