



The end of another year is approaching. It certainly isn't by chance that we spend the final months of the year in thanksgiving. As we prepare for the new year, we think of the many gifts we receive, ranging from the small ones to the greatest gift of all, our Lord Jesus Christ. As always, we will be entering the new year with many resolutions.

It is very important how we approach all that we encounter throughout the year. Focused on ourselves, we view our



environment and its current events through a distorting lens. In other words, we view the world through ourselves. This view is limited and is certainly influenced by our values. It is naturally affected by our feelings and moods; it reflects our current internal state. We show our gratitude to God in a rather reserved manner, in relation to the state of our being. If all is well, we speak of

being grateful to God. If things do not go according to our own plans, our thoughts of gratitude retreat and with some bitterness we begin to analyze our situation. In such a case we are not capable of being attentive and sensitive to God's presence, no matter what the situation may be. A completely different situation arises if the center of our attention is Jesus. With the knowledge of God's mercy revealed in the coming of Jesus to this world and His sacrifice on the cross, we are grateful even for the seemingly insignificant things in our lives and in the lives of others. In a sense, seemingly insignificant things make up our entire lives.

Let's not allow for God's gifts to become commonplace for us. Let's not allow for the arrival of God's Son to this earth to be only a matter of Christmas. Let's look at events around us through the eyes of Him through whom God's love has been revealed to us. Let's be sensitive to the needs of others, and grateful. This is where God's blessings lie. May our lives radiate with gratitude during the entire upcoming year.

We wish you a blessed and peaceful Christmas!

Editor-in-Chief *Natasha Legierski*



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Oakville, ON, L6H 2Z2, Canada

Editor-in-Chief: Natasha Legierski

email: natasha.legierski@primus.ca

Electronic Publishing and Art: Vit Malek

email: malek@ican.net

Assistant Editors: Janice Cermak, Ján Banko

Editorial Staff: George Sommer, George Legierski,

Joseph Novak

You may send articles to above address

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Přiblížil se závěr dalšího roku. Jistě to není náhoda, že poslední měsíce v roce prožíváme v díkůvzdání. Podzimem počínaje a vánocemi vrcholíce, uvědomujeme si čím jsme obdarováni. Od vnímání těch nejmenších darů, přes dary větší až po dar největší—Pána Ježíše Krista—chystáme se ke vstupu do nového roku. A opět s mnohými novými předsevzetími.

Je velmi důležité, jaký je náš osobní přístup ke všemu tomu, co v průběhu roku přijímáme a co nás obklopuje. Je-li náš pohled zaměřený do svého vlastního centra, je podstatně, na své okolí a dění v něm, zkreslený. Jinými slovy, díváme se na svět skrze své vlastní já. Tento pohled je do určité míry omezený a rozhodně ovlivněný žebříčkem námi vytvořených hodnot. Pochopitelně podléhá našim pocitům a náladám, odráží se v něm naše momentální vnitřní rozpoložení. Vděčnost Pánu Bohu projevujeme

☞ Pokračování na straně 130

Front and back cover: drawings by Rachel Novak

Convention Photos: George Sommer and Vlastimil Pojman



Vianoce

Anna Dudok

Nachádzame sa v predvianočnej dobe. Ale čo vlastne pre nás znamenajú Vianoce?

Je to udalosť, ktorá sa stala pred 2000 rokmi, kedy si pripomínáme, že sa Pán Ježiš narodil v maštali, v jasličkách a tak sa pripájame k ostatným ľuďom v oslavovaní tejto historickej udalosti. Alebo je to skutočnosť, ktorú sme zažili vo svojom srdci, že sa Pán Ježiš narodil nielen v Betlehemskej maštali, ale že sa narodil aj v našom srdci. Aj v týchto dňoch, keď sme zaujatí vianočnými pripravami, zamyslíme sa, čo tieto Vianoce znamenajú pre nás.

Pán Boh v osobe Pána Ježiša osobne zostúpil z výšin nebies v podobe človeka pred 2000 rokmi. Ale čo je ešte dôležitejšie, Pán Ježiš znovu príde na túto zem, a to sú tie druhé Vianoce ktoré očakávame.

Keď sa Ježiš narodil v Judskom Betleheme, traja mudrci od východu prišli do Jeruzalema a hovorili: „Kde je ten narodený kráľ židovský? Lebo sme videli jeho hviezdu na východe slnca a prišli sme sa mu pokloniť... A keď vypočuli kráľa Herodesa, mudrci odišli. A hľa, hviezda, ktorú videli na východe slnca, išla pred nimi, až prišla a zastala nad miestom, kde bolo dieťaťko. A zazrúc hviezdu preveľmi sa zaradovali.”

Pri druhom príchode Pána Ježiša Ján píše: „A videl som, keď otvoril šiestu pečat', a hľa, povstalo veľké zemetrasenie, a slnce sčernalo ako srsténé vrece, a mesiac bol celý ako krv, a nebeské hviezdy padali na zem...”

Keď sa Pán Ježiš narodil v Betleheme, zjavili sa anjeli na oblohe a zvestovali radostnú zvesť pastierom, zvesť že prišiel čakaný Mesiáš. Anjeli sa zjavia na

oblohe i pri druhom príchode Pána Ježiša. Ján píše: „A videl som sedem anjelov, ktorí stoja pred Bohom, a dalo sa im sedem trúb... a pripravili sa, aby trúbili.”

Prvý príchod Pána Ježiša na túto zem bol tichý. Narodil sa v maštali; iba Maria a Jozef boli tam prítomní. Ostatní ľudia ani nespávali o tom, čo sa stalo.

Druhý príchod bude celkom iný. Pán Ježiš príde ako Kráľ kráľov a Pán pánov, zničí svojím mečom všetkých kráľov a vladárov tohoto sveta a on jediný bude kraľovať na veky vekov. Pavel píše: „Ako že ja žijem, tak isté je, hovorí Pán, že mne sa skloní každé koleno, a každý jazyk bude sláviť Boha.”

Pri prvom príchode Pán Ježiš prišiel ako obetný baránok, aby zachránil ľudí od hriechu: „Hľa, Baránok Boží, ktorý snima hriech sveta!”

