

MAY 2014 / ISSUE #5

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THE MAGAZINE

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Multiplication in Belgium 03

The Poorest of the Poor 05

Victory in Kenya 06

Is Latin America Next? 07

Report from Ukraine 09

Our daily choices are governed
by our personal philosophy.

God's Odds: How to Win the Wager

By Desmond Ford

FOR ALL action some hypothesis about the origin and nature of the universe and humanity must be adopted, whether consciously or unconsciously. We act according to prior decisions as to what has value and whether there is meaning to life.

The question regarding what is good and what should be is answered by our personal decision regarding the beginning of all things. Are we just dirt plus time plus chance, or are we the children of a loving heavenly Father? This book sets forth the odds that the God spoken of in the Christian Bible are overwhelming, and that therefore the Christian faith is the best basis for every life.

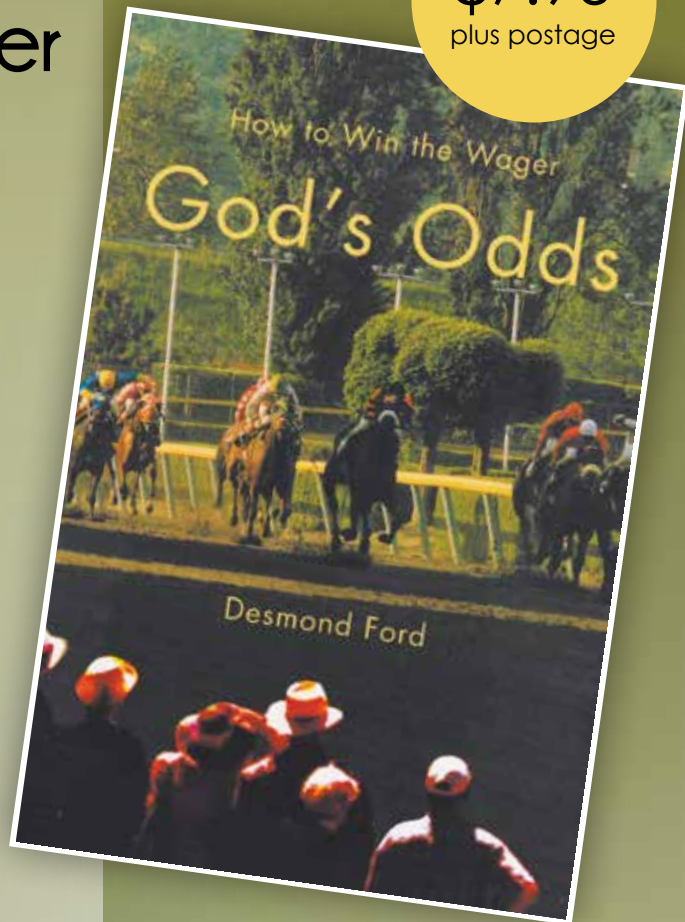
Born in Townsville, in Queensland, Australia, Desmond Ford is a semi-retired pastor, evangelist, teacher, and author of over thirty books. He was the Director of Good News Unlimited, a parachurch ministry in California for almost twenty-five years.

Desmond Ford has two earned doctorates from Michigan State University (USA) and Manchester University (UK). He hosted the Worth More Than a Million TV show and daily and weekly radio broadcasts in the USA, Australia, and Canada.

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EDITORIAL

There were seven Sabbaths on which Jesus healed people of serious ailments (Mark 1:21-26; Luke 4:38-39; 6:6-11; 13:10-14; 14:1-4; John 5:1-9; 9:14-16). Seven is the sign of our covenant relationship with God, and Jesus, by healing seven people on the Sabbath, was indicating that he had come to restore this relationship that had been broken by sin. And in restoring this relationship with these seven people, he was restoring their true Sabbath rest. The scribes and Pharisees, however, had a very narrow, legalistic view of the Sabbath—what could and could not be done on God's holy day.

On the occasion described in Luke 14 a very prominent Pharisee invited Jesus to a Sabbath meal at his place. This meal, however, was a set-up to entrap Jesus, for they had 'planted' a man with dropsy where Jesus could not avoid him. They then 'carefully watched' Jesus to see what he would do.

We know the man was planted because the religious laws of that time forbade extending hospitality to people who had been cursed by God, as had this man, in their opinion, because of his grossly swollen legs and arms. They suppressed their sympathy for such people because, in their thinking, to show sympathy to them was to oppose God.

After Jesus had healed the man he revealed the Pharisees' inconsistency by asking why it was forbidden to restore someone to normal health on the Sabbath when it was not forbidden to restore someone to normality who had fallen down a well on the Sabbath. The Bible story tells us that 'they had nothing to say.' They hated him for breaking their laws, and they seethed inwardly that he had exposed their false reasoning.

Jesus then went on to address the issue of human pride, in which people were prone to think themselves better than others. Not only did they exalt themselves above their fellows,

Jesus could have 'demolished' them ... but instead he stayed to encourage them to act in a way that would give them the rewards that would last for eternity

Ritchie Way
Executive Editor



but they had no place at their table for "the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind" (v. 13). Jesus told them that in God's sight they would be honoured for putting on a feast for such people because, "although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous" (v. 14).

Jesus could have 'demolished' them with a denunciation of the heartless way in which they used the man with dropsy, and then turned his back and walked out on them, but instead he stayed to encourage them to act in a way that would give them the rewards that would last for eternity. Jesus wanted to do more than just expose wrong; he wanted to save and enhance their lives also.

To do what Jesus recommended, however, would have required them to go against everything they had been taught and believed in. And it would have put them at variance with the very people they respected and depended upon for their livelihood. Such changes, nevertheless, are a necessary part of the cost of following Jesus. If this is where you stand, we encourage you to step out and follow Jesus. It's a decision that will greatly enrich your life; one you will never regret. ▼

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www.desford.org.au and clicking on Dr Des Ford Live.
You can watch or download recent broadcasts in HD also.

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Christians united in offering to all meaning and direction in their lives through a knowledge of God's reconciliation with humanity through his Son, Jesus Christ.

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The parable of the talents tells us that God owns all the riches, and that he is pleased when we invest the resources he has entrusted us with in his kingdom work. So this is an investment report for the many of you who are doing just that.

GOD AT WORK



18,000 books are currently being printed in Uganda.

