

Grace News Today



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“Faith Alone in Christ Alone”

We are grateful to our Heavenly Father for bringing you into our ministry. Each of you provide an invaluable link to the field where the action is taking place. When our soldiers go to the front lines in Iraq, they are supported by a supply chain, and so it is with the Christian warrior. The missionary goes to the battle lines of the angelic conflict, but behind him is another indispensable group of missionaries - You! You supply logistical and tactical support such as prayer, funds, time, talent, ideas, and encouragement. The soldiers who provide these necessary accouterments may not be as visible as the one with the boots on, but he is no less important, no less a soldier. So we want to take this time to thank you, our missionary corps, for your invaluable efforts as we go forth proclaiming the grace gospel of salvation through faith alone in Christ alone.

EVERYONE IS DRAFTED INTO THE LORD’S ARMY

Not everyone signs up for duty, but we are all inducted into the body of Christ the moment we are born-again. We are each given a spiritual gift whether we use it or not. As we grow in knowledge of the truth of God’s Word, we become aware of our position in the ranks, and whether it be as a teacher, preacher, administrator, or valiant prayer warrior, each function is used by the Lord to further His plan. And as we have seen in the Scriptures, He can even use the unwilling to bring about His results. All of us, as Colonel R.B. Thieme, Jr. has said many times, are in full time Christian service whether we want to be or not! Examples can be seen in surprising places! An analogy can even be drawn from studying the Working Ant which has two stomachs. One is for his own sustenance and the second is to feed other ants, perhaps ants who have come under attack by the Slave-Making ants! This emergency supply of food just might revive a few thousand fallen soldiers whose duty it is to protect the Queen’s eggs which become plunder for the invading army. Once they hatch, those ants become their slaves for life! All jobs are important!

Even in the world of ants, some jobs are lowly. For instance, some have the chore of taking out the trash, as there’s lots of preparation before they can eat the food they gather, so there’s lots to clean up as well. Only in the human realm do people look around to see if someone else is doing something more noteworthy. But in the spiritual realm, we who have trusted in Christ (John 3:16) learn to joyfully accept the role to which God has assigned us. Why? Because we have been born into a new hope of a life which is everlasting. With this new hope comes new responsibility as team members in the body of Christ.

So we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another (Romans 12:5).

Some are blessed with the gift to be pastor-teachers, and with this gift comes a great desire to dig into God’s Word and serve it up in a palatable form to the congregation. Others are given the gift of evangelism, and with this gift comes the desire to tell fellow members of the human race that there is One God who is greater than all of us, who sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to make a way for us to share eternal life with Him. What blessed hope for a lost and dying world.

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Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead (I Pet 1:3).

We are not all given the privilege of a communication gift, but God can certainly use each one of us in various ways. You might say that those who are not on the front lines are like the ant with two stomachs—believers who spiritually nourish and back up other believers who are struggling to get up the hill.

We are fellow workers for Christ! Those who sit at home and stuff envelopes so that others can get their publications or tape recordings on time are a vital link. There may be some who cannot even do that much, physically, but you can do so much through prayer which is, without doubt, the most desired and sought after commodity from those on the front line who battle unfamiliar weather, food, fatigue, danger, foreign language, customs, terrain, and the attempts of Satan to keep us from planting the flag of truth on foreign land.

No matter what you do, there are no small jobs in God's Army. We are all in full-time Christian Service!

In His Garden of Grace,

The G.E.M. Newsletter Team

WORD OF ENCOURAGEMENT

Just as you do not know the path of the wind and how bones are formed in the womb of the pregnant woman, ***so you do not know the activities of God*** (Ecclesiastes 11:5).

For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts higher than your thoughts (Isaiah 55:9).

Ironically, when a male and a female gamete fuse together in a woman's womb, the result of the union is magnificent, known to us as an embryo! If you were to extract this tiny embryo from the womb and examine it under a high-powered microscope, you most certainly will not see a human form—not even one tiny bone! Aha! Amazingly, that crystal-like substance contains the entire anatomical structure of a human being—the eyes, nose, ear canals, liver, lungs, kidneys, bones, and heart! Yes heart too—the blood-pumping machine! That's not all! It contains all genetic codes of its parents as well as the Adamic gene—the Sin Nature. But the mystery of it all is that they are all there—intact! A mystery, isn't it? Yes, a mystery to us—but not to the God of mystery! "Just as you do not know...how bones are formed in the womb of the pregnant woman, so you do not know the activities of [our Awesome] God."

Within a period of nine months or so, bang a miracle—the handiwork of God—and we behold a bouncing baby as it emerges in all its glory! What an Awesome God! But it takes time! It takes time for God to take an embryo through the process of metamorphosis before He can put a smile on our face by giving us this bundle of joy! That's the pattern of our spiritual journey—first, suffering, then metamorphosis, then blessing from on high!

