

THE EVANGELISTS

7 I N E

September 2012 - February 2013



Branded for Christ

A Classic Sermon by Leonard Ravenhill

What is the Gospel?

Good or Evil

the true nature of man

The Commission

THE EVANGELISTS MAGAZINE

(A Soldiers of the Cross Inc. publication)
Issue 12 Dec 2012 - Feb 2013

Editor:

Timothy Knowing

Layout & Graphics:

Leah Knowing

Article Contributors:

Timothy Knowing

Leah Knowing

Andrew Hsu

Scripture References:

Scriptures are taken from the KJV, NKJV,
NIV or AMP Bibles.

**For more information on this ministry,
please contact us at:**

Mail:

The Evangelists Magazine
P.O. Box 5353
Red Hill Rockhampton, Qld, 4701

Email:

contact@soldiersofthecross.com.au

Website:

www.soldiersofthecross.com.au

Mobile:

0488 048 412 (Tim)
0407 025 910 (Leah)

Subscriptions:

If you would like to subscribe to this FREE
publication, please contact us.

SOTC Aims:

Soldiers of the Cross, founded by Tim
and Leah Knowing, is dedicated to
evangelising the lost and seeing the
church become the mighty, mature and
fully-functioning army of God it is meant
to be, in a war that has already been
won through Christ's atoning death and
resurrection.

Ministry Affiliation:

Tim and Leah Knowing are affiliated with
the International Communion of Charis-
matic Churches (Aust) Inc.

Copyright:

The articles and graphics, except where
noted, are copyright to Soldiers of the
Cross Inc. If you wish to reprint articles,
please contact us. Permission is not
generally refused, except where it is not
ours to grant.

Disclaimer: The Evangelists Magazine is
not affiliated with, or connected to any
other publication of the same name.

Soldiers of the Cross

◆ Tim Knowing

As another year ends and a
new one begins, it is a good
time to reflect on the op-
portunities that we have had to share
the Gospel with those around us.

I believe one of the greatest times,
when the church should be its most
active in bearing witness for Christ, is at
Christmas and Easter.

The Apostle Paul, in Ephesians Chapter
5 verse 16, instructed us to be about the
business of *"Redeeming the time, because
the days are evil."* I like the way some
other translations put it, *"making the most
of every opportunity, because the days are
evil"*. (NIV 84)

As Christians, it is quite clear that most
of the world is celebrating everything but
Christ at Christmas. As part of fulfilling the
Great Commission we can be 'heralds', just
as the angels were on that night so long
ago, by proclaiming that there is only one
mediator between God and man, the Lord
Jesus Christ. (1 Timothy 2:5)

At a time when people are purchasing and
giving gifts let us proclaim God's gift to
man. And let's us also make a clear distinc-
tion between what the world says and
what the 'Word' says. In contrast to the
wisdom of this world God's gift cannot be
purchased or earned by us.

Ephesians chapter 2 verse 9 says, *"For it
is by free grace (God's unmerited favor)
that you are saved (delivered from judg-
ment and made partakers of Christ's
salvation) through [your] faith. And this
[salvation] is not of yourselves [of your
own doing, it came not through your own
striving], but it is the gift of God;
Not because of works [not the fulfilment of
the Law's demands], lest any man should
boast. [It is not the result of what anyone
can possibly do, so no one can pride him-
self in it or take glory to himself.]"* (AMP)

Over the last two years we have used
Christmas parades as an opportunity to
hand out Christmas

To all our readers,

*I trust the Lord has encouraged you
this year through our magazine and
pray that you and your families will
each be enriched this Christmas as we
celebrate Christ.*

Tim, Leah and Family

card-themed Gospel
tracts. This year we weren't as well-pre-
pared, as I only learnt of the parade the
day it was being held. However, praise the
Lord, we were still able to hand out forty
tracts to people as they were waiting for
the parade to start.

The cards we used (pictured below) are
available from One Million Tracts Aus-
tralia (www.evangelism.com.au). Living
Waters (www.livingwaters.com) also have
Christmas-themed tracts for those who
live outside Australia.

I would like to encourage all of us to take
advantage of this season and share with
those we meet, what Christians around
the world have been celebrating every day
for the last two thousand years.

*"For unto you is born this day in the city of
David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."*
(Luke 2:11)

This issue we take a look at what the Bible
has to say in asking the question, **'Good or
Evil - the true nature of man'**.

On page 12, we have part 2 of **'What
is the Gospel'** and on page 8, we have
reprinted a classic sermon of Leonard
Ravenhill's, 'Branded for Christ'.

We also have some short articles about
the evangelistic efforts of teams within
Australia, such as a team from Rockham-
pton who distributed tracts as they trav-
elled through western towns.

Read also about how One Million Tracts
Australia have been instrumental in taking
the Gospel to our nations leaders.

Until next time.



Letters to the Editor

Magazine effective tool in reaching the lost

(The letter below, from one of our regular correspondents, was very encouraging.)

I so much appreciate the evangelists mags, they were very inspiring and life transforming from the testimonies of those who came across them around me. God bless you so much, for I have found them a very effective tool in reaching the lost in both mass crusades and one to one evangelism. What a great job you are doing dear friend. Not only are you leaving an impact in Australia, but to the whole world. May those that the lord has brought across your path carry good testimony of you and the ministry of SOTC.

