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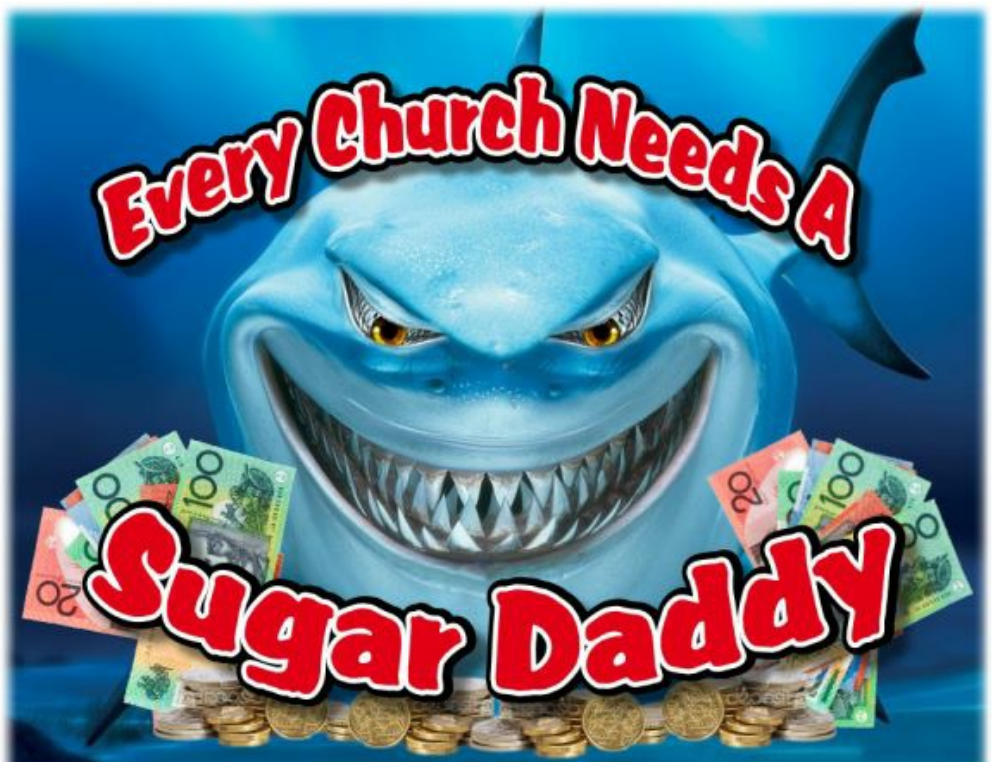
"But the path of the just is as the shining light,
that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."
Proverbs 4:18

Heads Up!

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FEATURE ARTICLE - WHAT ABOUT SUGAR DADDIES TO SUBSIDIZE OUR CHURCHES? - by Buddy Smith



Once in a while I come across a church that has a wealthy church member. These churches are definitely in the minority. Most Bible believing churches do not have people in membership who have much money. It is a simple fact.

Once in a while I hear of a wealthy member in a Bible believing church who knows how to give liberally and does so. They are as rare as hen's teeth. It's a simple fact. Most wealthy Christians do not give, or at least not in proportion to their income.

Once in a while I hear of a wealthy church member who offers to pay the bills for the church, or who offers to pay the pastor's salary so the church is not "burdened." It never turns out well for a church to have a "Sugar Daddy". God's people can meet the financial needs of the church if they give faithfully. We don't need "Sugar Daddies."

You are not familiar with the term "Sugar Daddy?" In the world it has immoral connotations, in that it refers to an older man who gives expensive gifts to a

younger woman in order to gain control of her affections and procure favours from her. The world is full of them. It is sad that some pastors are so enamoured with Hollywood that they permit the Bride of Christ to flirt with the rich men that flash their big bankrolls at the churches. They want the honour of being highly thought of at church, they desire the power of controlling what is preached and purchased, and they love the feeling that the church belongs to them. I remember pastoring a church which had an aspiring "Sugar Daddy" in membership. He wanted the church to have a new building (not that he wanted to pay for it, of course!), and was deeply offended when the church voted to purchase an old building that perfectly met its needs at that time. Needless to say, he didn't hang around long once the decision was made to buy the old building.

A pastor brother overseas recently wrote to ask my opinion regarding these "Sugar Daddies" who pay the bills for the churches. He wrote,

"I have a question for you.... I have been told (by an Australian business man from one of the IB churches in _____) that every pastor and church needs a business man to support the work financially. He tells me that there are some Scripture references that point to this but could not name them. He tells me that the church businessman would then be able to support the pastor financially to be full time in the ministry. I told him that it was the job of the church folk to support the ministries of the church not just the business man.... His statement about a church businessman needing to support the church has haunted me and I have been trying to relate Scriptures to this but cannot find any. My question to you is this 1. Have you heard of this before? 2. Is it true? 3. Is it common? 4. What are the scripture references relating to this?"

To my way of thinking it elevates the businessman in the church and the pastor could become his puppet and the businessman his puppeteer.

Should I be looking and praying for a businessman?

In Calvary's bonds,

Bro _____"

I replied, "Bro. _____, this is one of the subtle lies the CEO/pastors would like for us to believe. I do know a few pastors who have these "Sugar Daddies" in the their churches, BUT they usually cause trouble. It is mostly their large donations that are used to take control of the church. If they are successful, they then run it as a business, and are interested more in the bottom line than

in souls being saved and missionaries being sent out. That local church becomes a branch of whatever big business they are running. The pastor is relegated to being the branch manager who has to please the boss. Of course, he is afraid to preach against covetousness, or greed, or against the harmful effects of deceitful riches.

We once knew a millionaire church member in the USA who helped lots of missionaries and gave generously to the church. That church actually had six millionaires in it, but their money couldn't save it when the pastor died suddenly. A church I pastored here in Australia had a millionaire in it, but he was so miserly that his dear wife had to buy her clothes at the second hand store. She wanted to give to the church, but had to do it out of the grocery money, he was so tightfisted. The only time he would give was when he could use it to buy someone's affections. How sad. I think he wanted to be a "Sugar Daddy."

I sometimes see wealthy Christians who refuse to give a pittance to the churches they attend, and then start a parachurch organisation they can invest in and control without accountability to anyone. This is where their money goes.