[Count] it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let [pregnancy] endurance have its perfect result [nine months of gestation], that you may be perfect and [equipped in all ways] lacking in nothing (James 1:2-4).

No question about it, none of us, no matter what level of intelligence, has a clue as to what God is doing in our lives. No one! But you can rest assured that the same God, whose work is always perfect, who forms the baby in its mother's womb, knows exactly what He is doing in your life. He knows every suffering that you are facing as a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. He knows how to convert every suffering into an exceedingly abundant blessing as long you are on course—on heaven's highway—heaven-minded—consistently taking in His Word and aptly applying it to every circumstance of your life!

What this all boils down to is the timeless principle that the very God who has a monopoly on forming a living, breathing, human being out of a crystal-like substance is the same God who can convert your seemingly hopeless situation into a tapestry of marvelous results. That's a Scriptural fact!

And we know [the question is do you really know?] that God causes [blends] **all things** to work together for good to those **who love** God [heavenly-minded believers] to those who are called according to His purpose (Romans 8:28).

Job, the believer who holds the record on suffering, assured himself of this timeless truth. This was Job's solace in the heat of his colossal suffering, and it should be yours too:

But He [God] knows [what manner of suffering has befallen me]; when He has tried me [when He has finished blending all things together for His glory, He shall bring me] forth as gold (Job 23:10). For the eyes of the Lord [His Radar] move to and fro throughout the earth that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His...(II Chronicles 16:9).

Most assuredly, a hopeless situation is merely a myth—nonexistence!

For there is hope for a tree, when it is cut down, that it will sprout again, and its shoots will not fail. Though its roots grow old in the ground, and its stumps die in the dry soil, at the scent of water it will flourish and put forth sprigs like a plant (Job 14:7-9).

And so always remember that God is the source of 'the scent of water'; He will water your dead stumps at the right time.

For Himself has said, 'I WILL NEVER DESERT YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU (Hebrews 13:5b).

Fear not, for you will not be put to shame; neither feel humiliated, for you will not be disgraced; but you will forget the shame of your youth, and the reproach of your widowhood you will remember no more...for the mountains may be removed and the hills may shake, but My lovingkindness will not be removed from you (Isaiah 54:4-10).

As you surf wave after wave of suffering, anchor your soul on these infallible promises:

Do not fear, for I am with you; Do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. *I will strengthen you, surely I will help you, Surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand* (Isaiah 41:10).

When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; And through the rivers, they will not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be scorched, nor will the flame burn you. For I am the LORD your God (Isaiah 43:2, 3a).

...Has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken will He not make it good? (Numbers 23:19).

...WEeping MAY LAST FOR THE NIGHT, BUT A SHOUT OF JOY COMES IN THE MORNING (Psalm 30:5).

And so my friend do not be discouraged; but keep on trusting the very God who never fails us.

FILLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT: A PREREQUISITE FOR STUDYING GOD'S WORD

In preparation for our study, you may wish to pause for a moment and empty your soul of all filthiness by identifying and confessing to God any sin that could hinder the ministry of God the Holy Spirit from illuminating your mind:

Therefore putting aside all filthiness [I John 1:9], and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your [life] (James 1:21).

Dear Heavenly Father,

We humbly approach Your throne of grace with praise, gratitude, and thanksgiving. We praise You because You are the Most High God, and our souls are saturated with gratitude for Your infinite love, compassion, and grace toward us. We thank You for Your faithfulness in every sense of the word. Thank You for our so great salvation. We also thank You for the provision of sound Bible teaching and the relentless ministry of the Holy Spirit who makes Your Truth perspicuous to us.

Father, please “Open [our] eyes that [we] may behold Wonderful things from Thy [infallible Word]” (Psalm 119:18). And may the truth of Your Word take our ‘every thought captive to the obedience of our Lord Jesus Christ. That our understanding of You will cause us to reverence Your Majesty and make us have an unquenchable thirst to fulfill Your plan for our lives. We lift our prayer in the name of the One who loved us and offered His life as a substitute for us, the King of kings, Lord of lords, our Savior Jesus Christ in whose name we pray.

Amen.

DOCTRINE OF GRACE

An Overview of God’s Word –

Lesson 2

THE BLAZING FURNACE

Our last volume ended with a *remarkable scene* witnessed by King Nebuchadnezzar! Three Jewish believers Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego had just refused to bow down and worship the king in spite of the threat that they would be thrown into a blazing furnace. Their refusal to succumb to the king’s command filled Nebuchadnezzar with anger:

...And his facial expression was altered toward Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego. He answered by giving orders to heat the furnace seven times more than it was usually heated (Daniel 3:19).

