

The VINE & BRANCHES

The Newsletter of WORKERS TOGETHER WITH HIM, inc.



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Jesus said, "For without Me, ye can do nothing."

Psalms 143:8:

Cause me to hear thy lovingkindness in the morning; for in thee do I trust: cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; for I lift up my soul unto thee.

What a beautiful verse this is, the righteous prayer of one who desires to walk in truth and godliness unto the praise of his Heavenly Father and God. There is no greater peace than knowing that you are doing God's Will, regardless of the circumstances good or bad that surround you.

Since the last issue of the Vine & Branches, two more classes have been presented on The Weapons of our Warfare, one in June, here in Brownsville, and the other in July, in Switzerland. The Brownsville class was presented with Spanish interpretation provided by my wife Nelly, and our friend, Monica Fuentes. I was very encouraged by the results, and now I am really looking forward to my return to Mexico City in November to present the course there, again with assistance from Nelly and Monica.

The Weapons of our Warfare class in Switzerland was also a wonderful event. My dear friend Alois Eggmann has written his own report about this class that I think you will enjoy. I want to join him in thanking the many people whose unique contribution made this event so special.

Thank you for your prayers of intercession and gifts of support that allow me to continue in the work of the Lord that has been set before me. I am not unmindful of the great privilege that God has granted me, and I hope to fulfill His desires honorably. But this is by no means a "one-man show." Every time I go out, I carry you in my heart.

By the time you receive this newsletter, I will be in the middle of the presentation of the Weapons of our Warfare class in Wales. Soon after, I will return to England for the wedding of our friends David Mantock and Beatrice Scherer. Next, I will be teaching this course in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and then, in Crestview, Florida. The last seminar for

the year 2000 will be in Mexico City, Mexico, in November. Already a class has been scheduled for the summer of 2001, in Vienna, Austria.

My new book "The Weapons of our Warfare" is almost ready to go to the printers. I have been working on this manuscript ever since I returned from the first teaching of The Weapons of our Warfare class in Kaub, Germany last year. It must be in its fiftieth revision by now! Every time I have taught this course, I have learned something new that altered the next presentation. I have taken one step further in discerning the difference between the doctrine of the Lord and the doctrines of men. But this is according to the Word of the Lord spoken over me when I was ordained to the Christian ministry, a portion of which was, *'Yea, sayeth God Almighty, also mind thou this: Though it may not seem so to the eyes and the heart of men, My teachers are few in number to the demand, in comparison to the need. Therefore count thyself honored in Me, sayeth the Lord, for I have separated thee unto that very ministry. And thou shalt teach, and thou shalt teach, and thou shalt teach My Word. It shall become the passion in thy soul. And it shall grow in thee. Step by step. Day by day. Thou shalt increase in knowledge as thou givest out knowledge concerning the ways of thy God.'*

I do not include this prophecy to better your opinion of me. I include it to solicit your prayers, even as the apostle Paul sought prayers of support for himself and his coworkers in the Gospel. Now, I don't need any reminder that I am no Apostle Paul. If anything, my requirement for intercessory prayer is far greater than his!

Romans 15:30:

Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me;

Colossians 4:3:

Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds:

I want to serve God's people honorably, and use my office honorably, to the glory of God and our Lord Jesus Christ. I have seen far too many ministries gone sour, when the messenger is exalted over the message. For this organization to be successful, we must remember that we are all Gospel workers, workers *together*, and most important of all, workers together *with Him*. That is the only way we will be successful.

Workers Together With Him is not a fan club. If I wanted a fan club, I'd form a rock and roll band. Of course at my age, we'd have to call it "The Grey Hounds" or maybe, "The Mid-Life Crisis." How about, "The Grateful We're Not Dead"? (Okay, okay. A little humor. Yes I know. A *little* humor).

Rev. Todd Pekel will be in Muskegon, Michigan in September to present his teaching series, "The House of God" which is also the title of his first book. "The House of God" reveals Jesus Christ as the Rock, the Foundation, the Cornerstone, the Head of the Corner and the Door to God's Eternal Temple. This is a well-crafted and simply stated teaching that will be unto your edification and enrichment. Perhaps you would like Todd to present this series at your fellowship. This series could easily be presented over a weekend, a weekend I am sure you would not soon forget!