Pri druhom príchode príde ako lev z pokolenia Júdovho, aby si pobral k sebe tých, ktorí mu verne slúžili.

Vianoce. Slávime Vianoce. Spomíname si na udalosti, ktoré sa stali pri prvom príchode. Nachádzame sa v období medzi prvými a druhými Vianocami. Postavme si otázku, čo si Pán Boh od nás žiada i v týchto dňoch? Sme si istí tým, že sa Pán Ježiš narodil nielen v Betleheme, ale že sa narodil i v našich srdciach?

Keď sa pripravujeme k oslavovaniu jeho prvého narodenia, nezabudnime, že práve teraz ten zasľúbený Mesiáš sedí po pravici svojho Otca, vôkol neho stojí celé vojsko nebeské a chvália ho dňom i nocou. A preto si postavme otázku, čo Pán Ježiš čaká od nás i v tejto vianočnej dobe. Aký dar mu priniesieme, čo mám pre Pána ja? □

Where Can I Find Christmas

By
Judy Prater

*Where can I find Christmas?
Someone asked me today...
Well, Christmas is that special feeling...
That we share from day to day...
Christmas isn't on a map...
And it's not just once a year...
Christmas is how we look on life...
And how we spread our cheer...
Christmas is that feeling...
You carry in your heart...
Telling others about Jesus...
And how His love will never part...
When we give our gifts to others...
It's not ones that come from a store...
It's peace and love and joy and faith...
And hope forevermore...*

Jesus Christ, Companion Within

Dr. Andrew Kmetko

Colossians 1:27; 24–29

Colossians is one of the greatest books in the New Testament, and verse 27 of the first chapter is one of the greatest statements in the book. As the Life Application Bible suggests, its purpose was to combat errors in the church and to show that the believers have everything they need in Christ.

This reminds me of one of the verses we considered last year in 2 Peter 1:4: “His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness.” The Christian is not a pauper begging handouts; he has been assured by God that all of his needs will be met.

There are several phrases that call for our attention in Colossians 1:27, such as “make known,” the “riches of the glory,” the “mystery,” “Christ in you,” and “the hope of glory.” These are all fascinating terms that are recorded for our blessing. I wish to take these phrases to see how beneficial they are to our Christian faith. I believe every word of the Bible is important. “All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness” (2 Tim.3:16). The Bible not only tells us how to be saved but also tells us how to live the Christian life. In Hebrews 10:35 we are encouraged to be confident, which in the Greek means bold, courageous, fearless, and free. It means to speak plainly, boldly, and confidently. When in Iconium in the synagogue, Paul spoke “boldly, with reliance on the Lord.” This was also true of Peter and John when in Acts 4:13 it is said that the people observed their confidence and understood that these two men were uneducated and untrained. The people marveled, and recognized them as having been with Jesus. Do people recognize that you have been with Jesus? That you spend time with the Lord? That you are a regular churchgoer? That you read and study your Bible regularly? Let me ask you, have you been with Jesus in an intimate way today? I hope that



this sermon will somehow create within you an intimacy with Jesus so that your friends will recognize that you have been with him. Remember that faith, hope and love are not just concepts preached or taught from the Bible but should be nurtured as

life’s everyday building blocks.

First of all, this letter was written to believers. The Colossians were the ones being addressed. It really doesn’t matter how old we are or how long we’ve been believers. We are always in need of hearing and studying the Word of God. I think the church’s greatest need today is a knowledge of the Word. Our text says “to whom God willed to make known.” It is God’s will that believers know the Word. What does it say, what does it mean? The priests in Old Testament times were supposed to instruct the people, but the people failed to listen or to obey. “ ‘For the lips of a priest ought to preserve knowledge, and from his mouth men should seek instruction—because he is the messenger of the Lord Almighty. But you have turned from the way and by your teaching have caused many to stumble; you have violated the covenant with Levi,’ says the Lord Almighty” (Mal. 2:7–8).

The most important job the pastor has is to preach and teach the Word. Priests in the Old Testament were responsible for teaching the law. They were to teach all the decrees the Lord had given them through Moses. The purpose of God’s law was to teach people how to distinguish right from wrong, the holy from the common. The person who lives by God’s Word would obviously be set apart from the world. That is why being a leader in the church is such an awesome responsibility. If the Lord were not in it, it would be a fearful liability. Leading God’s people is a privilege and a responsibility. The believer is responsible for the purity of his actions, the quality of his example, and the truth of his words. When in doubt, do what the Lord told the prophet Haggai to do: “Ask

the priest
 what the law says.” At
 one point in the history of
 Israel, the prophet Hosea said, “My
 people are destroyed from the lack of
 knowledge.” That is why I feel that 2
 Timothy 3:16–17 is so important: “All scripture
 is God-breathed and is useful for teaching,
 rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness,
 so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped
 for every good work.” It is a knowledge of the Word
 of God that equips us to know and to do the will of
 God, “knowledge of the truth that leads to godliness”
 (Titus 1:1). A knowledge of His word leads us to “glorious
 riches.” It makes us aware of what we have in Christ. In
 Ephesians 1:8, Paul puts it very plainly and wants us to know
 how great his riches are. This is how it reads in the New
 Testament translation known as the “message.” Because of
 the sacrifice of the Messiah, His blood poured out on the
 altar of the Cross. We are free people, free
 of penalties and punishment chalked up
 by all our misdeeds. And not just barely
 free either, but abundantly free! The
 N.I.V. uses the words “lavished on us.”
 “Lavished,” in Greek *perisseuo*, means
 to have in abundance, overflowing, more
 than enough. The text goes on to say
 “He thought of everything, provided for
 everything we could possibly need.” This
 reminds me of the text used the last time
 I preached here, 2 Peter 1:3: “His divine
 power has given us everything we need for
 life and godliness.” Again we are told that
 “God will supply all our needs according
 to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”
 That is why Paul also said “I can do all
 things through Christ who strengthens
 me.”

