

LIFE@central



October 2017

Central Baptist Church, Pretoria





PASTOR'S CORNER

by Charles de Kiewit [Senior Pastor]

LESSONS FROM HANNELIE GROENEWALD

Dear Friends

The ladies of our church arranged to have a guest speaker that caught my interest. The speaker would give her testimony after her husband and two children were unexpectedly killed by the Taliban in Afghanistan. I decided to gate crash the meeting with my wife's permission to hear what this lady would say.

Having heard her story I decided to put in writing some of the lessons she shared with the King's Rubies.

One of the early struggles she faced was that of trying to come to terms with why she was still alive. Why would God let her live and take the rest of her family? In the process of God ministering to her she concluded that it was because their work on earth was done but God still had work for her to do.

My understanding of that lesson is something Paul addresses in *Ephesians 2:10*.

Ephesians 2:10

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

This is a challenge we all need to think about. The gift of life is connected to the purpose God has for you and me. This afflicted lady decided to go forward in her life serving the purposes of God; doing so by telling people how God has helped her and spurred her on the ongoing gospel opportunities in her life.

The lesson she learned does prompt the question for the rest of us: since you and I are alive how can we live purposefully for the glory of God?

A second lesson is good council that applies to all of us as in the many offences and hurts that come our way. It is that we must forgive those who offend us rather than becoming bitter and twisted. Forgiving those who murder your family is not possible apart from the grace of God in Christ. When we experience and comprehend the greatness of his forgiveness for us, it is possible to forgive those who offend us. It is a lesson that Jesus taught in telling the parable of the unmerciful servant.

It was clear to me in her talk that she believes that God is in control and therefore sovereign over all things. Resting in the sovereign action of God brings about a peace that life is not an accumulation of random meaningless events but that *Romans 8:28* is true.

Romans 8:28

And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

One final lesson that was very obvious to me was that God heals the broken hearted and afflicted. Facing the loss of her husband and two children must have been heart breaking and debilitating. The pain must have been excruciating. And yet we were able to witness someone who had hope and purpose. I'm sure she will never forget her loved ones. There will be days and even seasons of tearfulness and heartache. I have no doubt that the scars of hurt will remain but I did see that God had healed the bleeding wounds.

I share these few thoughts with you because I know that in some way and to some extent many of you have been hurt; having to deal with deep disappointments and loss. Those may include the premature death of a spouse or child, having to run from war torn home country, being unemployed, abandoned by family, victimized at work, experience the consequences of injustice in our country during Apartheid or even in the new South Africa...

Please think about these lessons we learned from this lady that point us back to God and His kindness to us in and through our Lord Jesus Christ.

For your consideration

Charles

WHAT IS YOUR LIMIT?

- SUBMITTED BY VALERIE COTTON -

What is your limit? The bear came to prepare David to face the lion. The lion came to prepare David to face Goliath. Goliath came to prepare David to face Saul. Saul came to prepare David for the throne. God allows situations with a difficult appearance to transport us to larger places. When we reach our limits, God comes with providence. The limit of Moses was the sea ... God split it in two. The limit of Abraham was to sacrifice Isaac ... God provided a Lamb.

Hannah's limit was her sterility ... God gave her a son. The limit of Christ was death ... God raised Him up. What is your limit? May God bless your life abundantly and that what is today your limit is tomorrow the instrument by which God will show you your miracle in your life. Do not look at your problem or the difficulties you live today as a limit, but as an opportunity for the manifestation of his glory in your life.

(From The Art Of Thinking Brilliantly)

The *Life at Central* Magazine

Thank you to everyone who contributed to this edition! Any articles or contributions for the next edition can be emailed to life@central.org.za.

Download the magazine in pdf format (colour) from the Central website: <http://www.central.org.za>

Previous editions (2006 to 2016) are also available.

Articles for *Women's Value* compiled by Natasha Dercksen. Edited by Daniel Salzwedel.

CARING MINISTRY

by Lukie Dercksen [Care Pastor]



DEALING WITH GRIEF

Over the years I've walked the road of grief with many people. I've travelled that road on my own as well. It's a hard road. It's often a long road. There are many challenges. I've seen people go through the stages of grief: denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance (more or less). No one escapes the devastation caused by heart breaking loss.

The Bible is clear that we will go through these difficult times. Christians do not have a free pass when it comes to grief. Some Christians mistakenly believe that if you're a "good Christian" then you won't experience grief. That, my friends, is what we call denial and is far from the truth.

I'm sure you're aware of the many instances where we find godly men and woman grieving. Jesus wept when His dear friend Lazarus passed away. As John Piper puts it: "Jesus wept not because he lacked faith, but because he was full of love. In love, he weeps with those who weep".

People grieve in different ways and at different times. It's a grieving 'process' and is not over in a day. Don't run away from grief. Deal with it. Rather cry and don't try to forget. Let your memories and thoughts flow. If you don't bring these memories and thoughts out into the open they will fester and brew until they cause more grief and pain than was necessary. Grief does not take kindly to being ignored. Don't fall for the temptation to replace grief with something else like alcohol either.

Ultimately we have to get to acceptance. That's why good theology is of great importance and help. The Bible is the ultimate guide on how to

deal with grief. Who God is and what He is all about brings much hope to this lonely place called grief. We must let the sovereignty, faithfulness, kindness and power of God guide our lives, leading us to truth and the Truth.

Spend time with verses like:

Hebrews 13:5-8: *"Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you.' So we can confidently say, 'The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?' Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.*

or

1 Thessalonians 4:13: *"But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope."*

Google *"Bible verses grief"* and spend time reading and even memorising these verses.

Let God's Word empowered by God's Spirit comfort your soul.

Leigh Robinson authored a wonderful little book called: *"Journey with grief"* that's worth the read.

Blessings and Love

Lukie

PS: One of the greatest joys of heaven will be that there won't be any grief. Halleluiah!