I hope you enjoy this issue of the Vine & Branches, with its featured articles by Todd Pekel and Stephen Kingsley and a very exciting "Seeing God At Work" testimony by Raymond Beard.

God bless you all,
Rev. Tim Sullivan

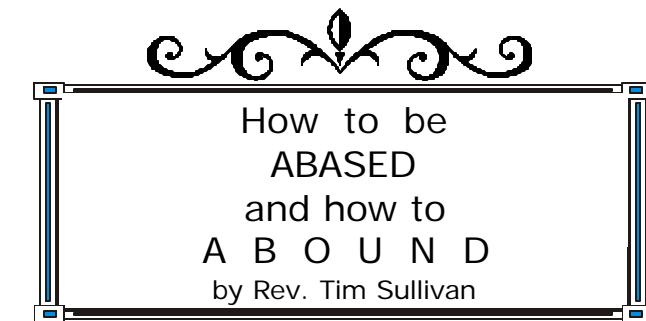
II Corinthians 6:1-4A:

1: *We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.*

2: *(For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.)*

3: *Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed:*

4: *But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God...*



Ecclesiastes 3:1:

To every thing these is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven.

To everything there is a season. Some seasons are of ease and others are of struggle. Life certainly has its ups and downs. But God desires that we know true contentment in all seasons, regardless of the circumstances that surround us.

Philippians 4:11-13:

11: Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, **in whatsoever state I am**, therewith to be content.

12: I know both **how to be abased**, and I know **how to abound**: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

13: I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

Not many of us can truly say, "In whatsoever state I am, I know how to be content." We may recognize we *ought* to be content, but we don't know *how* to be content. Like the Children of Israel of old, most people find it much easier to complain than to be content. Most people, rich and poor, are always looking for *more*.

When Paul said, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me," he was speaking specifically of knowing how "to be full and to be hungry, how to abound and to suffer need." This is a great lesson in Christian living, and the secret of a contented life.

Paul said he had *learned* to be content. This statement alone has much to teach us. Contentment does not come "naturally." It must be learned.

Before you can ever understand how to be content "in whatsoever state I am," you must recognize a fundamental truth about riches and poverty.

Proverbs 22:2:

The rich and poor meet together: the LORD is the maker of them all.

In this world, the Lord is the maker of the poor and the rich. There is no secret formula that guarantees wealth to all.

Ecclesiastes 9:11:

I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race

is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all.

If the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong; if the bread is not to the wise, nor riches to men of understanding, there must be something else that is being tested. "To every thing these is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven." To what purpose do we experience such ups and downs in life? What is God trying to teach us? What does He want us to learn?

More than anything else, God wants us to trust Him. We cannot love a God we do not trust. We cannot serve a God we do not love.

Luke 16:13:

No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

This is the greatest challenge in Christian living. This is a lesson God will continually test you on. Where do you put your trust? Do you trust in God or do you trust in money? He will test you with times of need. He will test you with abundance.

There are two times when Christians are most likely to forsake God — when things are going very well, and when they are going very poorly. Understand this, and you will understand why we need to learn *how* to be abased and *how* to abound.

Proverbs 30:8-9:

8: Remove far from me vanity and lies: give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me:

9: Lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is the LORD? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain.

The man gorged on his riches will deny the Lord, saying, "God did nothing for me. I have done all this for myself! Why should I give Him anything?" The man blinded by the things he lacks will take the name of the Lord in vain and steal. "God didn't help me in my time of need! Why should I give to Him?" Sounds familiar, doesn't it? God knows us better than we know ourselves!

I Know How To Abound

Perhaps you have never even considered that God would test your faith by giving you abundance. But it is one thing to abound. It is quite another to know *how* to abound.

Let's be honest. Most of us would much rather learn how to abound than to learn how to be abased. But it is

not as easy as you might think.

It is God's prerogative to give a man riches and wealth. It isn't a reward. It is a gift. It is also a *test*.

Ecclesiastes 5:19:

Every man also to whom God hath given riches and wealth, and hath given him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion, and to rejoice in his labour; this is the gift of God.