They were hurled into the flames, but our Father who controls every situation surrounding a believer did not forsake them; He was in the inferno with them! What an Awesome God!

Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astounded and stood up in haste; he responded and said to his officials, ‘Was it not three men we cast bound into the midst of the fire?’ Look! I see four men loosed and walking about in the midst of the fire without harm... Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the door of the furnace of blazing fire; he responded and said, ‘Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, come out, you servants of the Most High God and come here!’ Then Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego came out of the midst of the fire (Daniel 3:24-26).

In Daniel 3:27, we see that their hair wasn’t even singed, nor were their clothes scorched; they didn’t even smell of smoke! Nebuchadnezzar responded and said:

Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, who has sent His angel and delivered His servants who put their trust in Him, violating the king's command, and yielded up their bodies so as not to serve or worship any god except their own God (Daniel 3:28).

GLORIFICATION OF GOD

We should never lose sight of the fact that God is keeping us alive for one reason and one reason only—His glorification. But, if we are not fulfilling this objective, regardless of our reasons or excuses, we are the sorriest believers on planet earth! Without a change of direction, we “*will shrink away from Him in shame at His coming*” (I John 2:28b). The Scripture states that loser believers shall be ‘saved as through fire’ (I Corinthians 3:15).

These three men were not loser believers for they were bent on honoring God even at the expense of their own lives. What followed was the fruit of their defiance, an opportunity for King Nebuchadnezzar to acknowledge their God as the Sovereign One.

Therefore, I [Nebuchadnezzar] make a decree that any people, nation or tongue that speaks anything offensive against the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego shall be torn limb from limb and their houses reduced to a rubbish heap, inasmuch as there is no other god who is able to deliver in this way (Daniel 3:29).

What an extraordinary testimony! God’s name was proclaimed throughout the kingdom and beyond because these believers knew God and applied God’s Word without wavering! In the reign of Darius, there was a similar scenario when Daniel defied the law resulting in Darius proclaiming throughout the world that Daniel’s God is the Eternal God who possesses the attributes of sovereignty, omnipotence, and immutability.

My God sent His angel and shut the lions’ mouths...and no injury whatsoever was found on him, because he had trusted in his God.... Then Darius the king wrote to all the peoples, nations, and men of every language who were living in all the land: ‘May your peace abound! I make a decree that in all the dominion of my kingdom men are to fear and tremble before the God of Daniel; for He is the living God and enduring forever, and His kingdom is one which will not be destroyed, and His dominion will be forever. He delivers and rescues and performs signs and wonders in heaven and on earth, who has also delivered Daniel from the power of the lions’ (Daniel 6:22-27).

Make no mistake, the way these heroes adjusted to God’s Word would certainly cause embarrassment to many of us if we were to compare our spiritual conditions—especially when we factor in the enormous spiritual advantage we have in the Church Age. A careful scrutiny of their walk with God would compel us to lament:

Wretched [believers] that [we are]! Who will set [us] free from the body of this death? (Romans 7:24).

Our aim is not to idolize these heroes, for they were feeble men like us, and they failed periodically as we do; however, they knew how to use God’s Word effectively and to their advantage. Even when they failed, they knew how to promptly recover and move forward. While the Holy Spirit has recorded their names to spiritually challenge us, the Greatest Hero of all time, Jesus Christ, remains our only Role Model!

And so my friends, the hour has come for us to objectively look at ourselves: “Test [ourselves] to see if [we] are [*measuring up with the truth of God’s Word*]; [let’s] examine [ourselves!]” (II Corinthians 13:5a).

Every time David Livingstone was called upon to pray, he concluded with:

“Let us imitate Christ in all His inimitable perfections.”

from Heroes of the Faith
by Sam Wellman

We should do this without any delay, because we are face-to-face with the danger of becoming losers in time and for all eternity. Satan, our constant foe, appears to have enslaved millions into thinking they are living the spiritual life and with a cache of Bible doctrine in their souls even though they have no application. His banner sale’s pitch declares that doctrine is **legalism**. Many seem to buy into his lie! What a crafty creature he is!!

Satan disguises himself as an angel of light (II Corinthians 11:14)...[Prowling] about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to [enslave] (I Peter 5:8).

