

The Bible Guys

of Yesterday and Today

March 2009

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A God by any other name?

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*Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture references
have been taken from the King James Version.*

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The People of Truth
A Holy Nation

From the Editor

By David M. McNabb

Greetings once again, dear friends, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It is exciting what God is doing in these last days! As we continue to devote our time and energy to His work, He is faithful to bless our efforts.

Last month, we had anticipated increasing our circulation to 6700. In fact, there were more than 25,000 copies of the February edition of the Bible Guys printed and distributed by mail, by hand, and as inserts in several of the newspapers in the area surrounding Paden. God has put it into our hearts to publish the gospel of the Kingdom, and to share it with as many as we can. We have been obedient to that commission, and will continue to obey Him in the months ahead. Thanks to the Paden congregation for their efforts to help produce and prepare *The Bible Guys* for distribution, especially brothers David Allen and Larry Danko for the many hours they spent in keeping the machines running.

While we were busy with this massive printing effort, Brother Elden McNabb and I went on a trip to visit some of the saints in Mexico. On the trip we spent some time in Mexico City, Puebla and Loma Bonita, Oaxaca. God blessed our visit, and we rejoice to find others who cling to the God's truth and to revelation that He has provided in these last days. We continue to pray for Bro. Arturo Linaldi's soon return, so we can resume our translation efforts, and our work among the Hispanics.

Upon our return from Mexico, we were blessed with a visit from Pastor Philip Thomas of Thrissur, Kerala, India and Bro. Joey Houston of Gastonia, NC. Both of these brothers were a tremendous blessing, both ministering the word to us and sharing in great fellowship. We praise God for these brethren, and continue to walk before the Lord, expecting His blessings to multiply.

We will be celebrating the Feast of Passover the weekend beginning April 9. At this time, we remember the great sacrifice that God made in giving His own Son for our redemption. May God be praised forever and ever.

I trust that you will be edified and enlightened by the efforts here in *The Bible Guys*, and many of you are receiving it for the first time. We pray the blessings of our Heavenly Father on you, and that you will feel His presence in a mighty way. If you have not yet contacted us and subscribed, please do so today. If you know someone, who you think would be blessed by this publication, send us their address. Our contact information can be found on this page.

We encourage you to study God's word, that you might know the Lord, and serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul. Amen. 

**You are welcome to come
and fellowship with us!**

Prayer Daily at 9:00 a.m.
Sun. Morning Worship 10:00 a.m.
Thurs. Worship 7:00 p.m.
Sat. Night Bible Study 6:00 p.m.

The People of Truth
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“I Came Not...”

By C. Elden McNabb

I come to you in this month's newsletter to talk about an insidious error which has gradually eroded the faith which Christians once had in the word of God. This doctrine casts such aspersion upon the Old Testament that very few Christians even bother to read it anymore.

The Old Testament is minimized by terms such as History, and poetry. It is these things and more, because every incident is written in such a way that it also is prophetic of some future event in the Grace Age and beyond. When Moses described the events of the creation of Eve at the end of the sixth day, he was prophesying about the ultimate creation of the “The Bride, the Lamb's Wife” at the end of the age.

And did not the prophet say, “Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets” (Amos 3:7).

In the book of Hebrews, Paul showed that even all of the things pertaining to the Tabernacle of the Congregation, and the rituals of the worship were prophesying of the things of the Grace Age.

Jesus came into the world to accomplish certain things. Paul declared that “*Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners*” (1 Tim. 1:15). And Jesus said, “*The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost*” (Luke 19:10)

There are other things which Jesus *did not* come into the world to do. For one, Jesus, who Isaiah called the Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6-7), declared, “Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: *I came not to send peace, but a sword*” (Matt. 10:34).

When Jesus was presenting His prelude to replacing the Law of Moses with the Law of Faith He said, “*Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill*” (Matt. 5:17). From then until now the status of the law has been one of foretelling of coming events and the various works which

God has planned for the Grace Age. The Law of Moses, as religious ritual, has been set aside, and the Law of Faith has replaced it, as the guide for living.