Ecclesiastes 6:2:

A man to whom God hath given riches, wealth, and honour, so that he wanteth nothing for his soul of all that he desireth, yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof, but a stranger eateth it: this is vanity, and it is an evil disease.

What is the "power" that one man has to enjoy his portion that the other has not? It is a matter of *trust*.

The Bible teaches us that the love of money is the root of all evil. It is amazing how many Christians spend so much time praying for the one thing that has the power to ruin them.

I Timothy 6:10:

For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

Many people put their trust in wealth as their deliverer, their strong city. Their hope is to have enough money to buy their way out of any situation.

Proverbs 18:10-11:

10: The name of the LORD is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.

11: The rich man's wealth is his strong city, and as an high wall in his own conceit.

Money provides only the *illusion* of safety and security. The deceitfulness of riches is that it promises *what it cannot deliver*. Money promises to comfort you and protect you, and then it slips right through your fingers.

Proverbs 23:5:

Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? for riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven.

Haggai 1:6:

Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes.

The only durable riches come from God.

Proverbs 8:18-19:

18: Riches and honour are with me; yea, durable riches and righteousness.

19: My fruit is better than gold, yea, than fine gold; and my revenue than choice silver.

It is the *deceitfulness* of worldly riches that can choke the Word out of your life.

Matthew 13:22:

He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.

Solomon — a man who knew what he was talking about — warned of riches that are to our own hurt.

Ecclesiastes 5:10-13:

10: He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase: this is also vanity.

11: When goods increase, they are increased that eat them: and what good is there to the owners thereof, saving the beholding of them with their eyes?

12: The sleep of a labouring man is sweet, whether he eat little or much: but the abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep.

13: There is a sore evil which I have seen under the sun, namely, riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt.

The pursuit of wealth is a sure trap, certain to cause you to err from the faith.

I Timothy 6:9:

But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

There is nothing that will cause a man to compromise his values faster than the pursuit of a quick buck.

Proverbs 28:20:

A faithful man shall abound with blessings: but he that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent.

Proverbs 28:22:

He that hasteth to be rich hath an evil eye, and considereth not that poverty shall come upon him.

He that hastens to be rich (*whatever* the reason, whether to give to himself or to others) will judge every situation only by its potential to bring a quick return. That, my friend, is an *evil* eye.

How then are we to abound? What are we to do when increase comes? The challenge is not to set our heart, our trust, upon the increase.

Psalms 62:10:

Trust not in oppression, and become not vain in robbery: if riches increase, set not your heart upon them.

Proverbs 11:28:

He that trusteth in his riches shall fall: but the righteous shall flourish as a branch.

I Timothy 6:17:

Charge them that are rich in this world, that they

be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy;

God does not instruct the rich man to forfeit his riches. Nor does He want him to hoard them. God charges him to be not highminded (“I’m wealthier than you because I’m a better *believer*”), nor to put his trust in uncertain riches, but in the God who enriched him to begin with. God wants him to be rich in good works as well, ready to distribute what God has given him.

I Timothy 6:18-19:

18: That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate;

19: Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

Proverbs 13:7:

There is that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing: there is that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches.

Philippians 4:17:

Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account.

God wants our eyes on the eternal riches that are in Christ. He wants our reward to be full. To know *how to abound* is to know that no matter how much money there is, you still cannot and do not put your trust in it. Your trust is only in God.

I Know How To Be Abased

Modern theologians like to preach that for a Christian to be hungry or to suffer need indicates a lack of faith. This contradicts the message of the Word of God. Paul did not say “I know how *not* to be abased.” Being abased was one of the “all things” Paul said he could do “through Christ which strengtheneth me.”

The “fairy tale” some Christians like to hear is that if you have faith, you will never be abased. The reality Paul taught is that Christ will strengthen you in your time of need.

Just as we must learn how to abound, we must also learn how to be abased. Anyone can be a “fair weather Christian.” It is the person you are when things are *stormy* that reveals your Christian character! Where is your faith then? Are you fearful and afraid, unable to see God beyond the clouds? Or are you the kind who gets *mad* at God, just because He expects you to give Him the “benefit of the doubt” once in a while? If you are, it is time to repent, my friend.

