



The Voice IN THE Wilderness



*"The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight."
Mark 1:3*

CONTENDING FOR
FUNDAMENTAL CHRISTIANITY

Published Monthly
Free Subscription

CONTENDING FOR
AMERICAN FREEDOM

February 2004

TO ARMS, TO ARMS!

*"To Arms," "To Arms," was once the cry
And now again it's do or die.*

*Patriot and brother must take a stand
For the enemy is here within the land.*

*A Great Awakening and Divine Revolution
In this late hour is the only solution.*

*Is life so dear, or peace so sweet?
That in excuse you sound, "Retreat."*

*The lanterns lit in the Old North Church
Contenders for TRUTH – went out the search.*

*So Sons of Liberty, the war is begun
And now in truth, must the Victory be won!*

-Ronnie L. Williamson

*"...THAT THIS NATION, **UNDER GOD** SHALL HAVE A NEW BIRTH
OF FREEDOM..."*

-Abraham Lincoln



MY PERSONAL MESSAGE TO YOU

Dear Friends:

MY CREED OF LOVE

The food I share with others
Is the food that nourishes me.
The strength I spend for others
Is the strength that I retain.
The freedom I seek for others
Makes me forever free.
The pain that I ease in others
Shall take away my pain.
The load that I lift for others
Makes my load disappear.
The good that I seek in others
Comes back my life to cheer.
The path that I walk with others
Is the path God walks with me.

-Author Unknown

February is a month of card giving, chocolate hearts, and various expressions of affection to special individuals. However, the church is different, yes? The Bible says in 1 John 5:14 & 15 "We know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Thank God for the powerful, healing love among the brethren. It is true because John continues, "He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer." The world's "love" may have ulterior motives, hinged on reciprocation or smack of lust, but not so for the church.

Praise the Lord for the selfless, sacrificial, scriptural love of the brethren. Thank you for your love and friendship so generously

expressed towards this ministry! Due to deadlines and early preparation of the January 2004 material for this publication, most of your cards, letters and financial contributions had not been received in our office. As I pen this letter, it is January 3, 2004, my wife and I are rejoicing in the Lord! Your love has pushed the clouds away and given generous momentum for the New Year. Through October, The Voice in the Wilderness, Inc. had experienced a dramatic drop in support, which had seriously affected this missionary work. Many missionaries had to make dramatic adjustments to compensate. My wife and I sacrificed along with them receiving no income personally for two months. There were detractors and demons determined to destroy what the Lord was doing. But thanks to God for the LOVE AND VISION OF THE BRETHREN we have VICTORY IN JESUS. As of January 3, 2004, The Voice in the Wilderness, Inc. has received the largest Thanksgiving/Christmas response we have on record!!! Vindication and validation is sweet when the hand of the Lord is so evident and the adversaries' attacks are so impotent.

From our heart to all those who have written, prayed, and contributed

The Voice in the Wilderness is a nonprofit, independent incorporation, founded by Rev. Dr. J. Royce Thomason D.P.D. Ph.D., evangelist and medical missionary. The organization is dedicated to the spreading of the whole gospel to the world, especially in foreign lands. The program consists of building mission stations and schools, supporting the American missionaries and native pastors, providing needy students with room and board, administering medical and dental services free, and preaching Christ to the lost. We are supported by the gifts of those who care. All gifts designated by missions will go directly without any deductions. Contributions to The Voice in the Wilderness for projects or to support the ministry of a missionary will be used as indicated by the donor following approved policies and procedures. Gifts are tax deductible and should be made out to The Voice in the Wilderness. *The Voice in the Wilderness Magazine* is a fundamental publication, published each month in behalf of the work of the Lord and the preservation of the liberties of our United States. Printed material from other sources does not necessarily imply an endorsement from this ministry. There is no subscription charge; all interested people of good will may have a copy sent regularly to their address simply by requesting it. Address all correspondence to Voice in the Wilderness, P.O. Box 7037, Asheville, NC 28802.

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INDIA TRIP 2003

INDIA - THE VISION

INDIA – THE VISION Part II

Please take time to read “India Trip 2003” in the January edition of *The Voice in the Wilderness*. That first part sets the stage for this article. Without being redundant, it has taken a lot of prayer, proving and perseverance to arrive at this stage of ministry. India, not unlike most mission fields, presents unique challenges that vary throughout the sub-continent. Yet the Holy Spirit

will give discernment and equip His people to overcome and be fruitful regardless. Thank the Lord for the laborers the Lord has provided The Voice in the Wilderness, Inc. to carry on the gospel work among the precious souls of India. They know the languages, religions, cultures and customs. These Indian Brothers and Sisters understand the politics. With these knowledgeable workers in place, the time and opportunity is now to move forward. Forward with reaching lost souls, discipling believers, training pastors and establishing churches. Here is how you can help.

I. BE A PRAYER PARTNER

Take a church, pastor, worker or city and daily pray for our Lord’s provision. Stay informed and pray specifically. Each month *The Voice in the Wilderness* paper has a missions update. This report will help you pray intelligently. Listed below are names and places that stand in need of your prayers. Please partner with us and lift these friends and needs to the Lord.

Village Churches

Chinsurah Church
Howrah Church
Faith Church
Bethel Church
Delhi Church
Nellore Church

Good Samaritan Orphanage
Nellore Orphanage

**Pastors, families, orphanage
and printing workers, and
helpers:**

Abednego

Dayaraju

Pramod Kumar Nirmal David
Rajamallik Merupo
Samuel Patel
James C.P. Kumar
Dilip Kumar Dr. & Mrs. Jacob
Hemanth Varma
Ravichandran Sukumaran
Singh Dutta

(Dear Friends in India: If your name was inadvertently omitted, please forgive me. Also pray for the Tamil edition of *The Voice in the Wilderness*. Due to lack of funds, there has been a serious cutback in printing.)

We need your help in India. “BUT,” you ask, “What can I do to help in India? I don’t know the language, and even if I did, I could not afford to go to India. How can ‘I’ help?”

Be a missionary prayer partner in India! “Dear Lord, bless the missionaries. Meet their needs today.

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Contributions, Address Changes,
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IS GOD’S WORK IN YOUR WILL?

A bequest in your Will to Voice in the Wilderness can assure that the outreach of this ministry at home and abroad will continue after you have gone to your eternal reward. Prayerfully consider us in your Estate Planning.
Thank you!



The Voice IN THE Wilderness

SERMON of the Month

THE DISINTEGRATION OF FAMILY AND CHURCH

ANEMIC FAMILIES IN THE CHURCH ARE A TRAGEDY

The Voice in the Wilderness has been no stranger to addressing sensitive and controversial subjects. In recent issues of this publication, difficult topics have been discussed and readership has been vocal. The majority has been very supportive. Repeatedly, cards, letters, even phone calls have expressed appreciation for the biblical stand this ministry takes, as well as, the boldness to place in print those scriptural positions.