Then, with all that Jesus said and did about that, He still required His Jewish followers to keep both the Law of Moses, and the Law of Grace until the Temple was destroyed, in A.D. 70. The Law of Moses no longer had anything to do with the forgiveness of sins, but rather had become a vast store of prophesies waiting to be fulfilled. The blood of Jesus became the only source of redemption, but the Law was kept in the forefront of the move of God, so the constant fulfillment of those Old Testament prophesies would be easily seen and understood.

Luke told us that Jesus said unto His disciples, “O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And *beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself*” (Luke 24:25-27).

As Jesus fulfilled His volume of prophecy, His Apostles were also fulfilling theirs. For example, the Twelve Apostles of Jesus were a direct fulfillment of the twelve sons of Jacob. Jacob had six sons by Leah, two by Rachel, two by Bilhah, and two by Zilpah. Jesus had had six apostles who were foreshadowed by the six sons of Leah. He had also three sets of two brothers each. That is, Peter and Andrew, James and John, and James the son of Alphaeus and Judas the brother of James (Luke 6:14-16).

Perhaps the most remarkable of all was Judas Iscariot's betrayal of our Savior in fulfillment of Zechariah 11:7-14; specifically verses 12 and 13 (Matt. 27:9). And when Peter and the other disciples replaced Judas in the office of The Twelve, Peter quoted Psalm 69:25 and Psalm 109:8 as their commandment to replace him. He said, “*Wherefore* of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us ... *must* one be ordained to

be a witness with us of His resurrection” (Acts 1:20-26).

The Apostles Paul and Barnabas declared that they were fulfilling the prophecy in Isaiah 49:6 (Acts 13:47). Again Paul claimed that he had a “Dispensation of God” (a volume of prophecy) which God had given to him for “the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colossee” to fulfill with him (Col. 1:25).

Years later, at the council concerning the circumcision, James, the brother of Jesus, referred to the prophesies by Moses and Amos. He cited Amos 9:11-12, to justify His decision to “Lay upon [the Gentiles] no greater burdens than those four, “necessary” commandments, because at the end of the Grace Age, a group of Gentiles will “Build again the Tabernacle of David [The Throne of David], which is fallen down;” and set it up in preparation for the coming of our King (Isaiah 9:6-7; Isaiah 16:1-5).

Having done that, James invoked the words of Moses to prove his right to pass sentence in the matter, saying, “Wherefore my sentence is, ... For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath day” (Acts 15:15-21).

How many times I have heard ministers deny the obvious meaning here! James had been “anointed of God” to sit for that season as “a faithful and wise servant, whom his Lord hath made ruler over His household, to give them meat in due season” (Matt. 24:45). Jesus went further, in that passage to state plainly that just such a man would be ruling over His household when He returns. He said, “Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when He cometh shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, that He shall make him ruler over all His goods” (Matt. 24:46-47).

Where are you people who believe these words of Jesus? How can this straightforward statement, although a parable, be construed to mean anything else but that God will have an anointed man leading and feeding His flock when Jesus comes in His glory.

In his effort to make this truth perfectly clear, the Apostle Peter wrote about his experience together with James and John when they saw Jesus transfigured with Moses and Elijah. He said, “We have not followed cunningly devised fables when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For He received from God The Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to Him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from Heaven we heard, when we were with Him in the holy mount” (2 Peter 1:16-18).

This passage is wonderful by itself. Peter essentially said, “We saw the transfiguration. We did not make it up.” This was not an effort to “look good,” or to make Jesus appear greater than He is. This happened. We get to hear a wonderful report concerning a marvelous event in the life of our Savior and coming King. What a testimony! I am sure that those humble Apostles rehearsed that event with the saints of God many times.