Have we become his victims? If so, don't give up for there is still hope, even for Satan's victims! His hard to detect schemes prompted the apostle Paul, under the direction of the Holy Spirit, to issue a command to the Corinthians to examine themselves. His admonition falls upon us in the Church Age all these years later. We should be cognizant of the fact that Satan, in his cunning way, has discovered innumerable techniques of distracting and disarming believers from the spiritual race. Remember he is a genius! And while he is not omniscient, he is superior to us in knowledge. He is way ahead of us in mastering our age—the Church Age. Moreover, he is aware of the historicity, uniqueness, and significance of God's agenda and pulls trick after trick out of his bag to keep us from effectively utilizing the spiritual package designed to shake up his kingdom and to glorify God. His priority is to knock every believer off the track that Christ laid down for us. Whether in the pulpit or in the pew, we ought not to underestimate Satan's resolve! The question we need to ask ourselves is: Has he succeeded in getting us off track? Even if the answer is yes, there's hope!

For there is hope for a tree, when it is cut down, that it will sprout again, and its shoots will not fail. Though its roots grow old in the ground and its stump dies in the dry soil, at the scent of water [of grace] it will flourish and put forth sprigs like a plant (Job 14:7-9).

SATAN'S BASE OF OPERATION—BIBLE-BASED BELIEVERS

The irony is crystal-clear. Show me a camp of believers who are Biblically orthodox, whose aim is to dissect and interpret Scripture using every accurate theological kit available (with the objective of presenting its Truth to others), and I will show you the camp where Satan is headquartered! Our Lord Jesus Christ shed light on this phenomenal truth through the apostle John on the Island of Patmos:

I know where you dwell, where Satan's throne is; and you hold fast My name, and did not deny My faith, even in the days of Antipas, My witness, My faithful one, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells (Revelation 2:13).

The idea of Satan concentrating his war against believers who are executing God's plan was most evident in Satan's response to the seven sons of the Jewish chief priest, Sceva, who were invoking the Lord's name in vain. He said to them:

I recognize Jesus [the God-Man] and I know about Paul [my headquarters are adjacent to his], but who are you (Acts 19:15)?

In other words, his time is best spent waiting in ambush for those who have a passion to accurately interpret, disseminate, and apply the infallible Word of God. No wonder there are such doctrinal divisions among the so-called evangelicals who still hold the flag of doctrine in the Church Age.

Today, Satan has succeeded in getting us to tangle ourselves up in hair-splitting doctrinal matters. Consequently, we find ourselves spending our God-given resources and stamina in researching and defending issues that have no spiritual efficacy, such as 'does Jesus Christ have double or triple righteousness?' What we should really be concerned with is the spiritual significance of the very doctrine that we find ourselves fighting over. Who is behind all of this? Satan, the underhanded one! Are we aware of his modus operandi? Are we familiar with his shrewd method of enslavement? Do we think we can outsmart him without properly wearing God's armor? If he could slam-dunk Adam and Eve in the Garden, we are down-for-the-count apart from the Lord's help.

Satan works in every Christian camp, and he knows the peculiarities of each squadron. For instance, if he knows that *praise and worship* will captivate a particular group, he will distort these so as to become a distraction from real worship—the Word! Just look around, and you will see how far he has gone to promote entertainment in local assemblies. Some end up spending over 85 percent of their resources and devote excess time to this diversion and only about 15 percent is directed toward studying God's Word. No wonder Christianity is losing its direction from following our Savior in our daily lives—no wonder Christianity seems to have fallen apart—no wonder many Christians are not a good testimony to the world—no wonder it is throwing virtual rotten eggs at the church. But, if we fail to let the light of the Savior shine through us for all to see, we deserve this kind of treatment.

This doctrinal exposition is designed to challenge and compel us to mend our ways and adjust to God's grace and justice:

Seek the Lord while He may be found; call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to the Lord, and He will have compassion on him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon (Isaiah 55:6, 7).

We have become so mesmerized with human dynamics that we have lost sight of the spiritual dynamics of the Word of God. Countless numbers have gravitated to various personality traits and to great Bible scholars at the expense of God the Holy Spirit—the Great Illuminator of Scripture. Get it right. There's nothing wrong with seminary preparation. In fact, every communicator of God's Word should seek good, solid training; Scripture demands it! But *always* keep in mind that being an expert in Biblical exegesis is simply a means and not an end in itself. God the Holy Spirit is still the Greatest Teacher of God's Word. It's that simple!

Satan works hard to deceive us into concentrating on the presentation rather than the substance of God's Word. We praise ourselves for innovative delivery, and we have become obsessed with the technicalities of how to live the spiritual life. Some in our camp say it's this way; while others say it's that way or no way at all. Consequently, confusion among the troops has become the end result—exactly what Satan wants! What's wrong in our camp? What's wrong with our spiritual lives? The burden to provide an answer to these questions weighs heavily upon me.

HAS GOD'S WORD LOST ITS POWER?