There is a good illustration of
 God’s abundance in the life of David
 and his friend Mephibosheth. You will
 remember that Saul was an enemy of
 David. In fact, Saul wanted to kill David.
 But Saul had a son named Jonathan who became a fast
 friend of David’s. In fact, when Jonathan was killed
 David lamented his death. He said, “I grieve for you
 Jonathan my brother, you were very dear to me. Your
 love for me was wonderful, more wonderful than that
 of women.” But as grace would have it, Jonathan
 had a son whose name was Mephibosheth. This
 son had met with an accident and was unable
 to walk. I suppose today he would be confined to a wheelchair.
 At one point David asked, “Is there anyone still left of the
 house of Saul to whom I can show kindness for Jonathan’s
 sake?” When Mephibosheth, the cripple, was brought into
 the presence of David, he said “What am I that you should
 notice a dead dog like me?” In those days the worst kinds of
 people were referred to as dogs, and here Mephibosheth regards
 himself as a dead dog. What was David’s response to this?

“You will
 always eat at my table.”
 So he ate at David’s table like
 one of the king’s sons.

This is surely a wonderful picture of
 God’s grace. David is often thought of as a
 type of Christ. Now listen carefully: “I come
 to Christ as a dead dog indeed. I was dead
 in trespasses and sin, and my sin is ever before
 me. But God in His great mercy forgave me and
 accepted me as His child. “But God Who is rich in
 mercy even when we were dead.” Beth Moore in her
 book *A Heart Like His* said “We cannot outsin God’s
 ability to forgive.” When we accept Christ as Savior,
 He blesses us and meets “all our needs according to
 His riches in glory.”

God was pleased to reveal to His people, that is, to
 believers, how great is His grace and the glory which
 attends it. The Bible’s frequent use of such terms as riches,
 wealth, and treasure reveals that Christ has

made available to us an inexhaustible and
 unsearchable treasure. The word “riches,”
 in Greek *plutos*, means, according to
 Harper’s Greek Analytic Lexicon, “those
 rich benefits, those abundant blessings
 which flow from God or Christ and enrich
 us spiritually.” As Paul says in 1 Corinthians
 1:5, “For in Him you have been enriched
 in every way—in all your speaking and in
 all your knowledge.”

This leads me to another statement
 in our text which has to do with “Christ
 in you.” This particular phrase is often
 attributed to the Holy Spirit. According
 to the Word of God we know that, at the
 point of salvation, the believer receives
 the Holy Spirit. The reception of the
 Holy Spirit is not a second work of
 grace. It is the Holy Spirit who actually
 causes us to be born again. In John
 14:16, Jesus said, “I will ask the Father
 and He will give you another counselor
 to be with you forever, the Spirit of

Truth... you know him for he lives in you and with you
 and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I
 will come to you.” And He has—“Christ in you.” “The
 counselor, the Holy Spirit... will teach you all things
 and will remind you of everything I have said to
 you.” Having said that, God gives the Holy Spirit
 and reminds us of one of the greatest of all gifts,
 peace. “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give
 you. I do not give to you as the world gives.
 Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”

Paul mentions the gifts of the Spirit of God in Galatians
 5:22: “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience,
 kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control,”
 and elsewhere, in 2 Peter 1:5, “...add to your faith goodness,
 and to goodness knowledge, and to knowledge self-control,
 and to self-control perseverance, and to perseverance godliness,



Ježiš Kristus, spoločník v nás

Dr. Andrew Kmetko

Text: Kol. 1,27

List Kološanom je jednou z významných kníh Novej Zmluvy a 27. verš prvej kapitoly je jedným z najväčších výrokov tohoto listu.

Ako naznačuje zväzok „Life Application Bible“, cieľom listu bol zápas s omylmi v cirkvi a poukázanie na to, že veriaci ľudia majú v Kristu všetko, čo potrebujú.

To mi pripomína jeden z veršov, nad ktorými sme uvažovali minulý rok—tretí verš prvej kapitoly druhého listu Petrovho: „Jeho božská moc nám darovala všetko potrebné pre život a zbožnosť...“ Kresťan nie je ani bedár ani zobrák, ktorý prosí o „zvyšky“. Pán Boh mu dáva uistenie, že všetky jeho potreby budú naplnené.

V 27. verši prvej kapitoly listu Kološanom sa nachádza niekoľko slov a fráz, ktoré upútajú našu pozornosť, ako „dal poznať“, „bohatstvo slávy“, „tajomstvo“, „Kristus vo vás“ a „nádej slávy“. Tieto fascinujúce pojmy sú tu zaznamenané pre naše požehnanie. Chcem sa uchopiť týchto slov a fráz a vidieť ich osoh pre našu kresťanskú vieru. Verím, že každé slovo v Biblii je dôležité. „Každé písmo, vdychnuté Bohom, je aj užitočné na vynaučovanie, karhanie, naprávanie, na výchovné káznenie v spravodlivosti“. Biblia nám nehovorí len o tom, ako môžeme byť zachránení, ale aj o tom, ako máme žiť kresťanský život. List Židom 10,35 nás povzbudzuje, aby sme mali dôveru, čo v gréčtine znamená, aby sme boli smelí, odvážni, nebojácni a slobodní. Znamená to aj hovoriť jasne, slobodne, smelo a s dôverou. Keď bol Pavel v židovskej synagóge v Ikóniu, hovoril „smelo, dôverujúc Pánovi“. To isté bolo pravdou aj o Petrovi a Jánovi, keď sa v Skutkoch 4,13 píše, že ľudia videli ich odvahu a uvedomili si, že sú to ľudia neučení a jednoduchí. Čudovali sa a spoznali, že títo ľudia boli s Ježišom. Poznávajú ľudia, že si bol s Ježišom? Vidia na tebe, že tráviš svoj čas s Pánom, že riadne navštevuješ zborové spoločenstvo cirkvi, že pravidelne čítaš a študuješ svoju Bibliu? Chcem sa ňu opýtať, či si bol aj dnes v intímnom obecenstve s Ježišom? Dúfam, že táto kázeň určitým spôsobom vytvorí v tebe dôverný vzťah s Ježišom, a že aj tvoji priatelia spoznajú, že si bol s ním. Pamätaj na to, že viera, nádej a láska nie sú len pojmy, o ktorých



sa káže a vyučuje z Biblie, ale majú byť budované ako stavebné prvky nášho každodenného života. Predovšetkým, tento list bol písaný veriacim. Kresťania v Kolosách sú jeho adresátmi. Nezáleží na tom, akí sme starí,

