

Faith on the line

A Journal for Those Who Dare

Fall 2003

Volume 8

Issue 4

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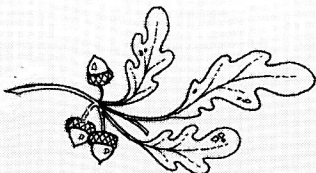
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*Thou art the Potter, I am the clay.
Mold me and make me after Thy will,
While I am waiting, yielded and still.*



HE SPEAKS YOUR LANGUAGE

BY RICHARD O'FILL



I was listening to the news not long ago. They told of a lady who had retired as a dean in a certain university. She lives alone and is in her 80's. She received a telephone call from a person who claimed to be, if I remember right, representing Ed McMann from the Publisher's Clearing House Sweepstakes. The person told her that she was the lucky winner of a million dollars, but in order to receive the money she needed to send a bond of ten thousand dollars. This she did. A day or so later the person called again and informed her that she had not won one million but ten million dollars, and that she would need to send more bond money. I don't need to tell you what was going on. In the end she lost sixty thousand dollars to a voice on the telephone that told her to send the money to a post office box number that had since been closed. When they talked with the old lady afterwards about the person who had called, all she could say that she could remember about him was that he was so kind and understanding!

Ladies and gentlemen, as a minister of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, I am here to tell you that there are voices out there... voices that sound kind and understanding, but these voices could well be robbing you of something much more than sixty thousand dollars. If you will do as they say, these kind, understanding voices could cause you to give up the true gospel and invest in a hollow, empty gospel. The hollow, empty gospel will be kinder and more understanding, but it will be a gospel that will lead the person who buys into it to nowhere but eternal loss. I really don't understand why so many of us are buying into these gospel scams. Can I interest you in buying the Brooklyn Bridge?

We have no one to blame but ourselves for how this will all turn out. The Scriptures say that we have a more sure word of prophecy wherein we do well to take heed as unto a light that shines in a dark place. But apparently we have preferred the darkness—no, we really don't prefer darkness; it is just that many have lost the ability to tell the difference.

The junk gospel that is being preached in more and more places these days is really no gospel at all. As you remember, the word "gospel" means *good news*, and the scam gospel that is being preached in more and more places is not even good news. In fact, it is bad news. Maybe I shouldn't say that though, because to some mind-sets, bad news is good news.

The true gospel—the real thing—is the only thing that can save us. The devil knows that, and for this reason he has come up with a gospel that, instead of being good news, is bad news even though it sounds like good news. But it is, nevertheless, bad news, because the person who buys into it will be lost instead of being saved, and though they will finally see that it is

bad news, they will have stayed in it until it was too late, because they thought it was good news.

The true gospel is both bad news and good news. The true gospel is bad news to the devil and those who have bought into his mind-set, and it is good news to sinners who want out.

But here is where the rub comes in. Extensive longitudinal demographic studies done over thousands of years by the Holy Spirit have concluded that the majority of sinners, when push comes to shove even when they are confronted with the good news, prefer to stay the way that they are.

You would think that this being the case, the devil would be satisfied with his winnings over the long haul and just live and let live a little. But the devil is not like that. He is not the kind of a person that you would want for a next-door neighbor. He is not into live and let live, but rather he lives and you die.

At the end of time just before the close of probation, which by the way is now, he makes a super demonic effort to cause the ruin of everyone who happens to be alive at the time, including the good guys. Satan has a dream—we would see it as a nightmare—but he has a dream, and that dream is to completely eliminate the people who insist on following God on this planet. *Revelation 12:17*, "And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."

Of course, we have come to understand that Jesus isn't going to let the remnant be wiped out, though there will be many martyrs. Just before the close of probation, God, in His mercy, will put into motion the greatest revelation of the true gospel that the world has ever seen. In order to try to checkmate that move by God, the devil is right now putting into motion the greatest revelation of a false gospel that has been seen since the Middle Ages.

By now you might be thinking, "Hey, this is going to be some fight. I think I'll stay and watch." No, my friend, we don't watch this fight... we are in it. We are sure how it will finally end, but we are not sure who will be on whose side when it is all over. I say this because now, what before looked clear, is becoming very confusing.

There are huge numbers changing sides every day. People who apparently were followers of the true gospel are running up the white flag and surrendering to the false gospel. At the same time, huge numbers who seemed to be on the side of the false gospel are moving across the lines to the true. This move is not always physical. In fact, at this stage of the battle, it is a change of ideology. This means that people can even be going to the same church and not be on the same side anymore.

This phenomenon is to be expected. Jesus was betrayed by an insider, and He Himself said there would be false teachers and false prophets and that even family members would betray His true followers.

All my life I had heard of what was going to happen in the last days. What is happening was clearly told us in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. But I think we were kind of like Jesus' disciples. He told them over and over again that He would be betrayed and crucified, but they must have been thinking of something else

at the time because they never caught on.

And so God revealed to us through His Word that it would be this way. But we must have been a little bit like the guy who said that he wasn't afraid to die; he just didn't want to be there when it happened! But then, I said that the devil would come up with a good news gospel that was really bad news, because it would be fatal to your salvation if taken according to directions.

The gospel that the devil has devised for the 21st century is almost impossible to differentiate from the true gospel. This is because the false gospel uses exactly the same vocabulary that the true gospel uses with a few exceptions and some serious spin doctoring.

It is incredible how clever he has been. He has basically invented a gospel that is every sinner's dream come true. Of course, we are all sinners, but there are two classes of sinners these days. Listen to me now. I repeat... we are all sinners, but there are two classes of us sinners and we are 180 degrees apart. One class of sinners likes it that way, and the others want out.

The devil has designed a gospel for the first group. The true gospel is for the second. The devil's gospel tells every sinner in good and regular standing what they have always wanted to hear—that Jesus saves us while we keep on sinning.

The true gospel is the news for every sinner who is fed up with sin and longing to be set free from its penalty and power, and that gospel is, sin shall not have dominion over us.

I don't know if you are into physical fitness. It is important that we get exercise. We use the expression "keep in shape." Not long ago my wife and I joined Bally's. We go there to walk, to swim and to use the conditioning machines. I have heard that weightlifters say, "No pain, no gain." If that is true in muscle building, it is also true in the spiritual life. If you hear a gospel that doesn't cause pain and death to the life of sin, then you are hearing a junk gospel.

We need to set the record straight. There may be some who don't understand, but listen to me now. When Adam and Eve sinned, something just didn't happen to their bodies, something happened in their hearts. Where five minutes before their nature was joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and self-control, five minutes later we are talking about people who now were bent to adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, emulation, wrath, strife, sedition and heresies.

Think now... the gospel, if it is going to be good news, has got to address both problems; the problem of a body which is now old-age positive and the problem of a nature that is suddenly anti-social. Do you understand what I mean?

It is easier, if you can say such a thing, for God to do

something about our mortal bodies than it is for Him to do something about our contaminated hearts. To do something about the body is simply a blink of the eye as far as He is concerned. To do something about our hearts is infinitely more complex. It requires us to want to change. Sinners who are into sin feel good about themselves the way they are; this makes it impossible for God to save them. Though nothing is impossible with God, the one thing He will not do is give you a new heart when you don't want one. If that was the way that He did things, He would have aborted what happened at the Tree of Knowledge. Do you see where I am coming from?

Ladies and gentlemen, God created us to be holy. We are not holy; therefore, the gospel is not a true gospel unless it is having the effect in your life and mine of de-installing the works of the flesh and installing the fruit of the Spirit.

I told you that the sham gospel the devil has come up with for those that are into sin uses the same vocabulary as the true gospel with some strategic omissions and some special spin doctoring. For this reason, a person who is looking for a way out of sin can become momentarily confused when he

hears the false gospel being preached.

The devil is an evil genius. He knows how to play on words and to play one concept off against another. A person can be thrown off guard. Now let me give you a few things to look out for. Remember he speaks our language.