Martha, Mary

and Interior Design

by Ann Onymous

The story of Jesus visiting with Mary and Martha (Luke 10 v38 – 42) has bothered me for many years. Being a 'Martha' myself, I felt it just wasn't fair that she didn't have the opportunity to sit at Jesus' feet. Not at all!!

Surely she was showing her love for Him by cooking a delicious meal, seeing that the sleeping facilities were spic and span, maybe even doing some washing....

Earlier this year Pastor Amien gave a sermon about this topic, describing her as bossy, controlling, ambitious. Ouch!!!

I was still mulling this over, when we visited old friends in their newly completed dream home. They are nearing retirement, and they just love entertaining. Feeding crowds of people and visiting until the early morning hours is something that they do in an excellent fashion.

Well, their new house was simply awesome! About 70% of the house is a huge, L-shaped entertainment area. It encompasses a lounge, dining area and open-plan kitchen. The kitchen has a big island where guests can help with the preparation of meals. Both inner sides of the 'L' open onto a deck, with even more space available during good weather. I'm sure they can easily accommodate 40 to 60 people at any given time, and the hostess

can keep an eye on everyone to see that they are comfortable. Bedroom, bathrooms and study-cum-guestroom is, although well designed and finished, definitely less important.

Admiring the planning that must have gone into this, the thoughtful details, it suddenly struck me: Martha and Mary should have had a house like this! That would have solved all their problems! Mary could have listened to Jesus whilst peeling the potatoes, Martha would not have felt excluded, and all the work would have been done much more quickly.

But what about my own feelings of being excluded, of 'having to do all the work'? Even when it is something I like to do, and do well? When can I sit quietly at His feet?

Then I realised: I must have an open-plan heart, an open-plan life! I must be able to see Jesus from every angle, able to hear His voice over the sizzling of bacon in the pan and the boiling kettle. I must be ready to introduce Him to the other visitors in my life. And when I still feel overwhelmed, I'm sure He will gladly provide help in some amazing way.

Surely, when everyone has gone home, when the last dish has been washed and put away, we will be able to sit down and have our quiet conversation. For ever and ever.



The evangelization of Africa began very early. In fact, as early as Pentecost we know that there were Egyptians and Libyans among the crowds who were gathered to listen to the apostle Peter. (Acts 2:10.) Philip, the deacon, spoke of the Word of God, and baptized an Ethiopian minister. Africans were put into positions of authority very early, due to the fact that two out of five of the doctors and prophets in the Church of Antioch were African: Lucius of Cyrene and Siméon, called Niger. These men collaborated with the apostle Paul (Acts 13:1.)

From these early days, Christianity began to spread very quickly throughout North Africa. Around the year 200, one of the most important postapostolic "Church Fathers", Tertullien of Carthage, wrote of the Païens: *We are but of yesterday, and yet we have filled all the places that belong to you — cities, islands, forts, towns, exchanges; the military camps themselves, tribes, town councils, the palace, the senate, the market-place; we have left you nothing but your temples.* He wrote this during a time when Christians were suffering under horrendous persecution.

It was during this time that one of the most notable and moving episodes of the long Christian martyrologue in North Africa took

place: in 203, Perpetua, a 22-year old girl of noble heritage, and Felicity, a young slave near the end of her pregnancy, were sentenced to death for their faith. Because it was illegal to kill a pregnant woman under Roman Law, Felicity's death was put off until she gave birth. On the 7th of March 203, the young slave saw her child one last time before she and Perpetua were thrown to the beasts in the amphitheatre.

The persecution of Christians, as ordered by the emperor of Rome, showed no sign of decreasing, and on the 14th of September 258 the bishop of Carthage himself was decapitated. But, the Church still incited admiration, leading to Tertullien coining the infamous phrase: *the blood of martyrs is the seed of the church.*

Nearly two centuries later, around the year 400, all that was left of Christianity in North Africa were 500 dioceses, 500 bishops, and 3500 churches. These numbers represented a mere 20 % of the pre-persecution Church, but included Saint Augustine, the greatest of all the Church Fathers.

However, despite the numbers, strength and science of the theologians lending their support, the North African Church was not able to resist

the double-invasion of both the Vandals and the Arabs. Today, all that remain of their former glory are rubble and ruins.

Nearly 10 centuries later, another promising attempt to evangelize Africa was made. The Portuguese, upon arriving at the coast of modern day Angola, near the mouth of the Kongo river, discovered and reported enthusiastically on a large and well-organized kingdom. It was the Kingdom of Kongo. Its capital, M'banza-Kongo, was situated in Angola, near the border of the Kongo, mid-way between Luanda and Kinshasa.

Missionaries were sent, and, in 1491 (one year before the discovery of America), the future king, who reigned from 1506 to 1543, was baptized under the name of Alfonso the 1st. In 1506, the very year in which this king ascended the throne, he sent his son to study in Lisbon. In 1513, the young boy of 18 gave a speech in Latin in front of the cardinals gathered in Rome. In 1518, at the age of 23, he was proclaimed titular bishop of Utica "in partibus infidelium." Under the rule of Alfonso the 1st, the name of the Capital was changed from M'banza-Kongo to San Salvador and six new churches, including a cathedral, were built.

In 1596, Pope Clement established the Congo-Angola diocese and, from 1599 to 1624, four Portuguese bishops followed one after another. Remarkable statistics were provided by Capuchin missionaries surrounding the numbers of baptisms: 341 000 took place over a period of 28 years, performed by 37 missionaries. Father Cherubino de Savona even claims to have baptized 700 000 Congolese between 1759 and 1774.

Yet all of this work, too, was completely erased; when modern missionaries arrived in this region in 1879, the only remainder of Christianity was the sign of the cross, which was itself practiced only within the context of fetishism!