I am sorry that I haven't been in touch for quite a long time, I have been in the mission field to Western regions of Kenya for evangelism. It was so fabulous as almost 150 souls surrendered their lives to Christ, and several incredible miracles took place. People were being healed spiritually and even physical ailments vanished in that precious name of Jesus.

A man we prayed with for salvation confessed to us that he had been a local bishop/Rev. for 12 years of a certain religion called . But he had never heard the gospel of Christ presented using the Law and the saving grace.

As you put it in the magazine "the harvest is plentiful but the labourers are few" it is my prayer dear friend that together we will work for the sake of winning the lost, and that SOTC will empower and raise labourers to reach many with the gospel,

Pastor Nicholas Onyango, Kenya

* * * * *

In need of Bibles - Can you help?

Thank you for your letter and magazine I will make use of it. I have a class of 17 people and I want to request you to help me to have them a bible. One bible is 7500/=ksh please brother do help. We are not able to buy as we are under a very hard time because of famine in Eastern Kenya. May God bless you.

Pastor Nicholas N. Munyao, Kenya

* * * * *

Edified by Magazine

Greetings in the mighty name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. I had the opportunity to read one of your magazines and it was spirit filled and edifying. I would appreciate if you could include me on your mailing list. His Loyal Highness, Chief Chikwanda, Zambia.

* * * * *

◆ Tim Knowing

As a father with young children, I have had many opportunities to rediscover some of the things that amused me when I was their age. One such thing was the old classic cartoons that remain timeless. My children are now being amused by something their grandparents also laughed at.

On thinking about the above, I can not help but be reminded of the scripture in 1 Corinthians 13:11 that says, *"When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things"*.

There are some things that pass over the heads of children, so to speak, that only with the wisdom of age and understanding and, in particular, that which God's Holy Spirit plants within us, that enables us to see those things that 'younger' eyes might miss.

In watching one of the above cartoons that I mentioned, there was a particular episode that stirred my thinking. One of the characters was faced with the position of how he would react to the circumstances that faced him. The governing force behind his actions, was which voice would he listen to. On one shoulder, he had an angel and the voice representing good guiding him; on the other, a devil and the voice representing that which is evil.

As I remember in many of the above situations, the character involved would listen to the wrong voice and reap the consequences of his actions. What can we learn from all of this? In particular, when it comes to choosing between good and evil, what can we learn about the nature of man?

The ultimate question we may ask ourselves is this: Is man, by his very nature, good or evil?

We live in an age where there are perhaps more social voices than ever before. Some philosopher comes up with his own belief system which attracts a crowd of followers and, before you know it, a new kind of 'ism' has emerged usually named after the philosopher who started it.

Most of these philosophical belief systems are rooted in Humanism which, in itself, rejects God and promotes human wisdom and reasoning. As history has proven, Humanism is, at its root, nothing more than the idolatry or deification of man.

When it comes to answering the question on whether man is, by nature, good or evil, Humanism or beliefs based on the wisdom of man, invariably come to the same conclusion.

Eastern philosophies maintain that man is, by nature, inherently good, but that this goodness is clouded by the evil around him.

Others claim that man is what he chooses to be, while a Relativist will claim that there is no good or evil.

I find it fascinating that the people who hold to such beliefs and who have rejected God's Word as final authority, are by their very actions confirming God's word to be true. Proverbs 20:6

says, *"Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness"*.

I remember some years ago meeting a man who shared his testimony



GO
EV
the true nat



with me, of how he had travelled to India searching for God. Coming home somewhat disillusioned in what he had found in eastern philosophy

and religion, he didn't realise that it was, in fact, God who was seeking him (Luke 19:10), and he was soon gloriously saved.

The passage of time has shown the fickle nature of man's own wisdom in understanding what we know about the nature of mankind. However, there is another wisdom that is from above and that does not change. Matthew 24:35 says *"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."*

We would also do well to consider the words of a very wise man by the name of Gamileal, as recorded in the book of Acts, when the religious authorities which he was a part of, were deciding what to do with those who were followers of Christ.

*"Then stood there up one in the council, a Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, had in reputation among all the people, and commanded to put the apostles forth a little space;
And said unto them, Ye men of Israel, take heed to yourselves what ye in-*

tend to do as touching these men. For before these days rose up Theudas, boasting himself to be somebody; to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves: who was slain; and all, as many as obeyed him, were scattered, and brought to nought. After this man rose up Judas of Galilee in the days of the taxing, and drew away much people after him: he also perished; and all, even as many as obeyed him, were dispersed. And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought: But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God." Acts 5:34-39

Having established the fact that human wisdom, regarding the true nature of man, is not a true and reliable witness, let us examine God's Word; for in it we not only learn about the true nature of God, but also the nature of man and his relationship to Him who created us.

Our question, and the answer on whether man is, by nature, good or evil, is such an important one to have a clear understanding on. If we don't, our views towards the cross and, in particular, the Gospel will be tainted.