ani na tom, ako dlho sme veriaci. Vždy potrebujeme počúvať a študovať Božie Slovo. Myslím, že najväčšou núdzou dnešnej cirkvi je znalosť Slova. Náš text hovorí: „Im chcel Boh dať poznať“. Je Božou vôľou, aby veriaci poznali Jeho Slovo. O čom hovorí a čo to znamená? Od kňazov v Starom Zákone sa očakávalo, že budú vyučovať ľud, avšak ľud nepočúval ani neposlúchal (Mal.2,7-9): „Lebo rty kňaza majú zachovávať známosť, a zákon budú hľadať z jeho úst! Lebo je poslom Hospodina Zástupov. Ale vy ste vybočili z cesty a spôsobili ste to, že mnohí klesli v zákone, a porušili ste zmluvu Léviho, hovorí Hospodin Zástupov.“

Najdôležitejšou úlohou kazateľa je kázať a vyučovať Božie Slovo. Kňazi v Starom Zákone zodpovedali za vyučovanie Zákona. Mali učiť všetkým nariadeniam, ktoré im Pán dal prostredníctvom Mojžiša. Cieľom Božích zákonov bolo naučiť ľud, ako odlišiť správne od nesprávneho, sväte od obecného. Človek, ktorý žije podľa Božieho Slova, je očividne oddelený od sveta. Byť vodcom v cirkvi je teda úžasne veľkou zodpovednosťou. Ak by Pán nebol pri tomto počínaní, bol by to hrozný záväzok. Vedenie Božieho ľudu je výsadou i zodpovednosťou. Veriaci človek je zodpovedný za čistotu svojich skutkov, kvalitu svojho vzorného života a za pravdivosť svojich slov. Ak má pochybnosti, má urobiť to, čo Pán povedal prostredníctvom proroka Haggea: „Nože sa opýtaj kňazov na zákon...“. V jednom období histórie Izraela prorok Hozeáš povedal: „Môj ľud bude vyhladený preto, že nieto známosť“. Aj preto si myslím, že slovo druhého listu Timoteovi 3,16-17 je také dôležité: „Každé písmo, vdychnuté Bohom, je aj užitočné na vynaučovanie, karhanie, naprávanie, na výchovné káznenie v spravodlivosti, aby bol človek Boží dokonalý, ku každému dobrému

skutku pri-
pravený“. Je to práve zná-
mosť Božieho Slova, ktorá nás
vystrojuje, aby sme poznali a konali
Božiu vôľu. Podľa listu Titovi 1,1 známosť
pravdy vedie k pobožnosti.

Poznanie Jeho Slova nás vedie k Jeho
„slávnemu bohatstvu“. Pomáha nám uvedomiť si,
čo máme v Kristu. Vo ôsmom verši prvej kapitoly
listu Efežanom to Pavel vyjadril veľmi jasne, túžiac, aby
sme pochopili, aké veľké je Jeho bohatstvo. V preklade
Novej Zmluvy, známom ako „Posolstvo“, čítame tento verš
nasledovne: „Pri Mesiášovej obeti bola Jeho krv preliata
na oltári kríža. Sme slobodní ľudia—slobodní od trestov
zaznamenaných všetkými našimi zlými skutkami. Sme slobodní;
nielen sotva, ale v plnej hojnosti slobody!“ Anglický preklad
Bible N.I.V. (New International Version) tu používa slová
„štedro nás zahrnul“. Jedná sa tu o pôvodné
grécke slovo „perisseuo“, ktorého význam
je mať v hojnosti, prebytku, mať viac ako
dosť. Text pokračuje ďalej a hovorí: „On
myslel na všetko, čo nám poskytne v každej
oblasti, v ktorej by sme mohli mať núdzu“. To mi opäť pripomína text, ktorý som použil
posledne, keď som tu kázal: „Jeho božská
moc nám darovala všetko potrebné pre život
a zbožnosť...“ (2 Pet.1,3). Božie Slovo nám
tiež hovorí, že: „Boh naplní každú vašu
potrebu podľa svojho bohatstva v sláve,
v Kristu Ježišovi“. Práve preto apoštol Pavel
povedal: „Všetko vládzem v tom, ktorý ma
posilňuje, v Kristovi“.

Existuje dobrá ilustrácia Božej hojnosti,
a síce v živote Dávida a jeho priateľa Mefi-
bóšeta. Iste sa rozpomeniete na to, že Saul
bol Dávidovým nepriateľom. V skutočnosti
Saul chcel Dávida zabiť. Saul však mal
syna menom Jonatán, ktorý sa stal verným
priateľom Dávidovým. Keď bol Jonatán
zabitý, Dávid oplakával jeho smrť a povedal:

„Úzko mi je nad tebou, môj brat Jonatán!

Drahý si mi bol veľmi! Podivuhodnejší si mi bol vo svojej
láske nad lásku žien“. Jonatán mal syna, ktorého meno bolo
Mefibóšet. Stal sa mu však úraz a bol chromý na nohy.

Predpokladám, že dnes by bol pripútaný ku kolieskovému
kreslu. Raz sa Dávid opýtal: „Či je ešte niekto, kto
by bol pozostal z domu Saulovho? Lebo by som mu
chcel preukázať milosť pre Jonatána“. Keď bol mrzák
Mefibóšet privedený k Dávidovi, povedal: „Čo je tvoj
služobník, že si pohliadol na mŕtveho psa, aký som
ja?“ V tých dňoch hovorili len o tom najhoršom
druhu ľudí ako o psoch, a tu Mefibóšet považuje samého seba za
mŕtveho psa. Ako na to zareagoval Dávid? „Ty budeš jesť chlieb
pri mojom stole vždycky...a tak jedol pri Dávidovom stole, ako
niektorý zo synov kráľových“.

Toto je istotne nádherný obraz Božej milosti. O Dávidovi sa často
uvažuje ako o predobrazu Pána Ježiša Krista. A teraz počúvajte
pozorne: „Prišiel som ku Kristu ako skutočne mŕtvy pes. Bol som
mŕtvy v prestúpeniach a v hriechu a môj hriech je stále predi mnou.