You figured it out just fine. Most of the churches in history have been poor, but God has done great work with what they gave. I always think of the churches in Macedonia which were commended by the apostle Paul, **2 Corinthians 8:1-5** *Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia; How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality. For to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves; Praying us with much intreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints. And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God.*

There have been a few rich men, like Joseph of Arimathea and Barnabas, who have given generously, but they are rare. We ought to read **1 Tim. 6:3-12** often.

"If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself. But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into

this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. 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. 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. But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses."

Contentment is a wonderful thing."

BroB

Pastor _____ wrote again, "Thanks for that Bro Buddy. I can see why pastors would get sucked into this. No pastor should be the puppet of anyone in the church. Another thing that has interested me lately thinking on businessmen and others who have rental property as investments, is how they tithe. I would value your input. I know that investments in business and housing is negatively geared so that they minimise their tax but what they are doing is also minimising their tithe at the same time. Writing off income against expenses is, as I see it, robbing God. We tithe on the amount before tax so why shouldn't the business and rental property owner?

Those who have rental houses do not tithe on the rent they collect because they can legally write off mortgage, insurance, council rates and other maintenance expenses and hence the tithe on rent income is not given. If I were to do that as a homeowner and not tithe on my income and write off the same (mortgage, insurance, council rates, maintenance etc.) then I would not tithe. Ah, you say, that income was not generated by the business so you cannot write those expenses off. You find that, as in many churches, \$10 or \$20 is placed in the plate rather than the \$120 which they should tithe on their gross income.

The business man I met "gives" himself a small salary to minimise tax and drives in a company car, company pays for his food (business related expenses), company pays for his living expenses, etc. I know that there are tax laws around some of this but that is why accountants are employed to maximise expenses to minimise tax. However the businessman then pays his tithe on the salary that he draws from the company not on the company's income. They say that the company tithes on the profit it makes at the end of the financial year (if it makes a profit the idea is to minimise profit so as to minimise tax) but that only happens after all the expenses are written off such as the company car that they have been driving all year and the petrol the car has consumed and all other "perks" that they are entitled to. I believe that this is not a true tithe. I can't claim a vehicle expense as a church member, I cannot write off expenses and then tithe on the "profit" or what is left over at the end of the year.

DEACON TRUE SEZ -



Me and ma sure do like going to a church with no clocks. Oh, most folks wear watches now, even out here in the country, but somehow not having a clock to stare at during the sermon helps most of us forget about keepin' to a tight schedule when we go to church. It just makes it easier to sit still and enjoy the nice music before the songleader gets up to lead, and if the preacher goes overtime a bit and is still shellin' out the corn, well, we don't mind at all. I guess the biggest benefit is the way everybody stands around and visits after church. Sometimes it is almost one o'clock before the last folks leave, and after church at night lots of folks sit around drinking coffee in the fellowship hall and catching up with each other for an hour or so. We visited a big city church with a cousin a while back and the preacher was pushin' ever'body out the door at five minutes past twelve. We thought we'd have to stand around outside to talk, but ever'body left so we went home. I asked Jake what's the all fired hurry to shut up the church and he said, "It's because, if we don't hurry, them Methodists would beat us Baptists to the Steakhouse for lunch, and we'd have to stand in line too long. If that happened, why, we could miss the kickoff for the pro football game on TV. And we couldn't let a thing like that happen, could we?"

I told him they'd be better off to eat at home and then read their Bibles or take a nap. Then they could take down the clock at church and learn to talk to each other again. And maybe throw out the television.

But I 'spect it fell on deaf ears.

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My wife is reading a book which is called "God owns my Business" by Stanley Tam as told to Ken Anderson. Which sheds a clear light on how businesses should be run. Many should be challenged on their giving to the Lord. The business man I told you about in my previous email, his company whilst in _____, pays his rent of \$1,300 per week (the average rent here is about \$400 per week), drives an Audi worth \$130,000, flies back to Australia once every couple of months and at the end of each school term flies his family back to see grandparents, all on the company business account and takes them at the end of the year on an overseas trip, extravagant living. All these are expenses written off the company's income. He often talks about the church giving more to missionaries. Well, if he lived in a home where the rent was \$650 per week (still well above the average) then the \$650 / week he saved could go to missions and that would go a long way in places like Africa, PNG, etc.

If he drove a car that was worth \$60,000 then the \$70,000 he saved could go to missions. Of course people do not like being challenged on their lifestyle. They feel they have

a "God given right" to live in the opulence that they do, after all Solomon was rich.

There is a new church which was started here which has several successful businessmen in it. The pastor came out here from _____ to candidate for the pastorate of a church, which he turned down. However, I understand that even with these successful businessmen in the church they are struggling financially. When they first started out they even asked our church to support them.

Anyway enough of my rambling thoughts. What do you think? I think it would ruffle some feathers in many-a-nest if we say that there are CEO structured churches out there, but maybe there could be an article here for your magazine on the tithe and giving for those who are generating income from other enterprises.

*For Christ and in His service,
Bro _____.*

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GOLD FROM OPHIR - by Missionary Jerry Wilhite



AGED MEN - GENESIS 45-50

When Jacob went down into Egypt and stood before Pharaoh, he was 130 years old (Gen. 47:9). At this point, one of his youngest sons, Joseph, would have been about 40 years old (Gen. 41:46-54; 45:6). When Jacob died at the age of 147 years, Joseph would have been in his mid

to late 50's. If his brothers did indeed look after Pharaoh's cattle as he asked them to do (Gen. 47:6), then they were in their 40's and 50's when so doing. At the end of the book we read that Joseph was 110 years old when he died (50:26). All this is to say that if there were 18-20 year olds employed in the king's business, they are not named.

Perhaps an overlooked commodity on the mission field are the older men in a culture. Probably far too many missionaries look for young, able bodied youth with many years ahead of them in which to invest precious time grooming them to take the leadership of the churches.

But maybe this is not wise. Possibly older men who are respected in society, settled in their surroundings, legally married to a spouse, without the temptation of pre-marital relationships, and financially secure, who have a skill, can be serious about their studies, and therefore are the ones we should ask to 'take care of our flocks'.