For some 5-6 years, my wife and I were a part of a travelling evangelistic tent ministry. Like many other such ministries, there would be meetings where the Gospel was preached and an appeal was made for people to turn to Christ. In the ministry we were involved in, however, this was not the only means by which we communicated the Gospel.

Within the 36 meter long tent, was a Panoramic exposition of the scriptures from Genesis to Revelation, and it was here that thousands of people each year would see and hear about God's redemptive plan of salvation.

By using this panoramic expo, which I have since likened to a huge Gospel tract, I could explain from the Bible what man's position is and where he stands in relationship to a holy and just God.

We know that man was created in the image of God. *"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."* Genesis 1:27

GOOD
OR
IL
ture of man

The scripture says of God's creation that it was good. *"And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good."* (Genesis 1:31)

Although man was created perfect, God had given him a command that promised to keep him eternally, if he kept it.

“*It is only in God that we can boast that He saved us. That which we were incapable of doing, the Father did by sending His Son.***”**

"And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." (Genesis 2:17)

However the testimony of scripture goes on to tell us how Satan, who is the father of lies, came subtly to Eve and through her, both Eve and her husband Adam, were deceived and seduced into willingly transgressing the command that God had given them. (Genesis 3:1-7)

By their disobedience, Adam and Eve fell from the original position they had, which was communion with God. The broken relationship was not only spiritual, but physical, for they were now under a sentence of death. (Genesis 3:19)

But the greater ramification of their disobedience was that the sentence, which had now been imposed on them, would also be imputed unto all their posterity.

As descendants of the first man and woman every person born since the fall has been conceived in sin.

In the 51st Psalm, King David, acknowledging his own sinful nature said,

"Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." (Psalm 51:5)

In the book of Ephesians, chapter 2, the apostle Paul refers to us being *"dead in trespasses and sins."* (verse 1) and that we are, *"by nature the children of wrath."* (verse 3)

In Romans 6:17 Paul says that because of our fallen nature we are *"servants of sin"*.

In fact, the early church fathers saw the understanding of this so important, that it became an essential part of church doctrine, and is today known throughout most of Christendom, as the doctrine of original sin.

Most Christian denominations will make reference to this within their statements of belief, such as found below from the Methodist church.

*"Original sin standeth not in the following of Adam (as the Pelagians do vainly talk), but it is the corruption of the nature of every man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and of his own nature inclined to evil, and that continually."*¹

Since the scriptures show us clearly that man is, by nature, corrupted by the fall of Adam, is it still possible for man to be able to do good?

No one would argue that giving to the poor and needy, or other such charitable deeds, are not commendable. But, will these good deeds, in themselves, stand the test of eternity.

Again, the wisdom of worldly men will issue accolades for what it perceives to be good, but our eternal security rests on what God has decreed; He is the final arbitrator in this matter.

In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus Himself corrected the understanding of the 'rich young ruler' who was hoping his good works would merit him life.

"And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal,

Thou shalt not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?

Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me.

But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions." (Matthew 19:16-22)

Note the young man addresses Jesus as 'Good Master'. Jesus, discerning that the young man is saying this in order to flatter Him, replies that only God is Good. Wanting to know what 'good' he should do to enter into eternal life, Jesus directs him to the 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th and 9th commandments, to which the young man replies that he had already kept them.

“*As descendants of the first man and woman every person born since the fall has been conceived in sin***”**

But the truth of the matter, was that he had in fact not kept the commandments. For when he was instructed, that in order to be perfect he needed to sell his possessions and give the proceeds to the poor, he couldn't, because his love for his money was more than his love for God.

The whole point, was that Jesus was showing him he needed a better righteousness than what his own works could achieve.

In the book of Romans, chapter 3 verse 20, it tells us *"...by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by*

the law
is the

knowl-
edge of
sin."

The bible tells us in no uncertain terms the effect the fall had on us. As the following scriptures verify, even our best efforts are, in the eyes of God, corrupted because

of our sinful nature.

"But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away." (Isaiah 64:6)

"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." (Romans 3:12)

For unregenerate mankind - those who are trusting in their own goodness - the Bible makes it clear that they will stand naked before God. Naked in that their own righteousness is not what God requires.

Men whose understanding is darkened
"...because of the blindness of their

heart." (Ephesians 4:18), run at hell as though it were heaven, and run away from heaven as though it were hell itself. They think they are good men in trouble with a bad God, where in reality, they are bad men in trouble with a Good God.

Because man is "dead in trespasses and sins" (Ephesians 2:1), he doesn't need good morals or good deeds to make him acceptable before God. He instead needs to be resurrected and clothed in the righteousness that only Christ can give. (Colossians 2:12, Revelation 3:5)

"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:

Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:

That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

Not of works, lest any man should boast".(Ephesians 2:1-9)

The words of that great old hymn come to mind, "To God be the Glory great things He hath done".

It is only in God that we can boast that He saved us. That which we were incapable of doing, the Father did by sending His Son. If we could even claim some part in our salvation, it would rob God of the glory which he alone deserves.

“
*Since ... man is
by nature corrupted
by the fall, is it still
possible for man ...
to do good?”*
”

But it is He who quickened us, who raised us, who gave us the grace to repent and believe and continues to give us the grace we need for each day to live for Him.