How do we learn to be content in times of need? It is a matter of proper judgment and right values.

Proverbs 15:16:

Better is little with the fear of the LORD than great treasure and trouble therewith.

Proverbs 16:8:

Better is a little with righteousness than great revenues without right.

Proverbs 28:6:

Better is the poor that walketh in his uprightness, than he that is perverse in his ways, though he be rich.

Before God will ever trust you with much, He will test you with little.

Luke 16:10-12:

10: He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.

11: If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?

12: And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?

Faithful stewardship is required in a servant of God. If God gives you ten dollars to do a job, and you waste it on something else, He is not obligated to bail you out of trouble with another ten bucks!

Proverbs 18:9:

He also that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster.

I Corinthians 4:2:

Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.

Conclusion

It is not poverty or wealth that reveals your worth.

Luke 12:15:

And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he posseseth.

The person you are in times of abasement or abundance defines your character. Paul said he had learned *how* to be abased and *how* to abound. In every situation, in every circumstance, Paul put his trust in God.

There is no greater poverty than the absence of hope. There are no greater riches than the true riches of Christ. Know this, and you can find contentment in whatsoever state you find yourself.

This is the secret to a contented life.

I Timothy 6:6-8:

6: But godliness with contentment is great gain.

7: For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.

8: And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.

This Man Receiveth Sinners

By Rev. Todd Pekel

It is truly amazing to think that when the chief priests were looking for at least two witnesses to condemn our Lord to death, they had difficulty finding them. In fact, they were unable to find two witnesses whose stories corroborated each other's. This was a dilemma because the law stated specifically that at least two witnesses were needed for someone accused to be put to death. One witness was not enough.

Deuteronomy 17:6:

At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; but at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death.

With this in mind, let us examine the events that led up to our Lord's crucifixion. In fact, it wasn't the *accusations* that led to his death, but rather it was the very truth of who He was and is that led him to the cross.

Mark 14:55-60:

55: And the chief priests and all the council sought for witness against Jesus to put him to death; and found none.

56: For many bare false witness against him, but their witness agreed not together.

57: And there arose certain, and bare false witness against him, saying,

58: We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands.

59: But neither so did their witness agree together.

60: And the high priest stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus, saying, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee?

The so-called witnesses themselves already answered this last question, as up to this point "neither...did their witness agree together." The very witnesses the chief priest had assembled to *condemn* our Lord had in fact done the very opposite. Because they were unable to agree, their "witness" according to the law, *exonerated* our Lord. That is, their testimony actually proved His *innocence*.

Mark 14:61-64:

61: But he held his peace, and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?

62: And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power,

and coming in the clouds of heaven.

63: Then the high priest rent his clothes, and saith, **What need we any further witnesses?**
 64: Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye?
And they all condemned him to be guilty of death.

Our Lord was condemned for telling the truth! He is the Christ, the Son of the Blessed. This sham of a trial was now over and our Lord was going to the cross for revealing the *truth* of who He is. What a great irony it is to see that there was a time when our Lord's accusers actually told the greatest of truths with their words of accusation. Behold the accusation!

Luke 15: 2:

And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, **This man receiveth sinners**, and eateth with them.

Glory to God! Shout it from the mountaintops. This man receiveth sinners! Oh Christian, don't you see it? The one accusation against our Lord that was *not* fabricated or falsified, this murmuring of the Pharisees and scribes, is in fact the greatest of truths. This man receiveth sinners. Consider the following.

Luke 7: 36-38:

36: And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat.
 37: And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment,
 38: And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment.

Unlike the Pharisee, this woman greatly honored and loved our Lord.

Luke 7: 39:

Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: **for she is a sinner.**

Like this Pharisee, some men *reject* sinners. Our Lord, however, *receives* sinners.

Luke 7: 40-48:

40: And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on.
 41: There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty.

42: And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most?

43: Simon answered and said, I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged.

44: And he turned to the woman, and said unto

Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head.

45: Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet.

46: My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment.

47: Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.