What explanation could be offered to explain these two failures? Throughout the first

centuries of our era, the North African Church was large and supported by many great theologians. The missionary Church in the Kingdom of Kongo had a good deal of political support from the Portuguese and locally. And yet, both of these attempts to evangelize North Africa failed. Of all the reasons for these failures that one could imagine (heresies, divisions within North Africa, connivance of the slave trade throughout the time of the Portuguese, etc.) there are two things in particular to which a great importance could be attributed:

1. The Church was foreign to the people. In the first centuries, the Church came essentially from a Latin culture and language. The Roman colonials were numerous, and it was a Church without any real foundations in the local Berber culture. It would even seem as though Saint Augustine needed a translator to be understood by the indigenous population.

During the period between the 15th and 16th centuries the situation continued to deteriorate. The majority of those influenced by Christianity were those who were engaging in business with the Portuguese (i.e. in the slave trade, among other things), but the religion remained foreign to the indigenous people. And even these small traces of Christianity disappeared with the change of the economic and political conditions.

This is the first observation that can be made: if a Church does not have real roots in a society, and if it continues to be seen as something foreign, it will not survive. A Church whose language, predication, liturgy and songs are not engrained in the local culture will, inevitably, disappear. If any traces of it survive, they are only to be found intermingled with the local Païen customs and beliefs (as is the case with several countries in South America). Though religious syncretism is a threat, it must not prevent the proclamation, the living out, and the singing of the eternal evangelistic message within the bounds of what a population can understand and love.

2. The second reason for which the Christian religion failed to take any lasting hold on the

countries of North Africa was the absence of Bibles printed in the local languages. Over the course of the first centuries, the Bible was published in Latin (the infamous Vulgate), but not in local languages of North Africa, like, for example, Berber. And how could a people who did not speak Latin ever hope to read it? This also became the issue in the Kongo in later years. How could the crowd of freshly-baptized become familiar with God's Word if they could not read it for themselves?

Because of this lack of both cultural roots and Bibles, the North African Church did not survive, in spite of the brilliant speakers and great theologians at its helm. As is proved in the example of the Armenian, Copt and Syrian Churches, when a Church is in possession of these two fundamental elements, it can withstand the worst of persecutions. Indeed, the Bible was translated into these three languages during Antiquity. In Armenia (which was, in fact, the first country to officially accept Christianity, around the year 300); in Egypt (the word "Copt" meaning Egyptian), and in the area encompassing Syria, Lebanon and Iraq, the Christian religion withstood centuries of persecution.

The missionary work done in Madagascar reconfirms the vitality of these two elements that were lacking throughout the two attempts to evangelize North Africa. In 1820, British missionaries, Jones and Griffith, sailed out to the enormous island. From the moment of their arrival, they made efforts to learn the Malagasy language and to translate the Bible. In 1830, not only had Malagasy become a written language (up until that point, it had only been oral), but the entirety of the New Testament had been translated.

In 1835 a new queen - Ranavalona I - ascended to the throne. Fiercely Pagan, she threw out the missionaries and began to persecute the baptized Christians, though there were only

about 200 of them. Her palace was situated on the highest hillside in Antananarivo. She would wrap the Christians in nets and fling them from the top of the cliffs... she made martyrs of many. And yet the Christians persevered, meeting in secret in the forest to pray and read the Bible. And the Church grew, in spite of the persecution. (A movie called *The Book Which Could Not Be Burnt* was recently filmed, telling of this incredible story).

When queen Ranavalona I died in 1861, her successor allowed for the return of the missionaries. Expecting to find nothing of their previous work, the missionaries were, to their great surprise, greeted by a Church larger and livelier than ever before. From there, the progression happened at lightning speed: in 1867, the number of Christians had risen to 27 000; in 1894, shortly before the arrival of the French, there were 137 000 students distributed throughout the various primary schools, one private school and two secondary schools. They were taught in Malagasy, and of course assembled regularly to worship (the temples often served as schoolhouses throughout the week, and as places of worship on Sundays). Moreover, in 1886 a medical school opened, training doctors, dentists, nurses, and a first generation of intellectuals collaborated on edited reviews in Malagasy.

One can only wonder what might have come of Madagascar had they remained independent. The Church would undoubtedly have continued to grow and flourish. But from the very beginnings of colonization, the colonial government decreed that school could no longer be taught in places of worship (because of a need to secularize) and all teaching had to be in French. In 1937, forty years after the arrival of the colonials, there were less children in school than in 1890 ¹.

Conclusion

The history of the Church in Africa is a thought-

¹ And we dare to pretend that the missionaries benefited from the colonization! What we know for certain is that in Madagascar the missionaries and protestant church suffered a great deal from the colonization.

provoking one, especially for our protestant Churches right before the 500th anniversary of the Reformation: a Church without roots or Bibles will die, whereas a Church with both will live and flourish.

The Reformation was born from a return to scripture (*sola scripture*). What is our relation to the Bible today? Does the holy book remain a sovereign authority in matters of faith and life? I am a member of the Council of Administration of the Museum of Protestantism Dauphinois in Poët-Laval in France. One of our guides told me the following story: he was explaining the story of the Huguenots and of their love for the Bible to a family who were visiting the museum. At the end of the tour, the little daughter, a young girl of around 10 or 12 years old, asked him: What's a Bible? What's a Christian?

This is perhaps an extreme example... But in our churches, products of the Reformation, is the Bible still read? Are its words still lived out?

Are not the words of Isaiah 8:20 more applicable than ever:

To the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to his word, it is because there is no light in them.

The history of the Church in Africa allows us to

pose a second question:

Can a Church without roots within the population survive?

Once again, the Reformation forces us to question ourselves. It was a movement which not only reached the great intellectuals, but made its way right down to the general population. One need only think of the little peasants from Cevennes who resisted the troops of the Sun King.