Be careful when you hear people talking a lot these days about legalism. This word is being used more and more often as a smoke

screen to try to play down the Ten Commandments. A person in their theological right mind in the 21st century doesn't believe that we are saved by keeping the Ten Commandments. But make no mistake, people who are being saved are people who want to keep the Ten Commandments and they are committed by God's grace to do so.

By the way, the reason you can't be saved by keeping the Ten Commandments is simply because a person who hasn't been born again can't keep the commandments from the heart no matter how hard they try. The Bible teaches us that the Ten Commandments can tell you what not to do, but they can't give you the power not to do it. Only the Spirit of our crucified and risen Lord can do that. But make no mistake, Jesus died and was resurrected from the dead not to get you and me out of obedience, but to get us into obedience.

If you hear someone preaching against legalism who is telling you that people who are being saved don't have to keep the Commandments, that person is preaching a false gospel. Because a person who has the Spirit of Christ in them moves out of disobedience into obedience, and He who has begun this good work in us will finish it. Another time you want to wake up and fine-tune is when you hear people say that Christ did it all and that we don't have to do anything.

The gospel that the devil has devised for the 21st century is almost impossible to differentiate from the true gospel. This is because the false gospel uses exactly the same vocabulary that the true gospel uses with a few exceptions and some serious spin doctoring.

This is a package bomb that will blow off more than your fingers. I say a package bomb. The mistake is in the combination of concepts. Of course, Christ did it all. Who said He didn't? When Jesus died on the cross and three days later was resurrected and 40 days later was taken to heaven, the sin problem had a decisive solution. It is complete and permanent.

I said, the problem is in the packaging of the concepts. The thing blows up in your hand at the part of "we don't have to do anything." Now, if we were lesser life forms, that would be true. But we were originally created in the image of God, and, as such, we have been endowed with the power of choice. This means, ladies and gentlemen, that although Christ did it all, it means nothing to us unless we buy into it. Are you kidding? We don't have anything to do? For

us who were dead in trespasses and sin, accepting the life-changing power of Jesus Christ into our lives is the most important decision that we will ever make. I wish they wouldn't say that we don't have to do anything.

I told you that the devil had done a lot of spin doctoring. If we sign the contract on the devil's gospel and then go to claim our heavenly real estate, we will hear the words, "Depart from me ye workers of iniquity. I never knew you."

By now you might be saying, "But I have heard that it is easy to be saved and hard to be lost."

The truth is, the Word says if scarcely shall a righteous man be saved what shall be the end of those who refuse the gospel? *1 Peter 4:18*: "And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?"

But if it is hard to be saved Jesus' way, it is impossible to be saved any other way. But be saved we must and be saved we will. Out in the world, if you want to put somebody down, you can call them an "xyz." But in the church, there is a nice clean way to shut up someone, and that is you call them a Pharisee. Calling a person a Pharisee in a religious context is like calling them an "xyz" outside.

As you remember, the Pharisees were the bad guys in the Bible. It was better to be a prostitute or a tax collector than a Pharisee. The Pharisees were the enemies of Jesus. So when they call a person a Pharisee these days it is just about the worst insult you can give to someone, because it means you are an enemy of Jesus, and besides that, you are a hypocrite and think you are better than anyone else.

You might be thinking, "Surely no one out there would call a person a Pharisee." I'm sorry, but it is happening; it is happening more and more. The Scripture tells us that we do not battle against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers. You know the text. We are not supposed to be fighting against each other; rather we are supposed to be united in the truth in the struggle against error.

Back in the old days it would have been easy. Back then we had a lot of strong opinions, but we agreed that the Bible would be the last word. And so we would all go to the Bible, and when it was over we would settle our differences by the truth of God's Word. God's Word was the last word! Sorry to say, those days seem to have passed.

Unfortunately, we are not united. Some have lined up with the truth and others have lined up with error. Back in the old days it would have been easy. Back then we had a lot of strong opinions, but we agreed that the Bible would be the last word. And so we would all go to the Bible, and when it was over we would settle our differences by the truth of God's Word. God's

Word was the last word! Sorry to say, those days seem to have passed. God's Word seems to no longer be the arbitrator of truth. There are still some who see the Bible as the ultimate test of authority, but there is a growing segment of opinion who feel that the Bible somehow falls short of meeting the complex issues of the 21st century. They say we must overlook a plain "thus saith the Lord," and that we must talk it out and come to a meeting of the minds based on a little from my culture and a little from yours, and throwing in

a whole lot of the culture of the world for good measure. Mix it all together and we come up with, not a new theology, but rather a new morality that at its core is the old immorality.

Back in what must have been the Twenties, my wife's grandfather came to the United States from the Ukraine. He was in his late teens and alone on a boat headed for the USA. A group of Russians approached him and said, "Where are you going?"

He said, "I am going to America."

They said, "You can't just be going to America; you have to be going to somewhere in America."

"I don't know where I'm going," he said.

"Then why don't you go with us? We are going to Southern Virginia."

And so he did. The Russians set themselves up as farmers in the area around Yale, Virginia. They even built a little church. They put a sign out front that said, "Russian Baptist Church." One day a couple of Seventh-day Adventist literature evangelists came along. They told the church leaders that Saturday was the Sabbath. The leaders of the Russian Baptist Church said that the men were wrong, but that they would be willing to study the matter from the Bible, and so they did. When it was all over, the leaders of the Russian Baptist Church took down the sign in front of the church and put up a new one that said, "Russian Seventh-day Adventist Church."

It is hard in the mind-set of the 21st century, here at the beginning of the 2nd century, to settle issues having to do with truth, faith, morals, and the Bible. For even Christians, and I might say even many Seventh-day Adventists, the Bible is no longer the standard of right and wrong.

But back to the matter of someone calling someone else a Pharisee. Don't worry if that happens to you. Don't forget that it is human nature to begin to call names when reason breaks down.

I was participating in one of the discussions in the then Adventist Forum on CompuServe. The theme of the discussion

was homosexuality. The discussion had been going on for at least six months. I happened to find it one day. Believe it or not, the discussion was being lead by a practising homosexual who at the time was a prominent person in a certain Seventh-day Adventist church, and this person was being supported by a group of people who believe that there is such a thing as a practising homosexual Christian.

Ladies and gentlemen, a person who practices any sin with impunity—by that I mean without shame, whether they be a practising homosexual or a person who is fooling around with some else's spouse or a compulsive liar or what have you—is blaspheming the name of Christ if they call themselves a follower of Jesus. At best they have departed from the faith.

The Apostle John is clear. He says in *1 John 1:6*: "If we say that we have fellowship with Him and walk in darkness, we lie and do not the truth." But that text is easy to turn on its head. These days, people simply call darkness light.

So there they were in the forum, debating whether it is right or wrong to practice a homosexual lifestyle. If the early founders of our church knew that it would come to this, they would turn over in their graves; to say nothing of how Jesus must weep. This is indeed what it means to crucify the Son of God afresh.

I joined the discussion. I used Scripture to establish the truth. The other person argued that Scripture was OK for a certain time, but had to be taken with a grain of salt in our time. Finally, the other person said that the problem was that I was a Pharisee. When arguments run out, first you will hear a point of view that will begin to run down the Bible, and then they will start to call you names.

Friends, I know that what I am saying is unusual. Yet we are in a struggle. We must understand the issues and how the devil will try to intimidate us into giving up the truth. In some ways, the persecution of the last days is underway. It is a mind game at this stage.

Friend, don't back down when—in the struggle between right and wrong, between truth and error—someone begins to call you names. You are in good company. When they couldn't handle truth anymore, they said that

Jesus was a devil. So don't worry...if they called Jesus a devil, why worry if someone calls you a Pharisee? Besides, Pharisees were themselves sinners in denial. That is what I said to the pro-homosexual lifestyle group on the forum. I said, "I am not a Pharisee. A Pharisee was a sinner in denial. I do not deny that I am a sinner. It seems to me that if we want to get technical, a Pharisee is anyone who is into sin but denying it."

