



EVANGELISTS

M A G A Z I N E

Issue 5 Summer 2011

PRAYER

Powerhouse of the Gospel

Gospel Tracts

Last Day Evangelism tools

Finish the Race

The Call to Persevere

A.W. Pink's Classic Message

'Is Christ your Lord?'

THE COMMISSION

By Tim Knowing

THE EVANGELISTS MAGAZINE

(A Soldiers of the Cross Inc. publication)
Issue 5 Summer 2011

Editor:

Timothy Knowing

Layout & Graphics:

Leah Knowing

Article Contributors:

Timothy Knowing
Leah Knowing

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 Charismatic 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 in any way with 'The Evangelist' a magazine published by Jimmy Swaggett ministries.

Soldiers of the Cross

Welcome to Issue 5 of The Evangelists Magazine. We have had a good response from people about the new format of this publication (*see right for picture of Issue 4*), and our hope is that the Lord will use this mightily for His purposes. We received Issue 4 from the printers the day before we headed off from Rockhampton, Qld, to attend the Vision Ministries 'Old Fashion Camp Meeting' at Aleetown in NSW.

We are blessed every time we attend this camp, this one being their 21st year of holding meetings at 'Mamre Farm'. At camp this year we were able to give away quite a number of copies of 'The Evangelists Magazine'. We also had a number of CD's, DVD's and books available for purchase, that Soldiers of the Cross promotes.

After the camp meeting we travelled on to South Australia where we spent the rest of the year. During that time, we had a number of opportunities to share the Gospel one-to-one with many people, young and older, and in a variety of settings, from streets to parks to markets to Laundromats (*see Survey Update, page 3*, where Leah shares some of her 'Survey' opportunities). We also had regular opportunities in South Australia, through street busking, concerts and carols, to 'preach the Word' through song. Praise God for His Divine appointments!

As I mentioned in last issue's editorial, we will be bringing to readers' attention other Gospel workers and the way that God is using them to reach the lost. Read this issue's article which highlights tract evangelism ministries. In the Spring edition we featured street preaching which brought to our attention the challenges that can face those who work in this area. We decided to do a follow-up on that story (*see Frontline News Update on page 3*), so that our readers are kept up-to-date with the continuing situation the Operation 513 team are having with local authorities, as they reach out to the people in their community.

All this reminds me of a message I preached some years ago based on 1 Corinthians 16:9, where the apostle Paul said of his work in Ephesus, "*For a wide door of opportunity for effectual [service] has opened to me [there, a great and promising one], and [there are] many adversaries.*" (AMP) It is the persecution that we receive that is often the confirmation that we are on the right track, and that what we are doing is disrupting the kingdom of darkness. This can come in many different ways.

Over the years when Leah and myself were involved in Tent evangelism outreaches, we ran into opposition from many different quarters. Sometimes from local government,

sometimes drunken demoniacs and most concerning of all, sometimes those within the church. This reminds us that all the work we do for the Lord has to be covered with prayer (*see page 6 for our feature article, Prayer: Powerhouse of the Gospel*). Many times over the years we have experienced great breakthroughs as an answer to prayer. Even to the point of laws being overturned in our favour.

Also in this issue's 'Classic Sermon' on page 4, you will find a reprinted article by A.W. Pink titled, 'Is Christ Your Lord?' I have enjoyed reading some of these old sermons myself as there was a depth in their Gospel preaching that is seldom seen today. The word they preached was like a "...two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow..." (Hebrews 4:12)

We also put these articles in, as we do not know the spiritual standing of everyone who may read this. So our hope is that God would use them to stir people's hearts and, where necessary, bring them to a place of repentance and faith in Christ.

Please feel free to write to us, as we welcome your comments. Send or email your letters or comments to the addresses to the left, marking them 'Attention: The Editor'. And if you are reading this magazine for the first time and would like to receive it regularly, please write, call or email us or fill out the subscription form on our website.

Until next issue. God Bless.



NEWS UPDATE

Street Preaching Persecution at the Gold Coast

Last issue we ran an article about street preaching in which we featured two ministries, one of which was Operation 513. The article gave insight into some of the challenges street preachers face if the Gospel is to be proclaimed publicly. As an update to that article we thought it might interest our readers about the continuing situation which exists for the Gospel workers of OP513.