Books for Africa Appeal

Good News Unlimited has received gifts totaling \$31,950 for the printing of Dr Des Ford's book *Jesus Only*, as abridged by Pr Ritchie Way. As I write this, a total of 18,000 books are currently being printed in Uganda. The quantities and languages being printed are:

- *Yesu Pekee* (Swahili = 10,000 books)
- *Yesu Wenyine* (Kinyarwanda = 2,000 books)
- *Yesu Yekka* (Luganda = 5,000 books)
- *Jesus Only* (English = 1,000 books)

The amazing thing is that these translations were all made by volunteers, both in Africa and Belgium, sometimes under very adverse circumstances. However, to bring the hope of the gospel to their people, the translators worked arduously to complete this magnificent work.

Because of your gifts, we have been able to organise for Pr David Kayumba to travel personally from Brussels to Uganda to take delivery of the books, and ensure their safe arrival in Kenya and Rwanda. While in Africa, he will present evangelistic meetings in Kenya and gospel revival programmes in other countries.

We have another faith goal for the future: this is to publish the abridged *Jesus Only* in Spanish and distribute it through Latin America.

We are looking forward to meeting many people in heaven who will be there thanks to the grace of God and the efforts of so many people, such as the translators, and of course, yourselves.

Thank you for helping print 18,000 copies of "Jesus Only" in four languages for distribution in Uganda!



Gospel to the Nations Appeal

We have received gifts totaling \$76,065 to invest in the technology to be a media ministry. From this, we have bought some essential production equipment, and the balance will be invested in the hire of a recording studio on a regular basis.

This investment will initially allow us to develop professional gospel content for radio here in Australia and overseas. As I write this, we are in the midst of producing some radio samples to be reviewed by Station Managers of Christian radio networks in Australia. We will keep you up-to-date with developments as they happen!

Summary

Our work has only just begun. Please support us with your prayers as these projects go forward in faith. We are so grateful that you are working together with us to make sure God's riches are put to good use!

TO THE POOREST OF THE POOR: THE GOSPEL WORK GROWING IN INDIA

Pastor Joseph Usala, "Gethsemane Power Ministries": I greet you in the name of Christ. This report is about what has taken place in the last few weeks of my ministry.

Taking the Gospel to the Unreached

God has called me to preach the good news to the poor and to serve the poorest of the poor. My mission is to preach the good news in the interior villages in the hills of Andhra Pradesh where the gospel has not yet been heard. It is also to help the aged and the orphans. I try to gather as many children as possible to plant the Word of God in their hearts at a tender age and show them a good future in the mighty name of Jesus. I teach them the parables of Jesus. I conduct revival meetings and medical camps in remote villages where the gospel of Jesus has not been preached before.



Above: Gethsemane Power Ministries is taking the gospel to numerous unreached villages in Andhra Pradesh.

The Mighty Name of Jesus

This ministry started one year ago in a family house with only a few believers meeting every week. The number of believers has been growing week by week, as people accept Jesus as their Saviour. Now there are more than 100 families meeting, and the meetings have extended to two more villages. Wherever and whenever we conduct prayer meetings in the mighty name of Jesus, people are interested in attending.

Bringing Hope and Peace

I lead this ministry, and there are seven lay people who help me preach the good news and who also help the orphans and widows. I have been a guest speaker for youth conferences twice, and we have been conducting family gatherings from house to house in order to preach the good news and to strengthen the spiritual and prayer life of families, as well as to create peace among the family members in the mighty name of Jesus.

Doing the Work of Jesus

Four times a week we conduct prayer meetings in the villages, and we are preparing people for baptism in the name of Jesus. At the beginning of this year we conducted candlelight worship services in various villages to encourage people to receive Jesus in the New Year so that they can have a new way of life in him.



Right: Pr Joseph's ministry provides food and clothing to local widows and orphans as they share about the new life Jesus gives.

We gave clothes to around fifty widows and elderly men at that time, and distributed gifts such as boxes, spoons, and pens to around 60 orphans and other children who come to our prayer meetings.

We conducted sports and games, Bible quizzes, and singing and dancing competitions for the children in various villages.

Please Pray for Us

The new microphone that was given to us by *Good News Unlimited* was very helpful during these programmes. I am so thankful to the Lord Jesus for the assistance given by *Good News Unlimited*.

Please pray for our ministry and me. I have been praying for the work you do for Jesus daily.

Your loving servant in Christ

▶ **JOSEPH USALA**
India

THE GREAT INVITATION: GOSPEL GROUPS IN IN BELGIUM

Our fellowship, “The Great Invitation”, has had a single purpose since the time we began: that is to share the gospel of Jesus Christ. We have been doing this by inviting friends into our homes for Bible study. All along, the video sermons by Desmond Ford have been and still are the messages that form our core understanding of the gospel as taught in the word of God. *From Pr David Kayumba.*

On Fire for the Gospel

After our connection with Dr Eliezer of GNU, we have been further energized and inspired to move out and start small gospel study groups here in Belgium. So far we have five of these groups. Each Sabbath afternoon we meet in a different home. Our efforts have been to equip the head of each Home Group to lead and help others to share the gospel in the simplest way.

Rediscovering the Gospel

The presence of beautiful church buildings in Belgium indicate that this country is not a place where Jesus is a stranger. In fact I have met very few people who will show a negative attitude to Jesus Christ. On the other hand, I have met many who hate institutionalized religion even though they still have great regard for religious rituals such as baptism and marriage. Therefore, our efforts have not really taken us to any one who is ignorant of the Jesus of Christianity; rather, they have led us to many active members of different church groups who have not found the Jesus who died for them and who offers them his saving grace without cost and without price.



We have been inspired to start five gospel study groups

We have found ourselves sharing with these brothers and sisters the gospel that they now excitedly call “new and liberating.” Some Christians, perhaps motivated by miracles and hopes for prosperity, have been surprised to hear about Jesus’ mission statement in Luke 4:18-19, and also the announcement in Luke 2:10-11. As a result, these people have caused a stir in their respective congregations. And because of this, many have asked to receive our weekly studies, which we

normally send out as PowerPoint slides. Members in our group are invited to share in their own congregations.