Easily, two or three articles have generated the most comments and criticism. One such was printed in March 2002 entitled, "Divorce and Remarriage." Obviously, for many this is not "cut and dry." As you know, the definition of marriage has been in stiff debate by state lawmakers and even amongst some denominational hierarchy. Only a few years ago most Americans would not have hesitated to say never. Never in this country will the institute of marriage and the family come under such an attack as to obliterate the biblical, traditional understanding of that which was divinely ordained. Never will judges and legislators by agenda aggressively sit in action against the very principles at the heart of America's foundation and success. Never will churches and clergy dare sanction homosexuality, ordain homosexuals, let alone, condone homosexual marriages.

I have lived long enough to see a day when such perversion and

ungodliness was unheard of. A day when red-blooded Americans would NEVER allow legislators, judges, much less churches permit or promote such wicked, destructive behavior. But now I have lived long enough to see that NEVER become NOW when the very foundation and fabric of America is being destroyed in a cesspool of hell spawned perversion.

Dear Pastor, I serve you notice. Continue to sermonette with those therapeutic addresses and you will be personally accountable for the ruination of many souls. Whether you agree with the following or not, divorce and the spiritually anemic families in our church is a tragedy. How many men do you have in your congregation that are scripturally qualified for office of deacon? Does your singles ministry encourage single, never married young men and women to develop relationships with divorced individuals? Does your preaching and ministry reach out in love with scripturally sound counsel and support to the divorced? Does your congregation understand clearly what the Bible says about divorce and remarriage? Concerning marriages you perform, does your position vary case by case or do you have clearly delineated teaching for your congregation? There is not only a world of lost souls out there, but congregations full of folk held captive by the world, the flesh, and the devil. Do not be afraid to preach specifics, holy living, and the

consequences of sin. Remember, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" John 8:32. Preach the truth in love. Our congregations need to hear the truth clearly and specifically preached.

DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE

"Win friends and influence people?" This article probably will win few friends, but I pray some will be influenced to search the scriptures. When was the last time you heard definitive preaching on divorce and remarriage? So many preachers have vacillated on this subject, much like the subjects of music and dress due to the pressures of our day. We preachers often exhort our young people not to give in to peer pressure. The compromise of this age has caused many a preacher to change his stand.

One report stated that the divorce rate within the church has now reached that of the world. If that were so, must pastors, Christians, and churches modify, adapt, or change previously held positions to accommodate? With the rise in the divorce rate of church members, do we now re-look at the grounds for divorce? Those who have been divorced and remarried, in almost epidemic numbers, must they be considered today qualified for any and every office in the church?

Before we venture any further, let

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me state clearly, God loves you! His mercy and grace are extended. Whether you are divorced and single, or divorced and remarried, His will for you is to be saved and know the joy of a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. Make no mistake, this article is not intended to single out or condemn anyone. The purpose is to set forth the Truth of God's Word and not the trends of this world. By the way, we mortals muddy the waters. The Bible is quite clear on the subject.

IN THE BEGINNING – LEAVE AND CLEAVE

Where shall we start? How about the beginning? Read Genesis 2:21-24 and note verse 24. "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." Emphasis must be placed on the "leaving," "cleaving," and "one flesh." Apart from the Word of God, marriage cannot be understood in all its richness and beauty. The "all" of marriage grows out of God's covenant relationship with His people. Depart from The Book and His Will and all is open to the devourer. In Genesis, is the origin of marriage when the Almighty made a helpmeet for Adam? This institution preceded civil law, government, and even the church. God, himself, ordained that a man "leave" his father and mother and shall "cleave" unto his wife. The covenant union of one man to one woman for life become "one flesh." One, do you understand this? There is no other type, picture, or relationship that says it like marriage. It is more than companionship, more than completion, more than commitment in a physical act and beyond. Here it is—you must get this. "For this cause

shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church" Ephesians 5:31 & 32. Marriage for the believer is not some "fuzzy wuzzy, touchy, feely, ooh I love you, gotta have you, can't do without you arrangement contract until I "feel" different event. Study the "love" Paul is talking about in Ephesians 5:25-28. What is this hidden mystical meaning? If it's a mystery, how are we responsible? Don't misunderstand, for it is "as plain as the nose on your face." It is all spelled out in Ephesians 5: 22-33, "I speak concerning Christ and the church." As believers, we are to let the light and love of our marital union show to a lost world that has not a clue (being "dead in trespasses and sins" – Eph 2:1) as to who Christ is, or what the joy of salvation is all about. The world cannot imagine heaven and the wonder of it all. This "mystery" once hidden is now fully revealed. In living color, a full-length portrayal of "Christ and the Church" is on display for all to see – this is the "cleaving of one man unto one wife; one flesh."

LET NOT MAN PUT ASUNDER!

ATTENTION (sirens, bells, whistles, alarms!) NOW HEAR THIS, NOW HEAR THIS! Of this divinely, ordained union, the very God and author of said union states: "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" Matthew 19:6. Tell me now; what man would dare shake a writing of divorcement in the face of God? I'll tell you what man. The man determined to break scripture, follow self-desire and live in sin, that's the man (or woman). No, now, Ronnie,

you are uncaring. You just don't understand my situation.

Hold the line. What does God say: "Let not man put asunder" Matt. 19:6. "For the Lord, the God of Israel, saith that He hateth putting away:" Malachi 2:16. So if that be the case, where does divorce come into the picture? Hear the Lord in the matter: "Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery." Matt. 19:9. Only if the husband or wife engages in the habitual practice of fornication and will not repent and return to the Lord does the scripture permit divorce. Keep in mind I said repent and return to the Lord. Only can a marriage be what it should when the husband and wife are what they should be with the Lord. And if there be an innocent partner, that individual should desire reconciliation to the Lord for their sinning mate. Is there any hope for this one who erred from the truth? There is power in prayer, and the Holy Spirit does convict.

James 5:19 & 20 says: "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."

Yes, it is clear that the Lord permits a divorce when fornication has been committed. However, the Lord does not require or command divorce. Two questions I ask: 1) Is the Lord interested in the repentance of the one who has sinned as well as the reconciliation of a marriage that has been jeopardized by sin, self, and Satan? 2) Should the spiritual partner (the one innocent of wrong) not with

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prayer and tears seek reconciliation for their mate, not only to the marriage but also to the Lord? On both accounts the answer is yes. Now the innocent party must face some soul-searching questions. Who in all the hurt and wrong will be the spiritual one here? When we talk about “the innocent party” is that individual willing to forgive? Will he or she pray and seek the Holy Spirit intervention and conviction? Is there a submissive heart yielded to what God can do even in the darkest hour?

I am about to say some things that can easily be misunderstood. This is not meant to be pious or callous. In all my years of preaching, pastoring and counseling, I’ve seen such bitterness and anger. I’m talking about on the part of the individual who is suppose to be the innocent one in all this mess. The one who committed fornication confesses and wants reconciliation, but no, “the innocent partner” will not hear of it. Again, not to seem unreasonable or callous, I’m not sure I’ve truly known more than one or two “innocent individuals” involved in a divorce. Then I ask, “Can I be certain in those two cases?”