As we have seen, we have no claim or merit before God as a result of our works. We are not saved by them, but rather as a result of His life flowing out of us, God uses us for the furtherance of His Glory.

"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." (Ephesians 2:10)

References:

1. The Articles of Religion in the Book of Discipline of the Methodist Church.
2. Albert Barnes' notes on the Bible.

Subscribe Today
... it's FREE!

Missed a back issue?
Ask us for a free copy

Go to page 2 for contact details or signup on our website

www.soldiersofthecross.com.au



In a certain sense, all men are strangers to one another. Even friends do not really know each other. To know a man, one must know all the influences of heredity and environment, as well as his countless moral choices that have fashioned him into what he is.

Though we do not really know one another, tracing the course of a man's life sometimes offers rich reward, particularly when we see the great driving forces which have motivated him.

ing no "stigmata," as did Saint Francis of Assisi in 1224 A.D. It is not a bodily identification by outward crucifixion. He had been "crucified with Christ" (Gal. 2:20).

Branded by Devotion to a Task

The marks of Paul's inward crucifixion were plainly evident. First of all, Paul was branded by devotion to a task.

to spirituality. After the Athenian clash on Mars' Hill, Paul poured contempt on the wisdom of this world, dying daily to the temptation to outwit and out-think the wise. His task was not that of getting over a viewpoint, but of overcoming the legions of hell!

Somewhere, most likely in Arabia, Paul's personality had been transfigured. Never after that was he listed as a backslider. He was too occupied with going on. It would have vexed his righteous soul to hear a congregation sing, "Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it!"

Unsponsored, unwelcomed, unloved — these made little difference to Paul. On he went, blind to every jewel of earthly honor,

christ

Branded

For instance, how greatly your life and mine would be benefited if we could experience the same surge of Christ-life that moved Saul of Tarsus (later called Paul) and plumb even a little the hidden depths of the meaning in his words, "I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus" (Gal. 6:17).

One thing is sure about these words: they were an acknowledgment of Christ's ownership. Paul belonged to the Lord Jesus — spirit, soul, and body. He was branded for Christ.

When Paul claimed to bear in his body the wounds of the Lord, he was claim-

ing, as tradition says, Paul was only four feet six inches in height, then he was the greatest dwarf that ever lived. He out-paced, out-prayed, and out-passioned all his contemporaries. On his escutcheon was blazed: "One thing I do." He was blind to all that other men gloried in.

Pascal was bitterly criticized because apart from the immortal soul of man, he could see no scenery anywhere worth looking at.

By the same token, the Apostle Paul might be castigated for saying not a word about Grecian art or the splendor of the Pantheon. His was a separation

deaf to every siren-voice of ease, and insensitive to the mesmerism of worldly success.

Branded by Humility

Paul was also branded by humility. Moths could not corrupt this God-given robe. He never fished for praise with humility's bait, but in the long line of sinners, put himself first (where we would put him last).

The old Welsh divine said that if you know Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, do not put them where Pilate did at the head of Christ, but put them at his feet. "What

things were gain to me," says Paul, "these things I count as loss for Christ."

What a heart's ease is the virtue of humility — the great joy of having nothing to lose! Having no opinion of himself, Paul feared no fall. He might have swaggered in the richly embroidered robes of the chancellor of a Hebrew school. But in the adornment of a meek and quiet spirit, he shines with more luster.

Branded by Suffering

Next, Paul was branded by suffering. Consider the thing he mentions in Romans 8: famine, peril, nakedness, and sword (these belonging to acute discomfort in the body), and tribulation (perhaps of the mind), distress, persecution (of the spirit).

Add to this list danger upon danger; then multiply it with loneliness; finally, count in the 199 stripes, 3 shipwrecks, 3 beatings with rods, a stoning, a prison record, and deaths so many that count is lost.

And yet if one could add it up, all must be written off as nothing, because Paul himself thus consigned it. Listen to him: "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment..." That's contempt of suffering, if you like!

Branded by Passion

Furthermore, Paul was branded by passion. A man must be in the dead center of God's will and walking the tightrope of obedience to call upon the Holy Ghost

the capital for enlarging the Church, and cheer to the heart of the Saviour, who was seeing the travail of His soul and was being satisfied.

Branded by Love

Paul was branded by love. When Paul experienced becoming a "man in Christ," he developed the capacity for love. Only maturity knows love. How Paul loved!

First and supremely, Paul loved his Lord. Then he loved men, his enemies, hardship, and soul-pain. And he must have loved this latter particularly, else he would have shirked prayer. Paul's love carried him to the lost, the last, the least. What scope of love! Mars' Hill with its intellectuals, the synagogues with their religious traditionalists, the market

ed for Christ

A classic sermon by Leonard Ravenhill

Of all these sufferings the "little" minister partook. This wandering Jew "made war on all that made war on God and on the children of men." This prince of preachers and his foe, the prince of hell, spared each other no beatings. It was a free-for-all and no holds barred!