As of this writing we are working with just such men. One man is over 70; another is in his mid-60's and one in his mid-70's. They may not have as many years as younger men, and yet they may have more. Due to reckless and wanton living, many young men face imminent death.

Thank God for aged men!

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December 31, 2013 (David Cloud, Fundamental Baptist Information Service, P.O. Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061, 866-295-4143, fbns@wayoflife.org.)

"I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine" (John 17:9).

Does this passage teach "sovereign election," meaning that God sovereignly chooses some sinners to be saved and does not choose others to be saved?

If so, it would be a glaring contradiction to the teaching of the same Gospel book.

"That WHOSOEVER BELIEVETH in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that WHOSOEVER BELIEVETH in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:15-16).

"I am come a light into the world, that WHOSOEVER BELIEVETH on me should not abide in darkness" (John 12:46).

In Bible interpretation, the context generally clarifies all things. Context is not only the first rule of sound Bible interpretation, it is the first, second, and third rule! This is the principle that we lay out in How to Study the Bible, which is one of the Way of Life Advanced Bible Studies Series courses. And in the context of John 17, Jesus is praying a high priestly prayer for His people. Thus He is not praying for the world. He is praying for the saved. The passage says nothing about the basis of election and salvation. Jesus speaks of those who have been given to him by the Father (John 17:2, 6), but He does not tell us on what basis these are given.

For that, we need to go to an earlier part of the Gospel of John as we have already quoted. *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that WHOSOEVER BELIEVETH in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).*

The basis of election is faith in the gospel. It is a whosoever gospel. The offer of eternal salvation is genuinely made to all who hear the gospel, and it is Christ's express will that every sinner hear the gospel (Mark 16:15) and be saved (1 Timothy 2:3-4). There are aspects of election that we don't currently understand and won't understand in this life, because they are still



hidden in God. I don't claim to have all of the answers to this issue. But I do know that the Bible plainly says that God wants all men to hear the gospel and that whosoever believes will be saved. The Bible plainly teaches that it is God's will for all men to be saved. *"For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth" (1 Timothy 2:3-4).*

God is not playing games with sinners. He is not offering eternal life to all but only giving it to the "elect." I once asked a Calvinist friend, a man that I hold in high regard for his love for Christ, this question: "Can any man be saved?" He wanted to go into an intricate theological explanation and did not answer with a clear and simple "yes." That is a fundamental problem with Calvinism. I can't answer every question that can be asked about election, but I do know that the Bible clearly teaches that any man can be saved. It is not something that is available, in practice only, to "the elect." It is not an issue whereby God's loves all men but in practice all cannot actually be saved because they all are not sovereignly elected.

Any man who cannot answer the following question with an unequivocal and resounding "yes" has been led astray by a theological system that is in error, because it is a theological system that is contrary to the plain and clear teaching of Scripture:

"Can any man be saved?"

For more on the following subject see the free eBook The Calvinism Debate, available from the Way of Life web site.

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NOTABLE QUOTES AND QUOTABLE NOTES -

ABORTION, THE GREATEST KILLER KNOWN TO MAN -

- The numbers about abortion are just mind-numbing. Globally there have been 1.3 billion babies killed since 1980. Today so far there have been 56,000 killed. Abortion is the greatest killer known to man: More here:
<http://www.billmuehlenberg.com/2014/01/20/abortion-by-the-numbers/>

- In a mother's womb were two babies. One asked the other: "Do you believe in life after delivery?"

The other replies, "Why, of course. There has to be something after delivery. Maybe we are here to prepare ourselves for what we will be later."

"Nonsense," says the other. "There is no life after delivery. What would that life be?"

"I don't know, but there will be more light than here. Maybe we will walk with our legs and eat from our mouths."

The other says "This is absurd! Walking is impossible. And eat with our mouths? Ridiculous. The umbilical cord supplies nutrition. Life after delivery is to be excluded. The umbilical cord is too short."

"I think there is something and maybe it's different than it is here." the other replies.

"No one has ever come back from there. Delivery is

the end of life, and in the after-delivery it is nothing but darkness and anxiety and it takes us nowhere."

"Well, I don't know," says the other, "but certainly we will see mother and she will take care of us."

"Mother?? You believe in mother? Where is she now?"

"She is all around us. It is in her that we live. Without her there would not be this world."

"I don't see her, so it's only logical that she doesn't exist."

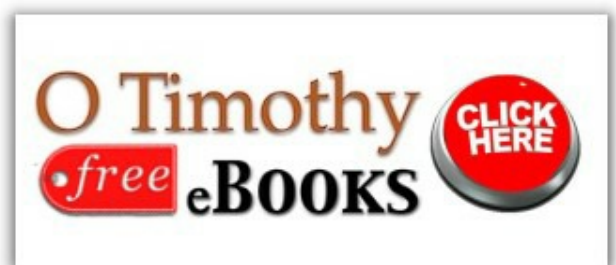
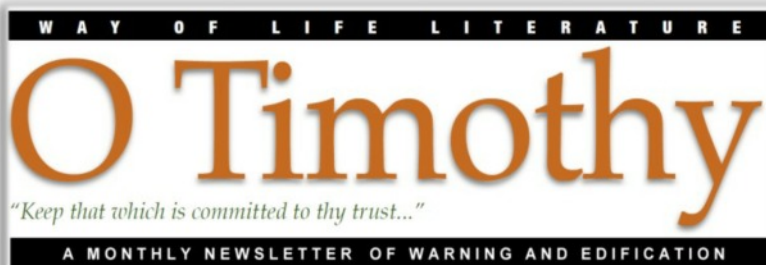
To which the other replied, "Sometimes when you're in silence you can hear her, you can perceive her. I believe there is a reality after delivery and we are here to prepare ourselves for that reality"

- "Today it isn't facing the music that hurts, it's listening to it."

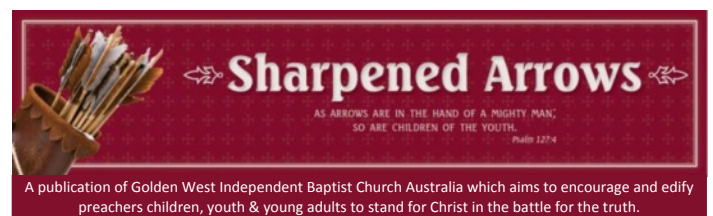
- "A day of worry is more exhausting than a week of work."

