

UNLIMITED

NEWSLETTER

UNLIMITED GOSPEL

Let everyone who is thirsty come! Let anyone who wants the water of life take it as a gift! (Revelation 22:17, ISV).

The Gospel is the unlimited gift of grace, joy, forgiveness, and power.

Christmas is the Gospel story; God's gift of Jesus to us. In reference to this greatest gift of all, there is a word that repeats again and again; 130 times in the New Testament. It begins and ends each of the apostle Paul's letters. It turned the western world upside down during the Reformation. It is *grace*.

The Greek word translated '*grace*' is *charis*. It comes from a root word meaning 'to be joyful'. It is a term for the active love of God that streams continually from God as light streams from the sun. It is the essence of the Gospel.

Augustine said that it is not grace unless it is free, for it carries the meaning of generous gifts. When interpreted theologically, it signifies redemption, and all that goes with redemption. Grace is a word set in contrast to law, works and human merit. We read: *...if by grace, then it is no longer by works; if it were, grace would be longer be grace* (Romans 11:6, NIV).

A Wildfire of Grace

Grace shows us that God is seeking sinners to bless them and change them, and to fill their lives with fruitfulness, innocence and joy. This is because God is what he says he is: Love.

God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son...not...to condemn the world, but to save the world through him (John 3:16-17, NIV). That is Grace. That is the Gospel.

There could have been no grace for us but for the fact that God the Son, in Eden, volunteered to take our place and redeem us. "Grace...came through Jesus Christ" (John 1:17, NIV).

If the Gospel were something trite, such as "Be good and God will save you", it would barely have made it out of Jerusalem. But instead, the Gospel is the unlimited gift of grace; it is forgiveness, and joy, and power, and fruitfulness, and mercy, and a thousand other good things. This is the reason the Gospel spread 'like wildfire' in the first centuries after Christ. It's the reason people wanted to live for it and were prepared to die for it.

We need to tell the world, and remind ourselves, that grace is God's unimaginable generosity. It led God to give us Christ, God's "*gift that is too wonderful for words!*" (2 Corinthians 9:15, CEV). It led God to promise to supply as we need it "*exceeding abundantly above all we ask or think!*" (Ephesians 3:20, KJV).

God's promise is a promise of grace. This is the free, abundant gift of the Gospel.

▼ DES FORD

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GNU WORD SPREADS FAST.
Good News Unlimited

THE GOSPEL IS NOT A BUTTERFLY..OR IS IT?

God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God (2 Corinthians 5:21, NIV).

When I was about eight years old, I saw a film that showed how caterpillars turned into butterflies. I was really impressed by the stunning change. The film featured this Bible verse: "If anyone is in Christ, that person is part of the new creation. The old things have gone away, and look new things have arrived!" (2 Corinthians 5:17, CEB). I thought that was awesome.

But as the years went by, I found that verse more and more discouraging. Why? Because even though I considered myself to be a believer in Jesus, I didn't feel like a new creature; in fact, I felt like the grub. I was still myself, with the same personality, still sinning. So, where was the bonus of being a Christian? What was the Gospel really all about?

I knew that the only way I could get into the kingdom of Jesus was to have a clean record. And the Bible told me that the only way to have a clean record was if God didn't count my sins against me. The only way.

The good news is that the Bible tells us exactly how it is that God doesn't count our sins



You can enjoy a vibrant life of faith right now.

against us: because "God caused the one who didn't know sin to be sin for our sake so that through him we could become the righteousness of God" (2 Corinthians 5:21, NIV). That is how the kingdom of God has come to this world. The result is that your status is changed: you "become the righteousness of God" in Christ.

The Gift of a New Life

We are now in a right standing with God, and God is able to pour out his Spirit, with gifts of love, joy, and peace. It's a whole new life. It's like being born again: born into the Kingdom of Christ. The Good News of the Gospel is that you are a new person because of the free gift of Christ's righteousness.

When you are part of the Kingdom of Christ, you get citizen rights. And when Jesus walks with you in life, things really do change. You become an ambassador of Christ, the agent of reconciliation in this world. That's what the Gospel is about.