Look closely at Paul — at that cadaverous countenance, that scarred body, that stooped figure of a man chastened by hunger, kept down by fasting, and ploughed with the lictor's lash; that little body, brutally stoned at Lystra and starved in many places; that skin, pickled for thirty-six hours in the Mediterranean Sea!

to bear witness to his witness. Yet Paul does this in Romans 9:1.

Oh, that from this wondrous flame every living preacher might capture just a little light! Beatings could not cast the flame out of Paul; fastings and hunger could not kill it; misunderstanding and misrepresentation could not quench its fire; waters could not drown it; prisons could not break it; perils could not arrest its growth. On and on it burned, until life ebbed from his body.

The living Christ who was within Paul (Gal. 2:20), as manifested by his soul-passion, was at once the despair of hell,

places with their prodigals — all these he yearned over and sought for his Lord. Like a mighty dynamo, love pushed him on to attempt great things for God.

Not many have prayed as this man prayed. Maybe McCheyne, John Fletcher, mighty Brainerd, and a few others have known something of the soul-and-body mastering work of intercession motivated by love.

I remember standing by the Marechale once as we sang her great hymn:

*"There is a love constraining me
To go and seek the lost;
I yield, O Lord, my all to Thee*

christ

To save at any cost!

That was not just a lovely sentiment. It cost her prison, privation, pain, and poverty.

Charles Wesley seemed to reach on tiptoe when he said, "nothing on earth do I desire but Thy pure love within my breast!" More recently Amy Carmichael uttered the heartfelt prayer; "Give me a love that leads the way, a faith which nothing can dismay!" These men and women were certainly on the trail of the apostolic secret of soul-winning.

Great soul-winners have always been

great lovers of men's souls. All lesser loves were conquered only by the greater Love. Great love to the Lover of their souls drove them to tears, to travail, and to triumph. In this evil hour, dare we love less?

*Let me love Thee, love is mighty
Swaying realms of deed and thought;
By it I can walk uprightly,
I can serve Thee as I ought.
Love will soften every trial
Love will lighten every care;
Love unquestioning will follow,
Love will triumph, love will dare!*

Without any of their choosing, millions will be branded for the Antichrist one day. Shall we shrink to bear in our spirits, our souls, and our bodies our Owner's marks -- the marks of Jesus? Branded means pain. Do we want that? Branded means carrying the slur of the servant. Will we choose to be branded -- for Christ?

Copyright Information:

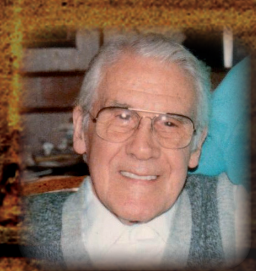
Used by permission of Bethany, a division of Baker Publishing Group. This article, 'Branded for Christ' by Leonard Ravenhill appeared in DAYS-SPRING copyright (c) 1964.

Leonard Ravenhill
(1907-1994)

Leonard Ravenhill was an English Christian evangelist and author who focused on the sub-jects of prayer and revival.

He is best known for challenging the modern church (through his books and sermons) to compare itself to the

early Chris-tian Church as chronicled in the Book of Acts. His most notable book is Why Revival Tarries which has sold over a million copies worldwide.



HOLIDAY EVANGELISM

◆ Leah Knowling

Recently, we visited friends after a week-long conference nearby. Although we were intending to only stay a night or two, it soon became obvious the Lord had other plans and two nights became a week.

Now, it can be very easy when holiday-ing, especially straight after a confer-ence, to take a break from everything.... including witnessing.

Which begs the question - Did Je-sus ever have a holiday? Admittedly, Israel in Bible times was probably not overflowing in tourist attractions, and movies and TV thankfully hadn't been invented yet. However, I have often pondered the thought of whether Jesus ever 'switched off', so to speak.

The Bible says in Luke 5:16, "But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed." That is something we should all be doing regularly, not just when on holidays. However, it is also recorded that often when Jesus withdrew that the crowds followed Him. Did He ever

turn them away and say, 'Sorry, I need a rest. Come back in a few days'? No, He didn't. So, I guess that means, neither should we.

With those thoughts in mind, back to our trip. We had never done the 'tourist thing' there before, so our friends took us to a local 'camping spot' for a picnic.

During lunch, a group of teenage boys (see picture) started playing ball near the water's edge. Rather than just enjoying the picnic, I felt to go witness to them. After a little while, their ball went too far out into the water and these 'brave' lads didn't want to swim that far to get it back. So our friend said she'd go and get it. Here was my opportunity.

After taking some photos of her swim-ming to get the ball, I turned to them and asked why they didn't get it. Were they scared of dying? Of course they were, though most wouldn't admit it.

I then continued to speak to them about death, the law, sin and judgment and then was able, amongst some heck-ling, to explain the Good News of salva-



Me with some of the boys

tion through Jesus Christ.

They listened and asked questions. Af-terwards, one boy spoke to me quietly, expressing concern over his soul's state, to which I encouraged him and the others to get right with God. I left them with some Gospel tracts and introduced them to my friend who told them about her church.

So, this Christmas, or the next time you are holidaying, remember the destiny of the lost and stay 'switched on', "making the most of every opportunity because the days are evil". (Ephesians 5:16)

During the Winter School Holidays in 2012, a group of young people from Peace Apostolic Community in Rockhampton, Qld decided to visit outback towns in Central Queensland and share the gospel with tracts they wrote themselves.