In recent months, the team who meet and preach, as well as hand out Gospel tracts, in Surfers Paradise on the Gold Coast, have been severely hindered.

Initially it was the police who seemed to set it as their mission to stop them preaching the gospel. This ceased though, after some media coverage. Since then, the Gold Coast City Council has taken their place, and is attempting to not only stop Christians from preaching, but also from handing out gospel tracts.

Anyone caught doing either of these things is being fined \$375 each!

At the time of writing, 9 people have been fined by the council. The council however have been unable to stipulate what laws, if any, have been broken. As a result of this the team from OP513 is appealing these fines in court.

"This is something very important to get involved in. For the outcome of this case will have its effect not just on the team at the Gold Coast, and not just all Christians who live at the Gold Coast, but its impacts will be felt by all Christians around Australia. For if the Gold Coast City Council is allowed to stop Christians talking about Christ, what is saying it will not spread to other places in this land?" (OP513)

It has also come to our attention that street preachers in Adelaide, as well as Coffs Harbour, have received similar treatment. It is important for the church to get behind these people as the ramifications of this could ultimately affect us all. For further updates about OP513 go to www.operation513.com.

It goes without saying that those who are involved in street preaching like the team from OP513 need our prayer support. Please also prayerfully consider whether you can support them financially as they appeal the fines in court and so defend the rights of Christians there at the Gold Coast.



Survey Update


The last three months have been a whirlwind time of travel and witnessing. And when you allow God to direct your path, He will bring the most amazing opportunities out of the most mundane domestic chores. Whilst opportunities to witness were not limited to just doing the 'Survey', we have had numerous opportunities to share the Gospel using this very effective tool.

In Parkes, NSW, while doing laundry at the local Laundromat, I had opportunity to 'survey' two men - one a truckie who was doing his washing, the other an Asian man (*below left*). While our clothes were getting washed, the Lord was able to bring these men to an understanding of their need to be washed, not with detergent, but with the precious blood of Jesus. These 'interviews' were also filmed and will be loaded on our website soon, as an encouragement for others. Go to www.soldiersofthecross.com.au.

In Loxton, SA, I was asked a few times to do some busking in the main street. Afterwards, I had a number of opportunities for witnessing - with the survey and without it. One of those times was with three people (*above left*), who had been watching me sing.

It is interesting how people can be so closed to the Gospel at first. However, with some probing, they often have had some sort of religious background, without knowing Christ as Saviour. As a result they have been 'turned off' from the Gospel and are then immunised to the Good News. They know just enough to turn them off, but not enough to know Him and be saved. Sadly, there are many in this boat. One of these gentlemen was like that, the other was totally hardened to the Gospel and the lady, well, she was involved with a cult. However, praise the Lord that they heard the Good News. We now trust the Lord to do the work of convicting and saving them to eternal life.





We do not ask: Is Christ your 'Savior'?—but is He, really and truly, your Lord? If He is not your Lord, then He is most certainly not your 'Savior'. Those who have not received Christ Jesus as their 'Lord' and yet suppose Him to be their 'Savior', are deluded, and their hope rests on a foundation of sand. Multitudes are deceived on this vital point, and therefore, if the reader values his or her soul, we implore you to give a most careful reading to this little message.

When we ask, 'Is Christ your Lord?', we do not inquire, 'Do you believe in the Godhead of Jesus of Nazareth?' The demons do that (Matthew 8:28-29) and yet perish notwithstanding! You may be firmly convinced of the Deity of Christ, and yet be in your sins. You may speak of Him with the utmost reverence, accord Him His divine titles in your prayers and yet be unsaved. You may abominate those who traduce [*'misrepresent' - Ed*] His person and deny His divinity, and yet have no spiritual love for Him at all.

When we ask, 'Is Christ your Lord?', we mean, 'Does He in very deed occupy the throne of your heart, and does He actually rule over your life?' "*We have turned everyone to his own way*" (Isaiah 53:6) describes the course which we all follow by nature. Before conversion every soul lives to please self. Of old it was

written, "*every man did that which was right in his own eyes.*" And why? "*In those days there was no King in Israel*" (Judges 21:25). Ah! that is the point we desire to make clear to the reader. Until Christ becomes your King (1 Timothy 1:17; Revelation 15:3), until you bow to His scepter, until His will becomes the rule of your life, self dominates, and thus Christ is disowned.