However that was not the main purpose for which Peter was rehearsing it in this epistle. Read it carefully, together with the next three verses, and learn a very important truth about what God intends to do at the end of the Grace Age. The testimony which we have just read was deliberately written to make a comparison of the dependability between the New Testament *account* of prophetic fulfillment and the *original* Old Testament *prophecies themselves*.

So Peter was saying, “I have told you the truth, but ‘We have a more sure word of prophecy.’” It is more sure than his testimony, and that of James and John. And we need very much to continue to take heed to Old Testament prophecy “as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts” (2 Peter 1:19-21).

So there is some very important prophecy about an event of great enlightenment at the end of the Grace Age, which Peter called “the day.” It is a time which we must anticipate by

believing some prophecy in the Old Testament. Peter explained that there would be a man called the “Day Star,” who will arise in the hearts of the believers. You want to believe that is Jesus, but how can it be Jesus? He has already arisen in the heart of all who have been born again. The only logical explanation is that it is the same person who Jesus told us about in Matthew 24:47.

You may well ask, “How can that be?” I will ask you, “How can it not be?” Is your pastor telling you that you need to be watching prophetic fulfillment, so you will know when “the day dawns?” Or is your pastor telling you that you cannot know anything about when that day is coming? Peter thought that we need to be watching diligently to “see that day approaching,” and that our hearts should embrace whoever that anointed prophet, the Day Star is.

Perhaps you have overlooked a very important Bible subject, which is prophesied of in Jeremiah 49:19 and Jeremiah 50:44. God said the same thing twice, very close together. That means it is very important. He said, “Who is a chosen man that I may appoint over her? for who is like me? and who will appoint me the time? and who is that shepherd that will stand before me?” God had every intention to send someone to announce the coming of Jesus shortly before His arrival.

I know that you have been ill advised about the meaning of Matt. 24:35-36, but even if it did mean what is being preached about it, it only meant that no one knew it at that time, not that God could not tell someone when the time is at hand. Remember Amos 3:7. “Surely the Lord God doeth nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets.” Do not let anyone beguile you of that truth.

In 2 Peter 1:19-21 Peter concluded his admonition saying, “Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”

Peter’s testimony was not a cunningly devised fable. Neither did the prophecies which are given to us in the Law of Moses and in the prophets come to us “by the will of man.” The Prophecies of the Old Testament are sure, because they were given by the direct inspiration of the Holy Spirit of God, and they are being fulfilled all around about us today.

In the time of the lives of John the Baptist and Jesus Christ, there began a great surge of the fulfillment of prophecy, which continued for about a hundred years. So likewise, as the coming of our King draws near, another great surge of prophetic fulfillment has begun.

It is high time that we Christians all wake up and begin an avid search of the scriptures, lest the Cry, “Behold the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet Him,” be made, and not realizing the truth of it until “the door is shut,” we are caught in the pouring out of the wrath of God, and can save ourselves only by martyrdom.

That may seem like a blessed way to go, but I assure you that finding the door, and entering it by faith in the word of God will be a much more blessed thing to do. Entering the ark by faith, in Noah’s day, was a much more blessed way to go than dying in the flood, and later having Jesus come to your prison and preach to you, and give you another opportunity to believe (1 Peter 3:19-20).

What did Jesus’ disciples say? They spoke the truth of the Word of God. What did Jesus say? Jesus is the Truth, and never spoke anything but the truth.

Jesus is coming soon. Believe it, and go in to the marriage, and live. ☞

A God by any other name?

By David M. McNabb

With today’s society pushing more and more for interfaith cooperation and “tolerance,” we are often barraged with the notion that the gods of the various religions are the

same as the God of the Bible. With great success, even among some Christians, the Buddhist idea of “many paths to heaven” has made advancements into popular acceptance.

Likewise, many religious systems claim to believe and honor Jesus of Nazareth. In fact, Muslims even claim to honor and respect “Jesus” more than Christians do, since every time they speak his name, they follow it with the words, “peace be upon him.”