The team in Barcaldine

Team Leader, David Alley, shared how each town had its own specific tract that they wrote after researching each location.

"Our tracts were designed to look like travel brochures

and were easy for

people to accept. About ten people from our church, mostly young people (see picture above), came along for the adventure of sharing Christ with others", he said.

Their plan of attack was to visit two towns per day and knock on every single door personally handing out their literature. Over the course of 4 days away, (1 day being a tourist day), they visited Alpha, Jericho, Aramac, Rubyvale, Duinga and Dingo as well as stopping in at Longreach and Barcaldine.

David continued, "We discovered very quickly that if we introduced ourselves as from "a church" we found it hard to talk and share. However if we said we were from a youth group visiting the outback that it was easy and we had a lot of good conversations, prayed with some people and handed out some Bibles too. A lot of what we did was ground-breaking work or sowing

seeds because many people had limited

exposure to the Gospel and only had television as a source of any information about Jesus, so we planted many seeds."

In Duinga, which in aboriginal means "to turn yourself around", their brochure focused on the concept of repentance.

"We illustrated using Johnny Cash as someone who turned around, and a local well-known violent criminal as someone who didn't." He explained, "The tract said that in God's eyes unless we turned to him, we were more like the local violent criminal. This was a very vivid illustration and has to this day (months later) still got people thinking about repentance."

In fact, they recently heard that their Duinga Tract is pinned to the wall of the Railway Depot in Rockhampton and is a source of continual discussion about Jesus.

David said, "It's amazing how when we go, God uses the seeds in His ways to bring about His purposes".

All their leftover brochures for each town were left at the tourist information centres for each town - so passers-through could receive the Gospel too.

"We all need to go more often", he said. I say 'Amen'.

If you have been encouraged or even challenged by this testimony to reach out to your greater community - not just your local town or city, but the unreached towns and communities around you, then why not do something about it.

Jesus said, "...Open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest" (John 4:35). But He also said, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few" (Luke 10:2).

Will you be a labourer in God's fields?



Visiting Alpha Hospital

Outback Witnessing

Youth go west to share Gospel

WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

PART 2



◆ Andrew Hsu

In our last issue, we printed Part 1 of this article. The following, Part 2, is the remainder. If you missed the previous issue, contact us for a free copy. Alternatively, go to our website where you can view all our previous issues.

Justice is not a novel concept nowadays and it's probably because we see scarcely little of it in our lives. The key of winning a lawsuit, often times have nothing to do with whether one has a case, but whether one can afford an expensive lawyer. Jail or 'Correctional Facilities' are more about reforming the criminal back into the society instead of punishment for the crime.

The idea of justice is by and large lost and any adherence to the classic Biblical understanding of justice is considered cruel and barbaric by much of the western world.

Even Christians, living and breathing the politically-correct air of this world, would deny the Biblical claim of God's final justice. After all, aren't we living in the age of grace and God has revealed Himself as an all-forgiving, all-loving, father figure in the sky in the New Testament?

The angry, avenging God - isn't that the Old Testament God before Jesus came and mellowed Him out a bit?

"Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4)

"But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and

whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." (Revelation 21:8)

Are you ready for your courtroom appearance?

The Bible does not present sin as mere mistakes that can be corrected. Sin, in the most straight forward explanation presented by John the Apostle, is the breaking of the Law of God. Even with our whitewashed understanding of justice, we still hold to the simple axiom: 'You do the crime, you do the time'.

We might say that it's not wrong unless we get caught, but that's just a feeble attempt at appeasing our God-given conscience that accuses us when we do wrong. Besides, on the day of Judgment we won't have attorneys presenting our case. We don't have one, none of us do. The all-powerful, all-knowing God of the universe will call our every secret deed and idle thought into account; we will be without excuse on that great and fearful day. The verdict is already made for all sinners; we are guilty of violating the Holy Law of God, and God being good, just and righteous, can not turn a blind eye to sin.

An earthly judge that lets a guilty criminal walk out of the court without proper punishment is not immediately thought of as being kind, but rather unjust and corrupt. How unthinkable it is, to try to apply that to God; the one who calls himself righteous and holy, to let sinners into heaven without dealing with their sin. Grace and Forgiveness aside for the moment, God MUST punish sinners, if He is to be called right and good.

It's not about Wholeness, it's About Holiness.

"For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me. Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful." (Romans 7:11-13)

The Law then, is not given to us as a way to heaven. Unholy men are incapable of keeping the Holy Law, and

the end result is not spiritual enlightenment but spiritual death. Instead, the Law was given to us so that we might realize just how sinful, sin really is.

Nicodemus was a Pharisee, and Pharisees understood the law as merely external. While it was a heavy burden to keep all the minute details of the external rules, at least, to their human thinking, it was now possible to please God through the Law. Jesus, on the other hand, in the famous Sermon on the Mount (found in the book of Matthew chapters 5-7), elevated the Law of God to it's true internalised conclusion.

That the breaking of God's Law does not start with an outward act, but all sin starts from within.

"The Bible does not present sin as mere mistakes that can be corrected."