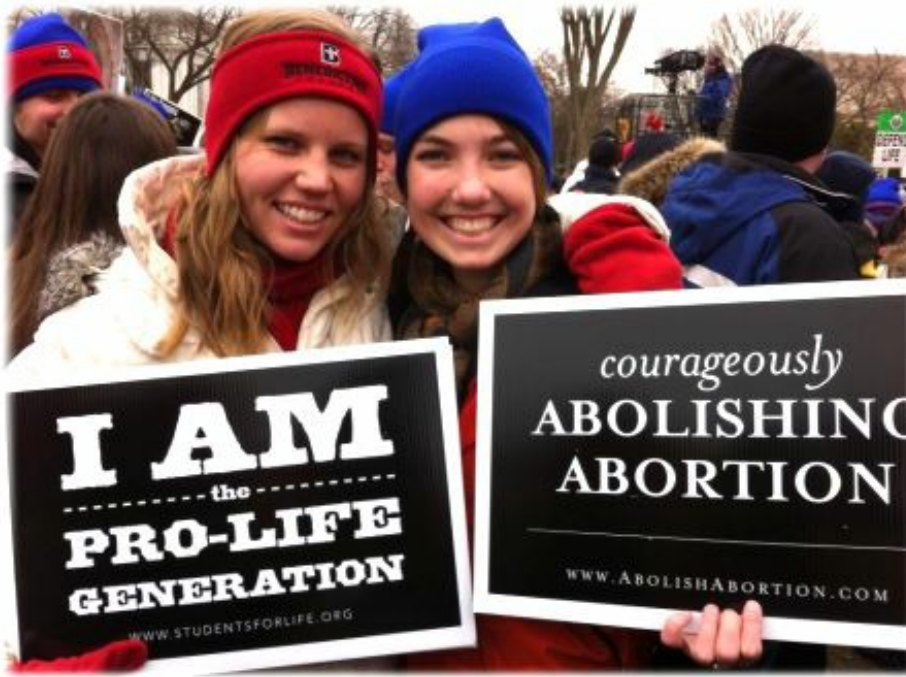
- "Truth changes hands only a few times to become fiction."

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motherhood, they pitted the mother against her child, creating an endless cycle of selfishness, pain, and deceit.

But this generation is determined to set it right. We've seen the ultrasounds of our siblings, googled "abortion" and seen the bloody images, and sat with a friend as she cried about her abortion.

This youth generation is the most pro-life generation of young people since 1973; we're even more pro-life than even our parents' generation. And this week our presence will be known as this generation will be the predominant participants in Wednesday's March for Life in Washington, D.C. and pro-life rallies across the nation.

What can I say that hasn't already been said about today?

Yesterday evening, I was sitting in my living room working while watching my sons play. I began to think about what my life would have been without them. How different I would be. How their lives have already made this world a different place since they were born. How much I would hurt if I had chosen abortion.

Then, I thought of the more than [55,000,000 lives](#) that have been taken in the U.S. since 1973, and I became overwhelmed at the tragedy. Tragedy for the babies, their mothers, their fathers, families, and us.

Who is our nation missing? What price is our society paying for the ultimate deceit of abortion? 40 years ago today, seven men on the Supreme Court decided in favor of a case presented to them from a 27 year-old, unknown, post-abortive lawyer, Sarah Weddington. That case was [Roe v. Wade](#) and, along with its companion *Doe v. Bolton*, it legalized abortion in all 9 months of pregnancy, for any reason, in the United States.

Today, this 27 year-old is writing to you as a survivor of that decision. The undeniable fact is that nearly a third of my generation is missing. We are missing brothers, sisters, cousins, friends, husbands and wives.

You see, Miss Weddington's generation got it wrong. In attempting to correct gender inequality in the workplace and in our society, they set into motion the ultimate act of discrimination – abortion. Instead of glorifying

This week, we will be proudly carrying our "I am the Pro-Life Generation" signs, and Planned Parenthood and the abortion industry will watch their target audience slip away.

In fact, we already have. [When Nancy Keenan, the former president of NARAL/Pro-Choice America, announced her resignation](#) last year, she cited the lack of young pro-abortion leaders as the reason she wanted to step down. This month's [Time magazine headline](#) story dealt with the same problem, claiming that the pro-abortion movement has been losing since 1973.

And last week's new Planned Parenthood video and talking points on abortion confirm this fact. [They don't want to use the term "pro-choice" anymore](#) because it's too negatively associated with abortion. You see, they know when abortion is mentioned, their favorability falls. Their goal? Never bring it up.

So, what should be our goal? To bring up abortion in every conversation we can – in church, the grocery store, at school, and at the neighborhood party. To never forget about abortion, no matter how busy our lives may get or how sad or immobilized we become by this immense, overwhelming tragedy.

Friend, it's time to rise up. Rise up off of your couch, out of your dorm room, or pew. Rise up and dedicate your life to something bigger than yourself.

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A new study shows that growing up without a father not only affects behavior – it transforms children's brain structure.

That's the verdict reached by the Research Institute of the McGill University Health Center and recently published in the journal *Cerebral Cortex*.

Researchers studied the behavior and brains of Californian mice who, like humans, are monogamous and raise their children as a unit.

Mice separated from their fathers showed greater aggression, anti-social behavior, and "abnormal social interactions" than those raised with both parents.

"The behavioral deficits we observed are consistent with human studies of children raised without a father," said Dr. Gabriella Gobbi, the report's lead author.