But is our God (the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ) the same god that is revered in other religions? A Catholic priest in the Netherlands seems to think so.

In an effort to obtain peace, Tiny Muskings said, in news reports in August 2007, that God doesn’t care what He is called, and that we should all use the name “Allah.” Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) spokesman Ibrahim Hooper supported the idea as a way to help inter-faith understanding. “It reinforces the fact that Muslims, Christians and Jews all worship the same God,” Hooper told FoxNews.com.

While the term “Allah” shares its Semitic roots with the Hebrew word of God “Eloah,” does that mean that the terms refer to the same entity? Isa is the Arabic name of Jesus, but is the Isa of the Koran the same man Jesus who is described in the Gospel writings and letters of Paul? Language and culture differences aside, The Book of Mormon purports to be “Another Testament of Jesus Christ.” But the Mormon Jesus, after his death, came to the New World and preached to the ancestors of Native Americans. Does that describe the work and ministry of Jesus?

Is it possible to preach a different Jesus? Paul seemed to think so, and admonished the Saints at Corinth, “But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another

spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him” (2 Cor. 11:3-4). Paul was concerned that we would entertain those who come supposedly preaching Jesus, but whose Jesus is not identifiable as the Jesus of the Scriptures.

Islam’s “Isa” is one such “other Jesus.” According to the Koran, Isa was born to the virgin Marium when she was alone under a palm tree. He was a prophet of Allah with the ability to speak from birth, but was not the Son of God. Neither was he crucified, but rather lived to an old age and ascended into heaven without dying (3:46; 4:157-158,171; 5:110; 19:29-33). This does not even begin to resemble Jesus Christ, “in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace” (Eph. 1:7).

So, too, is Islam’s Allah different from the God whom Christians serve. Whereas the Koran says, “Allah is only one God: far be it from his glory that he should have a son” (4:171-172), the Christian has confidence from the holy Scripture that “In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him” (1 John 4:9).

The Lord God said in Malachi 3:6, “For I am the LORD, I change not.” Of Him James said, “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning” (James 1:17). Paul said the same was true of God’s Son in Hebrews 13:8, “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever,” and Jesus said that His words shall not pass away. What about Allah? Well, he said, “Whatever communications We abrogate or cause to be forgotten, We bring one better than it or like it. Do you not know that Allah has the power over all things?” (2:106). Again the Koran states, “And when We change one communication for another communication, and Allah knows best what he reveals, they say: You are only a forger. Nay, most of

them do not know” (16:101). Allah abrogates (does away with) his communications from time to time. Thanks be to God that He is always faithful, and that His words stand forever!

Malaysia, a large, Islamic federation, recently affirmed that Islam’s Allah is not the Christian God. On March 1, the Malaysian government promised to restore a ban on Christian publications using the word “Allah” to refer to God. A government official said, “ ‘Allah’ cannot be used for other religions except Islam because it might confuse Muslims.” So much for the argument that we all worship the same God.

The fact remains, “there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved,” but the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, “neither is there salvation in any other” (Acts 4:12). Jesus himself said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me” (John 14:6).

As Paul said, “For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time” (1 Tim. 2:5-6).

“For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,) But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him” (1 Cor. 8:5-6).

And so, Joshua’s cry continues to echo through the ages, “And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that [were] on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD” (Joshua 24:15). As do the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, “Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve” (Matt. 4:10). 

Visitors

By David Allen

We were recently blessed with visits from Bro. Joey Houston from North Carolina, and Bro. Philip Thomas from India.

Bro. Joey met Bro. Joel McNabb on Bebo, a social network website, who, in turn, invited him to come and preach for us. And preach he did! We all enjoyed him thoroughly.

When Bro. Joel asked him to visit, his response was that he had an airline ticket that he had to use up or lose. Since he didn't want the airline company to get a "freebie," he opted to come and see us, not knowing anything about us. He mentioned that he was supposed to use that ticket last year to go to Dallas, I believe, but a tornado had destroyed the tent where he was scheduled to preach, and the trip was cancelled. After the weekend, he commented, "I guess God knew last year that I needed to come here!"