Mr Jason Finds Jesus

In September of last year we were treated to an exciting moment when we visited the home of Mr Jason in Charleroi, 60 km from Brussels. This man had grown up in a Christian home and his father was a church pastor. Jason was separated from his wife. He left the church because, as he confessed to us, “It gave me no hope, nor did I find it again until now.” This was his confession after we discussed with him Jesus’ mission statement and how he accomplished it. We left his home joyfully because he told us that he was so happy that he had found happiness in his life.

Two weeks later we drove back to his home and we found his house full of people, amongst whom were his wife and their three grown-up children. We all sang songs of praise one after another. What struck us greatly was his repeating that he had finally found happiness, and it was because of what Christ had done 2000 years ago. His wife was surprised to hear this, coming from a man whom she had known as an alcoholic without any regard for God!

This brother Jason is now a very active member of our evangelistic team. You can see him in the picture: he is the slender man with much hair. In this picture we had gone to share the gospel in our newly established group far away from Brussels.

Brother Thomas is a gifted young man who is a good singer. He has been composing gospel songs and we have been giving them as gifts to those we have shared the gospel with, and the results are encouraging. As you can see, our team is possessed by the love of sharing the gospel. Our mission is to all the church and unchurched.

MULTIPLY



Pr David (second from right) and his home fellowship leaders are witnessing renewed interest in the gospel within their communities.



Mr Jason (left) was revived in his faith and now actively shares the gospel in his community alongside Pr David.

Working on *Jesus Only*

We rejoice in the ongoing work of translating Des's book, *Jesus Only*, into our African language. We have engaged everyone in our groups to read, criticise the language and check for errors. This united effort helped everyone to see the beauty of this book. We see ourselves also very much focused on the work of sharing the gospel in Africa. We have started preparing friends and relatives in Rwanda, Uganda, Tanzania and Burundi to receive *Jesus Only* as soon as it is printed. We are happy to report that our evangelistic activities have led us to a stranger in a hospital in Brussels. This was a lady from Burundi who operated their family radio. Our interaction with her led her to accept Christ and attend church. And now she is eagerly waiting for the book *Jesus Only* in the Kinya-rwanda language so she can share this book with others. This means that we shall also be able to send books to Burundi.

Our Plans for a Broader Outreach

Due to the nature of our situation here in Belgium, we think it necessary that we develop our media capacity so that we are able to translate both audio and video messages by Dr Des, Dr Eliezer and Pr. Ron in the different languages spoken here and in Africa. This way, we can give CDs to those people with whom we speak or are in contact. We look forward to a time when we shall be able to translate every sermon produced by Des Ford and others so that we can distribute them.

We recognize that many people do not take time to read, but they can listen. So we plan to acquire the necessary equipment and this will be achieved slowly, step by step.

I cannot thank *Good News Unlimited* enough for their media ministry that has enriched us immensely. I am always quick to send the video message links to all the friends I have in this world, and many of those friends have done the same for others. I have also downloaded the audio and videos and made them into mp3 files, and I have sent them to those who cannot access the Internet. Each time I do this, I am conscious of the fact that thousands will find salvation through these gospel messages.

Thank you *Good News Unlimited*.

God bless and sustain *Good News Unlimited* and all of us.

▼ **DAVID KAYUMBA**
Brussels

THE BLOOD OF JESUS WINS: BAPTISMS AND VICTORY IN KENYA

From Pr. Peter Morwabe “Gospel Embassy Chapel”

I am glad in the Lord that he led me know you, Dr. Eliezer, and the Good News Unlimited family. Ever since then, we the Gospel Embassy Family have not stopped praying for you, Dr. Ford, Pr. Kayumba, and the Good News Unlimited family, as well as for your gospel partners around the world. I am equally glad for the continuous support that you have given to our ministry by sending us monthly teachings.

Twenty New Converts Every Week

We rejoice in our almighty God that in his manifold wisdom he has so favoured us by his grace that every Saturday we are receiving a minimum of 20 new converts. Currently we have about 120 candidates who will go through water baptism very soon, and we are arranging for another group to be baptized on May 17th.

Miracles Confirm the Word

We are also glad to let you know that since October last year a minimum of 3,000 people have been set free from demonic oppression and satanic manipulation. Besides this, God has shown us great miracles so that the lame have left their crutches and walked, the deaf have heard again, people who were made dumb by the powers of witchcraft have talked again and danced for the Lord. The furious demons of the

coast have been defeated by the blood of Jesus: families have been reunited again, people have been healed of diabetes, epilepsy, and a lady who had gone mad was restored and is now singing in our praise and worship team. We are in awe of the power of God.

New Visions, New Frontiers

We are optimistic that by the end of this year the membership of our main group in Kisii will be at least 1,500. Right now it is 400 adults and 150 children. We are planning to establish 3 more branches within the country of Kenya: one in Nairobi, another in Webuye, and another in Keancha. Our pastor in Dar-el-salaam, Tanzania, Pr. Benjamin Mwaipape, is also doing well. We are mobilizing our resources to go down to Dar-el-salaam to officially launch our ministry there.

We have also managed to successfully translate Dr Ford's book, *Jesus Only*, into Kiswahili and we are very grateful that you will help us with the printing costs.

Under Pressure to Get Out

Our current challenge is the ‘one month’ notice that we were given to vacate the government grounds which we have been using as church on Saturdays, hence we must look for an alternative venue that can accommodate our numbers. I thought it is important for you to know this so you, being our brothers in the Lord, will pray with us over this matter. The decision to evict us is coming from a denomination that is putting the pressure on officers in the government. They are afraid because their churches are emptying and the people are coming to us. However their pressure is the least of our concerns at present because we are focused on our God-given purpose to preach the gospel.

May the good Lord bless you all

▼ PR. PETER MORWABE



The Gospel Embassy family continues to grow as the good news of Jesus is shared and many come to faith in Him each week.

GOOD NEWS UNLIMITED IN PARAGUAY:

INTERVIEW WITH WOLFGANG STREICH

Eliezer: *Wolfgang, please tell us about your Christian experience from the time of your youth.*

Wolfgang: I was born in a Christian home in the country of Paraguay in South America. My father was an elder of the church and my mother taught the children in the church. Although my church is a bit legalistic, it was very focused on evangelism, and I grew up in a great church environment. I accepted Jesus Christ as my Saviour and I was baptised at nine years of age in 1979. I received my education in Christian institutions from primary school through to seminary. I completed a Bachelor of Theology in 1993 when I was 23 years of age.