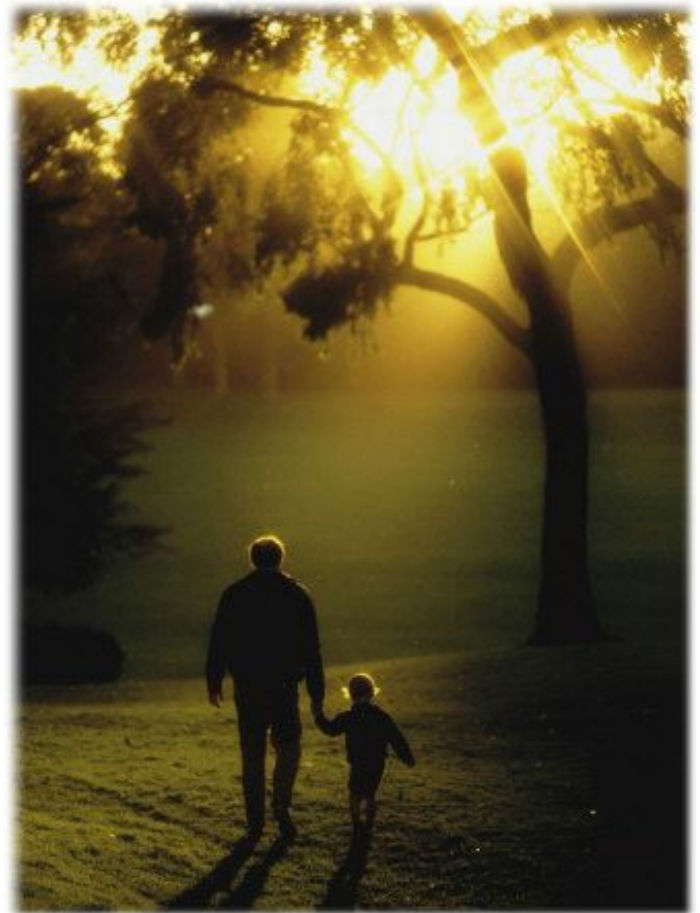
However, more groundbreaking was their finding that the behavior was not the only thing affected by the lack of a father. Mice raised by one parent had a misshapen prefrontal cortex, the portion of the brain associated with behavior, decision-making, and problem solving.

"This is the first time research findings have shown that paternal deprivation during development affects the neurobiology of the offspring," Gobbi said.

The report states, "Our results emphasize the importance of the father during critical neurodevelopmental periods, and that father absence induces impairments in social behavior that persist to adulthood."

The absence of a father has been associated with a string of poor behavior and life outcomes, including higher rates of substance abuse and criminality.

A report published by the Center for Social Justice found that half of all children in Britain are living in a single-



parent home, more than 1 million British children in all. By contrast, the presence of fathers – even uncommunicative ones – raises the levels of positive outcomes for children.

In 2011, researchers at the University of Melbourne found that delinquent behavior was reduced by 7.6 percent among boys who lived with their biological fathers, and five percent points for those living with non-biological fathers only, especially violent and gang-related crime.

<http://www.lifesitenews.com/news/growing-up-without-a-father-transforms-childrens-brains-study>

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Lifting Up The
STANDARD

"WHEN THE ENEMY SHALL COME IN LIKE A FLOOD, THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD SHALL LIFT UP A STANDARD AGAINST HIM" (ISAIAH 59:19).

An Outreach Ministry of FairHavens Baptist Church
www.fairhavensbaptist.net

CHALLENGING AND ENCOURAGING GOD'S REMNANT TO REMAIN FAITHFUL



On Christmas Day, 2013, I was hoping to watch the midday news on the TV, but, to my dismay, every channel was dedicated to broadcasting lavish Christmas morning church services from all parts of the globe. The ABC (Australia) was broadcasting live from the Vatican. The Pope was in the process of performing a mass for an adoring, bumper crowd. I wasn't overly enthusiastic about a Roman Catholic mass, but it seemed to be the most interesting of what was on offer, so I watched it.

It was an amazingly extravagant, religious performance. The gross idolatry of the Roman Catholic Church, and its Pope, and his entourage, was on public display and being broadcast to the world.

I decided to get a couple of snapshots of what was actually taking place because, even though we are aware that the Roman Catholic Church totally disregards the clear warnings in Scriptures concerning the worship of idols, I reckoned some of my friends would think I was kidding them when I told them what I saw the Pope doing. Here, right before my eyes, and before all this multitude of adoring people in the huge Vatican Church, I was actually watching the Pope playing dolls!!!

You see, off to the side of the main altar there was this cute little doll laying on a table. After the Pope finished his mass, he and some of the attending priests went over to where the doll was laying. The Pope adoringly looked at it, said something to it, and then he bent over and kissed it. He then gently and lovingly picked it up and started nursing it.

It reminded me a lot of my little sister when we were kids and how she used to play with her dolls. Nursing them, speaking to them, and having little afternoon tea parties with them. To all intents and purposes, you would think the doll was actually a real, living person. I guess we can allow that little girls do this, knowing that they will eventually grow out of such adoration and worship of

their dolls, but seeing a grown man, like the Pope, doing much like what my little sister used to do, was quite astounding to me.


Maybe the organizers of this religious extravaganza sensed that it was going to look a bit ridiculous for a grown man to be nursing a doll, or perhaps the Pope himself would have felt a little embarrassed? Whatever the case, as if to give it a more pretend flavour, a group of little children were brought over to join with the Pope and his attending priests, and they all walked off together, down the long aisle of the church, with the little iDoll, to the front of the building, where they tenderly placed it in an empty cot in an arranged nativity display.

Lots of people were taking photos of the Pope with his little iDoll, and in fact, the TV commentator said that there was a serious problem. One of the curses of the modern, digital age was also clearly on display in the Vatican church. Sadly, the majority of the people on either side of the aisle couldn't even see their Pope as he passed by with his little iDoll because of all the iPads and iPhones and iPods that people were holding above their heads in their attempts to get such an important picture.

Sorry to be frivolous, but what a sad joke.

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"IF GOD SHOULD LET ME THERE REVIEW,
THE WINDING PATHS ON EARTH I KNEW,
IT WOULD BE PROVEN CLEAR AND TRUE,
JESUS LED ME ALL THE WAY."

I have heard that a goldfish's brain resets every thirty seconds. It sounds like a leg pull to me. Who figured out how much a goldfish learns within thirty seconds, and then who was the clever fellow that realized that after that time the goldfish didn't know it anymore?

Another year is here, and unlike the mythical "goldfish brain resetting theory", a new year doesn't reset itself. While some of us would wish for a new and clean slate, it is really a wonderful thing that this does not occur. We don't always realize but God uses a cumulative method in some of His wonderful ways. He builds on what He has done before.