Why are many believers becoming indifferent to doctrine and saying that Bible doctrine does not work? Why is it a rarity to run into believers who truly reflect the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ? Why is there so much frustration among Bible teachers because their members don't reflect the doctrine they teach? Why are many believers saying that they would prefer doing business with unbelievers over their own fellow believers? Why do we take pleasure in doing the opposite of what God's Word says about not judging, gossiping, maligning or ridiculing other believers? Has God's Word failed? No, it has not! We need to examine ourselves to see what is going on inside our souls. We repeat our standing question: Do we truly know God?

Look around and see what's happening in Christendom. The litmus test of our spiritual condition is measured, in part, by our attitude toward other believers in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others (Philippians 2:3, 4).

Obviously, when we are more concerned about others (like the hero believers of the Old Testament were), we will spend less time in running people down and more time lifting them up in prayer to the throne of grace. That's the epitome of the true Christian way of life! Anything less is the work of the enemy of Christ—not the imitator of God (Ephesians 5:1).

By and large, it seems like modern-day Christendom is not very effective in witnessing for Christ. Why is this? Is it because we lack good Bible teachers? On the contrary, we now have had (and still do) many distinguished Bible expositors who stand perhaps on the same par with the apostle Paul in defending various doctrinal issues such as *grace and love*, the backbone of our doctrine. But when many of these pastors, along with their audience, are tested on application of fundamental doctrines, they go AWOL in a hurry!

What's the missing element? A Christ-centered life!! In view of this dilemma, Paul, the greatest apostle the world has ever known, gave this command: "Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ" (Philippians 2:5).

What kind of attitude did he mean? Let me say, that we cannot possibly be Christ-centered apart from making His mental attitude our own. In the course of this study, we shall endeavor to turn ourselves inside-out in order to evaluate our spiritual lives as to whether we are standing on the Rock or on sinking ground.

LIFE EXPERIENCE

I shall conclude this section with a story from a personal life experience. The story is about an incident en route to London a few years ago. The journey took me through Nashville and Dallas international airports. When I arrived at the Dallas airport, I asked a counter person for directions to the London Gatwick terminal, and I was directed to the right place. When I arrived at the gate, it was clearly written on the screen “London Gatwick.” I had plenty of time before boarding, so I sat down, pretty sure that I was at the right terminal; after all, it was on the sign. So I kept myself occupied with a book.

As I was waiting and reading, I had the urge to make another inquiry of whether or not I was really at the right terminal. It turned out that I was at the *wrong terminal*, and had only a few minutes left before my flight was to depart. I ran like a deer and quickly boarded a Bus to the right terminal (the Dallas airport is colossal). When I arrived, I was the last person to board the plane! They told me that they had been paging me, but of course I was on the other side of the airport! They were about to close the gate just as I got there. The Lord really graced me out as He will you but, first, we need to examine ourselves to make sure we are not at the wrong spiritual terminal!

Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who [executes God’s plan accordingly]. Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS’ (Matthew 7:21-23).

FINAL THOUGHTS

God, in His infinite grace, has *‘Blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ’* (Ephesians 1:3b), and He expects us to use them effectively for His glory. This brings us back to the human examples the Lord has given us as we follow our Role Model to the right spiritual terminal.

Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance, and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us. [Locking] our eyes on Jesus, the [One who orchestrated and tested the spiritual life for us], who for the [exceedingly] joy set before Him endured the cross [through the application of doctrine], despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God (Hebrews 12:1, 2).

Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling [losing your salvation], and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy, to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen (Jude 1:24-25).

To be continued in Volume 41, lesson 3, where we will look at “God in Our Daily Schedule.”

MISSIONARY REPORTS

G.E.M. AFRICA

The Gambia--Africa
Tayo Arikawe reports

PRAY FOR AFRICA, THERE IS A GREAT REVIVAL OF DOCTRINE GOING ON....

I just returned to The Gambia from a missionary trip to Nigeria. I met some positive pastors at churches in Nigeria, and I taught in a church in Port Harcourt during our visit to Jos for the pastors conference two years ago. This same church

invited me to speak last month at their 12th year anniversary. I had four days with them and every night, after I spoke, the pastor mounted the podium saying: “This message is not popular in this country, but it is the absolute truth of God’s word, and we need to change our orientation in this church.” On the last day, he told the whole audience that his wife kept whispering into his ear each night as I spoke: “It is God that brought Tayo to speak to us, though we arranged the conference.” Just today the pastor said to me: “The conference has created a great spiritual awakening to truth in our church.” We channel all the Glory to our King and our Savior Jesus Christ.