I wasn't always in agreement with certain of my church's teachings, but this did not cause significant problems for me back then. I particularly enjoyed a course I did in the seminary on the book of Romans. That's when the grace of God first reached out strongly to my heart.

Eliezer: *So how did you actually discover new light on the gospel?*

Wolfgang: Perhaps I've already answered that question, however I don't think I discovered the gospel; it was the gospel that found me. Many things that I had previously not seen about Jesus and his good news started to become progressively clearer. Finally, in the year 2000, I decided to stop being a mouthpiece for a system that emphasised elements that weren't central to the gospel, and so I left my church and began to find a new identity in Jesus Christ.

Wolfgang Streich and his wife Ruth



Eliezer: *How did your family, colleagues, and friends react to this?*

Wolfgang: Well, of course, the great majority reacted in a negative way. They never imagined that something like this could happen in my life. However, before my father died in 1996 he had encouraged me to follow what the Bible taught and not what was taught by men. And he said this while he was an elder of the church. Not long after I had stepped away from the church my mother started to ask me about the gospel, and soon she too followed the way of Jesus Christ.

At that point I faced considerable rejection because the majority of our relatives claimed that I had "brain-washed" my mother. And many of my former friends became indifferent to me and ignored me from that time forward. All of them belonged to the church of which I had been a pastor.

I thank God, however, that I quickly found new friends, and the evangelical church that I started attending soon invited me to be a preacher (assistant to the pastor), and a teacher of the youth class.



I don't think I discovered the gospel; it was the gospel that found me.

Eliezer: *How did you come to hear about Dr Desmond Ford? And how did he influence you in your Christian journey?*

Wolfgang: I first heard of Dr Ford while I was at the seminary. Afterwards, when I left the church in which I had grown up, materials came to hand that told something of Dr Ford's story. I identified myself with him because of what had happened to me in 1998, although of course, I was only a "mini-theologian" beside Des! I was very interested in prophecy and Dr Ford's interpretations. I also read an interview that had been done with Dr Ford, which gave me the impression that he is a person of good heart and full of the love of Jesus Christ.

Eliezer: *I understand that your career took a marked turn in 1999. What happened to your life from that point forward?*

Wolfgang: In 1999 I was contracted by Alfalit, a not-for-profit organisation that works in 22 countries carrying out literacy programmes for young people and adults, as well as basic education, financial management, and health programmes for people with few means. I joined them and worked as a coordinator for the literacy programme in Paraguay until 2009.



I am personally praying for the revival that is taking place in Latin America; in Peru, Nicaragua, Mexico, and the United States, and in Paraguay as well.

In 2004, encouraged by a pastor friend, I started a Bachelor in Journalism course, graduating with top marks in 2007. These studies gave me the opportunity to present the message of grace to folk much younger than I. As a student I wrote every month in a newspaper called Órbita [Orbit], in 2007 I did my internship in the newspaper La Nacion [The Nation], and from 2006 I have written regularly in a journal for pastors called La Fuente [The Fountain]. Here is the link: <http://www.revistalafuente.com/>

The Lord has also given me the privilege of helping young people studying theology through correcting and editing their work. I have also had the privilege of teaching some subjects in a theological seminary for a number of years.

Eliezer: *So Wolfgang, how do you see that the Lord can use all of this for the ministry of the gospel?*

Wolfgang: I often say that we are really just worthless servants, because we have only done what we should be doing. Apart from that, there are many bad things in my past that I have not mentioned here, but the Lord in his grace covers a multitude of sins, including the bad attitudes I used to have. I believe that the Lord still has much more to do in my life, and surely there is still much to be done for the gospel.

Eliezer: *I was surprised recently to find out that you launched the ministry Buenas Nuevas Ilimitadas (BNIL) ["Good News Unlimited"] in Paraguay some years ago. Please tell us how you started this ministry, what it does, and how the ministry is supported financially.*

Wolfgang: Well, in the beginning we used the name "New Covenant," but, inspired by Des's ministry, "Good News Unlimited", and thinking that they would never hear about us adopting their name in our part of the world, in 2010 we renamed it "Good News Unlimited", but in Spanish, of course.

I liked how it sounded, what it meant, and I liked the word "news" since I was a journalist. And when I did an internet search, there was no other organisation that had the abbreviation BNIL [Spanish abbreviation for "Good News Unlimited."] So I started a small blog, and afterwards I started various pages on Facebook, each on a different topic including theology, family, anti-violence, mission, gospel metaphors, hymns, doctrine, and journalism.

This ministry is sustained by the payments that I receive from some of my students, by my writing for the magazine The Fountain, by my work in theological seminaries, and by the grace of God. This year we have initiated a series of theological courses (180 hours over a year) at a low cost for lay people.

Eliezer: *So how was it that you found out about Good News Unlimited here in Australia?*

Wolfgang: I'm not too sure how or when. In reality, I knew about the ministry, but I don't know English and I didn't have any way of communicating with anyone from there. In January 2014, through the internet I contacted Eliezer Gonzalez, who

speaks Spanish, and it is a blessing to have him as a brother and companion in the cause. At first I was frightened, because I thought that I would be accused of stealing the name "Good News Unlimited", but now I am very relieved and happy to know you all.

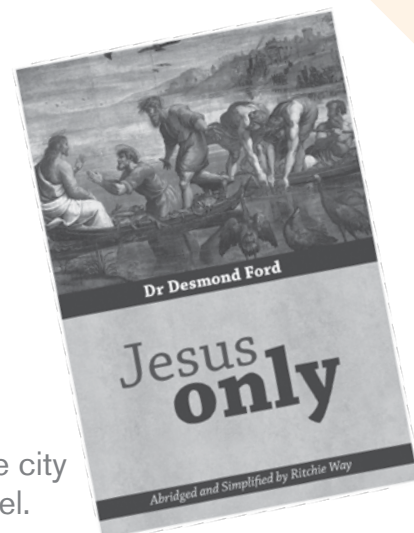
Eliezer: *Wolfgang, we have the same name because we have the same mission. And now we can work together. The time seems to be right, too, since I have heard that there is an evangelical revival going on in Latin America. What can you tell us about the interest that there is right now in Latin America, and how we can help you to bring people there to the foot of the cross?*

Wolfgang: It's true, Eliezer. Many people, pastors, and churches are waking up to their traditional religious systems that are based on meritorious works, and are coming to the message of the good news of the gospel as it is in Jesus Christ. I am personally praying with all my heart for the revival that is taking place in Peru and Nicaragua. Here in Paraguay the Spirit is also working, although not yet with much power in the traditional churches. We are also aware of the great evangelical revivals among the Spanish-speaking people in Mexico and the United States.