So, remember what I am telling you. The devil wants you to back down from the truth. He will try to intimidate you by classing you with the enemies of Christ. But don't worry, that is exactly what they did to Jesus, and Jesus said rather clearly that those who would stand for the truth would be treated like He was treated. You can bank on it.

Remember what I said early on. The devil speaks our

language. He is now using the words that we used to use to call people out of sin. He is using the same words to institutionalize sin and give credibility to his junk gospel. Remember what I am telling you now. He speaks our language. Before you agree to buy into what is being said, take the time to read the fine print. Now I am going to tell you about the word that is the most misused and abused of all. It is the devil's trump word. I don't need to tell you which one that it is. You can guess his trump word is the word "love." It is almost unbelievable, but the word "love" is a buzzword in the devil's sham gospel. It is the most dangerous word of all. He has painted the word "love" on the door that leads to eternal loss, and a great number of people are streaming into it.

Now, I know what you might be thinking by now..."Pastor O'Ffill, I suspected something was wrong with you; now I know it. You are against everything, and now you have revealed your hand, because you are against love."

Did I say that I was against true love? I am not. God is love, and I love God. It is not me who is against love. It is the devil who is against love. But to do it right, he has taken the word "love" and turned it inside out. Listen to me now, please. Listen up and listen closely. The love that is being preached in more and more places these days is really not love at all.

This is why, when you hear someone preaching about how important and wonderful love is—before you get that warm comfortable glow—it would be smart to ask the person what they mean by love. When a person says these days that all that matters is that we love one another, ask them what they think about living together before you are married. Don't let them off the hook. Insist that they answer you.

When a person says these days that all that matters is that we love one another, ask them what they think about the Sabbath. They will probably say that they believe in it. That's good, but don't stop there...get them to tell you how we ought to keep it.

My friends, do I need to tell you things are not like what they look like or sound like these days? If we don't have the ability to discern right from wrong, when Jesus comes we could discover that we have gone to a lot of trouble for nothing. Can't we see? The devil speaks our language now. He is using all the right words, but they now have all the wrong meanings.

You want to really know what is going on? When you hear someone talking about the fact that all that matters is that we love one another, ask them what they think about obedience. Here is where the hidden agenda will come out. The love that is being preached in many places is a substitute for obedience to the Word of God. That is how you can tell the true love from the false love. The true love is into obedience to the Word of God. False love always will play down obedience. That should

The devil wants you to back down from the truth. He will try to intimidate you by classing you with the enemies of Christ. But don't worry, that is exactly what they did to Jesus, and Jesus said rather clearly that those who would stand for the truth would be treated like He was treated. You can bank on it.

be your signal that something is wrong. Remember what Jesus said, "If you love me, keep my commandments."

Unfortunately, the love that is being taught in more and more places is actually a cover for selfishness—an "I will decide what is right and what is wrong for myself" attitude.

We are being told that love is all that matters, and that is right. True love is all that matters and true love works like this.

Listen...you remember how it goes...I Corinthians 13:4-7: "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things."

I don't need to tell you that the "love" of the 21st century doesn't have much in common with what I have just read. If you could characterize the love of the 21st century in just a few words, you might say that love of the 21st century takes. It doesn't give, and when it does, it wants something in return. Another word that the devil is using very effectively to keep people from being able to discern between good and evil, right and wrong, truth and error, is the word "judge." When you are discussing a particular matter with some and the conversation drifts into matters having to do with faith and morals, it is more and more common for someone to say, "But we shouldn't judge." I would like to ask, why not? When we buy a house, we judge. When we buy a car, we judge. When someone accidentally gives us the wrong change, we judge. When someone backs into your car and dents the bumper, we judge. What is the deal? If someone hurt our child or a family member, we don't mind judging. But a person may say, "But that is different! I judge when it has to do with me; when it doesn't have to do with me, it is not my business."

On one occasion I was called to jury duty in Seminole County, Florida. The day that I spent there helped me to better understand the significance of the process of judgment here and before God. As I sat in the courtroom, I thought of the fact that the Bible says that we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ. The judge and the lawyers emphasized over and over again that the accused was innocent until proven guilty.

It occurred to me, and maybe what I am about to say is not a totally good illustration, but when we give our lives to Jesus, we are then declared innocent. We are, as we say, under the blood. Jesus is our Righteousness, yet we continued to live after we professed to accept Him. The question in the judgment will be to see if we stayed under the blood or if we didn't. Those who accepted Jesus as Savior and then are lost, will be condemned by their own lives. They either did or didn't let Jesus cleanse them in an on-going way from all unrighteousness.

I was talking to someone about the times in which we live. Do you realize, my friends, that very likely we are the generation that is being given the opportunity to be the ones in which Jesus will finish His work? We are very likely the generation that

will meet God face to face without seeing death. This is enormously different from any generation before us. This means that Jesus will finish His work in us while we live. This means a cooperation with Him that is, by its very nature, different than any generation before. Not because we are better than any generation that has gone before, but rather because of the work that Jesus must and will complete in us. It must be said of us, "Here are

they that keep the commandments of God and have the faith of Jesus," and in another place "These are they that follow the lamb where ever he goeth." *Revelation 14:4*: "These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb."

Jesus is serious about completing the work in us that He has so graciously begun. This is no time for business as usual. We cannot afford to slack when we are so near the end. We love Jesus

too much to let Him down just now when His great plan for the cleansing and blotting out of sins is about to occur.

The devil has done more to damage the church of God since he joined it than he ever did when he was trying to wipe it out in the persecutions of the past. He now has learned the language of the gospel. He knows all the right words to say at all the right times. But as I have been pointing out, he is not using the words to further the plan of salvation, but to try to deceive and finally destroy those who don't seem to know what is going on.

What are we going to do about all of this? What we must do is forget about trying to find a new interpretation to the faith that has come to us from our fathers, and discover how things were meant to be. Our faith was based on truth. We may not have applied it consistently or understood how deep and wide it was, but that was not a problem of truth and error but rather of application of truth.

Let's get into the Word as we never have before. May I suggest the book, *Bible Readings for the Home*. Its format is question-and-answer and each question is answered with a text of Scripture.

Let us get into praying that the Holy Spirit will make the gospel real in our lives. We've gotten into trouble because we were often not growing in grace, and even sometimes we were not practising what we were preaching. It is not too late. God will help us.

(This sermon is part of a series entitled *Discerning the Times*.)

by Richard O'Ffill



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A.D. UPDATE

RICHARD O'FFILL IN WESTMINSTER - Sept 2003

The Westminster Seventh Day Adventist church was grateful for another uplifting weekend seminar with Pastor Richard O'Ffill. The two-day event began on September 19th, 2003 with a message on honoring the Sabbath and making it more special. The theme for the weekend was "As For Me And My House" with topics on humility, honesty and purity presented in Pastor O'Ffill's delightfully simple manner. Pastor O'Ffill is the revivalist for the Florida conference and also speaks worldwide encouraging and inspiring churches. An audio set of the 5 inspiring messages is available by calling Amazing Discoveries at 1-866-572-9457.

KARI 550 AM RADIO BROADCASTS IN 2003

From January to November, 2003, Amazing Discoveries has been on the air in the Vancouver and Seattle area. Every day for a half hour at 1:30 pm, the three angels' message has been broadcast to thousands. By God's grace, Pastor Victor Gill presented a full evangelistic campaign on the air for over 5 months, and Brian Neumann presented a six-week study on music. Our office has been receiving calls almost every day from people expressing their thanks to us for airing these broadcasts. Several non-Adventists would like to book Brian Neumann's music series in their churches, and many are purchasing his book to share with friends and family. All glory goes to God for His blessing on these radio broadcasts. This year was a one-year pilot project for Amazing Discoveries on radio, and due to the

response we have been receiving, we plan to go back on the air full-time within the next six months with more topics. We solicit your support and prayers as we lay plans to go back on the air waves, and increase our coverage to a greater part of the country.