48: And he said unto her, **Thy sins are forgiven.**

Oh brothers and sisters, may we be like this unnamed woman and not like the Pharisee. May we truly know the one who forgives sins. He it is that those sitting at dinner *didn't* know. Notice their response.

Luke 7: 49:

And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves, **Who is this that forgiveth sins also?**

This woman with the alabaster box of ointment had her sins forgiven by the one who forgives sins. She *knew* the one that those sitting at dinner *didn't* know. What a true blessing it is to know Him, the one who receives sinners and forgives sins.

I John 1: 8,9:

8: If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

9: If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

This is He who came into the world "to save sinners."

I Timothy 1: 15:

This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world **to save sinners**; of whom I am chief.

This is the man who tells those whose sins are forgiven, whether it be a sinner repenting unto Salvation and eternal life, or a Christian unto restored fellowship, to "go in peace."

Luke 7: 50:

And he said to the woman, **Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.**

"Thy faith hath saved thee," said the one who forgives sins. "Go in peace." Thanks to Him, all those that *know* our Lord Jesus Christ, can do just that.

Romans 5: 1:

Therefore being justified by faith, **we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:**

Thank God that the accusation leveled at Him is as true today as when it was first murmured by the Pharisees. Our Lord Jesus Christ hasn't changed one bit.

Hebrews 13: 8:

Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.

This man receiveth sinners! Amen and Amen.



The Weapons of our Warfare Seminar in Aeschiried, Switzerland

By Alois Eggmann

It was two years ago my wife and I met Tim Sullivan for the first time, and since that time I knew as well as he, that one day, he would come to Switzerland to present a Seminar here in this country. One evening at our weekly fellowship with my wife Regina and our sister Beatrice, the desire came up to organize this class for our Swiss citizens. It must have been God who moved our hearts to make this decision, because at this time we had no idea whatsoever who would be part of this adventure. So, I like to share with you some of the experiences we had in organizing and also be partakers of this wonderful happening.

A few days after the decision was made, God opened the door to this beautiful place above Spiez, a Christian organization named "Blue Cross," where we had the assurance that all needs would be taken care of by the owners Mr. and Mrs. Metzger and their staff. Thank you so much for all you have done for us, to make us feel "at home." Reservations and payments were made for Tim's and our rooms. The next step, of course, was to let Tim know about our intentions, so we went home to write the invitation, and Tim's answer came very quickly, saying, "I am very pleased to accept."

Now we started to send out invitations which we prepared, along with the class presentation "The Weapons of our Warfare," to friends and relatives we knew who were dear to our hearts. Time went by, and the date of the beginning came closer, and at our fellowships we listened carefully to the words that God gave us and, praise the Lord, they were always words for our comfort and encouraging, that He would do above all that we ask or think, and that we were to put our whole trust in Him alone. Did we have another choice? Our God knows His children who are meek and lowly in heart and ready to obey His calling.

So the students arrived on Friday and I was blessed to welcome Ray and Joella from Florida, Philip and Gary from London, Eva, Rudi's mom who came by train from Vienna, and Jan from Germany. And Michael, George, Hugo, Beatrice, my wife Regina and

me from the land of cheese and chocolate. And on Monday the Englishman David and our chorus leader Rudi joined us also.

Because God's hands were upon the whole congregation, the Seminar became a success for each and everyone. Our daily schedule was based on three lessons at morning between 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM, and three in the afternoon from 2:00 PM to 5:00 PM. This allowed us to have enough time to do some excursions together around this beautiful area.

It was a blessing to have the class presented live by Tim, and as the Lord led him, so he did. So there was a time of learning, a time to be quiet, a time to share, a time to be ministered, or to minister healing to the physical and spiritual needs of others, to the end that we became doers of the word, and not hearers only.

The aim of the "Church of Determined Christians" in Oberwichtrach is: Switzerland for Christ! – Amen! Peace be to this house, as they received us with open arms and the love of God in their hearts when we knocked on their doors. They also practice the fundamental truth according to Gods Word regarding water baptism, thus showing the death, burial and the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. We held a very touching water baptism service there, led by brother Ray Beard. Five students where baptized and received the word of the Lord by prophecy. This will be a unforgettable moment in their lives.