Ale Boh

mi vo svojej veľkej milosti
odpustil a prijal ma za svoje
dieťa.“ „Ale Boh súc bohatý v milosr-
denstve...aj keď sme boli mŕtvi v previne-
niach, spolu nás oživil s Kristom...“. Beth
Moore vo svojej knižke „Srdce podobné Jeho
srdcu“ hovorí: „Ani náš hriech nemôže nijako
zmenšiť Božiu schopnosť odpúšťať“. Keď prijmem
Krista ako nášho Spasiteľa, požehná nás a „naplní
každú našu potrebu podľa svojho bohatstva v sláve“.

Bohu sa zaľúbilo zjaviť svojmu ľudu, čiže veriacim,
veľkosť Jeho milosti a slávy, ktorá ju sprevádza. Časté
používanie takých pojmov v Biblii ako sú bohatstvo
a poklad nám zjavuje, že Kristus nám skutočne sprístupnil
nevýčerateľný a nevyspytateľný poklad. Slovo „bohatstvo“
je grécke slovo „plutos“, ktoré je v Harperovom gréckom
analytickom slovníku vysvetlené ako „ten

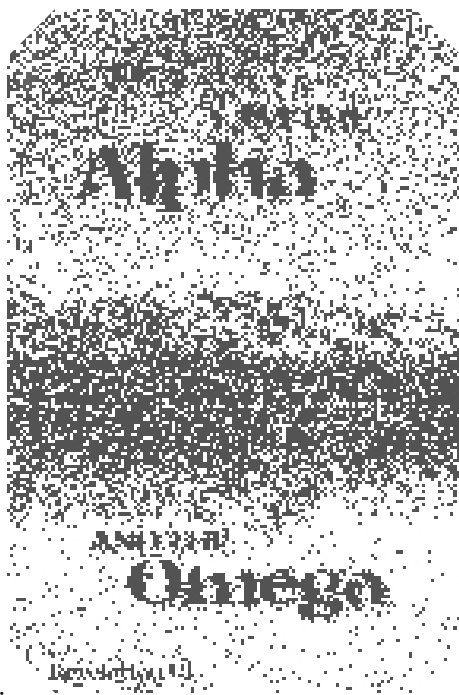
bohatý osôh, tie hojné požehnania, ktoré
plynú od Boha alebo Krista a duchovne
nás obohacujú“. Ako Pavel hovorí v 1
Kor.1,5: „V ňom ste obohatení všetkým,
každým slovom i každou známosťou“.

Toto ma vedie k ďalšiemu výroku
v našom texte, ktorý je v súvislosti so slovom
„Kristus vo vás“. Táto osobitná formulácia sa
často pripisuje Duchu Svätému. Na základe
Božieho Slova je nám známe, že v momente
záchrany veriaci človek prijíma Svätého
Ducha. Prijatie Sv. Ducha nie je druhým
dielom milosti. Je to Sv. Duch, ktorý nás
v skutočnosti „zrodí znovu“. V evanjeliu
podľa Jána 14,16 Ježiš povedal: „Ja požiadam
Otca, a dá vám iného Tešiteľa, aby bol
s vami na veky, toho Ducha pravdy...vy
ho poznáte, pretože býva u vás a bude vo
vás. Neopustím vás, aby ste boli sirotami,
prídem k vám“. A naozaj prišiel! „Kristus
vo vás...“. „Tešiteľ, Svätý Duch...ten vás
naučí všetkému a pripomenie vám všetko,
čo som vám povedal“. A povediac tieto

slová, On, Boh, dáva Svätého Ducha a pripomína nám jeden
z najväčších darov: „pokoj“. „Pokoj vám zanechávam, svoj
pokoj vám dávam; nie tak, ako dáva svet, ja vám dávam.
Nech sa neľaká vaše srdce ani nestrachuje“.

Pavel sa zmieňuje o ovoci Ducha v liste Galaťanom
5,22: „Ale ovocím Ducha je láska, radosť, pokoj,
zhovievavosť, dobrota, dobrotivosť, vernosť, krotkosť
a zdržanlivosť“ a na inom mieste v 2 Pet.1,5:

„...a poskytujte vo svojej viere cnosť a v cnosti
známosť a v známosti zdržanlivosť a v zdržan-
livosti trpezlivosť a v trpezlivosti pobožnosť
a v pobožnosti milovanie bratstva a v milovaní bratstva lásku“. Uvažoval som nad tým, prečo pojem zdržanlivosť bol použitý ako
ovocie Svätého Ducha. Toto slovo je použité v Novej Zmluve len
dva razy. Vyhľadal som si ho v gréčtine, kde znamená byť odolný,
pevný, schopný zvládnuť. Byť pánom samého seba, to znamená
byť schopný ovládnuť všetky negatívne city. Tesne predtým,
ako sa Pavel zmieňuje o ovoci Ducha, predkladá nám zoznam



Part 1

Doing What Is Good

Dr. Andrew Kmetko

Titus



When I decided to preach or study the book of Titus, the heavens didn't open, nor was I struck by lightning or hear a voice like thunder roaring from the skies telling me what to do. I am, however, indwelt by the Holy Spirit and following the dictates of the Spirit, I decided to preach from the book of Titus. As far as I know, this is the first time I have ever preached from this book.

I am not going to say much about the human author, Paul, just that he was motivated and inspired by the Holy Spirit to write the letter. The letter was written to Titus, a good friend and fellow traveler with Paul. He was a faithful emissary to the troubled church in Corinth (2 Cor. 7:6-7), to which Paul wrote that God, "who comforts the downcast, comforted us by the coming of Titus, and not only by his coming but also by the comfort you had given him. He told us about your longing for me, your deep sorrow, your ardent concern for me, so my joy was greater than ever."

In this brief statement, Paul says a great deal about Titus, that he was a great comfort to the Corinthians and to Paul. This believer, Christian, church member was a great comfort! Have you been a great comfort to someone? If you are a believer, a Christian, a church member then you should also be one who is able to comfort others. Remember again what Paul said in his second letter to the Corinthians (1:5-7): "...through Christ our comfort overflows. If we are distressed, it is for your comfort and salvation; if we are comforted, it is for your comfort....And our hope for you is firm, because we know that just as you share in our sufferings, so also you share in our comfort." If you have

been a recipient of His blessings, of His comfort, then share it with others. Don't hoard it only for your own use but share it for the use of many.