BRIAN NEUMANN 2003 UPDATE

2003 has been a busy, productive year for Brian Neumann. After finishing his U. S./ Canadian tour in May of this year, Brian went back to South Africa to prepare for an evangelism campaign the conference had scheduled him to do in one of the small local towns in the Cape Province area. This was conducted during the months of June/July and was a tremendous blessing. After the campaign proper, Brian continued with follow up work until he left on the 3rd of September for his European tour. This tour involved the countries of Germany, France and Switzerland. The seminars conducted there were on the topics of music and worship. The response to the seminars was encouraging – especially as far as the youth were concerned. On the 14th of October, Brian left Europe for Australia. He did a three-city tour (Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne) where he conducted end-time/New World Order workshops. The meetings were well attended and the response was very positive. Brian's newest book *The Megiddo Crux* has just been published and has been welcomed by people around the world as a book for sharing with friends and family about the end times. Be sure to order your own copy by calling Amazing Discoveries at 1-866-572-9457.



VICTOR GILL IN THE UKRAINE 2003

It had been two years since our last trip to the Ukraine. This summer we had a number of contacts from various conferences in the Ukraine inviting my husband, Vic, to have a series of meetings in their areas. Each place seemed to be needy, and we were struggling with where we should go. Finally, Vic told the brethren that they should decide where he should go, and we would comply. The answer came: the Crimea area - the city of Simferopol. We had never been to the Crimea and were anxious to see what it would be like. We were pleasantly surprised.

We left Vancouver airport on the 15th of September and arrived in Kiev on the 16th. Our customs experience was quite uneventful except for the fact that Karl Maletz, a member of our team, was asked to pay a fee of \$48 US because of all the things he was bringing into the country. I was made to open two of our suitcases because they couldn't figure out what all the musical instruments and little dinky cars and trucks were all about. But when I explained what they were for, they let me close the suitcases and keep going. Three vans met us at Kiev airport, and we loaded most of our belongings in the one van that would take our things to Simferopol. The Union brethren knew we had a lot of luggage, and they wanted to make sure they had enough room



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HAVE YOU COUNTED THE COST?

by Wendy Goubey Penner

There are times in our lives, when something happens to us, in such a way that it seems to open the eternal to us for a moment, something that is charged with love and the cost of that love. It may be something small, as light as the touch of the dawnwind on the leaves of the tree, something not to be captured and told in words. Or it is the dear human love we find in someone that bathes us as in summer seas and rests us through and through. Can we ever cease to wonder at the love we sometimes find in rare companions? And then suddenly we recognize our Lord in them. It is His love that they lavish upon us. Or sometimes we just look up through the blue air and see the love of God. And yet, after all, how little we see!

"That ye may be able to comprehend what is the breadth and length and depth and height and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge..." Eph 3:18,19 - the words are too great for us. What do we comprehend? What do we know? Confounded and abased, we enter into the Rock and hide us in the dust before the glory of the Majesty of love - the love whose symbol is the cross. And a question pierces us: What do I know of Calvary love? (If Amy Carmichael)

This summer I have been finding some glimpses of the answers to that question. I learned, for starters, that I did not understand in a personal way the cost my Saviour paid to save me. In the garden of Gethsemane, Jesus went *three* times to ask God to take away the cup. His human nature shrank from the awfulness of what He was about to do. Isaiah 53 says that He was "poured" out unto death. It says that He was a man of "sorrows" and "acquainted with grief" and that He "carried our sorrows". In fact, I discovered, He was the *Prince* of Sufferers! I did not know what that meant. I had sung it in Handel's Messiah many times. But, what did it really mean?

The more I contemplate it, the more I read about it, the more I realize that love is inextricably connected with suffering. "The way of love is never an easy way. If our hearts be set on walking in that way we must be prepared to suffer. 'It was the way the Master went; should not the servant tread it still?' It is possible that we may be enclosed in circumstances which drain natural love, till we feel as dry as grass on an Indian hillside under a burning sun. We have toiled for someone dear to us, but never knew it as toil. We have poured out stores of health never to be recovered, but did not know it, nor would we have cared if we had known it, so dearly did we love. And all our hope was that the one so cherished would become a minister to others. But it was not so. And then unwillingly we became aware of a strange unresponsiveness in the one for whom nothing had seemed too much to do, of a coldness that chilled, a hardness that pushed away as with hard hands the heart that had almost broken to save that life from destruction. Then a fear worse than any pain has us in its

grip: is the love of the years slipping from us? "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do" - is that fading from our memory? 'Love never faileth' - is love failing now? Shall we find ourselves meeting lovelessness with lovelessness?" May it not be so! (If Amy Carmichael)

Love was exemplified in Jesus' condescension to become a "man of sorrows", to become "acquainted with grief", and it culminated itself in the garden of Gethsemane and on the hill called Calvary, where the love of Christ revealed its enormity to all mankind.

Jesus says to us, "Take up your cross." (Matt 10:38) What does that mean? The cross and the way to the cross is a bitter road of death. Death to self-will, a new life of acceptance of suffering. The Cross is a sign of loss - shameful, humiliating, abject, total loss. And each of us needs to experience the loss of ourselves and learn to live with death - death to self, death to the world, death to our expectations, death to our control of our lives, subjection to circumstances in our lives that we wish were different.

"Deeper and deeper must be the dying, for wider and fuller is the lifetide that it is to liberate... Death must reach the very springs of our nature to set it free: it is not this thing or that thing that must go now: it is blindly, helplessly, recklessly, our very selves. A dying must come upon *all* that would hinder God's working through us - all interests, all impulses, all energies that are "born of the flesh" - all that is merely human and apart from His Spirit." *Lilias Trotter*

When things get hard, when God starts taking the things that we hang on to most, what then? I know what I have said. "I will not relinquish this misery. Not right now. God has taken away what I most wanted. I have a right to feel sorry for myself. I have been wronged. I will refuse, for a while at least, any offer of comfort and healing. Don't speak to me of joy. You pour salt in my wounds. Let me lick them for a while."

And in that misery, my sense of vision is clouded to the point of near blindness. And I grope for meaning and for direction. The temptation is there to try to escape by forgetting, by drowning the trouble with activity, by shutting oneself off from the world, by surrendering to defeat and sullen resentment. But does any of this lead to peace? Temporary respite perhaps, but what about the lasting peace promised by God?

Here, where it seems He is not at work, where His will seems obscure or frightening, where He is not doing what we expected Him to do, where He is most absent, here and nowhere else is the appointed place. If faith does not go to work *here*, it will not go to work at all.

What will be our response? The response of a humbled heart? One that admits its poverty and recognizes the gentle Love that waits, the Joy that is seeking him *precisely* because he is in such pain that he can hardly seek anything but death.

Somehow my ruined plans fit into His larger plans. It is a statement of faith.

Sometimes, I feel like the woman with the blood issue of 30 years - as if I can only crawl and reach and touch a little piece of the hem of His garment. **And there is still healing there.**

Sometimes we know that there is no way that we can even get up out of bed, or off our knees to walk out the door without the strengthening power of God's Spirit. We are glued to the spot, crying, knowing we are utterly inadequate for the job we must do - utterly inadequate to be anything for anybody, having absolutely nothing to give anymore. Knowing that at any moment, we can fall again, even just by a little word in our mouth. Knowing that we cannot do it of our own selves. **And yet there is strength given.**

What does all this have to do with love anyways? What is love anyways? Is it stinted, measured, calculated? I have been learning that loving brings fullness of life, as well as . But loving is not easy. It is easy to give to those that love in return. But it is not as easy to give to those that hurt us, use us, misunderstand us. It is then my love becomes stinted, measured and calculated. It is then that we entertain thoughts and even actions of retaliation. Can we abandon ourselves enough to love without being loved? To accept the great risk of great lovers? To give up an awesome power - the power to hurt? No one in the world has such power to hurt as a husband, wife, or intimate friend. To love is to be vulnerable to that power which lies in the hands of the one loved. To love means to open ourselves to suffering. Shall we shut our doors to love, then, and be 'safe'? Or can our cross be found in loving another even at great risk and often in the face of the reality of pain?