We must relearn how to spread the Word of God, to do so in a way which will speak to the people, and to do so from a place of faith and love which encompasses all aspects of society.

This is a great challenge, but an exciting one.

I was struck by these words, written at the entrance of a Methodist church in Pretoria:

***Without vision the people perish
(Prov.29:18).***

Without passion the vision dies.

***In every area of our lives, let us have both
vision and passion!***

You can beat the enemy by being patient. You can depress him with your joy. You can weary him with your rest, and your kindness, and your gentleness. You can totally dispirit him with the goodness of God because he has no access to any of that, and he doesn't know how to fight it. He can't fight against God; he is hopeless. The Holy Spirit never lost a fight yet!

(From The Art Of Thinking Brilliantly)



All-In-One Dog
Training and
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072 501 6783
Colleen Skinner

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS MINISTRY

by Lota Mollel

At the beginning of the year, the Internationals Ministry Committee set out to launch a ministry that would cater to the needs of international students. This is because there are a number of international students that fellowship at Central



who are often in need of support due to being in an unfamiliar country and away from their families. With

that in mind, we began planning for this ministry. On 13 March 2017, the committee launched the international students ministry with a luncheon and a celebration of the nations.

To contextualize the need for this ministry, the luncheon incorporated a formal segment. This formal segment consisted of a presentation of the aims of the international student ministry and opportunities for church members to be involved in this ministry. From there a skit was presented illustrating the challenges that international students would experience upon arriving to South Africa (being misunderstood, ostracized and adjusting to new and different cultures). The skit shed light onto the realities



that some international students face and was a call for us as a church to respond to this. Finally Johnny Mulossa and Elsie Zondo shared their testimonies on interacting with international students. Johnny spoke from the perspective of an international student interacting with South Africans and Elsie spoke

from the perspective of a South African interacting with international students. Both testimonies were encouraging and highlighted the challenges (both positive and negative) that cross-cultural friendships endure.



The ministry has gained momentum since the luncheon as a Bible study was established and regular meetings have occurred. We have met twice so far. The first Bible study was an introduction to the rest of the Bible study - time was spent in fellowship and discussions were held on which topics to be tackled in future Bible studies. The second meeting was a social during which we watched a movie – God's Not Dead - and a small presentation was held.



As we move forward, our hope is that we would continue to minister to international students, that international students would find a home at Central Baptist Church and that these students would leave South Africa equipped to share the gospel and their lives back in their home country.

YOUTH @ The Hill



Come join us for loads and loads of fun on a Friday evening from 18:00 at the Hill Campus. There is a place for everyone. From the youngest (Small Fry) to the older (Blast Off) to the teens (Life) and there is even time for fellowship for the adults (Adult Ablaze).



By Natasha Dercksen



I BELIEVE IN CREATION

by Valerie Cotton

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” - Genesis 1:1

The Scripture states: “Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have” – 1 Peter 3:15

I believe in God. For most of this century, militant atheism has spread like a deadly fungus across our world to the point that the twentieth century has been called the century of atheism. But things are changing. An increasing number of intellectuals are saying that the twenty first century is probably going to be a century of spirituality; the pillars of secularism, atheism and materialism are crumbling. Modern sophisticates believed that science has disproved God. But the author James Reid in his book “God, the atom and the universe”, states: “Science is preparing a surprise for mankind”. Also for those who have doubts about the Bible and its God, and believe that science has undermined the Bible. Some scientists may even be shocked to find that the facts of the universe support the Bible’s statements – including creation. For years as a man of science, James Reid, under the old classic physics, discovered support for this in the Bible. But the new disciplines of quantum physics, has transformed the scientific world and is now discovering that true science supports the statements of Scripture.

There is no branch of science that looks at a larger portion of God’s handiwork than do astronomers. The Scripture says: “The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of His hands” – Psalm 19:1, and “For the

invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen” – Romans 1:20. Most astronomers today believe in God. Those who have looked to the furthest extent that mans has been able to see in the universe have concluded that the hand that made it is Divine. Astronomer Dr Robert Jastrow, founder and director of the Goddard Institute for Space Studies at NASA, in his book *God and the Astronomers*, says developments in astronomy is the discovery that the universe had a beginning. And that means that there had to be a “Beginner”. In a book written by numerous Nobel prize winners called “*Cosmos, Bios and Theos*” (Universe, Life and God) concludes that “there is only one convincing answer” for the intricate laws that exist in nature. Not evolution, but the “creation by an omnipotent-omniscient God”. One author said that nature is a great architect, meaning that nature is God. It is also a great astronomer, a great chemist, a great physiologist and great mathematician.



Consider the mass and size of this planet. It is just right. If the earth were either 10 percent larger or 10 percent small, life would not be possible on this planet. It is just the right

distance away from the sun so that we receive the right amount of heat and light. If it were further away, we would freeze, if closer we would not be able to survive.

Consider the amazing fact of the tilt of the axis of the earth. None of the other planets is tilted as ours is - 23 degrees. This angle provides that the earth is slowly turned in all parts of its surface before the rays of the sun. If it were no tilt to the axis, the poles would accumulate enormous masses of ice, and the centre part of the earth would become intensely hot.

Another amazing aspect in the solar system is our moon. Without the moon it would be impossible to live on this planet. God has provided our moon to clean up the oceans and the shores of all our continents. Without the tides created by the moon, all harbours and shores would become a stench pool of garbage and impossible to live near them. The tides aerate the oceans and provide oxygen for plankton which is the foundation of the food chain of our world. Without the plankton there would not be oxygen and man would not be able to live on this earth. God has made the moon the right size and placed it the right distance from the earth to perform these and other functions.