This is what He taught his disciples, when He said that it's not what enters a man that makes someone unclean, but what comes out of us which shows the sinfulness of our hearts. This is crucial; the Bible's default position for all men and women is one of death in sin and in need of salvation. No one loves God or is capable of loving God apart from Christ.

Men or women today may have a 'spiritual' hunger, but do not mistake an affinity towards the things of God, for a love for God. All of us, born in sin, are by our very nature, selfish and self-serving; we might 'bow our knees' to a god, only if it serves our own selfish purposes. This most certainly, is not the way a man humbles himself before God, and is born again, being made a new creature in Christ by the very Spirit of God.

We are not good people just needing God to make us better; we are not just a little banged up and in need of a touch up. Christianity is not a self-help project in search of personal wholeness. The claim of Christ is no less than this: The God who will hold you accountable on judgment day, is all together Holy, and you better be holy as well, or there will literally be 'hell to pay'. It's all about Holiness.

Mission Impossible

"And when Jesus saw that he was very sorrowful, he said, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the

kingdom of God. And they that heard it said, Who then can be saved? And he said, The things which are impossible with men are possible with God." (Luke 18:24-27)

To some Christians, this is easier than sharing the Gospel with someone. If you start to think that this is an impossible message to preach - to confront men and women, with their politically correct, post-modern thinking, of their sin by the absolute Holy Law of God - that's just unthinkable, and it just won't work!

Well, that's exactly right. It is an impossible message to preach, and it does seem to work against all the wisdom the evangelism gurus today tries to tell us. Don't mention sin, don't mention hell, don't present God as judgmental or authoritative in anyway; just try to win them over by love.

However, pause and ask ourselves: when we preach this kind of message which has removed the Biblical message of final justice in the hand of a Holy God, what are we saving people from? Boredom and lack of direction in life? Are they saved from not living out their untapped potential? Saved from a mediocre job and unfulfilling relationships?

Turn to your Bible again; where did God promise any of the above when we become a Christian? Just the opposite; Christ made no promise of a better life in this life, and in all likelihood it will be a life of rejection, trials and tribulations.

Christians down the ages have suffered loss for the sake of following Christ. Jesus Himself asks His would-be followers to weigh up the cost of discipleship, and He did not mean two hours every week spent in a group Bible study. Christ demands total denial of self and makes no promise of a cushy existence. Jesus did not make it easy for people to believe, just the opposite. His message, the Biblical message of salvation, is impossible to believe for the human mind.

Therefore, when someone does believe, when the Biblical Gospel is preached, God, and God alone, gets the glory for saving sinners. It's not about the brilliance of the preacher, it's not about the attractiveness of the message and it's definitely not about the intellectual prowess of the listener;

it is only about the God who saves, through the faithful preaching of the Gospel.

The Real Good News

So are we ever going to get to the good stuff - the cross and everything? Yes we are, but I hope that we can now see how the preaching of the Law does not detract from the cross, but instead makes it much more glorious.

God's love is shown to us through the cross.

For when we understand the exceeding sinfulness of our sin, and Christ, who is God incarnate, the giver of the Holy law himself, then the cross is no longer a mere symbol of Christian faith, it's the glorious reality of God saving sinners from the judgment of sin.

The good news is not the myth that God just forgives everyone; the good news is about the fact that God sacrificed His only Son, who was innocent of breaking God's laws, as if Christ was a Law-breaker like you and I.

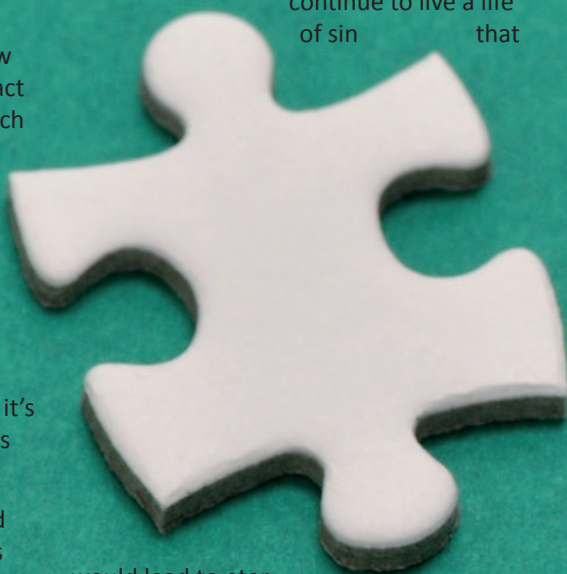
God's love is shown in our deepest need. If we were not such rebellious offenders of God's Law, God could just shower His blessings upon our lives as a sign of His love. The problem is that, in order for God to rescue us from His righteous judgment, the penalty of our crime must be paid for. Christ died on our behalf so that we might be made righteous before the Father.

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." (2 Corinthians 5:21)

This is why grace is so amazing. The sacrifice of God's only Son for our sin is NOT what we deserve. If we agree with the Bible, then we must come to the conclusion that we deserve not God's mercy, but His wrath. God is well within His rights to destroy every single last one of us for our outright hatred and indifference to Him, the giver of our every breathe. We should have perished in our rebellion, yet God was willing to lay down His Son's perfect and

sinless life as a substitute for our worthless damnable sinful life.