Our cross is not a showpiece of our noble struggle, of our dutiful sacrifice, of our worthiness of heaven's reward. Our cross is utter abandonment of ourselves to death for the benefit of others. This abandonment, in all cases, will mean pain . To be "poured out" as Christ was - without measure - completely - to the last dregs. Christ drank the cup to the last dregs. Can we be expected to do any less? The answer is NO, the way of the cross leads to the cross and not to a bank of flowers. We cannot be surprised when the way is rough, and we cannot think it strange, though the word is, "Think it not strange, count it all joy." (1 Peter 4:12; James 1:2) With what misgivings we turn over our lives to God, imagining somehow that we are about to lose everything that matters.

I find that events do not change souls. It is our response to them which finally affects us. I find that though I am in a new place of yieldedness before Him who has thus planned my life, little things remain between me and Him - big things in His sight.

What do I know of Calvary love? Very little. But enough to know that I don't have it. Only that I want it. Enough to know that what Jesus Christ did for me was more enormous than my finite mind can fathom. Before He got on that cross, He struggled in Gethsemane. Before He struggled in Gethsemane, He walked the roads of Israel - sacrificing His energy, His rest, and using His thought and every available moment of time to build up a kingdom that would last forever, being misunderstood & hated by many, being criticized by many, being doubted, being alone. Before He ministered to others, He spent 30 years in quiet humble service to others, making furniture, cheering their humble simple life, sacrificing to help provide for His mother and family. Before He did that, He laid aside forever His omnipresence, erased His memory banks temporarily containing all the information of

Rock of my heart and my Fortress Tower
Dear are Thy thoughts to me;
Like the unfolding of leaf and flower
Opening silently.
And on the edge of these Thy ways,
Standing in awe as heretofore,
Thee do I worship, Thee do I praise
And adore.

Rock of my heart and my Fortress Tower,
Dear is Thy love to me;
Search I the world for a word of power,
Find it at Calvary.
O depths of love that rise and flow
Round about me and all things mine,
Love of all loves, in Thee I know
Love Divine.

- Amy Carmichael

all His activities in the previous 6000 years, and clothed Himself in a mortal, imperfect, ordinary human body, becoming a person just like you and me. Before that, somewhere in time, He and the Father sat down and agreed to do this, knowing *exactly* what that cost would be. And before that, even before time began perhaps, He and the Father discussed the worth of continuing their plans of creating this world, knowing full well the implications of their decision. Jesus' sacrifice has been on-going for thousands of years. After the cross, He continues to serve, ministering for us in the heavenly sanctuary, and fulfilling the plan of salvation in all its aspects. He too must be anxious to be finally done with the sin-containment plan. He must look forward to laying aside those priestly garments, and gathering His faithful ones to Himself, and enjoying them as a Friend and Brother in the earth made new - He will see the "travail of His soul" and will be satisfied. But His love does not permit Him to even think of quitting early. So long as there is one person still available to save, Christ's rescue mission must continue.

And we are privileged partakers of the love that drove Him to do what He did. Despite the difficulty, despite the pain, it is still a privilege to participate in it, because we can understand Him better, and the sacrifice He paid on the cross. How blessed it is to know that I am privileged to carry a cross for Him who carried my sorrows, who bore my sins in His own body, and who willingly paid the penalty for my sin.

Amy Carmichael in her book *If* shares some examples of the kind of love that was expressed on Calvary:

"If in dealing with someone who does not respond, I weary of the strain, and slip from under the burden, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I have not the patience of my Saviour with souls who grow slowly; if I know little of travail (a sharp and painful thing) till Christ be fully formed in them, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I am afraid to speak the truth lest I lose affection, ... or because I fear to lose my reputation for kindness; if I put my own good name before the other's highest good, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I blunt the edge of truth, speaking not right things but smooth things, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I put my own happiness before the well-being of the work entrusted to me; if, though I have this ministry and have received much mercy, I faint, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I am soft to myself and slide comfortably into the vice of self-pity and self-sympathy; if I do not by the grace of God practice fortitude, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If the moment I am conscious of the shadow of self crossing my threshold, I do not shut the door, and in the power of Him who works in us to will and to do, keep that door shut, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If when I am able to discover something which has baffled others, I forget Him who revealeth the deep and secret things, and knoweth what is in the darkness and showeth it to us; if I forget that it was He who granted that ray of light to His most unworthy servant, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I take offense easily; if I am content to continue in a cool unfriendliness though friendship be possible, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I do not give a friend "the benefit of the doubt", but put the worst construction instead of the best on what is said or done, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I feel injured when another lays to my charge things that I know not, forgetting that my Sinless Saviour trod this path to the end, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I say "Yes, I forgive, but I cannot forget," as though the God, who twice a day washes all the sands on all the shores of all the world, could not wash such memories from my mind, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If I feel bitterly towards those who condemn me, as it seems to me, unjustly, forgetting that if they knew me as I know myself, they would condemn me much more, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If one whose help I greatly need appears to be as content to build in wood, hay, stubble, as in gold, silver, precious stones, and I hesitate to obey my light and do without that help... then I know nothing of Calvary love.

If something I am asked to do for another feels burdensome; if, yielding to an inward unwillingness, I avoid doing it, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

I have felt these words scorching to write, but it is borne upon me that, in spite of all our hymns and prayers (so many of them for love), it is possible to be content with the shallows of love, if indeed such shallows should be called love at all.... The more we ponder our Lord's words about love, and the burning words the Spirit gave to His followers to write, the more acutely do we feel our deadly lack. The Searchlight of the Spirit exposes us to ourselves, and such a discovery leaves us appalled... Like Job we abhor ourselves and repent in dust and ashes. But the light is not turned upon us to rob us of our hope. There is a lifting up. If only we desire to be purged from self with its entangling nets, its subtleties, its disguises (falsehoods truly), if, hating unlove

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A.D. UPDATE Continued

for it all. That night we stayed in the rooms at the Union Office and left early the next morning for Simferopol by air.

We arrived in Simferopol on the 17th of September. It was a beautiful day. Pastor Andrea met us at the airport with a van. He explained to us about our accommodations and then took us where we would be staying. My husband and I were to stay at Pastor Andrea's home and Ben and Elsie Kwiram, Karl Maletz and Alex Nischuk were to stay in an apartment that had been vacated for their use. Karl Maletz and Alex Nischuk stayed for 5 days and then left for another city about 1 1/2 hours distance from Simferopol to hold a series of evangelistic meetings.

Ukraine has changed a great deal over the years that we have come and gone. We didn't have to register with the authorities that we were there like we used to have to do years ago, and we could come and go as we pleased. We never felt like we were being watched or followed like at other times, nor were we warned about roaming around by ourselves, etc. Our greatest danger was in the traffic on the streets. We were fortunate to have a good driver who took us around. I think that if the citizens of Canada were to drive like most of the Ukrainian people, their licences would soon be revoked!

Simferopol has two churches with about 450 regular members. We were to find out later that one of the churches has a book membership of 419, but have a little over 200 attending. One of the reasons for the drop-off of attending members was the fact that the church had no proper heating system, and the older people found it difficult to sit in church for three hours in a cold stone building. Then there are those who have moved away and haven't transferred their membership, and others have had trouble with finding work and have eventually caved in to working on the Sabbath. (Schools in this area are also open on Saturdays. This still causes problems for our people in certain areas. Some teachers just ignore the fact that the children aren't there on Saturday and so there isn't any trouble.) In a church with a membership of 200, there were only two members who owned a car. One of these became our driver and took us where ever we needed to go.

Our meetings began September 19th at a beautiful hall fairly central in the city. We felt that it was the cleanest hall we

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If you wish to support this ministry, and would like to see the three angels' message disseminated around the world in the form of seminars, lectures, radio, and the internet, please consider a donation to Amazing Discoveries so that we are enabled to carry out this important work.

THE HEALTH MESSAGE - MAGNESIUM

by Christine Peck

Whatever do I need it for?

"Magnesium is needed for more than 300 biochemical reactions in the body. It helps maintain normal muscle and nerve function, keeps heart rhythms steady, and bones strong. It is also involved in energy metabolism and protein synthesis."¹ The presence of magnesium is found to have a positive influence on a variety of diseases, such as heart disease, osteoporosis, diabetes, and high blood pressure.²

Is There Cause for Alarm?