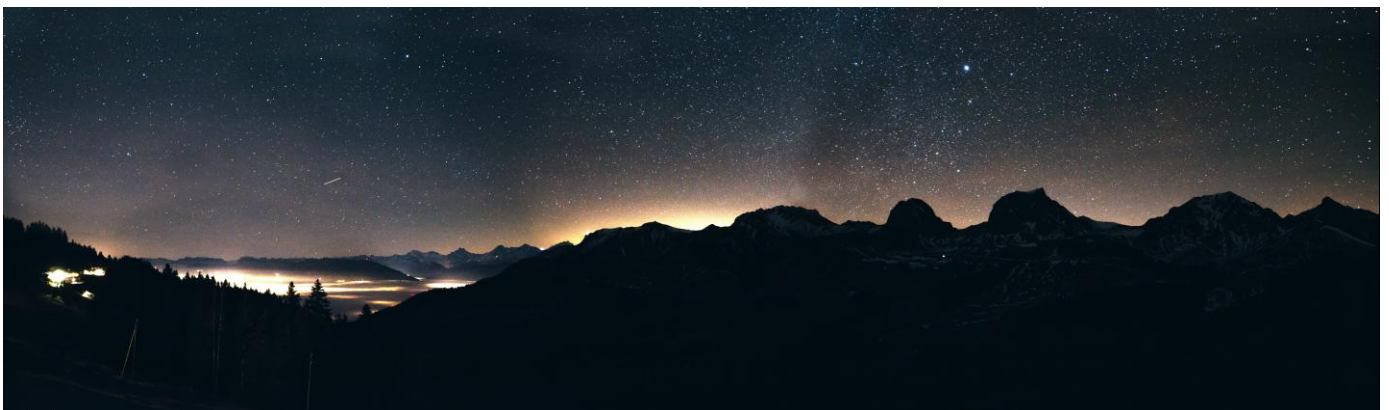
Our atmosphere – we live under a great ocean of air – 78 percent of nitrogen, 21 percent oxygen and 1 percent of almost a dozen different trace elements. These elements are mixed mechanically by the tidal effect of the moon upon the atmosphere. If the atmosphere were not as thick as it is, we would be crushed by billions of pieces of cosmic debris and meteorites that fall continuously upon our

planet.

There is the nitrogen cycle. Nitrogen is extremely inert – if not we would be poisoned by different forms of nitrous combinations. Because it is inert it is impossible to combine naturally with other things. God provides nitrogen out of the air into the soil by lightning, needed for plants. One hundred thousand lightning bolts strike this planet daily, creating a hundred million tons of usable nitrogen plant food in the soil every year.

Forty miles up there is a thin layer of ozone. If compressed it would be only a quarter inch thick, but without it life could not exist. Killer rays fall upon the earth from the sun. Without ozone we would be burned, blinded and broiled. Ultra violet rays come in two forms: longer rays which are deadly and screened out, and shorter rays which are necessary for life and are admitted by the ozone layer. The most deadly rays are allowed in a very thin amount to kill green algae, which would otherwise grow to fill lakes, rivers and oceans. We little realise what God is providing for our lives. The tiny ozone layer protects us. Beneath us is a thin rock crust, beneath that is molten lava. So we live between the burning blackening rays above and the molten lava below, either of which can burn us to a crisp. Yet we are totally oblivious that God has arranged things that we can exist.

The wonder of water found nowhere else in the universe in any abundance. Water dissolves almost everything on earth except those that are life-sustaining. It exists as ice, breaks up rocks and produces soil. As snow it stores up water in the valleys, as rain it waters and



cleanses the earth. As vapour it provides moisture. It exists as cloud cover in just the right amount. As steam it runs machinery. Other than Bismuth it is the only liquid that is heavier at 4 degrees Celsius than it is at freezing. When it is frozen it is lighter and rises, otherwise lakes and rivers would freeze from the bottom up and kill all fish. Algae would be destroyed, our oxygen supply would cease and mankind would die.



If it were not for dust we would never see a blue sky. If it were not for dust it would never rain. One drop of rain is made of eight million droplets of water and each is wrapped around a particle of dust. Without this the world would become parched and life would cease to exist.

There are many things that tell us we have been made by God. Our life is based upon the blood that flows in our veins. The red blood cell, created in the bone marrow gives up its nucleus when it reaches the bloodstream. For any other cell this would mean death. A red blood cell is formed like a doughnut with a thin membrane across the hole. Without a nucleus it is able to carry more oxygen for the body because of this membrane and the shape of the cell. If it were shaped like other cells, it would require nine times as many cells to provide oxygen for the human body.

The human eye. How could anybody look at the human eye and suppose that it just happened. Evolutionists tell us that where there is want, nature would provide what is needed. Imagine creating two eyes on a horizontal plane so that we cannot only see but also have a range finder

that determines distances.

What happens to your tears that continually flow across your eyes. In order to keep the eye moist and clean a wash is constantly supplied by a secretion. The superfluous brine is conveyed to the nose through a small perforation in the bone. When the fluid enters the nose, it spreads itself on the inside of the nostril and is evaporated by the warm air which in the course of breathing continually passes over it. The eye wants moisture but could the eye generate the gland which produces the tear or bore the hole through bone? Let the atheist or the evolutionist tell us who bored the hole in the bone and laid a water pipe through it for our tears.

Behind the intricate mechanism of the human eye lie breathtaking glimpses of a Master Plan. In the dark the human eye increases its ability to see one hundred thousand times. The human eye does it automatically and will find the object it wants to see. Both eyes moving together must take different angles to fix on it to see it.

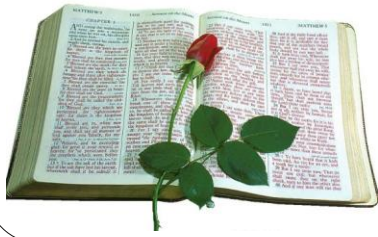
Last, we look at the incredible mind of man. Weighing about 1,500 grams, it can perform what 500 tons of electrical and electronic equipment cannot do. Containing 10 to 15 billion neurons, each a living unit in itself, performs feats that boggle the mind. Dr. H.M. Morris said: "Therefore, men who reject or ignore God do so, not because science or reason requires them to, but purely and simply because they want to".