My problem was that I was looking at the grub and wondering where the butterfly was. Now, the supreme love of God, through the sacrifice of Jesus, has changed everything. It's the Gospel that transforms you into that "beautiful butterfly".

▼ ELIEZER GONZALEZ

LIVES TRANSFORMED WITH YOUR SUPPORT

"Jesus has made me happy!" Ranjith's Story

In a remote village in southern India stands an ordinary hut. It is lonely, with no power or water, and with no outward sign that there might be anything precious within. A small boy, just five years old, slept inside, curled up on the dirt. His name was Ranjith. When he awoke, his grandmother scraped together a small portion of leftover food. It was a meagre meal of fish, rat and snake, caught by Ranjith's father the day before. With a tummy still rumbling, Ranjith, whose mother died when he was a baby, wandered off to find some amusement.

Today, he heard a different sound above the din of the street. Joyful music danced in the air, drawing Ranjith into the heart of the village. He saw a man speaking to the crowd. He could smell food. Ranjith's tummy began to growl again. He edged closer.

'Hello, I'm Pastor Joseph,' smiled the man. 'Are you hungry?' Ranjith sat amongst the children, eating a warm meal and listening to a story about a man named Jesus. He liked the story. Jesus sounded kind. There were more stories about Jesus. Ranjith listened, eyes wide. Never in his five years had he heard of anyone like Jesus. He was so excited that he dragged his grandmother and father along to hear the things Pastor Joseph was saying. The family of three accepted Jesus as their Saviour.

Through Pastor Joseph, your generosity to GNU's ministry is providing food for Ranjith's family, and teaching them more about Jesus. Life is still challenging, but now they have hope. 'I live with a smile because of Jesus,' says Ranjith. 'Jesus has made me happy.'

"In God's plan...everything happens for a reason"

So said John as he gave his inspiring testimony at his baptism recently. Like many Ugandans, John had a religious upbringing, but there seemed little that was compelling in church life, so he stopped attending. His mother's strong relationship with God was inspiring, but still he could not bring himself to make a personal commitment.

"Two years ago, I began receiving devotionals from GNU in my email. I also began making prayer requests via their website. Later, I met their representative, who continued encouraging me in my journey of knowing more about God. I loved the teachings, but unfortunately GNU has no church here.

"I knew I needed to join a church group for fellowship and support, so my sister and I tried a place called Well of Worship. It was led by Pastor Isaiah, a friend of Pastor Bonifresh of GNU. Right from my first visit, it felt like home.

"The only thing that was missing was my full commitment, and when the opportunity came up to be baptised, I knew instantly that was what I wanted. Now I want to study, and I'm fully committed to God to live the amazing life he has planned for me."





GNU CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS APPEAL

This Christmas we're focusing on the children of the impoverished communities in which GNU serves around the world. Christmas is a time for good news!

Thanks to the work that you do in partnership with GNU, many children who had never heard about Jesus before have received and loved the Good News. And often their families have done the same, because they have seen how their children have been loved by you and me.

This Christmas, help us raise \$49,000 to bring Jesus and his blessings to the children and their families in the communities around the world where we serve.

And you know that the Good News always comes with blessings. Through your generosity, these children have seen their families be able to eat in lean times, be clothed when they were dressed in rags. They have seen drunken fathers finally overcome addictions, and they have seen abused mothers finally find peace and happiness.

This is Ranjith. He is 5 years old. You can read his story on p.2 of this newsletter.

I don't have a mother or brothers and sisters, just my father. I am hungry and sad when he can't find food for me.

One day Ranjith was attracted by happy music playing in the village. It was Pr Joseph, who had brought the practical ministry of GNU to the village. He gave the children food and told them stories about Jesus—the first they had ever heard.

Pastor Joseph gave me food and told me about Jesus. He said that Jesus is my friend who helps me.