When the Holy Spirit begins His work of grace in a soul, He first convicts of sin. He shows me the real and awful nature of sin. He makes me realize that it is a species of insurrection, a defying of God's authority, a setting of my will against His. He shows me that in going my "*own way*" (Isaiah 53:6), in pleasing myself, I have been fighting against God.

As my eyes are opened to see what a lifelong rebel I have been, how indifferent to God's honor, how unconcerned about His will—I am filled with anguish and horror, and made to marvel that the thrice Holy One has not long since cast me into Hell. Reader, have you ever gone through this experience? If not, there is very grave reason to fear that you are yet spiritually dead!

Conversion, true conversion, saving conversion, is a turning from sin to God in Christ. It is a throwing down of the weapons of my warfare against Him, a ceasing to despise and

ignore His authority. New Testament conversion is described thus: "*Ye turned to God from idols to serve [to be in subjection to, to obey] the living and true God*" (1 Thessalonians 1:9). An 'idol' is any object to which we give what is due alone unto God the supreme place in our affections, the molding influence of our hearts, the dominating power of our lives. Conversion is a right about face, the heart and will repudiating sin, self, and the world. Genuine conversion is always evidenced by "*Lord what wilt Thou have me to do?*" (Acts 9:6); it is an unreserved surrendering of ourselves to His holy will. Have you yielded yourself to Him? (Romans 6:13)

There are many people who would like to be saved from Hell, but who do not want to be saved from self-will, from having their own way, from a life of (some form of) worldliness. But God will not save them on their terms. To be saved, we must submit to His terms: "*Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord [having revolted from Him in Adam], and He will have mercy upon him*" (Isaiah 55:7). Said Christ, "*Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath [all that is opposed to Me], he cannot be My disciple*" (Luke 14:33). Men must be turned "*from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God,*"

Is Christ your Lord?

A. W. Pink's Classic Message



before they can “receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified” (Acts 26:18).

“As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him” (Colossians 2:6). That is an exhortation to Christians, and its force is—Continue as you began. But how had they ‘begun’? By receiving “Christ Jesus the Lord,” by surrendering to Him, by subjecting themselves to His will, by ceasing to please themselves. His authority was now owned. His commands now became their rule of life. His love constrained them to a glad and unreserved obedience. They “gave their own selves to the Lord” (2 Corinthians 8:5). Have you, my dear reader, done this? Have you? Do the details of your life evidence it?

Can those with whom you come into contact see that you are no more living to please self (2 Corinthians 5:15)?

Oh my reader, make no mistake upon this point: a conversion which the Holy Spirit produces is a very radical thing. It is a miracle of grace. It is the enthroning of Christ in the life. And such conversions are rare indeed. Multitudes of people have just sufficient ‘religion’ to make them miserable. They refuse to forsake every known sin, and there is no true peace for any soul until he does. They have never “received Christ Jesus the Lord” (Colossians 2:6). Had they done so,

“the joy of the LORD” would be their strength (Nehemiah 8:10). But the language of their hearts and lives (not their ‘lips’) is, “we will not have this man to reign over us” (Luke 19:14). Is that your case?

The great miracle of grace consists in changing a lawless rebel into a loving and loyal subject. It is a “renewing” of the heart, so that the favored subject of it has come to loathe what he loved, and the things he once found irksome are now winsome (2 Corinthians 5:17). He delights “in the law of God after the inward man” (Romans 7:22). He discovers that Christ’s “commandments are not grievous” (1 John 5:3), and that “in keeping of them there is great reward” (Psalm 19:11). Is this your experience? It would be if you received Christ Jesus THE LORD!

But to receive Christ Jesus the Lord is altogether beyond unaided human power. That is the last which the unrenewed heart wants to do. There must be a supernatural change of heart before there is even the desire for Christ to occupy its throne. And that change, none but God can work (1 Corinthians 12:3). Therefore, “Seek ye the LORD while He may be found” (Isaiah 55:6). Search for Him with all your heart (Jeremiah 29:13). Reader, you may have been a professing Christian for years past, and you may have been quite sincere

in your profession. But if God has condescended to use this message to show you that you have never really and truly ‘received Christ Jesus the Lord’, if now in your own soul and conscience you realize that SELF has ruled you hitherto, will you not now get down on your knees and confess to God. Confess to Him your self-will, your rebellion against Him, and beg Him to so work in you that, without further delay, you may be enabled to yield yourself completely to His will and become His subject, His servant, His loving slave, in deed and in truth?