Examining creation will bring us closer to the Creator. That is what the earliest founders of science believed. In the first chapter of Genesis, the Hebrew term "bara" indicting the direct creation of God, is used three times. First, for the creation of matter – the material cosmos. Second, it is used for the creation of life and third, for the creation of man. I believe in creation.

Research in and reference from "Why I Believe" by D. James Kennedy.

HOLIDAY CLUB





WOMEN'S VALUE

Compiled by Natasha Dercksen

Good, better, best

by Carol de Kiewit

"The Lord answered her, 'Martha, Martha, you are worried and upset about many things, but one thing is necessary. Mary has made the right choice, and it will not be taken away from her'"

Martha's story is not about good and bad, but rather about good, better, best.

Martha was a good woman her intentions were good and Jesus loved her very much, apron and all. But instead of being satisfied and keeping the main thing the main thing, she sacrificed her joy and satisfaction on the altar of self-appointed service. Nobody told her to scurry around preparing or to stay in the kitchen while everybody else was sitting listening to the Lord. It was her choice.

1. Martha was hospitable, she opened her home to Jesus (Luke 10:38)

Martha was the one who invited Jesus in to be a guest in their home. If she hadn't have done the inviting Jesus wouldn't have been there for Lazarus to recline with, or for Mary to sit at His feet. It was Martha's hospitality that brought Him there.



Martha however needed to understand that it was more than just her home that needed to be opened to Jesus, she needed to open her heart to Him as well. Jesus wanted more than just her home.

2. Martha's distraction prevented her from listening to Jesus (vrs 39-40)



She didn't put her hands over her ears because she didn't want to listen to Jesus. She didn't refuse to listen to Jesus and go to the back end of the house. I'm sure in her heart she really wanted to sit at His feet

and listen too. Her problem was, that she was simply distracted by what she thought was more important.

How many times do you sit in church or in Bible Study or family devotions and you are distracted? Can you relate to that?

3. Sometimes ministry can be the biggest distraction in our pursuit of true intimacy with God (vr 40)

Have you heard the saying "If Satan can't make us bad, he'll make us busy"? We all know Satan can't actually make us do anything, but we can certainly assist him by keeping ourselves busy. Here is a servant who is so busy serving, she



couldn't hear from the heart of God. Ministry is a good thing, serving is a good thing. The church encourages people to get involved in various ministries. At Central we have plenty of opportunities

with almost any kind of service for any kind of person. We want body ministry but not at the expense of their intimacy with God.

4. *Martha didn't know when to stop (vr 40)*



The preparation Martha was doing was important. Her desire was to make the Lord and her guests comfortable, to make things nice for them. She was being a good hostess.

She probably wanted to give her Lord the best. The problem was she just didn't know when to stop. The issue is that she continued with her duties when the time came to sit at Christ's feet and listen.

There comes a time when we need to stop what we are doing so that we can sit at the feet of our Lord. We need to pace ourselves.

If it means going to bed earlier so you can get up earlier to enjoy time with the Lord, do that. If you prefer to have your devotions in the evening, you need to be disciplined, stop what you doing, leave it for tomorrow and go to your place of devotion.

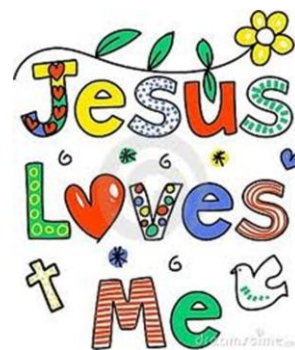
Know when to stop, Martha struggled with this. Do you?

5. *When you are distracted with things you can so easily miss how much Jesus cares (vr 40)*

If someone had asked Mary at the end of the day if "Christ cared about her" she would have answered with a definite "yes" without hesitation. But Martha came to Christ and asked,

"Don't you care?". Don't lose out of experiencing the love of God because of your business.

Christ's love for us never changes. However, we sometimes don't sense His closeness. This is not because He has stopped loving us, or He has moved away to somebody who is giving Him more time. He doesn't love anybody more because they are more holy. But, it is rather that we have made other things our priority and we haven't had that awareness of the importance of being in His presence. It's us that have distanced ourselves from Him.



Not one of us is beyond sliding in our relationship with God. Don't neglect to give Christ the opportunity to lavish you with the Love He always feels for you. Keep close to Him.

6. *Many things are good but not necessarily the best (vr 42)*

Isn't it true that every day we fight for right priorities? "What should our priorities be for today"? Do you ever have so much to do that you wonder what to do first?

Ultimately our relationship with Christ is the one thing we cannot do without. His message is that many things are important, but one thing is essential – **HIM**. Time with Him is ultimately the very, very best.

Will your choice be good, better or the best?





WOMEN'S VALUE

King's Rubies

The *Kings Rubie's* ladies were yet again spoilt these past few months at our meetings.

During our *King's Rubies* meeting held on 17 June the *Amato Pregnancy Counseling Centre* shared with us how devastating the option of abortion is to young moms. Moms who had abortions often say that no one told them how their lives would change after abortion. The *Amato Pregnancy Counseling Centre* lends a helping hand to these moms.

During our "Spud-Tacular" meeting Carol de Kiewit shared with us how our lives should be organised around God's love and glory. We were urged to take care of each other and to take interest in each other. We had some fun – decoration "spuds"!