Well, Bro. Ronnie, just how long am I to pray for reconciliation – a month, a year, ten years? Don’t I deserve to get on with my life? After all, I’m not the one who started this whole mess! Remember, even though Jesus permits divorce on grounds of fornication, He never required it. Jesus never commanded nor does the bible in any way intimate that a marriage must end in divorce due to sin or any other cause for that matter.

Listen to these words: “...love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall

be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil. Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful. Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven” Luke 6:35-37. “Then came Peter to Him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, until seven times: but, until seventy times seven” Matt: 18:21 & 22. “Say not thou; I will recompense evil; but wait on the Lord, and He shall save thee” Prov. 20:22.

If one partner proceeds with divorce, it may be the other partner cannot stop the action. Also, as tragic as it always is, the child of God is permitted to seek divorce if their mate is engaged in fornication. Fornication is the only ground given in the bible for divorce. For the innocent partner, forgiveness and reconciliation should be prayerfully and diligently pursued. Then for any other reason than fornication, the innocent party should not seek divorce.

“Wait on the Lord, and He shall save thee.” I must interject something I believe is important at this point. In the case of a violent and even life-threatening situation, I have recommended separation. I have witnessed several times the very life of a mother and her children in jeopardy by a husband completely out of control. I never suggested divorce but a period of separation and even legal restraint to prevent an even more horrible situation. Keep in mind; these marriages were never scripturally what they should be. It is not my purpose here to deal with these type problems. You reap what you sow; and in many cases, I have found myself in the middle of

somebody’s harvest with the crop coming in, and no preacher was gonna’ do a thing about it.

By the way, for all you people who want your rights. It should be noted the equality Jesus clearly teaches concerning this subject – Sin is Sin. There are no exceptions for male/female, husband or wife. Jesus does not nor never did condone sin. He always confronted sin. Men and women then have the choice to deal with it. Repentance and forgiveness was the message. Without question, men and women alike are accountable. Women were not property to be discarded at will. Men too had biblical teaching to clearly guide. Both husband and wife can find that path of success and happiness in Ephesians 5:21-33. “Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge” Hebrews 13:4. Take care of doing right yourself. God will take care of the rest. On your time schedule – No, in His time. We are to “Be still and know Him” Ps. 46:10. If we “wait upon the Lord” we have His promise. (Ps 27:14, Isa. 40:31, Rom. 8:25-31) If you rush ahead of the Lord in anger, hurt and revenge, you only heap to yourself guilt in the matter. I have seen this – one partner is unfaithful and the other then decides, “Two can play this game” and pursues an extramarital relationship as means of vengeance; or immediately files for divorce and does everything possible to make life miserable through legal avenues for the husband/wife that has sinned. Who exactly is the innocent party here? (Rarely is there one). “Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was

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not so” Matt 19:8. Matthew Henry states, “...none can wish to have the liberty of divorce, without virtually owning the hardness of their hearts.”

So what about remarriage? Fornication is the scriptural ground for divorce according to Christ in Matt. 19:9. In event of death, the surviving partner is free to marry. For example, Paul says in I Cor. 7:39, “The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord.” Death permits the believer to again marry but only to another believer. Paul also says it is a “happier” state to not marry again.

The Law of Moses allowed divorce for hardness of heart, but the law of Christ forbids it expecting love and reconciliation. Christ permits (not commands) divorce on grounds of fornication, while Moses called for punishment by death. Please don't miss the heart of what Christ is teaching. If the husband loves his wife and the wife reverences her husband, living together in this bond of grace, there is no need of divorce. The Pharisees tempting Jesus said, “Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause.” Jesus was confronted with men who had a heart problem. Marriage problems are heart problems. Divorce is a heart problem. “The Law of Moses considered the hardness of men's hearts, but the gospel of Christ cures it; and His grace takes away the heart of stone, and gives a heart of flesh. By the law was the knowledge of sin, but by the gospel was the conquest of it,” Matthew Henry.

Yes, I understand Christ permitted divorce on grounds of fornication. No, I do not believe Christ is teaching remarriage in cases

of divorce due to fornication. Divorce for causes other than fornication and marrying another is clearly committing adultery. In response the disciples said, “...If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry” Matt. 19:10. “If I'm locked into this thing of marriage like you are describing Jesus, I would be better off not to marry in the first place.” Some are eunuchs at birth, some made eunuchs by men and some choose to be for the Kingdom. But not all are able to receive this, indeed few can. Therefore, those who choose to marry also choose the commitment and responsibility. Buck up. Be a man, be a woman and accept the God given privilege as well as duty of fidelity in marriage. Quit your whining about rights, equality and fairness. Get to work and enjoy the blessed fruits of faithfulness to God and see what He can do in your marriage. Someone said marriage is made in heaven, but the husband and wife are responsible for the earthly maintenance.

I hear you – you disagree. So do many of my preacher friends. So do many scholars and commentaries. Can we possibly agree on the following?

1. Jesus permits divorce in case of fornication - **Agreed?**
2. If someone gets a divorce and marries another, except for fornication, that person commits adultery - **Agreed?**
3. In marriage does the man and woman (twain) become one flesh? - **Agreed?**
4. Is it true, “What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.” - **Agreed?**
5. In most wedding ceremonies (Christian weddings) the vows go something like this: For better, for worse...For richer, for

- poorer...In sickness and in health...To love, and to cherish 'til death do us part. - **Agreed?**
6. God designed marriage to be a picture of the relationship between Christ and His church - Ephesians 5:32 - **Agreed?**

REMARRIAGE

Now we may agree to disagree - Agreed?

The only ground for divorce is fornication. The only ground for remarriage is the death of the mate. Jesus did not give permission for remarriage in case of fornication. It is true He states that divorce is permitted only in the case of fornication. And it is true that Jesus said to divorce one's husband or wife except for cause of fornication and remarry was to commit adultery. However, Jesus did not give a wholesale endorsement of remarriage for those whose mate is a fornicator.

Too long have the church and pastors played a situation game with the scriptures. “He/she did this, then she/he did that and therefore the bible says thus and so.” No, no, a thousand times no. “Thus saith the Lord,” and that settles it. We must not analyze the scriptures in light of our sordid circumstances.

- 1) They divorce on unbiblical grounds; but now that he remarried, she is free to remarry because he committed adultery. No!
- 2) She committed fornication so he has a biblical right to divorce, remarry and get on with life. No! Where is prayer, fasting and waiting on the Lord? What happened to forgiveness and reconciliation? If the church, let alone individual believers would get right with God and His Word, the power needed to rebuke

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RELIGIOUS NEWS AND COMMENTS

OTHER RELIGIONS ARE ACTIVE TODAY

– Gene Price, Director of Communications of Roloff Evangelistic Enterprises writes, “Other religions are active today—much more active than any of us would believe. If we are not responsive in our duty of evangelism, we will have failed this generation.