Arthur Walkington Pink

(1 April 1886 – 15 July 1952)

An English Christian Evangelist and Biblical scholar, Pink was a student at the Moody Bible Institute in the USA. After this he went on to pastor churches in Australia and then the United States.

He also published a monthly magazine entitled ‘Studies in the Scriptures’ which was circulated among English-speaking Christians worldwide. After returning to England in 1934, Pink turned to writing books and pamphlets.

After His death, his works were republished by a number of publishing houses and reached a much wider audience as a result. His writings also sparked a revival of expository preaching and focused readers’ hearts on biblical living.



PRAY

Powerhouse of the Church

By Tim Knowling

The story is told of a man who, on visiting the Metropolitan Tabernacle where Charles Spurgeon pastored, was ushered by Mr Spurgeon into a room under the tabernacle where a number of the saints were gathered. Mr Spurgeon explained that as he ministered, these faithful gathered to pray. He explained that the success of all his ministry was because of this prayer covering, and that this room where they gathered was the 'Power House' of the church.

Indeed if we were to examine the lives of men and women of God who have done great things in His Kingdom, we would find a common denominator. They also were great people of prayer. They knew the truth of the scriptures, "I am

the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me ye can do nothing." (John 15:5)

Christ's example

More importantly, if we are to follow the admonition, "*He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked.*" (1 John 2:6), then we will also find that our Lord Jesus was also in a place of total dependence on the Father.

Jesus Himself said "...*Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.*" (John 5:19)

Not only was Christ totally dependant on the Father in deed, but also in word. He said, "*For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak.*" (John 12:49)

When we look at Christ we see the perfect example of One who was in communion with the Father. This would seem obvious, as one of the foundational doctrines is the triune nature of God. But in Christ we also see a life patterned on prayer throughout the books of the Gospels.

After the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand it says, "*And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up*



Our great need

We see from the Lord's example in these passages of scripture, that daily his work began and ended in prayer. And if Christ himself knew that without prayer he could not fulfill that which the Father had sent him to accomplish, then what of ourselves and that which Christ has commissioned us to do?

If we look at prayer in its simplest form as the means by which we have access to God, then it could be said that the Christian life starts with prayer. For how else can we appeal for mercy to the God we have offended, but by following the example of the publican who beat his breast saying, *"God be merciful to me a sinner"*. (Luke 18:13)

The Christian life is then lived in an attitude of praise and thankfulness to Him who alone saved us. For the soul that has been redeemed, this will be a natural response of our expression of worship to Him who is worthy to be praised.

But as we have already established, it is the realisation that we cannot live this life in our own strength, and it is through prayer that we come to God, that we see our need for Him to intervene in our lives.

When it comes to the fulfillment of the Great Commission, the Christian worker will become increasingly aware of his need for God to work through, and on his behalf, if those he is going to speak to are to come to a place of saving grace.

Fortunately for us, God equips those that he calls (Hebrews 13:21). The Lord himself prayed on our behalf in John 14:16, *"And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Comforter (Counselor, Helper, Intercessor, Advocate, Strengtheners, and Standby), that He may remain with you forever"* (AMP).

We read again in the book of Acts, just before Christ's ascension, the promise of the fulfillment of His prayer, *"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth"* (Acts 1:8).

Leading up to the day of Pentecost, the

brethren were gathered together in the upper room where they *"...all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication..."* (Acts 1:14).

The outcome on the day of Pentecost was a mighty demonstration of God's power being made manifest, firstly upon the believers, but then also upon those who came to see and hear as Peter preached His famous sermon. Under great conviction and concern for their souls, those who heard responded to Peter's call to *"...repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins..."* (Acts 2:38)

“...we know that the salvation of a soul requires a deeper work, a work of the heart which only God can perform.”