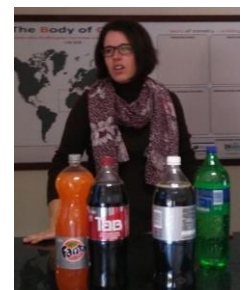


WOMEN'S VALUE

During our meeting held on 19 August, Hannelie Groenewald shared with us how to respond when life gives you lemons. We were encouraged by her words and challenged to forgive the people who did us wrong. She reminded us that life is a battle and that you don't have a choice to be part of the battle or not. You are part of the battle, but you have a choice on which side of the battle you want to be - God's side or the devil's side. We all need to count the cost for Christ and ask ourselves what we believe about God? God heals, God is our provider and God is our judge, so there is no need to take revenge. Most of all we need to remember that life is not about ME, but it is about God and His Kingdom and in the process, He will bless His children.



We are sad to say farewell to Aven Meiring, who has played such an incredible role in our lives. She always smiles and with her soft and gentle personality showered us with her love. Aven and AJ will become our missionaries in Japan soon.



*Behind the scenes!
Here are some photos
of ladies who work
behind the scenes -
serving others.*



HAPPENINGS @ CENTRAL

BIRTHS



Abigail Kemp, May 2017

Harvey Noah Frische, August 2017

DEDICATIONS



Stephan Kotze



Jacques Kaseke



Finn Salzwedel

WEDDING



Dale and Heather Smart

ENGAGEMENT



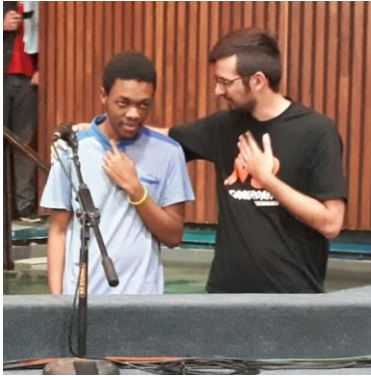
Anele Gabela and Siyanda Yaka

40TH



Phil Harrauld's 40th birthday





Welcome Ndzhukula



George Gomolemo Kekana



Farida Mohamed



Larry Aphane

BAPTISMS

OUTREACH TO MUSLIMS SEMINAR



WELCOME TO



Jabu Myburg



Jannie, Baby and Starlight Laas

MOTHER'S DAY SERVICE - GLENHAVEN



OPENING OF THE HIDDEN TREASURE CHARITY STORE



CHILDRENS CHOIR



NEW MEMBERS TEA



FAREWELL TO AJ & AVEN



THE GLENHAVEN FETE



2017



PHOTO'S BY NATASHA DERCKSEN

Bethesda Outreach Newsletter



Raised to Praise

Bethesda Outreach

July/August 2017

*This is pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father,
to visit orphans and widows in their distress..." James 1:27*

- Van Jaarsveld's Anniversary 6 September
- Florah's birthday 12 September
- Malapile's Anniversary 21 September
- Mutinta's birthday 22 September



- Weekly Bible studies for the men and ladies
- Weekly Bible studies for the teen guys and girls
- Pray for the Child of the Month

Johannah's Ministry Tour



Johannah Ngwenya, one of our Bethesda children – now an adult Grade R (kindergarten) teacher, had the opportunity to travel to the USA with Tonya Small, and Heather Rumley. During their four week mid-year break,

they did a whirlwind tour to connect with churches and individuals that have been praying for Johannah, Bethesda and many of our children for a very long time. In the weeks they were in the USA, Johannah was able to share her testimony to many people in many locations. She told how God had saved and kept her and her siblings safe when they were in a very desperate situation. Through the ministry of Bethesda and the diligent prayers and teaching from her houseparents, Johannah was able to hear and understand the gospel and eventually, God called her to be one of His children.



Johannah's testimony of God's grace, provision, and protection in her life is available to view

and we are happy to provide the link if you did not see it on our Facebook page or in the separate email that went out on 15 August. What an encouragement for anyone who is involved in parenting, orphan or foster care to know that God is actively working and transforming hearts and lives.

Keep praying for Bethesda's parents and staff as we continue to work hard to teach, challenge, discipline and love the children that God has given to us. We are not just looking for "success stories," but are looking to eternally impact the lives of each child who comes to Bethesda. Pray especially for the children that they will grasp the good news of the Gospel and learn how to follow their Heavenly Father.



"These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up...

~Deuteronomy 6:6-7

For more information on Bethesda, visit www.bethesdaoutreach.org

Bethesda Outreach Newsletter

Fun Run & Family Day

"Rain, rain go away...Come again another day!" Most of us have heard this familiar phrase but we didn't expect to use it this past May (since it NEVER rains in May!). This year, however, our Fun Run was graced with rain and thunderstorms so it was very wet and stormy. The 10K and the 5K went as planned although the 10K runners were very soggy when they crossed the finish line. Most of the games were able to go on except for when we had to shut down the carnival rides early due to lightening in the area. There was still a pretty good turnout of people who braved the weather, played the games, ate the food, and enjoyed the rides. The team from Lee University worked for days getting all the signs painted and equipment ready for the event and they did a superb job! All in all, the Fun Run went as well as it could and we are very grateful for the many people who helped and who came out for a day of family fun.



Orphan Care Seminar 2017

On Saturday, May 20th, Bethesda Outreach hosted an Orphan Care Seminar at Central Baptist Church in Pretoria. We had seven excellent speakers that biblically and passionately shared about adoption, foster care, local church engagement, and other supportive ministries in caring for the fatherless. We have received exceptional feedback from all the speakers, the six orphan care ministries represented, and from many of the 100 or so participants who came from a number of different churches in Pretoria and Johannesburg. For many, connecting and networking with others who are also interested in beginning or continuing in orphan care was one of the biggest sources of encouragement.



A huge thanks goes out to the many volunteers and those who were praying for the seminar. We are looking



forward to how God will continue to use the time we had together to impact even more orphaned and vulnerable children with the Gospel in South Africa.



JCA Playground...halfway to our goal of \$11,500!

Thank You!