Have you ever learned from an experience, and said, "I will never do that again!" That is part of God's process. Have you found yourself to be quite a different person than you were the year before? Have you found that God has worked in you day by day, to change and mould you; and one day you think about yourself as you were in comparison to who you are now, and you know God has been there? I have come to the understanding that we are prepared in our youth for the tasks of adulthood.

Think about the Biblical examples of this...firstly we see Joseph, his training begins in Genesis 37. God lets him start with learning to cling only to Him. Then He moves on to humility, servitude, and graciousness.

I am sure there were a thousand other lessons that he learnt through that time but they all enabled him to fulfill the task God had for him. Samuel is another example. He gave God full reign in his life at an early age. God gave him uncomfortable truths to pass on to the man who'd raised him....*"And Samuel told him every whit, and hid nothing from him....And Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground."* (1 Samuel 3:18-19).

How about David? Don't we all love the account of David, as he faced King Saul with his impressive résumé? *"And David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock: And I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him. Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear: and this uncircumcised Philistine shall*

be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God." (1 Samuel 17:34-36). God allowed these events to strengthen his faith in Him, and David responded well and wisely...so he was strengthened.

The list could go on...Esther is another good example, or John the Baptist. But let's get more personal. What is God trying to do in us? What events did He allow in 2013 to strengthen our faith in Him? Was He trying to purge us and cleanse us in certain areas of our lives? Were there opportunities to serve in which we took up the challenge? Or did we turn our backs, in shyness, fear or pride, on things God wanted to train us in?

In 2014 maybe we should be thinking about the training God has us in. It could be church ministries He wants us to be involved in. There are always opportunities for witnessing and kindness in our everyday lives. Sometimes it is a physical skill we need to know for later. David didn't just fluke his skill with a sling. He worked at it. What is God asking you to work hard at? Sometimes we get the idea that one amazing day, God will turn the light on and I will be Somebody!! An incredible soul-winner, or a missionary in a tough field; maybe a linguist who will translate the Bible into a language never given the Scripture before.

The list of all the things we imagine we might be goes on and on, but here is where the rubber hits the road!

Here...as in You Are Here on your life map!

Use the events, the experiences, the opportunities that God sends. Trust Him, He never overloads us. If it looks too scary, maybe the lesson is trusting God! If it looks too boring, maybe we are learning not to underestimate the power of small things. Go with what God gives you, and walk with Him every day...and you will be amazed at how God works in you this year. He is preparing you for a future, and He knows exactly what training you will need.

*"If God should let me there review,
The winding paths on earth I knew,
It would be proven clear and true,
Jesus led me all the way."*

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A PEER OF PIONEERS

Before following Blind Chang in his wider ministry, we must say a word regarding the man himself. Mr. Inglis describes him thus: "A remarkable man, with a voice more soft and mellow than I have ever known in any Chinese that I have met. He speaks with great rapidity, but words seem to flow from his lips like the ceaseless murmur of a brook." Men listened to him open-mouthed with wonder, even awe. One man, the missionary's driver, was overheard to say, "What strange influence makes this man so much more eloquent than many who can see?"

Early in his Christian life, Blind Chang formed the habit of fasting. Frequently he went without food for three days and on one occasion he was known to go without nourishment for three weeks. In spite, or who knows, because of this, he was said to be strong and even in robust health. Mr. Inglis considered perhaps the most remarkable thing about this man was his memory. He seemed to have learned the whole New Testament off by heart and could quote from the Old Testament, which at that time, was an unexplored field to most Christians. He also always quoted the chapter and verse.

Had it not been for the instruction given him during the two visits made to the Blind School in Peking, where he learned to both read and write, the Bible would have been to him a sealed book. Upon his return to Manchuria after his last visit to Peking he brought with him portions of the Scriptures that had been stereotyped for the blind into Braille. For a time he carried a portion of the Scriptures with him wherever he went. Great interest was created and crowds gathered to see the marvel of a blind man reading with the tips of his fingers. It was not much wonder, however, to learn later that Blind Chang had abandoned this plan. Even one small portion of the Scriptures in this script was large and cumbersome. Because the blind man's journeys were often distant, dangerous and difficult, he found that luggage was a problem, so he just memorized more Scripture.

We come now to what is really the most important part of this man's life and testimony. How inadequate are our powers to visualize this man's life as he lived it for those twelve years. His ministry, for the most part, was away from his home region. Blind Chang, from the time of his conversion had the spirit and vision of the pioneer. There seemed to be within him that which kept him ever seeking to reach the most needy, those untouched and unreached by the Gospel. Think of this man, blind and for the most part alone, with but his strong walking stick to



depend on. Sometimes he was able to have a young person, rarely an adult, as a guide tramping over rough mountain roads. This would be dangerous for those who could see. But ever onward, always with that impelling desire did he live to make Christ known to sinners such as he had been. He was ever eager to tell the story of what the Lord had done for him. In a climate of great extremes, he did this, year after year for twelve years.

A few weeks ago we had the privilege to talk with one, who over thirty years ago had been several times Blind Chang's guide. He was then a mere boy of fourteen but he well remembers what those journeys meant. He told us how the blind man often met with bitter persecution and endured great hardships, especially when going to a new region. Children were encouraged to pelt him with clods or bricks. Curses were hurled after him as the people drove him from their doors. Worst of all were the dogs that were set upon him. It was this last fact that sent a sense of horror through us as we heard it, for we too have had some experience with the fierceness of these great mongrel, half-starved Chinese dogs. What such attacks must have meant to blind Chang, who was unable to fend off their onslaughts! Yet none of these things moved him, neither counted he his life dear unto himself. Again and again he would return seeking a hearing for his wonderful, soul-saving, life-giving message. This he would do until public opinion turned in his favour and victory

came. Doors opened and being blind, he was allowed to spend hours in the daytime teaching the women and children while the men were busy in the fields. When evening came the men gathered in summer time under the trees and in winter in the homes, as Blind Chang gave to them all he knew. He had one message. He preached Jesus to them for he knew nothing but Christ and Him crucified. One missionary, in speaking of Blind Chang's message says: "The one truth Blind Chang emphasized was that Christ delivered sinners by His death on the Cross and that He rose again to justify all who believed in Him. This one great message entered the hearts of his hearers with such power that it became the spring of the true Christian life in those new converts."