God, the opener of hearts

As with Peter on the day of Pentecost, we will become increasingly aware of our need for God to be at work in the hearts of our hearers. If all that was needed to come to Christ, was to give mental ascent to Him and the work of the cross, then our prayers in this area would not rate a high priority. But we know that the salvation of a soul requires a deeper work, a work of the heart which only God can perform. (Jonah 2:9)

I suspect that a large number of people making 'decisions' today through evangelistic outreaches may be coming to the altar through the drawing of the preacher, rather than the divine drawing which God intended. This is obviously not a new concern, as Charles Spurgeon also addressed this issue in his day.

into a mountain to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone." (Matthew 14:23)

In Mark's Gospel we read, how at the beginning of the day before He was to preach in Galilee, He *"....departed into a solitary place, and there prayed."* (Mark 1:35). And in Chapter 6 just before Jesus came to the aid of the disciples who were struggling in the midst of the sea, it says He had *"....departed into a mountain to pray."* (Mark 6:46)

In Luke's Gospel just before the choosing of the Twelve it says *"And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God."* (Luke 6:12)

In the book of John, Jesus made it quite clear what was intended. He said, *“No one is able to come to Me unless the Father Who sent Me attracts and draws him and gives him the desire to come to Me, and [then] I will raise him up [from the dead] at the last day.”* (John 6:44 AMP)

The truth of this passage is attested in the myriad of testimonies that you will hear of how people came to the Lord. It is quite true that we do not fully understand this at first, but over time we look back and see the Lord’s hand in saving us.

The Apostle Paul’s missionary journey to Macedonia in Acts chapter 16, tells us of a woman from the city of Thyatira named Lydia who was saved along with her household. It says, *“And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshiped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized, and her household she besought us saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.”* (Acts 16:14-15)

Corrie ten Boom, a Holocaust survivor, who after the war spent the remainder of her life sharing the message of reconciliation, faced many challenges in her years of ministry. Whilst speaking at a meeting in the then Communist Eastern Europe, she found that without prayer the message God had given her was falling on deaf ears, such was the demonic oppression over these people.

Power to speak

The testimony of the scriptures and church history has been, that when faced with extreme difficulty, those saints who called on the Lord, found the grace to press on. In many

cases there has been great victories and breakthroughs. History even attests to great revivals starting as a result of the church humbling themselves before The Almighty. It has been through these revivals, that large numbers of people have been ushered into the Kingdom of God.

Under persecution the early church in the book of Acts was faced with numerous attempts to stop them preaching. The result of this, was the church coming together in prayer, as they realised that unless God moved on their behalf the work would stop right there.

We see this in the situation when after Peter and John were released from prison, Peter lifted up His voice to God saying, *“And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word, By stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus. And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.”* (Acts 4:29-31)

The Apostle Paul also found himself in similar need. We read in the book of Ephesians chapter 6, his request for the church to pray, *“...that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the Gospel, For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.”* (Ephesians 6:19-20)

We can see from these two passages the place for prayer in our own lives, if we are going to be effective labourers for the Lord.

We need to speak as the oracles of God, and that a holy boldness would be given to us when we speak. None of which is possible without the Holy Spirit working through us, as He is the source from which all ability flows.

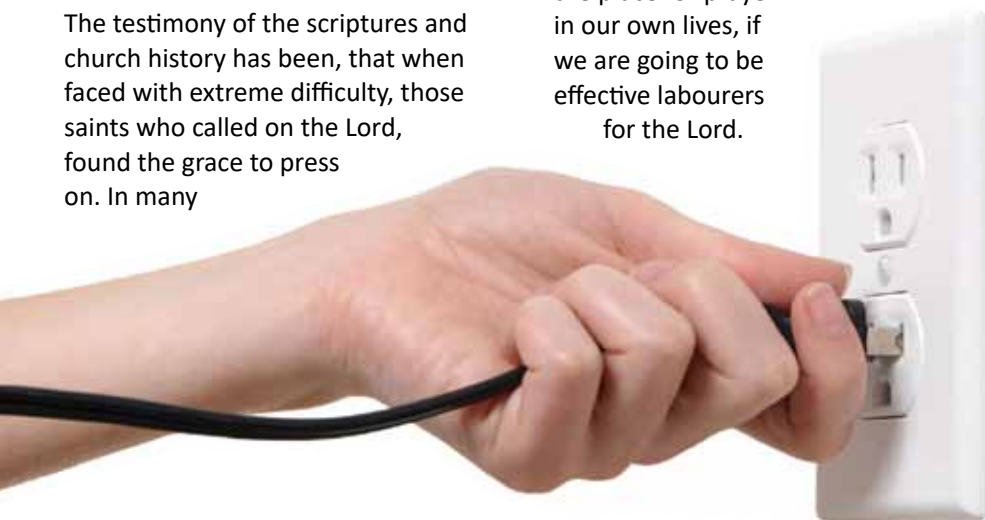
Confidence in Prayer

Therefore, we can have great confidence knowing that the full resources of heaven are available to us in fulfilling the Great Commission. Our Lord said in John’s Gospel, *“Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the father in my name, he may give it you.”* (John 15:16)

“We can have great confidence, knowing that the full resources of heaven are available to us in fulfilling the Great Commission.”