Right now, and as a result of our contact with Good News Unlimited, we are in the process of setting up what we are calling the Grace Network, to bring together churches and ministries that are centred on the gospel as taught in the Bible. Good News Unlimited in Australia and Paraguay are founding members, and already ministries throughout Latin America are joining us. The idea is to pray for one another and to share experiences and resources (books, sermons, videos, etc). A dream that we have is to launch an online magazine together with Good News Unlimited in Australia. And then we will see what else we can do. Maybe a radio programme? What I can say for now, is that the Lord has brought us to this point. ▽

JESUS ONLY

IN TROUBLED UKRAINE



In mid 2009 Pastor Stepan Boyko, who has a large independent Sabbath-keeping church in the foothills of the Carpathian mountains, not far from the city of Ivano Fankovsk, invited Rosemary and me to Ukraine to preach the gospel.

In October we flew to Ukraine and were met by Volodymyr (Walter) Stefanyk, our translator. This dear friend, God bless him, never left our side for the three weeks we were in his country. This was important to us because the only other person who was able to speak to us in English, during our stay in Ukraine, was a customs officer at the airport.

Our visit to Ukraine was very spiritually satisfying, but physically demanding. Our time there involved long hours of travel over unbelievably bad roads (once on black ice in a snow storm), meals that came at all hours, different beds, incredibly hard pillows, living out of suitcases, indescribable toilets, schedules that were changed at the drop of a hat, and much more.

One lasting memory I have of Ukraine, however, is that the Christians there can sing like angels, and are very friendly and generous.

“We pray that these men, who stood up for a better life in their country, will stand up behind the Leader who offers them a future life with no regrets.

While there we were interviewed for forty minutes on local television; we preached in four different Baptist churches, including the large stone Central Baptist Church in Ivano Frankovsk, as well as several times in Pastor Boyko's church in Billi Oslavi. We also took meetings in Chernivsti.

We returned to New Zealand via Vancouver, Canada, where we met several *Good News Unlimited* supporters. They offered to finance the translation and printing of Dr Ford's book, *Jesus Only*, into the Ukrainian language.

In order to produce a translatable script from this good book, I found it necessary to abridge and simplify it. When that was

done Walter proofread the Ukrainian translation, and arranged for a Christian printer in Ivano Frakovsk to print 6500 paperback copies for us at a very good price. These books have been distributed by Pastor Boyko, Pastor Rodymiuk—a Baptist pastor in Burshtyn—and Walter.

The recent political troubles in Ukraine, coupled with the intervention of Russia in Crimea, have destabilised the country, causing great uncertainty about the future in the hearts of its citizens. When the situation in Crimea became critical, Walter put his family in his car, and with a few possessions they drove northwest to seek refuge in Poland where they are being currently cared for in a refugee camp.

In an email Walter reported, “Last Sunday I drove to Warsaw to worship in a Russian speaking Baptist church. Members of this church are supporting fourteen Ukrainian men who were shot by snipers in the Kyiv [Kiev] insurrection. Polish military planes flew these men to the Warsaw police hospital for treatment. While there I gave the church folk copies of the *Jesus Only* book by Dr Ford to pass on to them.”

We pray that these men, who stood up for a better life in their country, will stand up behind the Leader who offers them a future life with no regrets.

The message of *Jesus Only* is crucial for salvation in these countries of eastern Europe, where hundreds of years of religious tradition have smothered the gospel, leading the ‘faithful’ to put their trust in churches rather than in Jesus, the only mediator between God and man (1 Tim. 2:5). It is also crucial for the generation that no longer attends these churches, because these people are empty of God's grace and love.

▼ RITCHIE WAY



THE ANT WAS WRONG

WHY KINGDOM BUSINESS AIN'T NOTHIN' LIKE YOUR M

Listen to Your Mother

We didn't have a car when I was a child. Everyone else seemed to. We walked and caught the train. We didn't have a telephone either – you know, the kind that was stuck to the wall. Everyone else seemed to.

Save! Save! Save! That's the principle my parents' generation observed. It was the way to get ahead. And they did get ahead. My mother taught me to save. I remember she used to tell me how,

Ants are creatures of little strength, yet they store up their food in the summer.
(Prov 30:25, NIV).

That's obviously great advice if you're an ant, or a person who is too much into "shopping therapy." But when we try to apply the world's 'tried and tested' principles to the Kingdom of God, we are *totally wrong*. Here's why.

Turning the World Upside Down

The gospel wasn't intended to be comfortable news. Sure, it's good news – but not good news that makes us comfortable.

This good news *turns the world upside down*. This principle underpins much of Jesus' teaching. For example, in Mark 10:42–44 Jesus turns the basis of authority in the world upside down. That's what the gospel does; it overturns the way we see the world, and how we operate within it.



Save! Save!
Save! That's
the principle my
parents' generation
observed. It was the
way to get ahead. And they
did get ahead.

The Parable That Most Upsets the Savers

In one brief parable, Jesus also overturns all the financial advice you ever received. I'm not saying the advice wasn't good; it just doesn't work in the kingdom of God.

The Parable of the Talents in Matthew 25:14–30 is hugely radical. Jesus intended this to be a *shocking* message.

And so there's no confusion, think of a "talent" as a "bag of gold," just like the NIV translates it. Here are the three shocking truths that Jesus taught in this parable.

Shocking Truth #1

The parable is not primarily talking about "talents" in terms of your ability to do things. This is a parable that *really is* about *money*!

Shocking Truth #2

All the money belongs the master – not ten percent, not twenty percent – but absolutely, totally, unreservedly, all of it! So the servants never ever owned anything; it all totally belonged to the Master. He put it in their hands; he gave them total freedom with it, but it was *always his*. And he intended for them to use it for his kingdom business.

Shocking Truth #3

The only servant who is condemned is the servant who saves the money! The ones who *used* the money for the benefit of their master were all rewarded, but the one who saved the money (and very carefully at that!) got told off! What would mama say about that!

And his "dressing down" was in no uncertain terms, either. The master is furious with him and says to him, "You wicked, lazy servant!" (Matt 25:26). And then he says,

throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. (Matthew 25:30).