Some of these converts were heard to pray, not in the usual set phraseology used by many Chinese Christians, but in a manner that showed they had learned the secret of fellowship with God. In grateful return for the blind man's teaching, women cooked, washed, sewed and mended for him. Then, as we have already indicated, the time would come when the Christians felt he had given them all he knew and some began to realize they knew more and were better able to carry on with the work than he. Then it was, that Blind Chang came to feel the old pioneer spirit take possession of him once again. On he would press to "Regions Beyond" that were untouched and unreached with the gospel. There to go through the same hardships, endure the same persecutions but to gain the same victories as before. And all this, he gladly and willingly did because of his Christ-like passion for the souls of men.

Mr. Inglis tells us that wherever Blind Chang went the light of the Gospel entered. That he was ever keen to be about his Master's business was seen from the fact that not few of the boys who acted as his guides were saved. As one of these lads led the blind man, holding the end of a stick, the story of Christ's love was told to them with such tenderness that the boy's heart was soon won as he yielded himself to the Lord. The missionary who baptized several of these boys writes: "What delighted me was the frank and hearty way these boys had accepted the story of Christ's love and sacrifice as told to them by the blind man."

It is only possible in this brief record to give the story of just one place where Blind Chang carried the Gospel as we have described. While still working for the most part in his home region, he felt pressed to take a journey several days

eastward to a glen among the mountains called Teshengkow (Valley of Victory). There one of his own kinsman lived. Here, as elsewhere, he preached Christ daily in the surrounding homes and villages. After remaining about two months there he returned home. Soon word came begging him to return, for many were enquiring about the way of Salvation. Again he faced what now he knew was the difficult return journey. Again he gave two months to preaching there to the enquirers. He had not left that little group of believers long before an urgent message was sent to Mukden asking for instructors. In response to these calls, Dr. Ross and Mr. Inglis started out for Teshengkow that autumn.

For seven days they travelled part of the way through forests, and over mountain roads. Through all that great region the missionary tells us "There was not one who had heard of the Saviour." But on the last day of their journey they began to realize "The sacred fire was alight." Scarcely had they seated themselves in the local inn when three men entered, giving them the Christian salutation "Ping an" (Peace with you).

On this first visit Dr. Ross baptized several converts but because there were no shepherds and teachers, as time passed the work languished.

Two years went by and again Blind Chang, hearing of the condition of the church at Teshengkow, felt pressed to visit them. On his arrival he lost no time in visiting the Christians. Throughout the entire region the blind evangelist tramped, stirring up the Christians, winning new converts and putting new life into all. A real revival followed and from that time the work went on. Later, one thousand converts had been received into the church in that region.

At this time, the anti-Christian attitude of the Chinese government seemed to be decreasing for there came to be what could be called a "pro-Christian" wave pass over Manchuria. During this short period, numbers were added to the local church. Little did any, either missionary or Chinese Christian, dream this was but the calm before the storm. The winter of 1899 was not far advanced before the rumbling of a great tempest could be heard.

- to be continued in the next issue of Heads Up

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"And, behold, there met him a woman with the attire of an harlot, and subtil of heart." (Proverbs 7:10).

The attire of an harlot is any manner of dress which would draw attention to the body rather than to the countenance. God gave a woman breasts to feed babies and to satisfy her husband, (Proverbs 5:19) not to satisfy everyone at the mall or at church.



Of all the disciplines of the Christian life, prayer is the least understood, the most infrequently practiced. Over the last fifty years it has become the neglected stepchild of the churches.

The old fashioned church prayer meetings have all but disappeared. Oh, some churches may maintain it as an empty tradition, a midweek church service and call it Prayer Meeting, but in most places it has degenerated into what we should call, "Sunday night lite." And of course, Sunday night meetings are just "Sunday morning lite." When modern day "prayer meetings" comprise lengthy hymn singing, longer sermons, and thirty seconds of prayer for "Who's Who In The Hospital" we really ought to change the name or cancel the meeting.

Prayer meetings ought to be about praying!

And we are not thinking about the Mega-Ho-Hum rerun of the "Lord bless me and my wife, John and his wife, us four and no more!" prayers we have all slept through.

The Unread Book in the Pastor's Study

There is a large dusty book on the top shelf of many pastors' bookshelves. It hasn't been moved since ten or twelve pastors ago. The title? It's called **Untouched Texts in Baptist Pulpits**. If we were brave enough to take it down, scrape off three inches of dust and cobwebs, and pry open the covers, we would discover two surprising facts. First, the top twenty favourite Baptist verses are missing. (John 3:16, the Romans Road verses, Mal. 3:10, etc.) They are well used and do not appear in the book. Second, all the verses on prayer are still untouched, still there. All of them. Unread. Unfamiliar. Untaught, Unused.

In mint condition. Ready to run. It is like the fine print we never bother to read in a contract.

There is even a section of the book that contains the words which describe and define prayer. These prayer words are perfect, pristine, still in the wrapper. Amazing! Thousands of years old, and still almost new. One or two show a bit of wear, but they look like they were wrapped up in the original wrappers centuries ago and put back in the book.

Supplication! What's that?

As I thumbed through the brittle old pages the book fell open to one of the

Untouched Texts, **1 Timothy 2:1**, "I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men;" One of the words for prayer fell out of its wrapper and rolled across the floor. When I picked it up I saw it was the word, "supplications." (Supplications? What does that mean?) It means, "*Urgent requests, even specific requests. It comes from a word that is related to the thought of being bound, or being in bonds. Most likely, it means that the supplicant is bound to the burden of his prayer and comes with importunity to God seeking for his burden to be addressed by God and for his bonds to be rightfully loosed. The concept of importunity includes the idea of persistence, insistence and overeagerness.*"

We can never study the word "supplication" without being reminded of **Luke 18:1-6** *And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint; Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man: And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me. And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith. And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?*

The lesson of the parable is that prayer is to be importunate, persistent, insistent, even to appear to be overeager. The wording of verse 5 is enlightening, in that

the judge speaks to himself, saying (literally), "This woman is bringing near to me that which cuts me and wears me out. She is annoying me, like she was hitting me under the eye! I will grant her request!" I have a book on prayer I must read, titled ***Give Him No Rest!*** That is the thought contained in supplication! And we know almost nothing of it.