Those whom God has called to full-time service may experience times of greater need than that of the average layman. But the need for God to work on our behalf is no less important in God’s eyes. Men such as George Muller, of Bristol, and Hudson Taylor, missionary to China, are remembered as not only great men of faith, but men of prayer. The two are inseparable, where one exists, so does the other.

However, for all who would be involved in some way, to bring the message of salvation in Christ to this dying world, the exhortation is there in the scriptures to call upon Him in prayer. (Jeremiah 33:3)





Movie Review

‘The Board’ DVD

There are a number of Christian films that have been produced that have a good Gospel presentation. The Board though takes a different approach and explores the workings of a person's soul, which in this movie are represented by a Board of Directors.

The members of this board (Mind, Memory, Emotion, Heart, Will and Conscience) discuss and vote on seemingly mundane events until a co-worker poses a dilemma that has eternal consequences. Having been confronted with the Gospel, the board's hypocritical self-defense is exposed as it wrestles with the ultimate decision that every person must make.

This short-film will reveal the reality of how God speaks to your own soul as you consider your eternal destiny.

Available from your local Christian Bookstore.



FREE

Reaching the whole world

The call to go into all the world and preach the Gospel will inevitably mean that we will meet people who won't necessarily speak the same language that we do. How can we reach these people? There are ministries that have tracts available in different languages and until recently there hasn't really been any other alternative.

In the age of changing technology that we live in, it doesn't come as a surprise that someone would come up with some thing not only new, but also unique. If you are the owner of an **iPhone** you may be interested in a **FREE** application called GM 2:8 that will turn your iPhone into a multi-language preaching machine. That's right, the phone does the preaching for you. Currently you can choose from 11 different languages. All you have to do is select the relevant language, and then you can take someone through a questionnaire or allow them to listen to a Gospel presentation.

GM 2:8 stands for Gospel Mate, and 2:8 comes from the book of Acts chapter 2, verse 8, where it testifies how the people heard the Gospel in their own language. With the GM 2:8 you will never need to feel unprepared if you meet someone and find that they can't speak your language. You will instead be able to communicate the Gospel clearly.

For more information, or to download the application go to www.thegm28.com



GOSPEL

By Leah Knowling

"This gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come." Matthew 24:14

While open-air preaching and one-to-one witnessing have been the main methods of evangelism since Jesus walked the earth, ever since the invention of the printing press by Johannes Gutenberg around 1440 AD, printed Christian Gospel literature, or tracts, as they are known, have become a very effective means of evangelism. As we approach the fulfillment of the

above scripture, and religious persecution sends the church 'underground', so to speak, I believe we will see 'tract evangelism' becoming even more prominent. As we already see in countries with religious persecution, such as China, where public preaching is a crime, the printed page is a mighty tool to spread the Gospel.

For many years the 'western' church has enjoyed religious freedom. And although this has been great for the advancement of the Gospel through open-air preaching, crusades, television and the internet, as well as printed literature, such as tracts and Bibles, many of the 'church' have fallen into an evangelical complacency.

This is nowhere more evident than in Australia, with the



'she'll be right' attitude, even in the church. However, as we are seeing even in Australia, Christians are starting to be persecuted for the Gospel's sake. (see *Frontline News Update* on page 3 for one such case).

The time for complacency is over. Regardless of when Christ returns, thousands die every day; many without knowing Christ, which means they will spend eternity in hell. So we should use every means possible to preach the Gospel, including tracts.

Certainly they have been instrumental in the conversion of many people, including the pioneer missionary to China, Hudson Taylor. He in turn used them cross-culturally through his missions movement, the China Inland Mission. In fact, it is a tract's 'gift' for crossing cultures, as well as gender, age and even time, that makes them so effective.

Dr Billy Graham has said, "Many will not come to a Gospel service in a church or to an evangelistic meeting, but they will read a tract. Therefore, one of the greatest means of world evangelism today is through the printed page."