Bethesda's school, Jabulane Christian Academy (JCA) has grown in the last years to where we have two Grade R classes (Kindergarten) and in 2018, we will have two Grade 1 classes as well. We have been raising money to put in a dedicated playground for the little children where they won't be so overwhelmed by the older and bigger children. The way a 13 year old plays is very different to a 6-7 year old! The playground equipment is also designed to help improve those developing motor skills such as balance, coordination, agility, climbing, and visual perception. This need for better development has become more pronounced with the large increase in the number of students at our school this year.



We have been able to order a portion of the equipment needed and will begin working on digging out the area where this will be installed. We are about halfway to our goal so if you are looking for a worthy project to give towards, please consider the JCA playground. You can go to our website and follow links to the giving page.

www.BethesdaOutreach.org

For more information on joining our Bethesda mailing list, visit www.bethesdaoutreach.org

ANDY THE ANT



The "Andy the Ant" series of children's stories, written by Max Ansell, follows the adventures and experiences of Andy and his friends at a Mission school in Swaziland.

RUPERT, THE ROACH

"Light has come into the world, but men love darkness rather than light, because they do evil things."

John 3:19,20

"Who is that crawling around in the dark under the sink?" asked Andy as he and Archie heard a rustling sound behind a pipe.

"I don't know," Archie replied. "But let's go and see."

The two ants crawled down the side of the sink until they came face to face with a funny little brown insect creeping along in the darkness.

"Hullo," said Andy in a friendly way.

"Who are you?"

The little insect turned as if to run away

"Don't run!" said Archie kindly, "We won't hurt you."

"I'm Rupert the cockroach" said the insect when he realised that they were just ants. "I live in the crack over there."

"Oh! You live here?" queried Andy with surprise. "It's funny that we haven't seen you before."

"Well, it's because I don't come out in the day if I can help it" explained Rupert, "I only come out in the dark. I don't like the light."

"You don't like the light!" exclaimed Andy. "My, but that is unusual. I've heard the Missionary talk about boys and girls who don't like the dark and are frightened of it because they forget that the Lord Jesus is always with them and He makes the darkness a friendly-darkness. I've never met anyone who is afraid of the light or doesn't like the light."

"Why don't you like the light, Rupert?" put in Archie, who had been waiting impatiently for Andy to finish.



"Because in the light I can be seen and I don't like to be seen" came Rupert's reply.

"Don't like to be seen?" asked Andy in amazement, "Why? Why?"

Rupert shrugged his shoulders, "Well, to be honest, it's what I do that makes me so. I steal children's food, especially if it gets away in a nice dark cupboard for the night or if someone leaves it on the table and then turns out the light."

"And you do this stealing in the dark?" asked Andy.

"Yes, if the light gets put on I run to the dark and hide. The light shows what I am doing, stealing, and that I am a thief. In the light I can get caught but in the dark I can hide away and you won't find me." Rupert admitted.

"Rupert, don't you think it is wrong to steal?" Andy asked quietly. "Either in the light or in the dark?"

"Yes, I suppose so," Rupert admitted again, "but I say that it doesn't matter as long as you don't get caught, that's the big thing. That's why I do it in the dark, so that I won't get caught."

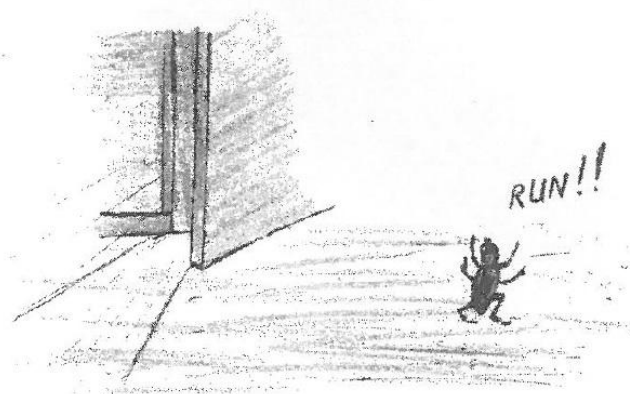
"Rupert, I think that you are very wicked!" said Andy becoming angry. "Not only do you steal but you are not even sorry when you do. All you worry

about is not getting caught. Let me tell you, stealing is wrong, whether you get caught or not. Now I remember, the Missionary spoke about people like you the other day. Do you want to know what he said?"

"Not particularly," said Rupert grumpily, "but you will tell me anyway, I suppose."

"Yes. I will tell you anyway." Andy went on. "He said that there are people who suffer from photo er – photophobia, genuine fear of the light. He also said that there were people who suffer from spiritual photophobia. They are scared of God's light. Jesus said about them, that Light has come into the world, but men love darkness rather than light, because they do evil things. For, everyone that does evil, hates the Light and does not come to the Light, in case their evil deeds are exposed."

Andy wanted to go on to tell Rupert how the Missionary had said that Jesus is the Light of the World and that by coming to Him our evil deeds can all be forgiven. But somebody turned on the kitchen light and when the ants looked again, Rupert was gone!



I KNOW NOT WHY GOD'S WONDROUS GRACE

I know not why God's wondrous grace
To me He hath made known,
Nor why, unworthy, Christ in love
Redeemed me for His own.

Refrain:

But "I know Whom I have believed
And am persuaded that He is able
To keep that which I've committed
Unto Him against that day."

I know not how this saving faith
To me He did impart,
Nor how believing in His Word
Wrought peace within my heart.

I know not how the Spirit moves,
Convincing men of sin,
Revealing Jesus through the Word,
Creating faith in Him.

I know not what of good or ill
May be reserved for me,
Of weary ways or golden days,
Before His face I see.

I know not when my Lord may come,
At night or noonday fair,
Nor if I walk the vale with Him,
Or meet Him in the air.

Word by Daniel Webster Whittle (published in 1883)