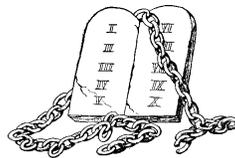
“We possess the *truth* found in the Bible and in Jesus Christ. We must not let the other religions convert the world with a *lie*. We are being told that all gods are one and the same regardless of whether it’s Allah or whoever. There is an increasing popular belief that many trails will, in the end, lead to the same God. Many of these religions utilize bits and pieces of the Holy Bible...but not the whole Bible. The foundation for truth must begin by believing the Bible is God’s word and accepting every word as from the hand of God. This is where the various trails begin to differ and where the ultimate ending reveals the contrast between heaven and hell.

“Love is one ingredient that is missing in other religions apart from Christianity. Because Islam is so much in the news today and is so rapidly growing worldwide and even in America, it bares looking at closely. It is based upon extreme rugged discipline, but with an absence of *love*. Although they claim that Allah does love, but he only loves those he deems *good*. One can only be deemed good by being a Muslim. That narrows the so-called *good* people down drastically. All other religions are not loved by Allah! This includes Judaism and Christianity, in fact everyone who is not a Muslim is an infidel in their eyes and that’s where we separate their god from the God of the Bible.

“The God of Christianity has deep love not only for one people of society,

but God SO loves the *whole world*—even the Muslims. He wants everyone to enjoy His love and His provisions for an eternal home in a wonderful heaven. We are all classified as on common ground as we enter this world through our birth...we are ALL sinners—everyone. However, we are thankful that God loves all of us enough to send His only Son as a sacrifice for our sin. It’s not automatic—we must repent of our sin and call upon Him to forgive us of our sin and believe in our hearts of His provision.

“As there are many religions out there, we believe it is essential for us to evangelize with the truth of God. We are told to go into all the world and preach and teach others. We cannot use an escape clause that we are too old or not able or whatever...God says, “Go.” He gives us all opportunities of evangelism, but we must sincerely seek out what we should do.”



INCREASED ATTACKS AGAINST RIGHTEOUSNESS IN OUR LAND

– Dr. David C. Gibbs, Jr. comments from *Christian Law Association*, PO Box 4010, Seminole, FL, “We see an increased attack against righteousness in our land: 1) Homosexual activity is now legally protected by the United States Supreme Court. 2) Courts are holding that requiring public school children to say the pledge of allegiance violates the Constitution because it includes the words “under God.” 3) The Ten Commandments are being taken down from public places nationwide. 3) Pastors are being told to not close their prayers in public meetings with the words “*In Jesus Name.*” 4) Malls and

businesses continue to expand in all directions while churches are being told that their properties are “over-developed.” 5) Drug and alcohol abuse continues to escalate while Bible-based ministries that help addicts are facing legal challenges. 6) Courts are holding that requiring abortion providers to inform parents that their daughter is having an abortion violates the legal rights of the daughter.

“It is imperative that God’s people let their voices be heard for righteousness. We must love our Savior fervently, obey Him faithfully, and win others to Him consistently. As the world grows darker, we must shine God’s light farther and brighter than ever before.”

DID A PUBLIC LIBRARY ATTEMPT TO DENY FREE SPEECH?

Chris Pfeifer, wanted to give a creation talk in one of the rooms in his local public library in Wisconsin. The library refused. Ironically, he was being denied the use of what the library called its ‘Constitution Room.’ So here was a library that was denying Mr. Pfeifer his constitutional right of free speech! The library had allowed many different non-profit organizations to use the room, with only a few exceptions, like political meetings and religious services. Mr. Pfeifer was there just to give a lecture on creation. Thankfully, a federal judge ruled that Mr. Pfeifer’s constitutional rights were violated. It’s one of the few victories Bible-believing Christians have seen recently in America’s courts. By the way, Mr. Pfeifer had only been a Christian for three years. He describes himself as a former ‘staunch’ evolutionist. He’d discovered that *Answers in Genesis* witnessing booklets were being wonderfully received by students as he

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passed them out to those who were attending the public school right across the street from his home—using ‘sidewalk evangelism.’ He realized how they need to know that the Bible can also be trusted -especially about their need of salvation. -answersingenesis.org 12/6/03



LEFT COAST HALL OF SHAME – 2003—The Pacific Justice Institute, info@pacificjustice.org 12/31/03 printed the following list: 1) 9th Circuit reaffirms its earlier ruling that the Pledge of Allegiance is unconstitutional for public schools. 2) New law allows illegal aliens to acquire driver’s licenses. 3) All foster care parents in California must now undergo homosexual sensitivity training in order to continue caring for children. 4) 9th Circuit financially punishes Washington student because of his theology major. 5) California law no longer protects students from being interrogated about sex, family life or religion without parental consent. 6) Ventura County United Way eliminates the Boy Scouts from their funding campaign. 7) Federal statue protecting churches ruled unconstitutional by Southern California judge. 8) To show their support for homosexuality, school districts hold Day of Silence for students for an entire school day. 9) Anti-recall union members beat women and threaten a 9-year-old boy, as his dad is beaten-up. 10) Christian students’ club singled out and censored to prevent any religious quotes on posters or flyers.



PRAY FOR THE PEACE OF JERUSALEM – Psalm 122:6 – Religion editor for *Asheville Citizen*

www.thevoiceinthewilderness.org

Times, Rebekkah Melchor Logan featured an article recently entitled, “ISRAEL: Peace effort reflects hope for end to violence.” The caption for a photo of Jerusalem read, “New peace proposals call for a divided Jerusalem to be the capital of both Israel and a proposed Palestinian state. Following are some excerpts from the article. “There will be no peace without two autonomous states. That’s at the heart of President Bush’s “road map to peace,” which is the latest attempt to restore order following decades of strife.

“Jewish people believe it is their right and responsibility to rebuild their sacred temple in its precise place.

“For Muslims, the traditional belief is that the Prophet Muhammad rose to heaven during his lifetime from the Temple Mount and that this is where the Day of Judgment will take place.

“Christian prophesies of the Old Testament also are based on this site where Jesus spent time.

“Ari Marom, Israeli minister of tourism says the problem is the issues are so hot that we definitely need help from the West to push us together. The States do have a role to play. It was encouraging that the signers and engineers of this Geneva Accord went to meet with Colin Powell. He at least has expressed some support for this as an initiative.

“The United States, European Union, United Nations and Russia are being referred to as the “Quartet” of Middle East Negotiators.

“One shop owner stated there is 90 percent of the country – Jews and Arabs – who want peace. The other 10 percent are the ones in control. They are running it for everyone else.

“Stone walls do a prison make. Some 2.2 billion religious faithful love the same 35-acre stone complex in the land of Israel. The Temple Mount in the Old City of Jerusalem is a religious center sacred to Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

“No other city has come so close so often to being loved to death. It has been besieged about 40 different times – and on 32 separate occasions destroyed, at least partially.

“Three major religions huddling en masse in one site on Earth. They all want

to have the final word and their last day in this location.” There will be THE FINAL WORD!