So what exactly is a tract?

A gospel tract is simply a leaflet with a gospel message on it. They come in many forms, from the very simple and plain, to the glossy and full-colour. They also come in a variety of sizes, from credit card size to larger pamphlets and everything in between.



TRACTS

How can I use them?

To answer that question, this issue we spoke to two 'tract' ministries that operate within Australia - One Million Tracts Australia and John Hartley International Ministries.

Chris Sandford from One Million Tracts Australia, said "There are two primary ways to use a gospel tract. The first is to just hand it out or leave it somewhere for people to find; the other is to use them as a means to get into a conversation with someone."

He said a gospel tract can be used to break the ice when trying to start a conversation. For example, you can hand someone a Million Dollar Note - one of the tracts they sell (see above) - and then begin to talk about the 'million dollar question', "Where will they go when they die?"

"Gospel tracts shouldn't replace one-to-one evangelism, but rather be used to compliment our witnessing," he said.

Chris said when he first started doing evangelism out on the street he was petrified of walking up to strangers and starting a conversation.

"By using gospel tracts I was able to start by handing them to people walking by, then get used to explaining the gospel to those who stopped to ask questions, and then before long my legs stopped shaking enough to walk up to strangers and witness to them."

Chris said he founded One Million Tracts Australia in 2009 for the purpose of providing training and biblical resources locally in Australia, mainly through the distribution of gospel tracts.

"We also print custom tracts for churches, so their congregation can hand them out, and know the people receiving them have a local point of contact if they have any questions."

However, Chris is not the only one who has been called to 'Tract Evangelism'. John Hartley, a quiet, unassuming fellow

from Broken Hill in NSW, was saved at the age of 12 in England. A few weeks later he felt called by God to a life-time's work of tract distribution.

Since that time, John said, "I have left a trail of tracts everywhere I have gone, first in England and Ireland and later here in Australia."

John not only distributes tracts personally, but also produces them freely for others to give away. In 1972 he also started producing a magazine called 'Australian Banner of Love', which later became 'Spreading the Good Word'. This magazine has a world-wide readership, which also means that John sends his tracts all over the world.

He said he has tracts in over 90 languages and even this year, on a trip to Sydney, was able to distribute tracts and booklets in over 20 languages.

"Any Christian could distribute tracts," John said. "It doesn't require any special qualifications."

If you are interested in using tracts for evangelism, please contact Chris at www.onemilliontracts.com.au or John can be contacted at Box 6013, Broken Hill North, NSW, 2880.

And if language is a barrier, go to resourcesforevangelism.com for some excellent free foreign language tracts.

Let us all go forth to "*preach the Gospel to every creature*" (Mark 16:15), using every available means, while there is still time.

Where to place tracts

- Keep a variety of tracts nearby to give to those who come to your door.
- Hand tracts to those who serve you at the supermarket, at the service station, or newsagent.
- Always carry tracts in your pocket, your purse, or in your car. Stock up when planning a trip.
- Give tracts to the sick or lonely. Share them with your dentist, your doctor, and your bank teller.
- Work with others in distributing tracts on the streets or from door to door. Take advantage of special occasions when large crowds gather.
- Obtain permission to place tract racks in Laundromats, hospitals, rest homes, airports, etc.
- Leave tracts in letterboxes as you are walking. Just be aware that it is illegal to put unaddressed mail in letterboxes which have a 'no junkmail' sign attached.

Benefits to using Tracts

- They speak the truth and do not get into arguments or say the wrong thing (providing it's a biblical tract)
- They can linger around for weeks or even years waiting to witness to more people.
- Many who never go to church or read the Bible will accept and read a tract. Through tracts, the Holy Spirit reaches many in private who have closed their hearts to public Gospel appeals.
- Tracts can go anywhere to places and people you could never reach otherwise. They can speak any language and minister to those in any culture.
- Tracts are inexpensive.
- Tracts are concise. Many who shun reading for lack of time or interest will read a short, attractive Gospel tract.
- Tracts open doors for further witness to share your faith. Those desiring additional help can look up the website or write to the address printed on the tract.

Information adapted from a tract by Fred W. Miller, Christian Light Publications, USA.