Three months ago, I spoke in another church in Nigeria, a so-called grace church, but it was obvious that they know very little about the grace of God, though very hungry for the message. I taught about salvation by faith alone in Christ alone. Though it is not my custom, the pastor asked that those who had believed to step out (their tradition). Lo and behold, over 70% of the people stepped out. Obviously, many heard the clear gospel for the first time that Sunday morning.

No doubt, there is a great hunger for grace doctrine on the continent of Africa, and I pray that God will grant me grace from time to time to step forward as His vessel to disseminate this truth. There are many other churches in the surrounding region who desire to hear truth, and I hope GEM can assist me in reaching them. We need to pray more for Africa, there is a great revival of doctrine going on. My regards to all the GEM family over there.

GRACE TEACHING HAS A HOME IN BURUNDI

Burundi and Great Lakes Region--Africa
Pastor Philippe Selemani reports

After many days of accusations from the enemies of the truth, Grace Burundi has been officially registered at the Home Justice and Home Minister’s office. The board of Directors and I agreed to identify with GEM by naming the Church “Grace Evangelistic Temple.” Now our government officially recognizes us! This is a miracle from heaven! I personally take this opportunity to thank the GEM family for this help to spread the truth to the entire Great Lakes Region. The Board of Directors thanks all the GEM family around the world for the support, especially prayer support. Submitted in His Field of Grace.

HUNGER FOR TRUTH GROWS – NEW CENTER OPENS

Nairobi, Kenya—Africa
Maurice J. Mwale reports

Grace and peace to you and the entire family. I am glad to inform you and the entire GEM family that the hunger for Truth has amazingly grown here in Nairobi, Kenya. This has necessitated us to begin another GEM fellowship right in the center of the city of Nairobi. What just started as a study group of six, in a small rented office in the city, is about to bring forth a centrally situated doctrinal center in Nairobi.

Kindly join us in prayer as we prepare to officially launch the GEM Nairobi city center fellowship on the 9th of July, 2005. We will be having a one hour daily Bible class beginning the 4th of July, 2005, and a monthly meeting on the second Saturday of every other month. This came about after comprehensive and prayerful consultations within the GEM Family in Kenya and East Africa at large.

The challenges ahead of us are breathtaking but we have confidently put our hope and trust in Jehovah Jireh for the spiritual and even material provisions. We are hiring a meeting hall, and we might also need to establish a sister library like the one at Grace Doctrine Church being pastored by Rev. Naboth, due to the high demand for doctrinal literature.

We thank God for any of His servants who are encouraged to partner with us in whatever way the Lord speaks to them. This is how far the Lord brought us. We eagerly desire your prayers.

THEOLOGY OF SLOGANS FOUND LACKING

Jos, Nigeria—Africa

Darlington Elekwa, Executive Director reports

Something great is going on here in Nigeria. People are beginning to ask lots and lots of questions about the validity of the theology of slogans, declarations like: “This is my year of supernatural abundance!! This is my year of total breakthrough!! This is my year of super harvest!!” etc. I call this the theology of slogans or popular theology.

Many are rushing back to us trying to find out what we are saying in our usual conservative Evangelical Theology—the whole realm of Christ's unadulterated gospel.

We have plans to reproduce GEM publications soon. No matter how many as they don't last long in GEM's office before all the books are gone.

I have been drafted to speak at ECWA Evangelical Church of West Africa headquarters Sunday church services. The first sermon was on May 8, 2005, and I spoke about the Importance of God's Word. The Anglican Cathedral here in Jos lined up a program for me through June 2005. In May, I will also hold a weekend program for them with women, men, and youth fellowships combined. Everyone is doing well, and we thank God for it. Warm greetings to all our GEM friends.



G.E.M. ASIA

RIDING THE DEATH TRAIN DISTRIBUTED HOUSE-TO-HOUSE

Andhra Pradesh—India

Dr. B.V.N.Rao reports

We have printed the Telugu version of Riding the Death Train in a pocket book model and distributed it to the needy through our evangelists and women during a Hindu fair, and from house-to-house in the un-reached villages. Of course there is a strong opposition for its distribution which is still going on and the results will be known after I go back to Vijayawada.

Our youth are distributing them in trains and buses to the non-Christians. We are also printing ten thousand more books in Tamil and sending them to a Hindu place on an island between India and Sri Lanka. Thank you for assisting us with tracts for this great purpose.

We have also used funds sent for the purpose of giving fishing nets to the Christian Fisherman suffering from the aftermath of the tsunami on the southeast shore of India adjoining the hamlet on the Bay of Bengal. We found nearly 120 of the fishermen who are not going to the sea to fish, regularly, as they have no nets; they were lost or torn during the tsunami on December 26, 2004. Now due to your gifts, we will be able to freely distribute nets to these Christian fishermen.