Over the course of the weekend, we also had opportunity for many exciting bible discussions. I think maybe Bro. Joey heard some things he never heard before.

We had a dinner Sunday after the service, at which Bro. Joey requested that we not have a discussion since he already had a lot to digest. Well, as it turned out Bro. Joey started asking more questions and we did get into another discussion. Praise God!

We have known Bro. Philip Thomas for several years now, and this was his third visit with us.

While here in Paden, we had the opportunity to sing gospel selections at the bi-monthly Country, Bluegrass, and Gospel Night in the town auditorium. Bro. Philip joined us on stage and sang a pair of very inspiring songs. He also preached for us at our Thursday evening service and delivered a wonderful message.

Bro. Philip also joined in bible discussions over the course of his stay here.

It was our pleasure to have both Bro. Joey and Bro. Philip here as our guests. They were a tremendous

blessing to us and are always welcome here. 

Your Daily Sacrifice

By Joel McNabb

"By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name. But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased" (Heb. 13:15-16).

How many of you awake in the morning with a song or a good thought on your mind? We go about our daily routines, thinking about life and all we have to do. Some people know exactly what they are going to do from the time the alarm clock goes off, and they set about doing it day after day. One day seems just like another. As Christians, we too have our own daily routines. If it were not for the fact that we go to church on Sunday, there would not seem to be much difference between us. We have to eat, go to work, and get the children off to school day in and day out. Recently, I asked our congregation, "Do you wake up singing a church song?" I said that this happens to me most of the week. It makes me think of God and all He has done for me. There were some that said they do. Others had to think about it. Then I asked, "What is the first thing on your mind in the morning?" I let them think about it for a while. We who are born again should wake up thanking the good Lord that we are able to see another day and be in our right minds. This should be our first thought, regardless of what else we have to do that day.

The prayer that Jesus taught his disciples is the manner in which we ought to pray. He said, "Give us this day our daily bread." We are to have contact with God every day: a personal relationship with our Lord. Since God has given to us, so ought we to give back to Him: our daily sacrifice, that should be as automatic as breathing. For "in Him we live, and move, and have our being" (Acts 17:28). Can we say with the psalmist David,

"O how love I thy law! It is my meditation all the day" (Psa. 119:97)?

When Jesus was tempted in the wilderness, after His baptism by John the Baptist, the devil came to Him. There wasn't a little red-horned devil with a tail and a pitch fork on his shoulder, poking him saying, "If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread." It was all in Jesus' mind. Our thoughts are where the devil tempts us, and Jesus was just like us. "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15). Jesus said, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." When the forty days of his temptation in the wilderness was over, the devil left Him, but it was only for a little season. He came back time and time again to tempt Jesus. We live by the word of God, and we cannot truly live without it. "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life" (John 6:63). Taking time to read from the Bible every day is part of our daily sacrifice. It is one way we can offer some time to the Lord. Did you know that if you just read three chapters a day, you could read the Bible through in about a year? Now that doesn't seem like very much, to ask to receive life from God. "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls" (Matt. 11:29).

On Mount Sinai, God gave Moses the Law and a pattern with which to build a tabernacle for the Lord. He also told Moses to set up the priesthood. He chose Aaron and his four sons to be the priests, giving them duties that were to be performed daily. They were to keep the candlestick and its lamps burning continually, making sure every day that there was oil in the lamps, so that they would not go out. If the word of God is "a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path," (Psa 119:105), then we should read the Bible every day to keep our lamps burning. In the New

Testament, after the Day of Pentecost, the saints continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers (Acts 2:47). Also, they were daily with one accord in the temple. This daily study and prayer continued in the days of Paul's ministry. He and Silas were in a town called Berea in the synagogue of the Jews, where they found more noble saints than those in Thessalonica, because they heard the word of God with an open mind, and searched the scriptures daily, to see if the things that they were told was true or not. I wonder if Christians today, after hearing the preacher on Sunday morning, are going home and searching to see if their preacher was correct or not. It takes men and women who have an honest heart to look into the word of God daily to make sure they are not being deceived. A lot more preachers today would have more questions to answer if their congregations were more like the Bereans.