Every man and woman presented with the Gospel have only two choices: either reject God's kind and gracious offer and continue to live a life of sin that



would lead to eternal damnation, or else repent from their sins and be born again into the likeness of Christ and receive the ultimate perfection in heaven.

Either way, God will be glorified - for being the Righteous judge when He calls all sinners into account, and punishes them according to their offences, or He will be glorified as the God who saves and justifies sinners. This is the glorious message Christians are called to preach, whether in Churches behind a pulpit or 'one on one' with a neighbour, friend or stranger. To preach and exalt God's Holy law and call every sinner to repentance and to run to our loving Saviour.

U-Turn Required

"When Jesus heard it, he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." (Mark 2:17)

The proper response the Gospel demands is not reciting the sinner's prayer, walking an aisle nor noting a date on the back of your Bible. It is when a sinner turns away from their sins and turns towards the Saviour.

Christians who understand the character and nature of their new master and the fact that Christ paid a dear price for their sins, no longer live in the same sinful lifestyle that dominated their old life. A U-turn is required for all those who wish to follow after Christ.

It doesn't mean all Christians live in perfect holiness the minute they are born again. What it does mean, however, is that

there should be tangible, radical changes to one's life style. There ought to be sorrow and disgust with one's sin that does not diminish, but increases as we grow in holiness. When we set our eyes on Christ, it always means we leave the sinful world behind us.

Being repentant, Christians must put their total trust in Christ. This means that we no longer try to please God by our own merits and good works, instead we look to the complete and final work of Christ on the cross as the only source of our salvation. It does not mean that we live a life devoid of good works, but that our good works are no longer attempts at bribing God on Judgment Day. Instead, it flows out of our appreciation and love for our God, who is so kind and merciful to save us.

We love God's Word because it reveals to us the person and character of our new Master. We desire to preach the Good News to those who are lost, because we remember how we were all once lost, like the world. We worship God because our hearts have been made new.

The Gospel we preach is free, but it's not cheap. The Gospel we preach is open to all, but it's narrow and few find it. The Gospel we preach is not a heavy burden, but it is difficult to believe. The Gospel of God offers the sinner everything, but only if the sinner gives up everything. The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ is never politically correct, it is never compromising, it is sometimes offensive and at all times confrontational. It is never popular and always counter culture, it's the only message we are given by which sinners can be saved and all glory belongs to God.

May we all strive to be faithful, to that only Gospel that is the power of God unto salvation to all who believe.

Andrew Hsu

Andrew Hsu is a founding member of Operation513, a Christian ministry dedicated to street preaching and personal evangelism. Andrew served as co-leader of the Brisbane team for three years and he is serving on the Operation 513 board currently, taking a less active role on the street due to family commitments.



Andrew is blessed with a lovely wife, Desma, and a young energetic two year old boy, Justin, with a another baby scheduled to arrive in September. The Hsu family have made Grace Bible Church in Holland Park, Queensland, their spiritual home since 2010.



'180' Movie reaches federal politicians

During this year, One Million Tracts Australia, an evangelistic ministry based in Melbourne, Victoria, along with the support of some generous financial supporters, completed a project to get the '180' DVD to Australia's federal politicians.

The '180' DVD, produced by Living Waters, is a 33 minute movie/documentary, where Ray Comfort does an excellent job of bringing logical reasoning into the debate of Abortion and a woman's rights.

In total, some 226 DVD packages were sent out. With all the federal politicians away from Canberra for a number of weeks, now is a great time to pray that they would sit down and watch the DVD.

The responses below are a sample of the official responses which One Million Tracts Australia have received so far, including one from the office of the Opposition Leader, the Hon. Tony Abbott.

Response from Hon. Warren Truss MP

"Thank you for sending me a copy of the DVD 180. Although I have not yet had the opportunity to view the DVD I look forward to doing so when time permits.

I understand that it is a Christian based DVD which provides strong reasons for people to oppose abortion. I personally agree that the life of an unborn child is precious and I have never supported abortion on demand. I appreciate that you have taken the time to send me the DVD."

Response from Sen. Helen Kroger:

"Thank you for your recent letter in which you enclosed a copy of the film 180 U-Turn. I appreciate you bringing this to my attention. At my first opportunity I will have a closer look..."

Response from Sen. John Faulkner

"Thank you for your letter... and for the enclosed DVD, 180. I can assure you that I will watch this film with interest."

Response from the Office of the Hon. Tony Abbott MHR

"Thank you for your recent letter to the Leader of the Opposition, the Hon Tony Abbott MHR including a copy of a DVD. Mr Abbott has asked that I reply on his behalf and I apologise for the delay in responding.

Your comments and thoughtfulness were appreciated and have been carefully noted."

Response from The Hon. Philip Ruddock MP

"I refer to your letter dated 25th June and thank you for sending a copy of "180", which I shall watch with great interest.

We should always learn from history, not only to ensure we do not make the same mistakes but to also draw from the good that has been achieved and enhance on work already undertaken by those who have come before us."

www.soldiersofthecross.com.au