We praise Him for the blessings of health showered upon pastor Moses. We are praying for your Africa tour and hope you plan to visit Andhra Pradesh soon. Please continue to pray for me. I will be undergoing my second surgery on my left eye to put back the partially detached retina on 25th July. Be blessed; we love you all.

(Note: At the request of a doctrinal Church, GEM participated as a 501c3 organization to channel earmarked contributions for tsunami relief to Christians affected by the tsunami. These relief funds were distributed via a GEM point man and associate in India.)



G.E.M. EUROPE

DOCTRINAL BIBLE SCHOOL OPENS DOORS IN LONDON

London, England

Rev. Elijah Dennis Ejila reports

We give thanks to God for His manifold Blessings and matchless Grace which He bestows on us—the undeserving. Here in London, we hope to begin classes at the newly formed “London Bible Training and Leadership Institute” on July 12, 2005. This is the realization of a long term goal and comes at the request of one of the churches that I have been associating with. They asked me to start a Bible school so believers may study God's word. This is in response to my continual emphasis on the need for the intake of Bible doctrine and the need for every local church to make it a major priority to provide this. We sent out application forms and questionnaires.

When asked why they chose to attend, they all answered, “to study God’s word and to grow spiritually.” We also asked applicants to briefly write when and how they became Christians. Amazingly enough, only one person even attempted to answer—which means they don’t know!

One lady, who called me to inquire about the Bible school, told me that although she had been involved in almost all the Christian activities from the moment she joined that church, they never offered her the opportunity to learn Bible doctrine. She regrets that she can not explain her Christian faith in the light of scriptural view points nor can she define her beliefs before unbelievers.

It is obvious that there is a great need for the Truth here in the U.K. I am grateful to God who opened my eyes and sent me here to bring that same Truth to these hungry and positive souls. Please continue to pray for the proper opening of the Bible School, for myself, family, and for every one who will be involved especially the prospective students.



G.E.M. NORTH AMERICA

Moses Speaks at Unity Baptist Church

Nashville, Tennessee—U.S.A.

Moses C. Onwubiko reports

In June, Gloria and I traveled to Indiana to give a missionary update to Pastor Fred Rowden and his congregation at Grace Church of Frankfort. They have been long time G.E.M. supporters, and it was a wonderful time of reunion, and fellowship.

Over July 4th weekend, Gloria and I attended Pastor Clay Ward’s 5th Annual Bible Conference at Pleroma Church in Tullahoma, Tennessee. This year’s topic was “Sufficiency of the Scriptures.” We had to miss the Sunday session, but it was for two very good reasons. The first is that we have established a doctrinal church in Nashville, Grace Community Bible Church. We hold services on Sunday morning and a Bible class during the week. For now, we are meeting in the G.E.M. offices and I am teaching. Our hope and plan is to be able to call a pastor for face to face teaching.

The second reason is that immediately following GCBC’s services, we went to speak at Unity Baptist Church. I met the pastor of this church on the elevator in the building of the GEM office on Thursday of this same week. We struck up a conversation, and he asked me to come that very Sunday to speak in his church. After teaching, he then asked me to lead the communion service. He commented that “Teaching is exactly what is needed in our churches,” and he said he hoped I would come to teach his congregation again. We thank God for restoring my health which made all these visits possible through His Grace. We look forward to our visit to Zimbabwe in August and solicit prayer for this and future mission trips now being planned.



MISSION TRIPS:

Please pray with us as we prepare to give pastors conferences, crusades, and youth evangelism in Zimbabwe August 11, 2005 through August 28th.

A trip to Nigeria is proposed for the Fall of 2005, and India and Pakistan in the Spring of 2006.

Missionaries Remembered *from Days gone By*

David Livingstone (1813-1873)

Going to China as a missionary was all David wanted for a long time, but he discovered that one of his professors, Rev. Cecil, was going to flunk him in his seminary studies and not give him a second chance as he did to other students. The main reason was that not one word came to David's mind when he stood before an audience to deliver his first sermon. All he could stammer, after staring blankly for a few minutes was:

“Friends, I have forgotten all I had to say.”

David had a hard time accepting this failure when his primary concern had been how to convince the missionary society to send him to China and now he wasn't even going to get through school! David took a long walk after he was told he was not going to pass—to pray and to rid himself of self-pity. Behind the scenes, the Lord had a plan for David, and quickly turned the tables by showing the professor a different side of David. The teacher was waiting for him when he returned from his walk. When David saw Rev. Cecil, he prayed that the Lord remove the bitterness from his soul, and this is what he heard:

“They tell me you worked in a cotton factory fourteen hours a day, six days a week, for thirteen years. I've judged you as if you came to me from a school for the well-to-do, like Eton. I must admit I have been severe with you. For that I am sorry. See me tomorrow morning, and we will discuss your next sermon.”