Every year or so another alarm is raised about the lack of some nutrient in our diet and how this lack is the true underlying cause of large numbers of deaths from some well-known disease, such as heart attacks. This was the case with the selenium scare in *Dead Doctors Don't Lie*, as well as the current frenzy over magnesium. A website I visited while researching this article claimed that there is "an inverse relationship between water hardness and mortality from cardiovascular disease. That is, people who drink water that is deficient in magnesium and calcium generally appear more susceptible to this disease. The U.S. National Academy of Sciences has estimated that a nation-wide initiative to add calcium and magnesium to soft water might reduce the annual cardiovascular death rate by 150,000 in the United States."³ The 150,000 represent only 9% of the 1,602,000+ deaths from cardiovascular disease listed in the World Health organization's statistics for 1998,⁴ the latest year for which such statistics are available. While magnesium does play a role in the regulation of heart rhythms, among other metabolic functions, the greater amount of evidence shows that heart disease is generally caused by poor lifestyle practices, such as a high cholesterol diet and lack of exercise, not from mineral deficiency.

It's estimated that the average American gets only 300 mg of magnesium a day, compared with the Recommended Dietary Allowance of 420 mg.⁵ The RDA for magnesium is actually age and gender specific.

Life-Stage	Men	Women
Ages 14-18	410 mg	360 mg
Ages 19-30	400 mg	310 mg
Ages 31+	420 mg	320 mg

SOURCE: National Institutes of Health Clinical Center

Will adding mineral supplements to the drinking water really solve the magnesium deficiency problem for the average American? Here's a comparison of drinking habits in the U.S. versus Canada and Europe:⁶

1997 8 OZ. SERVINGS PER CAPITA

	Canada	USA	Europe
Carbonated Soft Drinks	471	861	191
Coffee	402	315	248
Milk	380	301	271
Beer	274	357	221
Tea	246	112	252
Juices	240	130	115
Bottled Water	90	184	191
Powdered Drinks	72	78	n/a
Wine	27	30	89
Sports Drinks	17	26	12
Spirits	16	21	24
All other/tap water	848	496	1470

From the above table, it's evident that the average American gets 34% of his liquids from sources involving tap water, and 65% from sources that use purified water or are non-water sources. The Coca Cola Company states that "In 2000, the Company distributed approximately 4 billion unit cases (24 eight-ounce servings, or 192 ounces per case) of products in bottle, can, and fountain containers."⁷ Pepsi-Cola's statistics indicate that the average American drinks 55 gallons of its carbonated soft drink products every year.⁸

What Causes Magnesium Deficiency?

Many things can cause a magnesium deficiency, such as gastrointestinal disorders (like excessive diarrhea and vomiting), the use of diuretics and some antibiotics, some cancer treatments, inefficient magnesium absorption in the intestines, and alcohol consumption. Magnesium is lost in the urine, so anything that causes excessive urination can also cause a deficiency. Poorly controlled diabetes also increases the loss of magnesium in the urine.⁹

"Signs of magnesium deficiency include confusion, disorientation, loss of appetite, depression, muscle contractions and cramps, tingling, numbness, abnormal heart rhythms, coronary spasm, and seizures."¹⁰

Too Much of a Good Thing Can Hurt You Too

Very high doses of magnesium can be bad for you, too. It can trigger "undesired affects" such as diarrhea, which is probably why it's used in laxatives. The elderly are more often at risk of magnesium toxicity because kidney function declines with age and they are more likely to consume laxatives and antacids with magnesium in them.¹¹ "Signs of excess magnesium can be similar to magnesium deficiency and include metal status changes, nausea, diarrhea, appetite loss, muscle weak-

ness, difficulty breathing, extremely low blood pressure, and irregular heartbeat."¹²

The Diet Challenge

Is it possible to obtain sufficient quantities of this mineral to maintain good health from our everyday diet? If you eat right, yes. Processed foods have a lot less magnesium in them unprocessed "whole" foods. White bread has only 6 mg of magnesium per slice, while whole wheat contains 24 mg in a single slice.¹³ Green leafy vegetables, nuts, seeds and some grains are good sources of magnesium and provide a variety of taste and texture. A variety of these sources in the diet will ensure that you have enough of this mineral to satisfy your daily needs. Here are some great vegetarian sources of magnesium:¹⁴

Food	Serving Size	Magnesium (mg)
Artichoke, boiled	1 med	180
Quinoa	½ cup	179
Pumpkin & squash seeds	1 oz	152
Soybeans, mature boiled	1 cup	148
Great northern beans	1 cup	134
Soybean nuts, roasted	½ cup	125
Navy beans	1 cup	123
Small white beans	1 cup	122
Adzuki beans	1 cup	120
Black beans	1 cup	120
Pink beans	1 cup	110
Oatmeal, cooked	1 cup	108
Millet, cooked	1 cup	106
Florida avocado	1 med	103
Sesame seeds, toasted	1 oz	101
Sunflower seeds, dried	1 oz	100

The Bottom Line

Even though some sources may be raising a fuss over magnesium, other sources indicate there is not a cause for alarm among healthy adults. "Even though dietary surveys suggest that many Americans do not consume magnesium in recommended amounts, magnesium deficiency is rarely seen in the United States in adults. When magnesium deficiency does occur, it is usually due to excessive loss of magnesium in urine, gastrointestinal system disorders that cause a loss of magnesium or limit magnesium absorption, or a chronically low intake of magnesium."¹⁵

"Healthy adults who eat a varied diet do not generally need to take a magnesium supplement. Magnesium supplementation is usually indicated when a specific health problem or condition causes an excessive loss of magnesium or limits magnesium absorption."¹⁶

Christine Peck

¹ Facts about Dietary Supplements, NIH Clinical Center, National Institutes of Health website at <http://www.cc.nih.gov/ccc/supplements/magn.html>

² Ibid.

³ Dr. Harold D. Foster, "Groundwater and Human Health," Groundwater Resources of British Columbia, Ministry of Environment, Lands, and Parks and Environment Canada, pp 6.1-6.3 (reprint), 1994.; found at the website <http://www.execpc.com/~magnesium/>

⁴ 2001 Heart and Stroke Statistical Update, American Heart Association, source: The World Health Organization, www.who.int/whois and NCHS.

⁵ Abstract # C-13, Is the RDA for Magnesium Too Low? N.A. Littlefield and B.S. Hass, NCTR, FDA, Jefferson AR 72079, found at the website: <http://vm.cfsan.fda.gov/~frf/forum96.littlef.htm>

⁶ Beverage Digest LLC website located at <http://www.beverage-digest.com/editorial/980821.html>

⁷ Coca-Cola Enterprises, Inc., at the website http://www.cokecce.com/srclib/nav/process_nav.asp?strBody=company/business_description.htm

⁸ PepsiCo, Inc. at the website <http://www.pepsico.com>

⁹ Facts about Dietary Supplements, NIH Clinical Center, National Institutes of Health website at

<http://www.cc.nih.gov/ccc/supplements/magn.html>

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Bowes & Church's Food Values of Portions Commonly Used, by Jean A. Pennington, p. 157.

¹⁴ Bowes & Church's Food Values of Portions Commonly Used, by Jean A. Pennington

¹⁵ Facts about Dietary Supplements, NIH Clinical Center, National Institutes of Health website at <http://www.cc.nih.gov/ccc/supplements/magn.html>

¹⁶ Ibid.



AD Update

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had ever used in the Ukraine. The bathrooms were clean and useable, and everything was well looked after.

The first evening, we had 117 non members, and probably 300 members. The pastor was very disappointed. He had really worked hard at advertising, and had *hand delivered*, with the two churches, 40,000 handbills! They had banners up in the city, posters in buses and also all over the city. There were TV ads and radio announcements. From then on, we usually had at least 100 non members who attended. The numbers fluctuated - sometimes 130, sometimes 90, but averaging about 100 each evening. Around the middle of the series, the pastor told us that there had been 245 people who registered and came at least once. There were about 80 who had not missed a night and others who had come a number of times.