MISSIONARY UPDATES – We thank the Lord for His protection and provision for two young missionaries in Moldova, Shanna Newman and Sara Trent. If you remember, we mentioned them in prayer as their apartments and belongings were severely damaged/destroyed by fire a few months back. A recent newsletter reported on the Lord’s provision as they cleaned, refurbished, and replaced many items. Also as we’ve reported in the past Bro. Gary May, who is ministering on a Reservation in South Dakota, experienced a fire that destroyed their church building. Both of these are very traumatic loses, but we praise the Lord that none of the missionaries were injured. They would appreciate your continued prayers as they recover from these situations. Again, any contributions you would like to make towards their ministries would always be appreciated.





Nuggets of Gold

1. Duty makes us do things well, but love makes us do them beautifully.
2. In summer, mosquitoes put more clothes on people than modesty.
3. The death penalty may not eliminate crime, but it stops repeaters.
4. Some church members are like wheelbarrows – they go only when they are pushed.
5. Some women say they have nothing to wear – others demonstrate it.
6. The world at its worst needs the church at its best.
7. Congress fighting inflation is like the Mafia fighting crime.
8. Men no longer hide behind women’s skirts; neither do women.
9. If the church is ever to get on its feet, it must first get on its knees.



SOME CHURCHES I HAVE KNOWN

What a joy to fellowship with and preach to hundreds of precious people in the churches of India. The singing was enthusiastic, the preaching received with welcomed hearts, and as always, the hospitality wonderful. American churches stand to learn some much needed lessons from the churches in India, Venezuela, Mexico, and many countries we often call the "mission field." Maybe we are the student and they are the teacher.

The multitude of smiling faces and enthusiastic handshakes were refreshing. Talk about a singing church! Wow! These folk lifted heart and voice in praise to the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. The children as well as young people radiated with such a beautiful spirit.

The Lord has richly blessed Terry and I with churches and preacher friends that have been such an encouragement to our ministry. From Maine to Florida, North Carolina to California, Texas to Alaska, Canada to South American and around the globe to India, it has been my privilege to become acquainted with some wonderful local churches. Whether preaching or just a visitor, I have always been attentive to the uniqueness each ministry offered.

It is not my purpose here to extrapolate the negatives, but to accentuate the positive. Pastor – lay person, you just might glean a bit of good to take along to church with you next Lord's Day.

Sophie Muller wrote in her book *Jungle Methods*: "Some people say that it cramps the Holy Spirit to have everything written down in order for the services, but I know that it really cramps the devil."

I'm thinking of a church where I've preached several meetings. Hard work, prayers, and organization have been hallmarks of these meetings, as has the apparent sensitivity to the Holy Spirit. Souls were saved, and God's people

expressed in a spirited and reverent fashion the Lord's work in their midst. I agree with Sister Sophie. Often, the lack of order is an excuse for laziness and an opportunity for the devil.

One precious congregation forever touched my life. Halfway around the world in Calcutta when Howrah folk baptize, they truly praise the Lord. As each candidate rises from beneath the waters, the Pastor pronounces a powerful "Hallelujah." Then the entire congregation echoes, "Hallelujah." A second time and finally a third, the Pastor resoundingly declares a "Hallelujah" as the congregation each time echoes quite enthusiastically.

I found this procedure very appropriate for the occasion. By the way, dozens of small children sat for about three hours with barely a peep from a one. That was indeed incredible.

What is a small church and what is a big church? Personally, I think a big church is one doing the will of God.

At the Camp Meeting, Pastor "A" thought Pastor "B" had a big church with a congregation of 300, while Pastor "B" thought Pastor "C" had the big church who averaged almost a thousand in Sunday School. I even heard it said, "Well, I don't like those big churches – don't know anybody and they don't know me."

Let me share my experiences in two churches that run about 2,000. The three of us (my wife, daughter, and myself) walked into this huge auditorium thinking, "No one will even shake our hands."

Were we surprised! We had barely taken our seat when a brother approached our pew, introduced himself, shook our hands, and warmly welcomed my family. I later found out that every pew was divided into sections and a member knew when a visitor sat in his/her section. That individual diligently greeted newcomers, providing information about Sunday School, church,

restrooms, etc. Incredible!

I've also been in a church where I could count the adults on my fingers and toes...yet not a handshake or howdy-do. To my amazement, the Pastor of one "BIG" church personally greets and shakes the hand of every visitor following the service. Every visitor is asked to stop in the Welcome Center, a room conveniently located at the auditorium exit, to meet the Pastor and his wife. Now, how about that!

Do you ever get the impression that some churches just don't want to grow? Well, it wasn't true of these folk. If you ever darkened their door, that following week you will receive a letter in the mail, a follow-up visit, and a phone call. Absentee members get the same treatment. Too pushy you say. I kind of thought it was because they CARED.

There was no shortage of full-length mirrors at this church. They were the nicest looking bunch, for sure. Just imagine - the ushers all wore coats and ties. Now that was a novel idea. Try this on for size: Each Sunday morning they go through the entire congregation and ask how many chapters in the Bible you read that week. Oh, but Brother Ronnie, that's embarrassing. Why? – Because you did not read any?

I'll have you know there are strong, Bible-preaching, soul winning, separated local churches all around this globe. Can you believe it? I was even in a service where they played the organ and the piano and sang the old faithful hymns. Not a tape or watered-down ditty in the house! They sang with spirit. No dead, dry funeral dirge. "Victory in Jesus" had victory. "Power in the Blood" had power, and "When We All Get to Heaven" made you want to go there. Then, my – the preaching! He had something to say, and I believe God said it to him first. Isn't it great to have been in the House of the Lord! Amen. - -RLW

(Continued from page 7)

sin would be available. If the guilty refuses to repent and be delivered, then should not the church “deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus?” I Cor. 5:5. However, there is so much of the world in the church today that the church has no power to “deliver such an one,” period!

“But the Lord can’t solve these problems. My husband/wife has deeply hurt me. They deserve to be punished. I did no wrong, I deserve to be happy.” On and on the confusion goes, and the further we get from true biblical Christianity. “...Men ought always to pray, and not to faint;” Luke 18:1. If storm winds blow upon our marriage, the night has never been so dark, the valley so deep, we can, and we must Trust GOD! Pray and don’t faint. Divorce, at least divorce and remarriage may be the ultimate fainting spell. It need not be. No, I cannot condone divorce and remarriage, regardless the grounds. As a preacher, I will not perform the ceremony for an individual divorced wanting to remarry. I simply cannot get peace about such. There are many more scriptures I would like to discuss, but must encourage the reader to “study to shew thyself approved...”

Since this scripture was brought

to my attention, I will conclude with these comments. It has already been stated that, “The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord.” I Cor. 7:39. But what about I Cor. 7:15 where it says, “...if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace?” So if in verse 39 the wife is not bound after death; is that not true in verse 15 when it says, “...not under bondage...?” Please note that verse 15 is talking about a believer married to an unbeliever. This could be due to one individual getting saved and the mate remaining unsaved. The unbeliever then decides to leave his or her saved mate. Then the saved spouse “is not under bondage.” The Greek word for bondage in verse 15 means to enslave – bring into bondage and is different from the word used in verse 39 for bound. Bound means to bind or be in bonds. In other words if the unbeliever leaves, the believer is not brought into bondage to force a marriage relationship to further peril. The hope is verse 16. Of course death releases the surviving spouse and they are no longer bound. Verse 39.