It is my conviction that we do not share enough of God's blessings with others, even with other believers. We talk about everything but the Lord and His blessings to us. What has He done for you lately?

There was a terrible problem in the Corinthian church. The issue concerned a Christian who was carrying on an incestuous sexual relationship with his mother. Think of it: a son having sex with his mother! Some have interpreted this passage as meaning his stepmother; that is, his biological mother died, his father remarried and this was his stepmother, not his biological mother. But the text doesn't support this interpretation. Have you ever noticed how open and forthright the Word of God is in talking about sin? It is outspoken and often mentions in detail the sins committed by individuals or nations. There is the incident in the book of Acts about Ananias and Sapphira. Both lied and tried to cover it up, but they were found out by the Holy Spirit and as a result were executed, and buried on the spot. It is not a good practice to try to cover up any sin we may commit. "If we confess our sin he is faithful and just to forgive us our sin and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

This was not a small problem, and yet this situation did not seem to faze the Corinthians in the least. It's much like our generation saying, "I did nothing illegal or wrong." The godly response should have been grief for this wayward brother, leading to discipline that would exclude him from intimacy with the congregation

until he showed genuine repentance for his action. What should have happened is recorded in Matthew 18:15-17: "If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that every

matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector." Titus may very well have been with Paul in this most sorrowful, grievous, distressing situation.

Titus and Paul parted on Crete, an island in the Mediterranean Sea located south of Greece. God was using Paul to call a people for Himself and to teach them the truth which is conducive to godly living, as Paul instructed Timothy, "But you, man of God, pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, and gentleness" (1 Tim. 6:11). In other words, Paul's ministry was aimed at both the salvation and sanctification of God's people. In the very first verse of Titus, Paul speaks of "...the knowledge of the truth that leads to godliness." You cannot know God's will without knowing God's Word, and neither can you live the Christian life without that knowledge. That is why I personally spend a great deal of time reading and studying God's Word and encourage others to do likewise.

Titus was sent to the island of Crete so that he might straighten out the existing problems. Paul must have had a great deal of confidence in Titus. Notice what is said about the Cretans in the first chapter, verses 10 to 13. The word "silenced" caught my attention, so I looked up its

meaning in the Greek text. It is the Greek word *epistimidzo*. It means “to apply a muzzle, to gag or to silence.” How does a believer do this since he is kind, considerate, loving and thoughtful? He is thinking of their eternal lives.

Our faith in Christ and our knowledge of the word rest on the hope of eternal life. Shortly after I became a Christian, I began a program of memorization. Later I discovered the Navigators, which was a group of believers devoted to the memorization of the Word. They had small address-type cards on which a verse of Scripture was printed with the reference on the opposite side. I eventually bought some blank cards and cut out of old Bibles the verses that I wanted to memorize. One of the first verses was Titus 1:2 in the King James version: “In hope of eternal life which God that cannot lie promised before the world began.” There were several words in this text that absorbed my attention.

There is first of all the word “hope” —“in hope of eternal life.” “Hope” as we use it today simply means that what is desired is also possible, or that events may turn out for the best, for example, “I hope to see you tomorrow.” But the Biblical word hope means much more. It is the Greek word *elpis* and means “absolute confidence in eternal life.” As with all believers, the elect, Paul’s life and service were firmly rooted in hope, which eagerly and confidently awaits the realization of eternal life, life not only endless but having an eternal quality. Believers already possess eternal life, as stated in John 5:24. Jesus says, “I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned. He has crossed over from death to life.” Have you crossed over? Do you possess eternal life? Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will have eternal life. Its full and perfect realization awaits the return of the Prince of Life.

I hear a lot of talk about Heaven and what’s there. I really don’t know. The Bible is rather quiet about the things that we are going to experience. I know what isn’t going to be there, and that is recorded in Revelation 21:4, “He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has

passed away.” My, what a wonderful place Heaven must be just because of the absence of these things which trouble us so much. Think of it: no more pain, no tears, no more memorial services. When we lost our daughter just a few years ago I thought my heart would break, and I told my remaining children, “Please don’t do this to me again.” Just think, no more tears and no more death—that in itself would be heaven. This is our hope, not wishful thinking but a firm assurance.


Both our faith and knowledge are “resting on the hope of eternal life.” The phrase “resting on” is taken from a single Greek word, *epi*. But it is better to understand this word as “with a view to.” Paul’s thought is that all his ministry is “with a view to” eternal life. This hope was promised to the believer (elect) from eternity past. In 1 Timothy 1:9, Paul explains that God “has saved us and called us with a holy calling not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity.” When was that? How old is the planet, this earth? Who knows? Some time ago I was listening to a tape by Hugh Ross, a believing scientist. He said the planet earth is millions of years old. I don’t know about that, but I do know that before the earth was created, I existed in the mind of God. Before I was born, God had me in mind. I believe that my eternal destiny was settled before this planet existed. “God is not a man that he should lie! neither the son of man, that he should repent; hath he spoken and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken and shall he not make it good?” (Num. 23:19)

Now, God cannot default on His Word. Only in these latter days, however, has the full understanding of that word come to light in the message God gave Paul to preach. As is common in the Pastorals, the apostle referred to God as Saviour. One example is in 1 Timothy 4:10, where he said “for, therefore, we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe.” And again in this letter Titus 1:3: “and at his appointed season he brought his word to light through the preaching entrusted to me by the command of God our Saviour.” God’s eternal plan was to salvage a people for Himself, and this,

rather than any worldly agenda to liberate social structures or institutions, formed the primary focus of Paul’s ministry.