Under the Law of Moses, in Exodus 29, the priests were to take two lambs in their first year and offer them day by day continually, one in the morning and one at evening, as a daily sacrifice to the Lord. Besides these offerings and keeping the lamps burning, there was the sweet incense and the daily meat offering. These represent something we should do as Christians today in our daily sacrifice to the Lord. I believe they are our prayers and praise. In Hosea 14:2, we are to "render the calves of our lips." The offering of our praise goes right along with the way Jesus said we should pray, "hallowed be thy name", acknowledging our Heavenly Father every day and praising Him, praying that His will be done in earth as it is in Heaven. After we have entered into His gates with thanksgiving and into His courts with praise, we ask our Lord to take care of all our needs. There is an old song that says, "Just a little talk with Jesus makes it right." "Be merciful unto me, O Lord: for I cry unto thee daily" (Psa 86:3).

Our Lord Jesus came to earth to offer himself for the sins of man, a fulfillment of the true daily sacrifice

(the two lambs offered daily, morning and evening). The High Priest had his men come to the garden of Gethsemane at night, to have Jesus tried, convicted, and sentenced to death. All night long Jesus was on trial. He was brought to the palace of the High Priest and, when they couldn't find anything that he did wrong, they brought false accusations against him. Then the High Priest spoke, "I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." That was all it took. "The High Priest rent his clothes saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? Behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy. What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death" (Matt. 26: 63-67).

When morning came, the chief priest and elders took counsel on how they could put Jesus to death, because they were under Roman rule, and they couldn't carry out the sentence themselves. So they bound Jesus and took him to Pilate, the Roman governor, who could find no fault. Pilate sent the case to Herod, seeing Jesus was from Galilee. Herod was happy to see Jesus, because he thought he might see a miracle done by Jesus. He asked Jesus many questions. The priest that brought him stood up and vehemently accused him. And Herod, with his men of war, set Jesus at naught, and mocked him, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and sent him back to Pilate. Neither he nor Herod found anything worthy of death in Jesus. Pilate, being the politician that he was, came up with a solution that was his way out. He could release a prisoner at the feast. He brought a murderer, and set him and Jesus before the people, so they could choose who would be released. The people chose the murderer over Jesus. Pilate asked them three times to be sure, willing to release Jesus. The people and the chief priest got louder, saying, "Crucify him, crucify him." And Pi-

late gave sentence that it should be as they required. And the rest is history. Jesus was beaten, a crown of thorns placed on his head, and taken to Mount Calvary and nailed to the cross at nine o'clock, the time of the morning sacrifice. He hung there in shame and disgrace for six hours, and at the evening sacrifice, three o'clock, He said, "It is finished: and he gave up the ghost" (John 19:30).

Jesus became the ultimate sacrifice, offering Himself for us. Now we do not have to offer an animal sacrifice for our sins. "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission" (Heb. 9:22). We can offer ourselves a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is our reasonable service (Romans 12:1). The old song comes to my mind, "Is your all on the altar of sacrifice laid, your heart doth the spirit control?" Our daily sacrifice is nothing compared to what Jesus sacrificed for us. Are we willing to devote some time during our day in thanksgiving to the Lord of our salvation? "He paid a debt he did not owe, we owed a debt we could not pay, we needed someone to wash our sins away." Jesus offered his life for us. What are you willing to offer today? Could you take time to pray, read your Bible and think about the Lord. I encourage you to be a living sacrifice, devoted to becoming more like Jesus. You will find that the cares of this world will be an easier burden, and your life will have fullness. At this time of the year, let us remember the Lord's death and the price that was paid for us. And let us be resolved to offer our daily sacrifice.