Dear reader, what a joy to be a child of the King, joint heirs with Jesus Christ. What a privilege in our

marriages and families to be a living, daily demonstration of Christ and the Church. “What He hath joined together let not man put asunder.” But Bro. Ronnie, I’m divorced – I’m divorced and remarried. Let me say here that whatever the past, whatever the sin, get it under the blood. “He is faithful and just...” I John 1:9. There is victory in Jesus. Then commit your all to Him and live according to His Word.

Now just a note to pastors, ordaining counsel, etc. If you take this position, you will not have to worry about showing favoritism to a deacon’s daughter who is divorced and wants you to perform the ceremony for her remarriage. If for some reason you don’t think the remarriage is right, then you will lose a deacon and family. Preach this position, and they do not even ask you. Or how about ordaining preachers and deacons who have been divorced and remarried. I have seen groups continually rehash case after case and inevitably create division and bad feelings. Why? Because we are trying to judge each individual situation and not simply take a stand on the Word. If you allow yourself to be trapped in a personality or respecter of persons’ game, everyone is a loser. Preach it; spell it out, and with love take a stand. It is certain to relieve a lot of headache!
-RLW



1) Matthew 19:9 “Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.”

2) Mark 10:11 & 12 “Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery.”

3) Luke 16:18 “Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery.”

(Please note that Mark and Luke did not mention remarriage in the light of fornication. Jesus is teaching that the only biblical grounds for divorce is fornication. As is obvious in the parallel references of Mark and Luke, Jesus is not teaching about remarriage but what the grounds for divorce are.)



(Continued from page 3)

Give and protect and strengthen them to do their work.” This is a rather general approach to some very specific needs. Every missionary should have a base camp energized with a team of prayer partners keeping the channel of protection, provision and power open to the throne of Glory. How is that accomplished? What should we pray in relation to the daily needs of the missionary?

1. A sweet heart for Jesus.

“Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind” Matt. 22:37. Missionaries are usually overworked and under appreciated. It is easy to work out of duty, rather than serve out of love. Pray that the supreme motivation for obedience to the call of God is love for Jesus. In John 14:15 Jesus said, “If ye love me keep my commandments.” Then, we read in II Corinthians 5:14 “The love of Christ constraineth me.” Pray that your missionaries will keep a sweet, fervent heart of love for the Savior.

2. A scheduled appointment with God.

The temptation is to skip or skimp on their time alone with the Lord. The only result is failure. “Study to show thyself approved” – “pray without ceasing.”

3. A spirit filled life.

Be “filled with the Spirit” means every aspect of one’s being – motives, will, emotions, thought, actions—is under the control of the Holy Spirit, Ephesians 5:18. In John 3:30 we see the desire of a great servant. Pray that your missionaries will yield to the Spirit’s daily filling and control. Pray that the fullness of the Spirit and the fruit of the Spirit, the very beauty of Jesus, will be evident in the missionary’s life. See Galatians 5:22 – the fruit of the Spirit.

4. A servant’s hand for others.

“Love thy neighbor as thyself,” Matthew 22:39. A major difficulty for many missionaries is getting along with the other missionaries with whom they serve. One mission board discovered that 80 percent of its missionaries did not return to the mission field because of problems with their co-workers.

Pray also that missionaries have a Christ-like love for nationals. One missionary couple were well instructed in the Scriptures, but nevertheless returned home because they “could not learn to love the nationals.” The hand and heart of the missionary must extend from neighbor even unto the enemy, Matthew 5:43-48. Pray for this servant’s hand and heart.

As you pray for your missionaries’ spiritual walk and spirit filled life, emphasize the following specifics:

- A. Spiritual discernment.
- B. Divine wisdom.
- C. Patience to wait on the Lord.
- D. Perseverance and courage.
- E. Steady, daily faith.
- F. Vision for lost souls.
- G. Discipleship for converts.

You too will need the Lord’s leadership in how to pray specifically in these areas.

5. A Sense of security in His will.

Every missionary family will experience times of uneasiness in strange surroundings and circumstances. Homesickness can be a battle for some. Pray for an abiding peace even in uncertain times and hostile conditions. Jesus prayed not that the Father would take them out of the world, but that He would keep them from the evil one. Pray for protection and adjustment.

6. A supply and strength both physically and materially.

“But my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus,” Philippians 4:19. The Lord has blessed you that you may be a blessing to your missionaries. You are rich both spiritually and materially as a child of the King. Pray for the Lord’s leadership in how He would use you to meet the needs of His missionaries.

This may come as a shock, but missionaries need money; and we must not make them beggars or fund raisers. Enough said!! Then pray for strong healthy bodies. Disease and sickness is a constant concern. Pray the Lord will grant the greatest measure of strength and health that His glory be established, as well as His good be accomplished in and through the missionaries.

7. A spiritually strong and steadfast family.

The final point is not least in importance. Husband, wife, and parent-child relationships are under extreme attack by the enemy. Missionary families are no exception. Pray, pray, pray for the missionaries’ home. Record their names, birthdays, anniversaries, specific likes, hobbies, books they enjoy, etc. Send them cards, emails, and even a special gift from time to time. Keep your missionaries’ family in your heart, on your mind, and close at hand to reach out in an expression of love on a regular basis. Be a missionary to your missionaries’ family. Take this personally.

Paul said of the Philippians, “I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy...I have you in my heart...”

A part of your mission is to

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support your missionaries through consistent prayer and personal involvement. The reward is eternal. Yes, you can help in India. Get involved. Be a prayer partner.

II. BE A MINISTRY PARTNER

In 2002 The Voice in the Wilderness, Inc. brought nine of our workers to Faith Church in Agra, India for a revival and Pastors Conference. Then in 2003, Pastor Patel, Deacon Babu and I traveled to meet with these men to encourage them in the work in India. I believe we made great advances during the November 2003 meetings. One such meeting was held at the Chinsurah Church. Pastor Dayaraju and his congregation were so very gracious. After the service, we met with the church committee to resolve several issues. Last month I promised an interesting story and so here it is. This congregation had been without a pastor for several years. I had told them sometime ago we would find a pastor for this church. But the question was, how? Thank the Lord, with God nothing is impossible! On this trip they said to me, "You promised us a pastor and we now have a pastor!" This congregation seemed so pleased with Pastor Dayaraju. Pray with us that they will grow in Christ and see many come to the Lord in salvation.