The evening that Vic preached on baptism, 34 people indicated their desire for baptism. Then a few nights later when the subject of "Babylon is Fallen - Come Out of Her, My Peo-

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THE LANGUAGE OF MUSIC

-PART 2

by Brian S. Neumann

More Evidence From the World of Scientific Research

For a quarter of a century researchers have been monitoring how our brain reacts to certain stimuli and how it processes the information received. They have discovered that the brain starts to build up a stubborn wall against an overload of information and stimuli of a sensational nature. They have noticed that the construction of this inner wall is initiated more quickly than any other evolutionary change that has occurred since the existence of man. The necessity of the brain utilizing this defense mechanism is as a direct result of the information overload that people, especially those of the past fifty years, have been exposed to. It would appear that as a result of modern 20th century humanity's exposure to an ever-increasing amount of dramatic, violent, and sensational information, the brain has had to resort to researching itself.

About 20 years ago, the first signs started to surface that something unique was happening inside the brain. Researchers discovered a strange phenomenon when they were studying the processing of stimuli and emotions of people in Germany.

Four thousand persons took part in a biological experiment that took place over a couple of years. After the experiment it was clearly noted that the human 'guinea-pigs' could not smell and taste as before. "In the department of smell and taste there was an extreme change", remembers psychologist, Henner Ertel, from Munich. "The brain had developed a stimuli acceptance limit, under which it refused to process any new stimulant." (*PM magazine Nov 93 p.14 - 20*)

Before, any stimuli were accepted without hesitation, but after these intensive experiments the picture began to change dramatically. It was noticed that our sensitivity to stimuli reduces itself yearly by about 1%. The finer stimuli are filtered out of our consciousness with the result that more space is left for the receiving and accepting of the coarser sensations known as the 'very strong stimuli'. With each generation we have been losing the ability to process and accept the more sensitive and finer kinds of stimuli.

When showing grown-ups (parents of the 80's & 90's), videos in which people are cut to pieces in front of the camera,

Our sensitivity to stimuli reduces itself yearly by about 1%. The finer stimuli are filtered out of our consciousness with the result that more space is left for the receiving and accepting of the coarser sensations known as the 'very strong stimuli'. With each generation we have been losing the ability to process and accept the more sensitive and finer kinds of stimuli.

they reacted sympathetically and disgustedly. Most of them refused to even see it through right to the end. But in the case of the younger generation the same reaction was not found. They watched emotionless and were more interested in seeing the dramatics and whether the contents of the film were exciting. If it was, then they continued watching, if not, then they would switch the movie off.

'The Committee of rational psychology', who conducted this study, discovered a type of generation gap that was manifest between the groups. Whoever was born before 1949 has apparently still got the 'old brain'. Whoever was born between 1949 and 1969 has a modified version of the 'old brain'. Only those who were born after 1969 possess the, so called, 'new brain'.

The new brain, unlike the older model, can react in a state of 'dissonance-readiness.' By the term dissonance we understand that there is a disturbance in a normally harmonious process. "The youth," says Henner Ertel, "have grown up with contradictions and can handle them." In the past one would have called this ability/disability, 'multiple-consciousness'. Today it is considered normal. (*PM magazine Nov93 pg.14-20*)

All this points to a rising society whose minds are becoming more and more resistant to the bizarre, violent, sensational and harder messages that they are being bombarded with every day. The sad thing is that their minds are becoming less and less sensi-

tive to the simpler and purer messages that they are being sent. It is believed that by some time next century the ability of the mind to successfully differentiate between right and wrong will become all but non-existent.

What would the reaction have been in 1956 if a band like 'Guns 'n Roses' were unleashed on the public, instead of Elvis Presley? Of course the reaction to Elvis and his contemporaries was very strong back in the fifties anyway. But, if it had been something of the likes of

Guns 'n Roses, you could be sure that even the rebels of the fifties would not have known what to do with their music. Today Elvis is, quite literally, kindergarten music. Not to mention the aspect of semi or total porn used in advertising today. If you were driving down the road in the 1950's and saw a billboard displaying a naked or half-naked woman selling cell phones or car batteries (obviously, the connection between cell phones and naked woman does not seem to escape the manufacturer or advertising agency), there would have been an immediate outcry. Now, in the 'enlightened' 21st Century, it is common practice and, in most cases, even recommended.

Things that would have shocked people thirty, forty, or fifty years ago, today have no effect on what has become known as 'generation Xr's.' That which was right has become wrong and that which is wrong has become right. A total switch in values has occurred. These things have resulted in the break up of the family unit and the disintegration of the 'church family' as well.

What do we do to fix the problem? We often do exactly what we should not do – we follow the standard that the world has set.

Satan has not been asleep in the 20th century. He has, especially in this age of the information explosion and modern technology, made expert use of the devices available to him. If there were one thing that he desires more than anything else, then it would be to debase people's consciousness to the point where they cannot successfully differentiate between right and wrong. One cannot underestimate the role of music as a device for the desensitizing and conditioning of modern society. There is nothing new in the concept that music has the power to adjust and channel the collective mind-set of massive groups of people.

How can we expect generations of people, affected by music and media, with minds that have lost the capacity to clearly distinguish right from wrong (and we have all been affected), to make rational, sane decisions about method of outreach and content of music in worship? Humanly speaking, we cannot. Our safe guide will not be our feelings or personal preferences. Our guide must be the light that God has given us in the principles of His Word and in His prophetic testimony for His end time people. Combined with this, we need the guidance of the Holy Spirit, living and dwelling in the 'body temple', individually and collectively. Any other route we take will be on the road to salvation by our own works, a salvation obtained through human wisdom, which is blind to the things of the Spirit of God. Only when we allow God to strike the equilibrium in our lives will we once again be worshiping Him in the Spirit and with the understanding also.

Another field in which music has been used as a symptomatic treatment and attempted long term healing device is in the area of mentally handicapped and schizophrenic patients. The neurologist, Dr. Oliver Sacks, describes a patient of his, suffering from recurrent crisis characterized by intense excitement and uncontrollable movement, under treatment:

By far the best treatment of her crisis was music, the effects of which were almost uncanny. One minute would see Miss D. compressed, clenched and blocked, or jerking, ticking and jabbering, a sort of human bomb; the next, with the sound of music from a wireless or gramophone, the complete disappearance of all these obstructive, explosive phenomena and their replacement by a blissful ease and flow of movement as Miss D. suddenly freed of her automatisms, smilingly 'conducted' the music, or rose and danced to it. (Oliver Sacks, *Awakenings*, revised edition, London Pan 1981)

The sad thing is that their minds are becoming less and less sensitive to the simpler and purer messages that they are being sent. It is believed that by some time next century the ability of the mind to successfully differentiate between right and wrong will become all but non-existent.

And in the book "*Healing sounds*" by Jonathan Goldman, he refers to research done by Dr. Diamond with regards to the strengthening or weakening effect of music as a healing device

Dr. Diamond spent many years demonstrating that not only would certain substances make us strong or weak, but that music could do the same thing. (p.18)

The question of whether music has or does not have the ability to influence, in the way which we have thus far observed, has not just been a study that falls within the parameters of some scientific researchers, neurologists and ancient philosophers. If this had been the case then one may be tempted to write it off as simply the theoretical concoctions of over zealous, perhaps, even, in some cases, prejudiced minds bent on turning the facts to suit their own particular bias. My contention, and, for the sake of absolute clarity, is that when searching for truth it is best to question those who have had experiential knowledge in a particular

field, who have not just seen through observation, but have experienced, in this case music, as creators, performers, and ultimately, philosophers. You will discover, when searching for this valuable information, that musicians, across the wide spectrum of musical styles, from Rock to Classics, will testify to the amazing power of this intangible, yet all powerful, expressive medium we call music. So let us look at a couple of statements that proceed, as it were, straight from the horse's mouth.