That's a bad place to be. If you have understood and believed the gospel, you will never be there.

Ants hoard. We must not hoard as far as the kingdom of heaven is concerned. If we hoard, we will stand utterly condemned before God. Remember the man in Luke 12 who decided the solution to his wealth problem was to build a bigger barn? That story didn't have a happy ending either.

In the end, when it comes to how the kingdom of God operates, *the ants get stepped on*.

ONG!

IAMA TOLD YOU

A Gospel-Based Financial Manifesto for Good News Unlimited

I've told you all of this so that I could come to this point. Good News Unlimited is a ministry that relies on the support of people around the world who love the gospel. We know you pray for us. We know you spread the Word. We know you support us with your money, and often with sacrifice. It's important that I share with you our attitude to managing the money that God has entrusted to us.

What I am about to say is radical because Jesus Christ's call to preach the gospel is radical. Jesus Christ has died for us, he has risen for us, he lives for us today, and he is coming soon. Spreading this message is the foundation for everything we do.

We Will Not Hoard

We will not hoard your money. The bank does that.

We won't have money sitting idle. We'll be prudent and we'll plan carefully to meet the ongoing needs of the work of the gospel, but our goal is not to have the biggest bank balance.

Hoarding is for those who have plenty of time; hoarding is for those who don't have urgent things to do. We believe the world is out of time, and we have urgent work to do – the fulfilment of Jesus Christ's great commission.

We Will Invest

Any money that the Master puts in our hands will be put to work to spread the Word fast. To be quite blunt, that means that we will spend it; we will invest it in the work of the gospel.

We Will Not Be Afraid

The worthless servant did not invest the money that was given to him because he was afraid. We will not be afraid; we will act by faith and even take appropriate risks so that by any means, lost sinners everywhere will find life and hope in Jesus Christ. We will not be afraid to let the fellow-servants of our Master know about opportunities to invest in the Kingdom of God through our ministry.

And as we do these things, we will act with honesty, integrity, and transparency in all of our financial dealings, using all due diligence and care in all of our transactions on behalf of the Master.



We believe the world is out of time, and we have urgent work to do – the fulfilment of Jesus Christ's great commission.

Because Word Spreads Fast

We believe we are to be a channel for the blessings that flow into Good News Unlimited as money and resources, skills and volunteers. Our job is to convert these into gospel messages, and get them out into the world fast.

We will be a clearing-house for God's money, not a hole in the ground. Our success will be demonstrated by our faithfulness to God and by the souls in the kingdom, not by the size of our bank account.

He Who Dies With the Most Toys Loses

Good News Unlimited has been appointed by the God of the Universe to preach the everlasting gospel. We know that all the money is his; that as we do God's work, he will open up opportunities for us to share the good news, and he will fund these projects through his faithful people. Good News Unlimited will merely be a conduit for those funds which God provides. Jehovah-Jireh (God Will Provide).

We will invest in the Kingdom of God. And because of it we accept that the size of our bank account when the Master returns will only count for our condemnation.

Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

We invite you to join with us in this faith experience; as you can see from the stories in this magazine, it's already proving to be quite a ride!

ELIEZER GONZALEZ

Managing Director, Good News Unlimited

GOSPEL FELLOWSHIPS MANUAL

Part 2 of 3

5. What is a Good News Fellowship not?

i) It is not a denomination or a church in a traditional organisational sense.

A Gospel Fellowship is fully inter-denominational and welcomes people from all churches and denominations. Although a Good News Fellowship is not a denomination or a church in a traditional sense, wherever it functions it is truly church in the New Testament sense.

ii) It is not part of the Good News Unlimited “organisation.”

A Gospel Fellowship is fully independent of *Good News Unlimited* and has no legal or organisational ties with it or with other Fellowships associated with *Good News Unlimited*. The only tie that unites us is the love of Jesus and the gospel, through the work of the Holy Spirit.

A Gospel Fellowship may choose its own name.

iii) It is not a church “service.”

Because a Gospel Fellowship is very different from a traditional church, it not necessary to have all the elements of a traditional church “service” at each meeting. The purpose of a Gospel Fellowship is to be as close to the principles of the New Testament church as possible within a contemporary setting.

iv) It is not defined by a creed.

Although Good News Unlimited has a Statement of Belief, this is not a test of Christian fellowship, and is not binding on Gospel Fellowships.

v) It is not a theological forum.

Gospel Fellowships do not exist to debate theology, or for anyone to try to impose their theological frameworks on others. While some people may be inclined to do this, you must stick to the four essential elements from Acts 2:42. A Gospel Fellowship is not a place for arguing.

Your Gospel Fellowship is to be positive and affirming of other Christians. It is not to convert other Christians to your way of seeing things. Our mission is to share the gospel of Jesus, not to challenge other people's beliefs.



6. Basic Principles for running your Good News Fellowship

A Good News Fellowship basically looks like whatever you need it to look like so you can share the gospel. It should be easy, fun, and something that people will want to invite their friends to. If it's not, then you will need to change the way you are doing things.

The guidelines provided here are simply guidelines, not a prescriptive recipe. Remember that every fellowship will look different based on culture, circumstances, demographics, and the gifts that the Holy Spirit has given to the group.

i) Why do it?

You come together as a Gospel Fellowship because you have been saved by the gospel of grace, and everyone you know desperately needs what you have received. The kingdom of Christ will not grow unless you take action!

ii) Who is it about?

Your Gospel Fellowship exists to create an environment in which the Spirit of the risen Christ can convict, guide, teach and empower the members of your group. It is not about you. It is about sharing the gospel in its truest sense, in the way the New Testament church did. It's all about Jesus and what he has done for us.



A Good News Fellowship basically looks like whatever you need it to look like so you can share the gospel. It should be easy, fun, and something that people will want to invite their friends to.

Everything you do must be geared towards two things:

1. Creating a community in which the Spirit of the risen Lord can work. This means that your fellowship will be with Jesus, who is truly present every time you meet.
2. Creating a community to which you can invite your friends, because Jesus is honoured when the gospel is shared and his kingdom grows.

Remember your Fellowship is for your friends who are not Christians or who do not go to church, or others with whom you'd like to share the gospel. That's why it is not just about reading the Bible together and praying together. It is also about eating together and doing fun things together – whatever good things friends usually do together.