I also want to thank all of you who contributed to the success of this seminar. Beginning with you Beatrice, our dear sister in Christ. Again you labored day and night to make the impossible, possible. Also the simultaneous translations of Tim's lessons were indeed very good. God bless you mightily for all you have done in His love. If I was to make a list about every item, God knows it would be a big one. But may He who seeth in secret reward you openly.

Thanks to you, Rudi, for your arrangements with the Songbooks, and for the leading of the Song services. It is a wonderful way to give praise and thankfulness to our God. Now we have no excuse anymore for singing out of tune. Did you hear the difference?

God bless you Ray and Joella, for your faithful commitment to our God. Your example and godly council were needed to take care of His flock.

Thank you each and everyone who where partakers in this Seminar. I am happy to know you personally as my brothers and sisters in Christ.

God bless all of you, who have kept us through this

time in your prayers, as the prayer of a righteous availeth much.

And you Tim, I probably will never find the right words to really express what my heart is trying to say – Thank you. Thank you so much for bringing us closer in our relationship to God, who is able to open the eyes of our understanding, that we may see and behold the wonderous works He hath prepared for His children, as He is the one who worketh in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure.

I guess we have wasted enough time around the runway, having studied almost everything intellectually about how to obtain a race. But now – be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord – seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race **that is set before us**. – Amen.



The Centrality of Christ

by Rev. Stephen Kingsley

If Jesus were alive today, (that is, if He was ministering on earth today as He did in the Gospel period) He would be labeled as “intolerant” for his blasting of the Pharisees in Matthew 23. They completely missed the greatest of truths in the Old Testament, “judgment, mercy, and faith,” which are the key elements to the gospel. The Pharisees were highly educated, disciplined, and trained. They loved prayer, tithing, fasting, memorizing scripture, and such activities. Isn’t it amazing that Jesus labeled these men as “hypocrites,” “blind,” “serpents,” and “fools”?

Every Bible topic becomes corrupted when separated from the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the life blood of scripture. Disconnect Jesus from any scripture and it is

meaningless. Without Christ, grace becomes license, faith becomes positive thinking, peace becomes unity among men, love becomes something the hippies share, mercy becomes lawlessness, prosperity becomes worldly gain... Take the great reality of the gospel of God’s grace and His free salvation through the cross-work of Christ out of God’s Word, and it becomes a tool through which evil men and seducers deceive and enslave their unwitting victims.

Grace, faith, peace, love, mercy, prosperity, (and any of hundreds of other topics from scripture) are all vital subjects for believers to embrace and practice, but apart from Christ they are but an empty shell drained of their real substance.

Let’s preach Christ to the Church and world again. Thus, the Apostle Paul, our example began his ministry, “And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the son of God.” (Acts 2:20) Likewise, he fulfilled his ministry and ended, “Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things that concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him.” (Acts 28:31)

Don’t be deceived. Christianity is not a system of ethics, morals, virtues, and family values. Much greater, it is the assembly of those who have received the love of the truth, WHO is the Lord Jesus Christ. These are all born again of God’s Spirit, and called to live in the flesh, in this world, in a manner that is worthy of Christ’s sacrifice on their behalf, and pleasing to their Father in heaven. A Christian loves the will of God and practices many of the same activities that the Pharisees did, but not to win God’s love and favor as they did, but because of it. The Pharisee’s likely knew, in the still hours of the night, that they were as empty inside as was their self-righteous principles. How different those same principles become to those whose are secure in Christ’s great and free salvation, having the gift of righteousness.

John 1:17:

For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

Galatians 2:20b:

... and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”





Seeing God At Work

by Raymond E. Beard

I am excited to see The Vine & Branches begin the "Seeing God at Work" section. I have long believed that too many Christians fail to recognize God at work in their everyday lives. I once heard it said, "If you are in a job where you don't see God at work – you need to find another job." However, I say, "If you are in a job where you don't see God at work – you need to open your eyes."

I have spent most of my adult life serving as a policeman and have continually seen God "at work" – sometimes very dramatically. On more than one occasion, I have seen God alter situations that would have caused me great harm without His intervention. This story is about one such occasion.