Supplication agrees perfectly with the phrase in **Hebrews 4:16** "Let us therefore ***come boldly*** unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." "Boldly" is actually two words. It means, "with & out-spokenness, frankness, bluntness, assurance, and confidence."

The Place of Reverence in Boldness

We must not presume that we are to be brazen in our boldness, like the impudent and irreverent televangelists we see on TV. There is no fear of God before their eyes, to put it mildly! Rather, the Lord would have us to worship Him in the fear of God to the point that we love Him worshipfully, and we come to have great confidence in our approach to our Father through our Lord Jesus Christ when we pray to Him.

Being Specific in Our Supplications

One of the vital aspects of supplication is that of bringing specific requests to God. He would have us come and ask Him for precisely what we have discerned to be His will for us, no matter how large or how unusual they might be. Let me give two examples:

1. A hundred years or so ago, a missionary couple in northern China were led to pray with supplication regarding the wife's health. She had fallen ill, and no medicine seemed to help. As they prayed for God's help, she asked her husband if he thought they would be praying within the will of God to ask for some oranges, as she felt they would help her to recover. Her husband replied, "But you know there are no oranges grown in this part of China! It is too cold!" She replied, "Yes, I know, but I believe God will provide and they will help me get well." So they agreed to pray for oranges, and sure enough, the next day, there was a Chinese brother knocking at their door with a bag of oranges on his back! The most interesting thing is that he had been impressed a month before that he needed to bring them a bag of oranges from the warm province where he lived, a month's journey away! That is supplication.
2. I told one of our men last night about George Muller's prayer when the ship he was sailing in was trapped in

thick fog in the Atlantic. He went to the captain and asked, "Is there any chance that we will still be able to arrive at our destination on time? I have never been late for a meeting, and I don't intend to be late for this one." The captain replied, "There is no way we can be on time! The fog is so thick, and we cannot sail at full steam for fear of shipwreck." Muller said, "Let us have a word of prayer," and they went into the chartroom and knelt to pray. When Muller finished praying, the captain began to pray, but Muller laid his hand on his arm and said, "I do not want you to pray." The captain said, "Why not?" Muller replied, "For two reasons. First, because you do not believe. And second, because ... the fog's gone!" And when they rose to their feet and looked outside, the fog WAS gone. It was as clear as day. The captain later said that this led to his conversion to Christ. That is supplication!

Arthur's Prayers, the Goanna, and the Bus

Supplication ought to be a part of every day's prayers. We recently drove 3000 kilometres to Brisbane and back. One night we stayed with our dear friends, the Cassimatis family near Mackay. When we left for home the next morning, I asked Arthur Cassimatis to pray for us, and he did. In fact, he supplicated for us. He asked urgently, insistently, persistently, boldly and specifically for God to watch over us and keep us safe as we travelled. He prayed for the other drivers and the road conditions. He prayed for me to be alert and to drive safely, and for the car to run well. There was none of this cheap, "Bless 'em good, Lord," praying. It was the real thing. We got our money's worth, and felt that God had heard his supplication. Mind you, it wasn't loud or rude. It wasn't brash or brazen. It was the prayer of a son to His Father, whom the son knew well, and is on good terms with, and it was a prayer full of confidence in the Father of lights, in whom is no variableness, nor shadow of turning, the Giver of every good and perfect gift.

We had driven for about two hours when we needed an answer to Arthur's prayer. The weather was clear, the road was good, and traffic was light. We were about a kilometre or so behind the nearest car. A car and a bus were coming toward us when I saw something moving in our lane about 200 meters or so ahead. It was the same colour as the road so it was hard to tell what it was. I began to slow down, and then had to brake hard as I saw that it was a really large goanna crossing the road in our lane. He was, I think, the largest specimen I have ever seen, almost six feet long and standing up almost a foot high. If I had hit him he would have wrecked our little car! By this time he is 2/3 of the way across our lane and the bus is almost to

him in the other lane. There was no where for us to go. We couldn't stop in time, and we couldn't swerve into the other lane without hitting the bus. I aimed for his head, thinking it would be the smallest part of him to hit, but was fearful of clipping the bus, even if we missed the goanna.

And God's answer to Arthur's supplication came. There was no impact with the goanna (or the bus, thankfully!) I glanced in the mirror and caught a glimpse of the big lizard scurrying off our side of the road. Our granddaughter said she saw the goanna rear up and turn away from us as we passed him. God had heard and turned the threat aside, keeping us in our lane, and

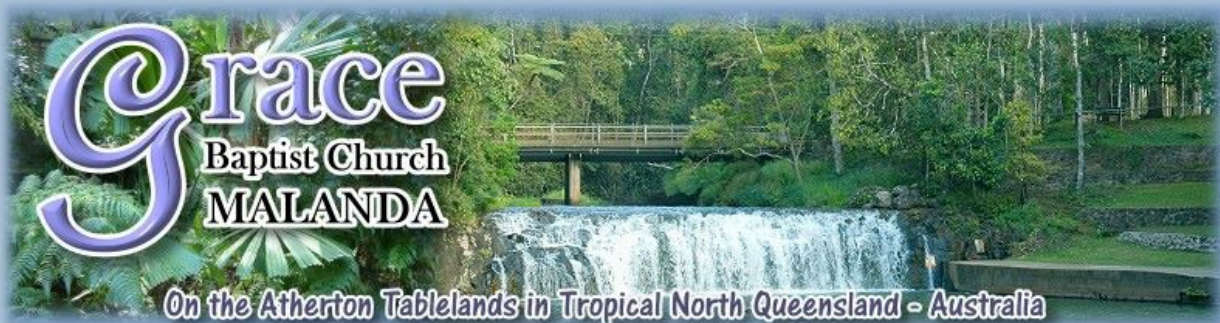
preventing a disaster! We were the unknown subjects of another's supplication, and God had heard! How we thank Him!

There are many wonderful truths pertaining to prayer in Holy Scripture. We often feel that they are the fine print in the Bible, not really all that important.

But it is not true.

SUPPLICATION IS THE BOLD PRINT OF PRAYING!

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Heads Up!

A fortnightly publication produced by Pastor Buddy Smith, [Grace Baptist Church](#), Malanda, QLD., 4885. Australia.
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