As you do this, you will see Jesus powerfully at work in your Fellowship and in the lives of those who participate in it. As a result your own faith will be encouraged.

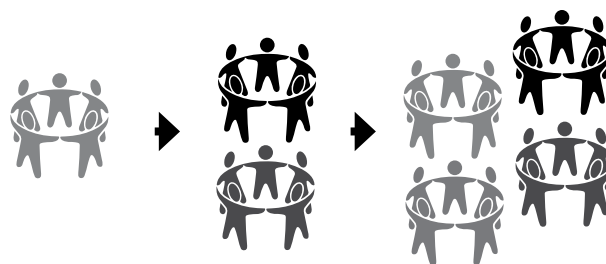
BUT, if the main focus is on those who are already believers, your fellowship will stagnate and lose its purpose. Our Christianity must be always outward looking in nature, in fulfilment of the Great Commission of our Lord.

iii) What's the aim of your Fellowship?

The aim is not to grow your Fellowship; it should grow by itself, and you praise God for that. Instead, your aim should be to grow *more* Fellowships.

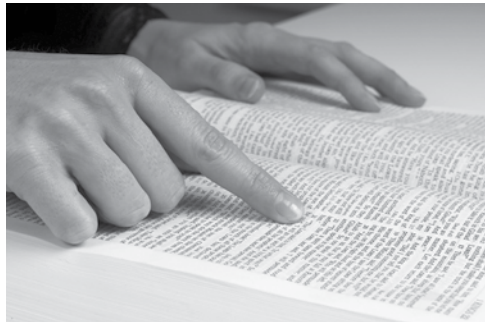
When new people join your Fellowship, your aim should not merely be to include them in your Fellowship; your aim should be to help them start their own Fellowship while they are still on fire for the Lord.

In everything your fellowship does, everyone should bear in mind that the ultimate goal is duplication. The kingdom of Jesus grows through duplication.





You will see Jesus powerfully at work in your Fellowship and in the lives of those who participate in it. As a result your own faith will be encouraged.



iv) So how do small groups grow?

The example of Jesus and the early church shows us that the kingdom of God principally expands through personal relationships with people you already know or with whom you come into contact.

You may spend all your money on advertising, but if the people in your Fellowship aren't excited about the gospel and aren't anxious to invite others to the group to hear it, there will be no real growth.

v) How many should there be in each group?

The early Christians spread through the growth of small groups. They mainly met in homes, and even the largest homes would not have held more than 30 people. See 1 Corinthians 16:19; Romans 16:3–5; Philemon 1, 2; and Colossians 4:15. Small groups work best when they have around 12–14 actively involved people.

vi) Where is a good place for groups to meet?

In your home, by the river, at the beach, at your local cafe, at your local prison ...

Do you get the picture? Church is where God's people get together. Think about it. You should get together wherever your Fellowship likes to socialise.



vii) For how long should each small group meeting last?

Whatever works for the members of your Fellowship. Be mindful that people's concentration spans these days are quite short. Make sure that you are attuned to the needs of your group. Some Fellowships, for example, find that a Bible discussion of 30 minutes is way too long, but they can easily pray together for a similar period. Again, every culture will be different. ▼

Look for the third part of the Gospel Fellowships Manual in the next Good News Unlimited magazine. We also have versions of this manual available for African and Indian cultures.

LETTERS *from our readers*

GNU is a meeting of minds from a wide range of church affiliations and therefore opinions expressed in our articles may differ from that of our readers. Recognising that opinions can differ and we all have much to learn and unlearn, we encourage our readers to participate in this forum.



What glory?

Ritchie,

What is the "glory" that Jesus mentions in John 17:22 – 23, where he says, "I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me"?

It seems to me that the word "glory" suggests something very precious and treasurable. I'd like to know what it is!

Kind regards D. S.

Dear D.

The word "that", just after the comma in verse 22, gives us a clue because this particular "that" is short for "so that" or "in order that" i.e. "I have given them the glory

that you gave me, [so] that they may be one as we are one: I in them and you in me."

It is apparent from Jesus' words that the purpose of God's glory is oneness or unity. As the Father in Jesus made them one, so Christ in us will also make us one. And if we are one with Christ we will be one with each other because we can't be one with Christ yet at variance with our brother who is also one with Christ. Is Christ divided?

The mark of this world is its division. It is divided into a multitude of political parties; it is divided into different religions, different religious sects, and different ethnicities, etc. The wars and revolutions that constantly plague our planet are evidence of this world's spirit—disunity.

Christians should be different because the glory of the Godhead is its unity, and this is the glory that Christ

Continued on page 16

A MESSAGE FROM ELENNE FORD

Des' daughter and a board member of Good News Unlimited.

We appreciate so much the way that you have prayed for us, volunteered, and given us your financial support. In these ways you have expressed your faith in Christ and shared it with others.

In addition to this, some friends also choose to include Good News Unlimited in their will in the form of a bequest. Doing so ensures that some of the wealth they leave behind contributes directly to the sharing of the good news of Jesus Christ with a dying world through the ministry and mission of Good News Unlimited – creating a legacy that affects lives far into the future.

My father and Gill have left a bequest to Good News Unlimited for the preaching of the gospel. In fact, after bequests to the family, most of their estate will be given to Good News Unlimited. I am also making provision for Good News Unlimited in my will, and I know that other board members are doing the same.

If you would like more information explaining how to include Good News Unlimited in your will, please contact Eliezer at

LEAVE A
Legacy
THAT
IMPACTS
PEOPLE
FOR
YEARS
TO COME

has given us. Christians who despise other Christians are not true Christians at all, for they are not controlled by the indwelling spirit of Christ (1 John 3:14). The evidence that the Prince of Peace lives in us is our love and support of each other, regardless of our ethnic, social, or academic diversity. Other Christians may differ from us theologically or in their religious culture, but if they have Christ in them then we should acknowledge them as a part of God's diverse but unified family. We do not reflect God's glory if we look down on true Christians who believe differently from us, or who attend a denomination where the religious culture is quite 'strange' to us.

God's glory reveals an essential unity in spite of our diversity. This unity is the supreme evidence—in the eyes of the world—that we have something they haven't got. And that something is the incredible unifying force of the indwelling Jesus in each of us. That is true glory—the glory of the New Earth.