I was working in San Antonio, Texas, which has a population of about 1.2 million and a police force of about 1,900 officers. Almost all of the patrol officer work as one-man units and handle calls without backup but two officers are usually sent on any potentially violent calls.

My patrol district was a busy area of town and I was working the late evening hours, which gave me more than my fair share of violent calls. The officer working the neighboring district was a friend of mine, Gary Albrecht, and we often handled the violent calls together. We worked well together and developed a good routine so we always knew what the other would do during any type of call.

One night we received a call for a report of a violent family disturbance in an apartment complex and responded in our separate patrol cars. Gary arrived first and waited (as he always would) until I arrived so that we could approach the call together. As we came to the apartment, a short middle-aged man came running out of the door. He was drunken, splattered with blood and quite surprised to see the police.

The man explained to Gary that he had been fighting with his brother but that his brother had left the apartment and drove away. The little man was not injured – the splattered blood belonged to his brother. The man described his brother's pickup truck and said he would stay in the apartment but would call us if his

brother returned. Since the fight was over and the other brother was gone, there didn't seem to be much for us to do. However, one of the interesting things about police work is that situations are not always as simple as they first appear.

As Gary and I drove out of the apartment complex, we saw the brother's truck returning and stopped it. We noticed that the back glass of the pickup truck was shattered and, as the brother stepped out of the truck, we saw that he was HUGE. He stood about 6'4" and weighed about 275 pounds. His nose was shattered across his face, his eyes were blackened and swollen shut and he was covered in blood.

As I tried to figure out in my mind how the little man that we met at the apartment could have caused such damage to this huge man, Gary began to question him. This man explained that the apartment was his and that the smaller brother was only visiting. The smaller brother was an alcoholic who had been traveling from relative to relative until he wore out his welcome. This was his last stop before running out of family.

This bigger brother had tired of his brother's visit and had ordered him to pack his clothes and leave. The smaller man went upstairs and supposedly began packing. After too much time had passed, the bigger brother went upstairs to see what was taking so long. As he rounded the top of the stairs, the smaller man was waiting with a pipe in his hand.

Before the bigger man could react, his brother hit him across the face with the pipe shattering his nose and swelling his eyes shut. As he fell down the stairs, his brother pursued and continued hitting him with the pipe. The big man managed to stumble to his truck, start the engine and back out of the parking lot over a four-foot drop into an adjacent apartment complex parking lot. He drove away as quickly as he could while prying his eyes open to see the road. After regaining some composure, he decided to return home.

As Gary continued the conversation, I checked on my computer for information about the two men. This man showed to have never had any contact with the police while his smaller brother had had numerous arrests and was wanted on a felony DWI (driving while intoxicated) charge in Houston, Texas. Gary and I then decided to return to the apartment to arrest the smaller man. We instructed this big man to wait in his truck until an ambulance arrived.

As we drove back to the apartment, Gary arrived first and parked his car along the curb near the front

door of the apartment. I parked in front of Gary's car and notified the dispatcher of our situation. There were two steps leading up to the apartment door and I had planned to approach the door with Gary and then stand at the bottom of the stairs and off to the side. This would allow Gary to contact the wanted man and have him step outside to talk. Once the man was outside, I would be behind him and we could easily affect the arrest. This was our usual procedure and I had fully expected Gary to have the same plan. What happened next caught me by surprise.

As I was notifying the dispatcher by computer, I heard Gary call out to the man inside the apartment. I looked up and saw that Gary was already at the front door. I scrambled to get to his side. Gary had knocked on the door and the man inside asked, "Who is it?" Gary replied, "It's Officer Albrecht." The man then yelled, "I'm going to kill you!" A shot rang out and I saw Gary stumble back on the porch.

Gary is himself a small man, standing only 5'4" but he is also a body builder. His chest size is 54", which causes him to fill most doorways. The man inside had fired a .357 magnum handgun. The bullet went through the door covering Gary with splinters but surprisingly, the bullet had missed. Gary retreated from the porch and an all-night SWAT standoff began.

Gary and I had been separated during the standoff, one of us on each side of the door. All during that time, I kept wondering why Gary had approached the door without me. Later, we were relieved from our positions to prepare our reports and petition a judge for a warrant to forcibly enter the apartment. I then asked Gary why he had not waited for me and he was unable to tell me why. He likewise knew that he would always wait to approach the door together but for some unexplainable reason he did not this time. We also could not understand how the bullet could have missed hitting Gary.