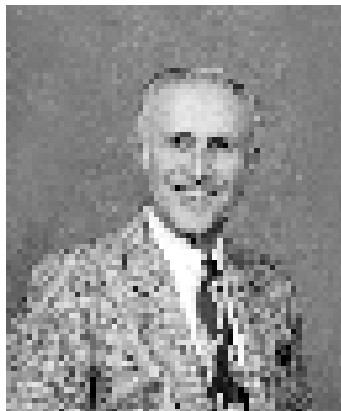
As with hope so with faith, knowledge, and eternal life. These are not just vague pious aspirations but are sure, because they are grounded in the absolute trustworthiness of God, “who cannot lie.” In the same way, hope is not a vague, pious aspiration but is sure, because it is grounded in the absolute trustworthiness of God, the character of God “who does not lie.” This is the Greek word *apseudos* and means “incapable of falsehood.” God couldn’t tell a lie if He wanted to. This assures the fulfillment of His promise or, should we say, this assures the fulfillment of all His promises. For example, the promise of peace as in John 14:27: “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth give I to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.” The promise of truth and peace can be found throughout the Word, and God stands behind all of the promises He has made. He said to His followers (John 16:33), “These things I have spoken to you that in me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation but take courage, I have overcome the world.” In the world we are surrounded by trouble. We have all sorts of unsolvable problems, difficulties that are all but impossible for us to solve, but be strong and of good courage, fearless in the face of misfortune, because He Who has promised us peace cannot lie. Where the gift is given Paul also said (Phil. 4:7), “and the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

What else has God promised? Something all of us have, I hope: eternal life, and this He promised before the world began. To me this means, as I said earlier, before the planet earth existed. I was down at the Navy Pier for the flower show some time ago, and they had on display the bones of some dinosaurs. How old are those bones? Scientists say they are very old—thousands upon thousands of years old. Who knows for sure? But God promised this eternal life before the world began. Paul said to Timothy (2 Tim. 1:9) that “God saved us and called us to a holy life...not because of anything we have

 Continues on page 130

The Rev. Joe (Joza) Novak

70



Everybody who is connected with the Czechoslovak Baptist Convention knows Joe (Joza) Novak. This dear friend and co-worker is celebrating his 70th birthday.

Joe Novak pastored Czechoslovak churches in Winnipeg, Manitoba, in Toronto, and then in other Baptist churches in Weston and in Mississauga, Ontario.

Joe held many different positions in the Czechoslovak Baptist Convention. He was president, vice-president, executive secretary, and editor of *Glorious Hope*. He is currently president of the Czechoslovak Evangelical Mission, which he found in 1985. He writes and distributes Christian literature, tracts and booklets.

Joe is married to Rose, his faithful helper and co-worker, and on December 29, 2000, they will celebrate their 51st anniversary (Golden + 1). They have four children and ten grandchildren.

Joe, we wish you (and Rose), on behalf of the Czechoslovak Baptist Convention of USA and Canada, God's blessings and good health.

George Sommer

[You can read more about Joe Novak's life in *Glorious Hope*, in May 1999, page 64, and in March 2000, page 27 issues.]

□



Rose and Joe Novak

Editorial ... Pokračování ze strany 122

poněkud rezervovaně, v přímé spojitosti s naší vlastní osobou. Je-li všechno v pořádku, hovoříme o vděčnosti Pánu Bohu. Neběží-li všechno podle našich představ, myšlenky na vděčnost ustupují do pozadí a s určitou hořkostí rozebíráme svou vlastní situaci. V takovém případě nejsme schopni nic jiného vnímat a chybí nám citlivost na Boží přítomnost, ať už je situace jakákoliv.

Docela jiná situace nastane, je-li středem naší pozornosti každodenně Pán Ježíš. S vědomím Boží milosti, zjevení v příchodu Pána Ježíše Krista na svět a potom také jeho oběti na kříži, jsme velice vděční i za ty zdánlivě maličkosti v životě osobním i v životech našich bližních. Maličkosti prakticky tvoří náš život.

Nedovolme, aby nám Boží dary zevšedněly. Nedovolme, aby samotný příchod Božího Syna na zem se stal pouze záležitostí vánoc. Dívejme se na události kolem sebe očima toho, ve kterém nám je zjevena Boží láska. Citlivě reagujme na potřeby druhých a budme vděční. V tom spočívá Boží požehnání. Kéž o věčnosti naše životy svědčí po celý příští rok!

Šéfredaktorka Nataša Legierská

Požehnané a pokojné vánoce vám srdečně přeje naše redakce!!

□

Bible Study ... Continues from page 128

done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time." This promise existed within the Godhead before He created the world. In other words, it is rooted in God's eternal purpose for humankind. It is not just a figment of my imagination but is grounded in the Word of God.

We "hope" in something that we do not experience with the physical senses. "...But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what he already has?" (Rom. 8:24-25) Hope doesn't respond to the five senses: you can't see it, hear it, smell it, taste it, feel it; you can't touch hope with your hands or any other part of your body. This calls for faith in the Word of God and what it says about salvation and how it is appropriated. "Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the Word of Christ" (Rom. 10:17). Where does hope come from? Not from the depths of the earth or seas. It comes from God. And it is impossible for God to lie.

Once again we see the importance of hope--the very antithesis of the despair that might grip us if we saw no more than the sinful world. But as the elect, believers, we do see more. We look forward to the consummation of God's great work of salvation. Amen!

□

Jesus Christ ... Continues from page 125

and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love.”

I wondered why the term self-control was used as a gift of the Holy Spirit. It is used only twice in all of the New Testament. In Greek it means strong, stout, possessed of mastery—mastery of self, that is, to be able to control all of your negative emotions. Just before Paul mentions the fruit of the Spirit, he gives a list of the emotions. One is control. Do you know what incontinence is? It means that you have lost control. If a pilot loses control of his plane it crashes, so if a person loses control of his emotion he crashes. If you are angered by some event, don't go into a rage. Control yourself under the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Having said all that, let's take a look at the treasure God has accumulated. We can't begin to know the extent of God's unsearchable riches. It goes far beyond our limited human understanding, but it does not go beyond our admiration or thankfulness. In the Old Testament God said that the Israelites were His treasured possession: “Although the whole earth is mine, you will be my treasured possession.” He then follows that up in the New Testament by saying that we are a “chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God that you may declare the praises of Him... once you were not a people but now you are the people of God. Live such good lives among the unbelievers that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God.”