The Lord be with you throughout all of your day, and bless and keep you is my prayer. 

Testimony Time

My name is Lee Goodall. I was born in Omagh, N. Ireland in 1976. My dad was in the army so we lived in Germany till I was 6, before moving back.

My mum and dad were caring people, and they looked after me and my sister Deborah well. My sister is 3

years older than me. My brother was born in 1982 with a disease called cystic fibrosis. This attacks all the inner organs, and cannot be cured yet.

I started to mix with lads older than me. We got up to all kinds of bad stuff. We started breaking into shops and stealing stuff (mostly sweets). By the age of 10, I started to drink a bit.

I was getting into more and more trouble, so my mum and dad had to agree with the social services to put me into a children's home, as they could no longer control me. Around this time my younger sister was born, she had cystic fibrosis as well. Shortly after this, my mum got multiple sclerosis and ended up in a wheelchair. There is no cure for this either.

I spent 6 months in the children's home, and all the staff hated me. I was rebellious to them all. I would barricade myself in my room, break windows and just completely be out of control. I ended up in court for all the places I broke into, and spent a couple of years in a juvenile centre. From there I went to a secure juvenile centre, as I kept running away from the other one.

I still had more charges against me, so when I went to court, I was given 3 years. I served my time and got out to go home.

I soon fell in with my old friends and started to go back to my old ways. I was stealing, drinking, and taking drugs.

Me and 3 other mates pulled off an armed robbery, and got caught for it a couple of weeks later. We were

put on remand to prison. By this time, I was just turning 17.

Then, in the month of November 1993, I was laying in my cell waiting to get sentenced for the armed robbery. I decided I had enough, and was going to hang myself. I rolled a smoke, and thought to myself, I will read a bit of the Bible before I kill myself. I can't remember what I read, but for the first time in my life, the words in that little Bible came alive. I felt a peace while I read, so I read some more.

I got on my knees and said, "Lord, I'm sorry for all that I have done in my life, can you forgive me." I felt a weight had been taken off my shoulders. I felt clean. For weeks I was on a high, and I could feel the presence of God all over me.

When the lads in the jail heard I was a Christian, they all said I was only doing it to look good to the courts, to get less time, but I knew I was saved and that it was genuine. I never even told my solicitor I was a Christian, so the judge never knew. I ended up getting 3 years for the armed robbery.

The whole way through my sentence, I would have debates with the lads. God gave me the words to speak to them, and I was shocked that I had an answer for them every time. I was persecuted for my faith in God. I was hated, classed as an outcast by most of them, and even one of the prison officers who claimed to be a Christian singled me out and gave me all the worse jobs while I was on his wing.

God had different plans. He gave me a job as a maintenance helper, which meant I worked outside in the prison officers' lunch room at times. I used to write Christian tracts and put them in the toilets, bar, books: anywhere I could really.

I got out in 1995, and went back home. I then moved to another town where my sister was living. I went strong for a long time, then unfortunately, I strayed from God. There were things going on in my life which I will not get into. I met Anne in 1999, and we started dating each other. Five years later we had our daughter Zoey. After a while I realised I could not go on without my Saviour. I came back to God, and a couple of years later Anne gave her life to the Lord also. My younger sister ended up dying of her disease. Instead of me praying for her to get better, I prayed she would be saved. A couple of days before she died, she gave her life to the Lord.

You know, I have had my ups and downs in my life, but when I think back on the times I was not living for God, He was still there, keeping me safe, waiting on me to come back to Him.

I was unfaithful, He was faithful. I went astray, He brought me back. Many times, I should have been dead, but He had bigger plans for me.

Jesus is the only way. I see no point in life if we are not serving the King. If we are walking around without Christ, then we are just waiting about to die. 

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The Back Pew - Jeff Larson



Reverend Jacobs was both flattered and exasperated when Billy picked him to interview for career day.