One need expressed in our meeting with them during this year's trip was that of finances. The church did not have the sufficient money to meet needs. What could be done? As brother Babu translated from English to Telugu, the committee and I discussed the church budget. As the twelve-member committee shared, in Telugu, the details of the church finances, I was impressed of the Lord to do something a bit unusual. While

Babu and the committee talked, I removed 12 pages from my note pad, one page for each committee member. After a brief exchange and translation, I asked each committee member if they tithed to the church. I explained that I did not want to embarrass them but desired to be of help. They all smiled and seemed willing to cooperate. Then I asked the members to take a sheet of paper and write down their own personal weekly income. There were not any objections to doing this. Then Partha collected the 12 sheets, totaled the amounts and calculated 10 percent. Now earlier in our discussions, I had already ascertained that the congregation was giving about one-third of the needed budget in offerings. That was the entire congregation giving only one-third of what was needed to sustain the church financially. No, these are not wealthy people. Yes, they work hard and struggle to take care of their own families, let alone trying to carry the weight of the church expenses. Remember, the committee consisted only of 12 people. What difference could only 12 people make when the entire church was only giving one-third of what the church needed financially?

Well the 12 sheets were collected, numbers totaled and 10 percent calculated. Needless to say, the committee was amazed! Ten percent of the income from only 12 wage earners of the entire congregation came to two-thirds of the needed budget. Also keep in mind that was only 12 wage earners, and just a tithe was totaled. The sum did not include an offering or faith promise giving. In the church there were far more than 12 wage earners capable of duplicating the same numbers. Thus, we all were

beginning to see that the ability to finance the Chinsurah Church existed within the present congregation. It was evident once again that you simply cannot go wrong with THE BOOK. We so often get trapped by, In the Box thinking, and fail to go by THE BOOK. The Indian box of thinking was "I can't do that" or, "We don't have the money" but we had just proven that wrong by the way of THE BOOK! Hey! It's time to get out of that box and get in THE BOOK. There are Indian Boxes, American Boxes, Boxes of Prejudice, and Boxes Man-made. Get out of the Box and in God's Book, the Holy Bible! God's method for financing His church is not American. God's method is divine and eternally settled in Heaven. It works if we work it. His Book will work no matter the economy, politics, language or geography.

You should have seen the smiles ☺ come across the faces of those committee members. The numbers were there and yet they had not tapped into all the potential. However, we must be reminded that even when the numbers on paper do not add up or when logically we cannot figure it out, if God said it, then it is true and if God said it, it is settled.

Get in THE BOOK! That's our vision—To assist our brothers and sisters in pursuit of Christ and His Word. Time and again He has proven His Word to be good far over and beyond anything I could ever expect. In obedience to God's word, India pastors and congregations will realize self-supporting, autonomous local churches firmly grounded and reproducing themselves according to

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the Great Commission. Biblical fellowship, stewardship, and accountability will be taught and faithfully practiced among the churches and pastors.

THE BOOK AND A BANYAN TREE

“Alexander Duff, the first foreign missionary of the Church of Scotland, got off to a rough start. He was young, only twenty-three, and bright and innovative. But on his way to India in 1829 with his new wife, he was shipwrecked—not once but twice! The most serious wreck occurred when his ship, the Lady Holland, was within a few miles of India.

“At ten o’clock P.M., Duff was half-undressed when a shock and shudder ran through the vessel. He rushed to the deck where the captain met him with terrifying words, “Oh, she’s gone! She’s gone!” The ship split apart, but a portion clung precariously to a reef. Through the night the passengers huddled in terror in the surviving portion, expecting every moment to be swept away. They were saved the next day, but their clothes and prized possessions were lost, including Duff’s entire library of eight hundred volumes.

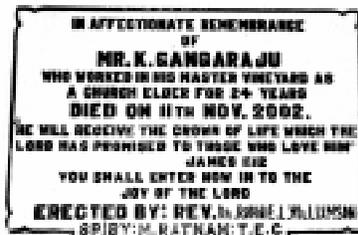
“Later, standing on the shore and looking sadly toward the reef, Duff saw a small package bobbing atop the water. He watched and waited as it floated close enough for him to wade out and retrieve.

“It was his Bible. Of all his precious books, it alone survived. His heart soared, for he took it as a sign from the Lord that this one book alone was worth more than all the others put together.

“He assembled his fellow survivors and read Psalm 107, the Traveler’s Psalm. Soon, using the

same Bible, he began his first class with a little group of five boys under a banyan tree. Within a week the class had grown to three hundred, and it soon became a school that evangelized and educated the higher classes in India, producing a qualified generation of leaders for the nation’s young church.” (Author unknown)

The Gospel work in India will not succeed because The Voice in the Wilderness, Inc. sends financial support. The Gospel work in India will not succeed with the absence of poverty, politics, and problems; but rather success will come with the promises, power and presence of Jesus Christ in the lives of His faithful servants.



Brother Gangaraju and I spoke several times about the needs of the Chinsurah Church. Brother Gangaraju went home to be with the Lord on November 11, 2002. We dedicated a plaque in his honor during my November 2003 visit. It was a day of rejoicing with this congregation’s new pastor, Brother Dayaraju. Pray that this church will go forward to reach many souls with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

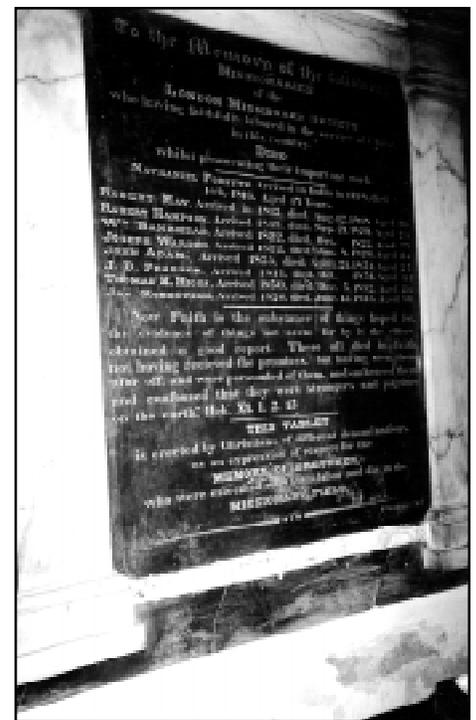
III. BE A BURDEN PARTNER

“Bear one another’s burden.” I cannot with words express the burden in my heart for the precious people of India. Repeatedly tears have been sown along with the Gospel seed on behalf of the lost souls of India. The harvest is plenteous but the laborers are few. Will you help bear the burden of our Lord’s prayer request? God has given us this privilege. I am not worthy, but thankful that He has allowed me to carry this burden.

This burden reaches to the very core of all we are doing in India. Our

desire is to see each brother and sister hold an unshakable commitment to the authority of God’s Holy, inspired, infallible Word. Sound biblical doctrine and separation both personal and ecclesiastically is essential. The Lord has given The Voice in the Wilderness, Inc. some dedicated brothers, truly seasoned soldiers of the cross willing to assist in this endeavor. Thank God for burden bearers. Thank God for holy men with a burden to minister in places of extreme need. And I thank you for joining us as a Burden Partner.