Hebrews 12:1 says *"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us."*

As we begin another year, a worldly tradition that has permeated the church in recent years, is 'New Year's Resolutions'. The only difference being Christians will resolve to pray more, read their Bibles daily and to share their faith more regularly, among other things. And while these 'resolutions' are fine in themselves, one thing that is generally assured: By the time school starts, our good intentions are all but forgotten and we are back where we started.

Now, do not misunderstand me, I am not advocating the making of New Year's Resolutions. Jesus said *"Let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No'."* Matthew 5:37. The Christian life is a walk of grace by the Spirit, not of works or law. Although we do use the law, to bring the knowledge of sin to an unregenerate sinner; once someone is born again of the Spirit, the law no longer has dominion over them.

However, the Lord does call us to persevere (literally, 'endure with joy') and to finish the race marked out for us. The Apostle Paul's own testimony in Acts 20:24 is *"I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me - the task of testifying to the gospel of God's grace."*

This task of testifying to the Lord, of being His witnesses, was not just the call of the Apostle Paul; it is the commission of everyone who bears the Name of Christ. And while we are called to finish the race and persevere in every area of the Christian life, it is in area of evangelism or simply sharing our faith that most Christians give up the easiest.

We may work on our prayer life, our understanding of the Word, and try to be more patient, loving and kind to others. But, it seems, that many give up sharing their faith after they speak to someone who rejects them. In reality, however, it is not them, but the Lord and His Gospel, they are rejecting. And it is this piece of knowledge, along with a good grasp of what Christ really did on the cross that will help you to persevere and finish the race marked out for you.

The thing that discourages Christians the most, when witnessing, is a lack of 'decisions'. However, as Jesus points out, *"No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him..."* John 6:44. When speaking of the Holy Spirit, He said *"When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment."* John 16:8.

We are not the One who convicts and saves, we are only the messengers of reconciliation. And for the

Christian witness, this takes the pressure off of having to 'close the deal' and get a 'decision'. For some it may also change the way they preach.

How so, you may ask? Well, in an effort to 'sweeten the deal' and get people to 'pray a prayer', some Christians leave out or, at best, gloss over, essentials parts of the Gospel message - parts that a sinner would not like, such as sin, repentance and the judgment to come. Then, they will use the fruit of the Christian life, such as love, joy and peace, as the drawcard to attract and motivate sinners to be saved. However, if we are no longer under the pressure to get a 'decision', then we can be honest and upfront, (in a spirit of love, of course) about the Gospel and the Christian life and about the character of God: that God is not only a God of love, but of holiness and of justice as well.

So, how does this encourage us to persevere and finish the race? By getting our eyes off the person we are witnessing to and off ourselves and putting them on Jesus and His purposes. Hebrews 12:2-3 says, *"Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart."*

If Jesus, after all he went through, could look not at the sufferings of the flesh, but at what they would accomplish, then surely if we keep our eyes fixed on Him, we can do the same. Then one day, when we have finished the race He has marked out us, we will hear, *"Well done, good and faithful servant,... enter into your rest."* Matthew 25:21

Twenty Years Lost!

A story is told about a Christian man who was giving away tracts. Among those who received one was a gentleman who remarked that he feared such efforts did little permanent good. "I am not opposed to such work," he said. "In my younger days I did a good deal of it myself, but I cannot say that I ever saw any fruit from it."

The tract distributor was somewhat 'dampened' by that remark. But he instantly remembered that his own conversion was brought about by means of a tract, which he received when a lad of twelve. As he passed the door of a Mission Hall, a young man handed him a tract and asked him to go inside and hear the Gospel. He did go in and heard words that awakened him to think of eternity and his state before God. He went home in deep soul trouble. In his anxiety, he turned to the tract he received, read it, and was saved. The tract distributor told this story to the gentleman, who listened with evident interest and when it was finished he said, "May I ask where this event took place?"

The man named the street, the Hall and the very night on which he got the tract, and was invited inside. The gentleman's eyes filled with tears; he grasped his hand, and said with great emotion, "It was my work many a night, when newly converted, to stand at that door giving tracts and inviting passers-by; and well I remember inviting the bright-eyed lad in that night. But I lost heart soon after that and gave it up, thinking such work was almost useless. Now after twenty years, God has let me know it was not in vain, and if He spares me to return to the city, I shall by His Grace, return to the service He gave long ago confessing my faithlessness in leaving it."

"You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised." Hebrews 10:36

Adapted from a tract issued by Evangelical Tract Distributors