Before we could petition the judge, the man surrendered and was arrested. We returned to the apartment to retrieve our cars and found that detectives were already processing the scene. One of the detectives ran a piece of string that showed the path the bullet had taken. What it showed was very odd.

The man inside the apartment was not standing in front of the door when he fired the shot. He was walking down the stairs which were next to the front door when Gary knocked. When he fired, he was standing on the first step which sent the bullet through the door on a descending angle. The bullet passed within two

inches of Gary's chest and hit the side of his patrol car. The bullet tore through the metal side and lodged inside the trunk.

As I looked at the string that showed the bullet's path, I stood in the spot where I had planned to be standing if I had approached the door with Gary. I found that the bullet would have struck me square in the pelvis about two inches below my protective vest. In all likelihood, the bullet would have severed my spine at the pelvic bone.

God has proven to me time and time again that He is perfectly capable of protecting me. He has also made it clear to me the thing which He chose to make known to King Nebuchadnezzar, "... that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men ..." (Daniel 4:17B)

There is no god like unto our God. He is our Saviour. He is our Protector. He is our All in All. To Him be the praise, honor and glory.

If you are one who doesn't see God "at work", please open your eyes and see that our God is truly an awesome God. May God bless you all.



God bless in the powerful name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Cornwall Weapons of our Warfare seminar was not your average type of get together. It was more uplifting, more fulfilling and eye-opening than I have ever experienced in my life.

In the last few years I have learnt an awful lot and have advanced because of it. But in Cornwall, God's Word became more and more personal to the extent that I realized that what I learn is very serious. When God reveals things to you, the deeper you go with no turning back, and with that there are tremendous responsibilities that you have to be prepared to take on.

I have never seen so many people's lives change so quickly, positively, peacefully in just one week. The teaching was very compact. Therefore we needed an ideal place to be able to concentrate 100% away from every day distractions. God obviously worked in Jerome's heart to place us in Cornwall, as it was the perfect setting, beautiful scenery, peaceful and quiet. Everything was so well organized it went like clock

work, with all the helping, loving hands of God's children putting into practice what they have been taught by God's Word. To see this was something special.

Tim delivered God's Word with such truth, so spiritually eye-opening and concise, it was pure luxury to be a part of it. Tim shared a few moving personal experiences that affected his life, and many people there could relate to what he shared as they had gone through similar experiences. Therefore it was a valuable sharing message to all in some way or another, and it was nice to know we are not the only ones going through what we have to go through.

Tim was down to earth and humble, letting God lead the lesson. This is how I also believe it should be taught. All glory, all praises goes to no-one but to our Heavenly Father and not to man. It was refreshing to hear the truth as it is with nothing taken away or added and with every statement backed up with God's Word.

It was great to have a syllabus with all the lessons and verses from the King James Bible already written down for us, as we were able to give 100% of our attention to the teaching, making some notes instead of trying to write everything down. Now it is there whenever we need to go over anything, reflect on or share with others.

It was so godly how everyone lived, shared, helped each other and talked about God's Word so freely. This is something you cannot do so easily in the world today. Maybe it is a small taste of what it will be like when JESUS CHRIST returns (may He come soon to deliver us from this evil world to where we really belong).

It was a blessing and a glorious sight to have witnessed a beautiful double rainbow after one class session, maybe to make us realize that sometimes He gives us signs to remind us of His promises.

Having the baptism and the prophecy really put the icing on the cake. It was like the seal of our commitment to our Heavenly Father that we have been chosen and called by God to walk as purely as possible like our Saviour Jesus Christ. To show yourself approved and to walk in the light, showing yourself accountable to everything you say and do, that you are truly God's child and not only by name.

What I experienced is hard to put into words. For others to understand it, they have to live through it and experience it themselves. May God bless them as much as He blessed me that week in taking a big step forward towards our Heavenly Father.

Cyndi Diamond
London, England

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The German translation of "Walking On The King's Highway" translated by Beatrice Scherer.

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