(excerpt from *Heroes of the Faith – David Livingstone – From Africa to Eternity* by Sam Wellman, published by Barbour Publishing.)

The Lord closed the doors to China but opened them for Africa.

LETTERS TO G.E.M.

Dear GEM

I just finished reading the latest volume of Grace News Today. It always gives such refreshment and always is the right message at the right time for those in this household. Thank you does not adequately express our gratitude.

We are brought to our knees with thanksgiving for the men our Lord raised up to teach us, and for those He has charged with keeping all the wheels turning.

U.S.A.

Dear GEM

We wish to express our gratitude to your Ministry in Jos for the kind gesture you expressed to us by giving us those wonderful materials for the progress of the work of God on our Campus.

Sir, we wish to state categorically that the organization shall remain eternally indebted with gratitude to you. It is our sincere prayer that God in His infinite mercy will continue to move your Ministries forward in Jesus Name.

Yours in Christ,

Femi Olagunju
Christian League International
University of Jos Chapter

Dear GEM:

Great news about the advance of the gospel among the Hindu's and Moslems in India and Pakistan. We are bound, as a client nation to God, to supply the gospel to other nations.

Thank you, for your work helps to preserve the freedom that we enjoy today. I will keep your organization and Moses in my daily prayers

USA

Dear Sir:

Your great evangelical activities in Plateau State, in particular, and Nigeria, in general, are worthy of emulation and commendation. I wish to inform you that The Christian Police Association (CPA) Nigeria, the Umbrella body to unite and direct Christian Police activities in Nigeria, is happy with your ministry.

The recent visitation to the Christian Police Officers at the Staff College in Jos and subsequently giving out Christian Books and Bibles are worthy of mention. The Christian Police Association (CPA) Nigeria is grateful for what you have done. We know that this cost a lot of money. We pray God to reward you greatly and increase your success. Your effort to identify with Christian police officers is highly appreciated. God Bless you and may He expand your ministries.

Yours in Christ,
Assistant National Secretary,
Christian Police Association, Nigeria

Editors Note: The CPA's work is all the more significant since Nigeria is considered to be the most corrupt country in the world.

**LAST CALL FOR THIS YEAR'S CONTAINER
SHIPMENT TO AFRICA**

Good quality used clothing, washed and ready to wear; doctrinal books or Bibles in good usable condition still needed. These can be sent by September 1, 2005, to Suzie Dunn, 3038 Regency Park Drive, Murfreesboro, TN. 37129. Please label box with contents on outside. For any questions, please contact Suzie via e-mail at zozoieeee@yahoo.com.

SPIRITUAL HUNGER IN AFRICA & ASIA

There is a tremendous hunger in Africa and Asia, not for food as such, but for the truth. Would you make it a burden to pray routinely that God would graciously provide enough doctrinal material for those who are starving for sound Bible

teaching? And, that this ministry would never lack in quenching their spiritual thirst to know and have rapport with the Living God!

PLEASE JOIN US IN PRAYER

THANKSGIVING:

- For many open doors around the world.
- For the strides made in Moses' recovery.
- For the knowledge that Jesus Christ controls history.

PETITION TO OUR FATHER FOR:

- President Bush (for wisdom and guidance).
- Israel's protection and the U.S. Military.
- The U.S. (For a great revival, peace, and freedom from terrorism).
- The restoration of Moses' health.
- Protection of G.E.M. personnel and development of foreign translations.
- Doctrinal pastors and their tape ministries.
- God's guidance and provision for those who have been displaced due to a doctrinal stand.
- Health of Col. and Mrs. R.B. Thieme, Jr.
- G.E.M. supporters who are sick or terminally ill.
- The spiritual growth of new believers.
- Indigenous pastors (that God will equip them in every way).
- For our presence wherever a grain of positive volition exists.
- Divine provision and sustenance for missionaries desiring full time work in the field.
- Energy, wisdom, and discernment for G.E.M.'s God-assembled team.
- That God will use the Tsunami disaster to glorify Himself. That victims will seek God and subsequently hear the grace gospel and be saved.

If you would like to be on our mailing list to receive this bi-monthly issue of Grace News Today with no obligation, please contact us:

Grace Evangelistic Ministries

P. O. Box 17246
Nashville, TN 37217-7246
or call us at (615) 365-0015

So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you continue in My word, you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free. John 8:31 & 32.

To receive updates and prayer requests:

E-MAIL CAFE: debby@debbyhagar.com – Or visit us on the internet: www.gracemissions.org

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