-RLW



THE BURDEN – Many faithful have gone before to pioneer the way. Their very blood and lives have been the seed for the gospel. Union Chapel in Kolkata, India, displays this marble tablet in honor of a few who paid the ultimate price to take Jesus to the lost. The inscription reads: “To the Memory of the following Missionaries of the London Missionary Society who having faithfully labored in the service of this country DIED whilst prosecuting their important work.” Then following the inscription those precious names are listed. The first individual named arrived in 1798; and on the average, these missionaries survived in India about six years, dying at an average age of 30 years. Do we not now have the burden to faithfully prosecute the mission so sacrificially begun by these brethren?

Needs Met - Praise the Lord!

In the Nov/Dec 2003 edition of *The Voice in the Wilderness* several year-end needs were presented for your prayers.

1. Office Copier – Praise the Lord this need has been provided.
2. India Trip – Praise the Lord the expenses for this very important trip have been paid in full.
3. Venezuela Bible Institute – Praise the Lord, expenses for round trip travel to Venezuela have been provided. However, The Voice in the Wilderness, Inc. would still like to help one of the national pastors purchase audio/visual equipment for his church and open-air meetings. We believe he is a worthy pastor and servant and pray someone reading this will be burdened to take on this project. Will you be the one to supply this need? If so, send your contribution to The Voice in the Wilderness, Inc. ear-marked "PASTOR RAMOS," or just give us a call at 828-649-1043 if you have further questions. Thank you and Praise the Lord!

*Please see the Nov/Dec issue for needs we are still praying for.



His personal prayer book, written in his own handwriting, declares continual fidelity to the Lord Jesus Christ: "O most Glorious God, in Jesus Christ my merciful and loving Father, I acknowledge and confess my guilt, in the weak and imperfect performance of the duties of this day."



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with a gracious gift of support – THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU! Your caring and sharing has proved the enemies' efforts a waste! Hallelujah!

Consider the following report and items of praise:

1. As mission checks go out this month, each account will now receive support because of your gifts. Praise the Lord!
2. The trip to India in November 2003 was made by faith, because funds were not available. I had asked my two Indian brothers to accompany me also trusting that the Lord would cover their airline tickets, accommodations, and food as well. As of January 2004, that bill is paid in full. Praise the Lord!
3. The owner of ValuePrint, Inc., the printer for *The Voice in the Wilderness* publication, permitted this ministry to do three mailings in Nov/Dec 2003 even though he knew income was down and money was not available to pay him. As of January 2004 those three bills have been paid in full. Praise the Lord!
4. Several urgent needs have been met for which we again say, Praise the Lord!
5. Funds are now available for us to participate in the Venezuela Bible Institute. Praise the Lord!
6. The new copier and office needs have been provided. Praise the Lord!
7. In November 2003 it appeared The Voice in the Wilderness, Inc. would close

out the year in critical need. What a joy to report all bills paid and current. Praise the Lord!

Praise the Lord! Because of "YOUR" generous gifts these needs have been met. May God bless you for your faithfulness to Him!

Now, may I have your ATTENTION PLEASE? Often after the greatest victory comes severe challenge. We cannot rest on the past and sit, soak, and sour. What The Voice in the Wilderness, Inc. needs currently are new partners who will help on a regular monthly basis. If you have never made a contribution to The Voice in the Wilderness, Inc. ministries, your gift would be deeply appreciated.

For those of you who have given, please pray that others will follow your generous example. We desire to be faithful until the trump, and with that, tomorrow is as bright as the promises of God. Sister Terry and I are encouraged about the work our Lord is doing. Look around – you do see the hand of God – do you not? The year 2004 has already proven to be full of opportunity. The Voice in the Wilderness, Inc. is deeply grateful for all those around the world that have been used of the Lord to come this far. Now as we move to the next level of vision, growth, and service in Christ, may His preeminence be supremely evident. Again, thank you for your active participation, prayers, and support as we partnership together in this great calling.

For Christ and Souls,
Bro. Ronnie



THOSE WHO LED THE WAY

The Pilgrims and the Puritans led opposition to slavery in Massachusetts. When the first slave trader brought his ship to Massachusetts, he was arrested and his slaves were returned to Africa. When Georgia was founded in 1732, its founder, James Oglethorpe, prohibited slavery.

The first opponents of slavery and the chief advocates for racial equal rights were the churches (the Quakers, Presbyterians, Methodists, etc.) Religious leaders such as Quaker Anthony Benezet were the leading spokesmen against slavery, and evangelical leaders such as Presbyterian signer of the Declaration Benjamin Rush were the founders of the nation's first abolition societies.

So great was the effect of these early civil rights pioneers that prior to 1774, two of the thirteen colonies actively sought to abolish slavery or the slave trade and other colonies were rapidly moving in that direction. As Benjamin Franklin explained: "A [desire] to abolish slavery prevails in North America, many of the Pennsylvanians have set their slaves at liberty, and [Virginia legislators] have petitioned the King for permission to make a law for preventing the importation of more [slaves] into that colony. This request, however, will probably not be granted, as their former laws of that kind have always been repealed."

Indeed, King George III vetoed all colonial laws abolishing slavery or ending the slave trade. His actions actually caused many American political leaders to become involved in the move to separate from Great Britain. These leaders were quite open in their denunciation of slavery:

Slavery is repugnant to the principles of Christianity... It is rebellion against the authority of a common Father. It is a practical denial of the [effect] of the death of a common Savior. It is [encroaching on the authority] of the great Sovereign of the universe who has solemnly claimed an exclusive property in the souls of men. BENJAMIN RUSH, SIGNER OF THE

DECLARATION, DIRECTOR OF THE U.S. MINT

Christianity, by introducing into Europe the truest principles of humanity, universal benevolence, and brotherly love, had happily abolished civil slavery. Let us who profess the same religion practice its precepts by agreeing to [abolish slavery in America]. RICHARD HENRY LEE, SIGNER OF THE DECLARATION, FRAMER OF THE BILL OF RIGHTS

Justice and humanity require it [the end of slavery] – Christianity commands it. Let [us] pray for the glorious period when the last slave who fights for freedom shall be restored to... that right. NOAH WEBSTER, REVOLUTIONARY GENERAL, SIGNER OF THE CONSTITUTION

In 1789 President George Washington signed a law prohibiting slavery in any federal territory.

On January 31, 1865, the House invited an African American minister, the Rev. Henry Highland Garnet, to preach a sermon in the House Chambers. Rev. Garnet concluded by praising the leaders who had finally brought slavery in America to an end: "Honorable Senators and Representatives! Illustrious rulers of this great nation! I cannot refrain this day from invoking upon you, in God's name, the blessings of millions who were ready to perish but to whom a new and better life has been opened by your humanity, justice, and patriotism. You have said, "Let the Constitution of the country be so amended that slavery and involuntary servitude shall no longer exist in the United States except in punishment for crime." Surely an act so sublime could not escape Divine notice; and doubtless the deed has been recorded in the archives of Heaven.

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