The chronology of Jesus' resurrection

Dear Editor

I've been reading through the four Gospel accounts of the resurrection of Jesus and have to admit that I am more than a bit confused. Some of the accounts, particularly those about the women, seem contradictory. For example, John says Peter ran to the empty tomb (20:2), before the resurrected Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene (20:11-18), while Luke claims Peter ran to the empty tomb (24:12) after Jesus had appeared to Mary Magdalene (24:9-11. See also Mark 16:9-10). What's the solution, please, to this apparent disagreement?

R. S.

Dear R.

Fortunately for you and me, others who have wrestled with this enigma have sorted things out for us.

Firstly, none of the four Gospel writers wrote a comprehensive history of everything that happened in the life and death of Jesus, but chose only those details that were relevant to their theme. So in order to get a fuller picture we need to weave the accounts together in a way that makes sense without distorting or rejecting anything.

Here is a harmonization of the post-resurrection events:

1. Mary Magdalene and companions (John 20:2) went to Jesus' tomb on Sunday morning while it was still dark (John 20:1).
2. Observing that the stone had been rolled away from the entrance, and that Jesus' body was no longer there (John 20:1), Mary ran back to the city to tell Peter and John (John 20:2). Her companions, however, bewildered by the sight of an angel in the tomb, fled and said nothing to anyone (Mark 16:4-8).
3. Peter and John, alerted by Mary, ran to the tomb where they saw the folded grave clothes (John 20:3-9). The two disciples then returned home, passing Mary who was still on her way back to the garden tomb (John 20:10-12).
4. On arriving a second time at the tomb the tearful Mary noticed two angels seated at the head and foot of where Jesus' body had been laid.
5. Jesus then appeared to her (Mark 16:9; John 20:14-17) and advised her to go back to the disciples with the message that he had risen from the dead and would soon return to the Father (John 20:17-18).
6. As Mary was leaving and just as the sun was rising, another group of women arrived at the tomb with spices to complete the embalming of Jesus' body (Matt.28:1; Mark 16:2). They too saw the angels in the tomb who advised them all to go and tell the disciples what they had seen (Luke 24:1-8). Mary, who accompanied them, told the disciples that she had seen the Lord (John 20:18).
7. Upon hearing this Peter got up and ran, a second time, to the tomb (Luke 24:9-12). It was probably during this visit to the tomb, when Peter was by himself, that the Lord appeared to him also (Luke 24:34; 1 Cor. 15:5).

SEMINARS

COORANBONG SEMINAR

Date: 3 May 2014

Theme: The Book of Hebrews: The Gospel to the Legalists

Location: Morisset Uniting Church
10 Stockton Street, Morisset 2264

10:00am Dr Milton Hook
Disengaging from the Shadows

11:00am Dr Eliezer Gonzalez
"The Mount Everest of the Book of Hebrews"
– It's Not Where You Thought It Was

12 noon Lunch - BYO

1:30pm Dr Eliezer Gonzalez
"Good News Unlimited – The Future is Now." This will be an exciting update on the latest news from GNU around the world, and how God is using us to take the gospel to the world. It will include a special video message from Des.

BRISBANE SEMINAR

– To be announced.

FELLOWSHIPS

POTTSVILLE FELLOWSHIP

Fellowship meetings led by Pastor Ron Allen are held at 9:30 a.m. on the following Saturdays in 2014.

March 8, 22 | April 12, 26 | May 10, 24 | June 14, 28 | July 12, 26

Venue: Reef Room
Pottsville Beach Neighbourhood Centre
12 Elizabeth Street Pottsville Beach, NSW 2489

Contact: Ron Allen
Email: carron.741@gmail.com

GOOD NEWS FELLOWSHIP - Milton, Brisbane

GNU meetings are held every Saturday from 2:15pm to 4:00pm, at the auditorium behind the Royal Geographical Society of Queensland (RGSQ) building at 237 Milton Road, Brisbane.

People are invited to come earlier and bring their lunch, beginning at 12:30pm.

After lunch, our pastor, Eliezer Gonzalez, holds a Bible discussion and prayer, beginning at 1:15pm.

Our main presentation commences at 2:15pm.

**LOOK OUT FOR
THE NEXT ISSUE
OF THE GOOD
NEWS UNLIMITED
MAGAZINE!**

INTO ALL THE WORLD

LONG HANDS BIG REACH

Some people's memories go way back to childhood, and they remember when they were very little. They remember when they could just stand up by holding onto the edge of the kitchen table. We parents remember how our children would peer over the top of the table at all the goodies that mum had there. And then their little hands would reach up and over and stretch out as far as little hands could go. How frustrating it was when those little hands just couldn't reach!

The Latin proverb goes, "Don't you know that kings have long hands?" For those of you who are interested, it's *An nescis longas regibus esse manu*. There have been a string of kings throughout history that seem to support this claim. For example, the Greeks called Artaxerxes I, King of Persia, Μακρόχειρ, which means "Long-Hand"; that's *Longimanus* in Latin.

But enough with the foreign languages already!

What I really want to tell you that our Lord the King of All has long hands! My Bible says,

Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save.
(Isaiah 59:1, NKJV).

If you ever doubted it before, then I hope that you are absolutely convinced after reading this edition of *Unlimited Magazine*. And if you are still not convinced, then read it again properly!

For this issue we put together some reports from the frontiers of today's global gospel-work. These are stories that you and I should be especially excited about – stories about what is happening in missions and gospel fellowships around the world which are being encouraged and supported by Good News Unlimited.

These stories show you how the long hands of King Jesus are reaching into materialistic Europe, teeming Africa, idolatrous India, tumultuous Ukraine, and into Latin America that is thirsting for freedom through the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Spreading the gospel is all about sharing stories, and these are great stories. However, they represent something more than just that. They represent what God has done through Good News Unlimited in a few short months. And he has done it through your prayers and your support.

Those of you who partner with the work of the kingdom are Christ's hands in this world. When you do that, together with Good News Unlimited, you will have long hands indeed! They are hands that reach into the depths of sin and ignorance and despair; hands that bring the liberating truth of the gospel to where it most needs to be heard.

I want to thank those of you who have decided to join our Good News Unlimited Partners. I want to thank God for the many more whom I know will join up. The more of you who join, the more we will be able to stand back in awe and see how *Word spreads fast!*

Grace and Peace in Jesus!

▼ **ELIEZER GONZALEZ**

Senior Pastor, Good News Unlimited