In the evening, Ranjith brought his elderly grandmother along to hear Pr Joseph share the Gospel. Although culturally a Hindu, she had never believed in any god at all. But that very

night she accepted Jesus as her Lord and Saviour. Ranjith's father did the same at a subsequent meeting. Every week, Ranjith receives a small amount of food to help him survive. Despite the little they have, Ranjith is overjoyed to know that there are people like you who care, and a Saviour who loves them and has given them hope.

We love Jesus, and he makes me happy.



Ranjith says "Thank you!"

In addition to giving you the opportunity to do the work of Jesus by giving to our Children's Appeal, we want to give you the opportunity to write an encouraging message, which we will deliver to a child.

And there's more! For every gift of \$100 and above, I will send you a hand-drawn picture by a child who has been blessed by your partnership with GNU. It's just a way for them to say thank you, and to build a little kingdom community around the world!

So please help us reach our **\$49,000 target for our Children's Appeal this Christmas**. Be part of something bigger than yourself, and bigger than all of us: sharing the Gospel of Jesus with those who haven't heard!

Please fill in the reply slip below with the details of your gift, and send it back to us, together with your Christmas message to a child far away.

Grace and peace in Jesus

Eliezer

Eliezer Gonzalez Senior Pastor, Good News Unlimited

PS – Don't be discouraged if you can only give a little. Your little will become much in God's hands. Let's work together for the Gospel to reach every person and for Jesus to come soon!

my gift to do the work of Jesus

Eliezer, I want to give a gift to help the world's precious children learn about the love of Jesus Christ!

Enclosed is my gift of \$ _____

Please follow the instructions on the reverse, cut along the perforation, and return this slip to GNU in the enclosed reply-paid envelope.



Let the little children come to me.

■ Matthew 19:14



FROM ELI'S DESK



Dear Friends

I've had a couple of health scares recently. One of them required a biopsy that was not at all pleasant, but nothing nasty was discovered. Very recently my blood pressure has been shooting through the roof. It turns out that I was getting my medications mixed up!

Feeling a little unwell has reminded me that I, too, am mortal. Sometimes it doesn't feel like it, but it's true, our lives here on earth have a "use-by" date. It's also true that, "we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. (2 Corinthians 4:7, NIV).

The treasure that God has given us is the Gospel: the Good News of God's salvation through Jesus Christ. We hold it in jars of clay. Everyone in the ancient world knew that jars of clay needed to be held carefully, because if you didn't they'd break. The jars of clay are our earthly lives, in their weakness and mortality.

If your jar of clay is empty, then you will have nothing to share. But if your jar of clay is full to the brim with the unsurpassing power of God for salvation, then your passion for the Gospel will be overflowing wherever you go.

Every twinge of mortality that you feel should be a reminder, not to complain, but to share your blessings. It's a reminder that your work isn't done yet; that you have a mission to continue to share the Gospel.

So how is it with you, my friend? We all have to put up with the jars of clay, but do you have the treasure?

Grace and peace

▼ **ELIEZER GONZALEZ** Senior Pastor, Good News Unlimited

*God gave his son
...for your life*

*In the bleak midwinter, a stable sufficed
The Lord God Almighty, Jesus Christ.*

*What can I give Him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;
If I were a Wise Man, I would do my part;
Yet what I can I give Him: give my heart.*

CHRISTINA ROSETTI

My gift to help spread the Word of the Gospel Fast

I would like to give my gift by:

Credit Card (Please indicate card type) Visa Mastercard Amex

Card Number: _____ Expiry Date: ____/____

Name: _____ Signature: _____

Cheque/Money Order (Please make cheque to Good News Unlimited Ltd and enclose)

Direct Deposit: Acc Name: Good News Unlimited Ltd BSB: 032-278 Acct Number: 651816
Ref: Initial, Surname, & 'Donation' Swift Code: WPACAU2S (for international transfers)

I would like a tax-deductible receipt (Tax-deductible receipts can only be issued to Australian tax-payers, and only for sharing the Gospel on radio and the media in Australia.)

You can also give securely online at: goodnewsunlimited.com/donate

Please complete the information and return to: Good News Unlimited, PO Box 973, Penrith NSW 2751
ABN 34 235 659 914



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