Jimi Hendrix, the guitar hero who wrote that hit song entitled, interestingly, '*Voodoo Child*' reveals the strength of music as a medium for setting spiritual atmosphere and indoctrinating minds:

We're making our music into electric church music - a new kind of Bible, not like in a hotel, but a Bible you carry in your hearts, one that will give you a physical feeling. We try to make our music so loose and hard-hitting so that it hits your soul hard enough to make it open. It's like shock therapy or a can opener. Rock is technically blues-based. . . . We want them to realize that our music is just as spiritual as going to church. (David Henderson, '*Scuse me while I kiss the sky*', Bantam Books, 1978, pg.9, 10)

And if this seems to be the drug induced opinion of some psychedelic rock star, then we would do well to listen to the words of one of the classical greats clearly making the spiritual connection with music. In the words of Claude Levi Strauss:

Since music is the only language with the contradictory attributes of being at once intelligible and untranslatable, the musical creator is a being comparable to the gods, and music itself the supreme mystery of the science of man. (Oliver Sacks, *Awakenings*, revised edition. London Pan, 1981, page 56 - 57)

The spiritual implications of these statements are more than clear. And it is only when one has experienced music, not merely as a casual listener, that you can appreciate the incredible depth of influence that can be accomplished through the use of this powerful yet subtle form. I would stop short of comparing the musician to 'a being comparable to the gods', but I would most definitely stress that anyone who doubts the persuasive influence of music is doing so purely from the point of ignorance, or stubbornness.

If you have ever spent some time in the privacy of your own room and in the not so restrictive confines of your mind, listening intently to your favourite music and letting the atmosphere of the sound take you on a journey of your own imagining, then you will know, first hand, the liquid force of music's subtly transforming power.

In my own experience, as a listener, composer, performer and critical observer, I have personally witnessed how music can take a hold of and literally, transform the mood of those exposed to its influence. I have had the opportunity of experimenting with various modes of music while performing and have witnessed the effect that it produces on its listeners. I have performed in front of various people in different countries and diverse cultures and have seen the same musically induced response manifest in those who are listening to the many varied atmospheres in sound that are being offered to them.

Brian Neumann

Brian Neumann is on a speaking tour in the month of November in the USA, and will be returning to the US/Canada and Barbados in the spring of 2004 for further appointments. (See our website:

www.amazingdiscoveries.org for further details.) To book a seminar with Brian Neumann on music, the spirit of prophecy, or the new world order, please contact the office. We are accepting bookings for fall 2004 and the rest of 2005, anywhere in the world.

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ple" was presented, 80 people registered that they wanted to join the Remnant church. The first baptism saw 20 individuals go through the waters of baptism. One family that was baptized were from Belarus. They were extremely poor and were living in someone's cellar. There was the grandmother, the parents and a son who had severe health problems because of the fallout of Chernobyl. They were so happy to have heard the truth.

Pastor Andrea had follow-up meetings after we left and 60 individuals have been coming to church and the meetings each evening. There has been a second baptism with 5 more taking their stand, but there are numerous others who need to study and work on problems that they are trying to iron out. One of these problems, which is so prevalent in the Ukraine, is alcoholism. A number of people asked for special prayer to overcome their habits.

We met for Sabbath services twice in the second church. Even though it was nice and warm outside, the church was cold inside. Vic encouraged the pastor to put an in-floor heating system into the church and he would raise the money for this. We received an e-mail from the pastor just a few days ago saying that the heating is in and everyone is so pleased that they can sit and enjoy the services in warm surroundings. This heating system has cost the conference \$6,500 US which they advanced to the church with the understanding that it should be paid back as soon as possible.

I helped with the young people's meetings and tried to encourage these youth to be faithful to the Lord. They are all going to worldly schools and universities and find it very difficult to stand up to the standards of our church. The youth of Simferopol really need your prayers. Some of these youth are strong, but there is an element that really concerns me and I can see where Satan is really making a bid for their hearts and lives.

We also visited two orphanages in the region. One orphanage has anywhere from 30 - 50 children, ages 3 to 17. This orphanage picks unwanted street children, usually at train stations, brings them to their facility, shaves their heads, burns their rags and try to teach them how to wash, eat with a spoon and fork, and how to fit into society. When these children have learned to take care of themselves, they are sent to other facilities. We were told that they often find children 3 years of age out on the street, begging and trying to fend for themselves. Many of the children are undernourished and so are very small for their age. A 10 - 12 year old might be the size of a normal 6 year old. I noticed that some of the children had impetigo on their faces and the director told me that when they find them they are usually full of lice and vermin.

I asked the director what her greatest needs were. She replied that there was never enough money for food. She said that it

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cost about 50 cents a day to feed one of these children. She also explained that they were constantly running out of funds for electricity and heat. This is devastating in the winter when it is cold. She also said they were in constant need of clothing as when they send a child to another facility, clothing has to go with that child. The director and her helpers were delighted with the clothing we were able to leave with her, as well as the toys. The children were so excited to get a toy of their very own.

The second orphanage had 300 children from birth to 3 years of age. This facility was run like a hospital and was clean with quite a number of staff for each ward. Their little cots were end to end in rows with just enough room in between for someone to walk through. Some of these children had been severely traumatized. One child in particular just screamed when I came near him. The fear in his eyes was pitiful to behold. The director, doctor, and nurse in charge were just delighted with the clothing we presented to them, and especially the flannel diapers that we were able to bring. We left toys for the children in this facility as well.

In both these facilities I noticed that each cot had a warm quilt on the bed. I was so glad for this as I have been to other facilities in other places where there was just a very thin, skimpy blanket or covering on each bed. When I crawl under my warm quilt on my queen-sized bed at night, I think of some of these poor unfortunate children who will never in their life experience the warmth and comfort that we take for granted.

When we visited the Westminster church just before we left for the Ukraine, a lady spoke to me about adopting an orphanage and forming a grandmother's club where older ladies in the church would work to supply clothing and other necessities. I have since given this idea some thought, and I believe this would be an excellent idea. In fact, the orphanages in Simferopol would be delighted if

this would happen.

In closing we would like to thank all of you for your support in our mission. Your prayers and gifts of money are greatly appreciated. We know that some of you have given very sacrificially. One couple sold their goats so that they would have something to give to this work. God bless them! Their reward is in heaven. We saw some of that reward as we were able to help students go to seminary, paid for medical help, the poor who couldn't afford proper food and clothing, and a vehicle for the pastor so that he would no longer have to walk for miles, ride the transit system, wasting precious time and energy. The look of gratitude on his face was priceless.

We are planning another trip in May and June of 2004. We have already been invited to a number of places and are in the process of deciding which one we will accept. We solicit your prayers and your means to help us in this work because we are not able to do it of ourselves. The Lord has planted us in pleasant places. We enjoy so many things that they can just dream about. God grant that we will be faithful stewards of the means that He has entrusted us with. God bless you all!

Nettie Gill

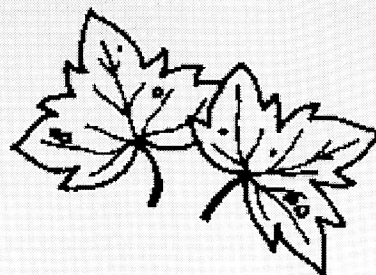


If you would like to support Pastor Victor Gill's evangelistic ministry in the Ukraine, Amazing Discoveries can provide a tax-deductible receipt for your donation, and accepts clothing donations as well. Please contact our office for questions or further information.

Have You Counted the Cost?*...Continued From Page 10*

from the ground of the heart, we cry to be delivered, then our God will be to us a God of deliverances. ... To look at ourselves leads to despair. Thank God, the Blood cleanseth."

Wendy Goubey Penner



Faith On the Line is the official quarterly publication of Amazing Discoveries Charitable Foundation, a Seventh-day Adventist based non-profit organization, addressing theological, political, economic, and scientific issues from a Biblical perspective. Copies are sent to all who request them. Requests should be sent to the address below. A suggested minimum donation of \$17 CDN or \$11 US would be appreciated.

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