God said that all the silver and gold and cattle on a thousand hills belong to Him, every bird in the mountains and the creatures of the field. “...for the world is mine and all that is in it.” And don't forget that as believers we are His.

If we are His treasure, then He blesses us out of that treasure. We are His treasure trove. We are His diamonds, His pearls of great price. God has a great treasure trove of blessings that He wants to bestow upon us. If we are a part of the storehouse of His wealth, out of this treasure He not only blesses us but also makes us a blessing. If I am a part of His treasure, then He takes me, a jewel out of His wealth, to bless or enrich others. Paul said to the Ephesians “...that you may know the riches of His glorious inheritance in the saints” (Eph. 1:18). His inheritance of His wealth is in us. We believers are part of His treasure trove.

Have you blessed anyone today or enriched them? Remember the words of our Lord when he said, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. Rivers of living water will brim and spill out of the depths of anyone who believes in me this day...” He said this with regard to the Holy Spirit. “We now have the Holy Spirit—Christ in you” and we enrich each other through fellowship.

Amen

This sermon was delivered on July 1, 2000, during 91st Annual Convention in Philippi.



Ježiš Kristus ... Pokračovanie zo strany 127

skutkov, ktoré je potrebné mať pod kontrolou. Viete, čo je nezdržanlivosť? To znamená, že ste stratili kontrolu. Ak pilot stratí vládu nad svojím lietadlom, zhavaruje. A ak človek stratí kontrolu nad svojimi citmi, zhavaruje tiež. Ak ste aj rozhnevaní nejakou udalosťou, nerozzúrite sa. Ovládajte sa pod mocou Svätého Ducha.

Povediac všetko toto, pozrime sa teraz na poklad, ktorý Boh nahromadil. Nemôžeme spoznať rozsah Božieho nevyspytateľného bohatstva. Ide totiž ďaleko za naše obmedzené ľudské chápanie, avšak nepresahuje medze nášho ocenenia, nášho obdivu, či vďačnosti. V Starom Zákone Boh povedal, že Izrael je Jeho „zvláštnym vlastníctvom“. Boh riekol: „Budete mi zvláštnym vlastníctvom nad všetky národy, lebo veď moja je celá zem“ a pokračuje v tom v Novej Zmluve, keď hovorí, že sme „vyvolený rod, kráľovské kňazstvo, svätý národ, ľud, určený byť Božím vlastníctvom, aby ste zvestovali Jeho cnosti...ktorí ste kedysi neboli ani ľudom, ale teraz ste ľud Boží... Svoje obcovanie medzi pohanmi majúci dobré, aby vo veci, v ktorej vás ohovárajú ako takých, ktorí robia zle, vidiac vaše dobré skutky oslavovali Boha...“.

Boh povedal: „Moje je striebro a moje zlato...môj je všetok dobytok na tisícich vrchoch. Poznám všetko vtáctvo vrchov i poľné zvieratá ... lebo môj je okruh zeme i jeho náplň“. A nezabudni, že ako veriaci aj ty si Jeho a On je tvoj.

Ak sme Jeho pokladom, tak On nás požehnáva z tohoto pokladu. Sme Jeho cennosťou.

Sme Jeho diamanty; Jeho perly, ktoré majú veľkú cenu. Boh má veľký poklad požehnaní, ktorými nás chce obdarovať. Ak sme časťou skladu Jeho bohatstva...z tohoto pokladu nás nielen požehnáva, ale nás aj činí požehnaním. Ak som teda časťou Jeho pokladu, potom ma vezme, ako klenot z Jeho bohatstva, aby tak požehnal alebo obohatil aj iných. Pavel povedal v liste do Efezu: „...aby ste vedeli aké je bohatstvo slávy jeho dedičstva medzi svätými“ (Ef.1,18). Dedičstvo Jeho bohatstva je v nás. My, veriaci, sme časťou Jeho cenného pokladu.

Bol si dnes niekomu požehnaním alebo si niekoho obohatil? Rozpomeň sa na slová nášho Pána, keď „volal: Ak niekto žizni, nech príde ku mne a pije! Kto verí vo mňa, ako hovorí Písmo, rieky živej vody potečú z jeho vnútra. Ale to povedal o Svätom Duchu ...“. My teraz máme Ducha Svätého—„Kristus vo vás...“ a tak sme požehnaním alebo obohatením iných prostredníctvom vzájomného obecnstva. Amen.



Toto kázanie bolo predneseno 1. července 2000 na 91. výročnú konferenciu ve Philippi, WV, USA.



A Golden Opportunity For Those in Their Golden Years



I have often thought of the Czechs and Slovaks who immigrated either to Canada or to the USA during the years of totalitarian rule in former Czechoslovakia. I know personally those who have had the opportunity to complete their education on this side of the Atlantic. For the most part they have done very well, as can only be expected of such courageous people. Frankly, I envy every one of you for your excellent ability to understand and speak Czech or Slovak. I have met many American missionaries in the Czech Republic and in Slovakia who have struggled a long time with one of these languages. They were paying the price to be able to witness about their wonderful Lord and Saviour. Any one of you former citizens of former Czechoslovakia can outdo any of these newcomers to the land of your birth. It is the language that is of extreme value. You have it as a sacred deposit.

Some of you have reached the age of retirement. What a blessing you would be to your

people on the other side of the Atlantic. What a rich treasure you have accumulated in scripture knowledge and experience which would be so readily accepted by your "home" people. What would happen if you went back to your home town, to your former school friends, to fill in the details of your life as you find it in Jesus Christ. They would listen to your stories wide-eyed. You can do it without an interpreter. And there is another side to this picture: your children. Former Czechoslovakia is going to be won to Christ through the younger generation. Your children learned either Slovak or Czech along the way to the New World. They too have a rich heritage to share with their fellow Slovaks or Czechs. A two-week vacation in Europe could change your life forever. You all have a unique place in history. It all depends on how you invest your time, your talents, your resources and your lives. Only what is done for Christ will last.

From the heart of your brother in Christ,

Dan Feryance □

Canji Retirement



For the past thirtysome years, Vlado and Ljuba Canji have been involved in full-time ministry. From serving in the towns of Leskovac, Pakrac, and Zagreb in former Yugoslavia, they moved to Canada and continued their ministry for another 20 years. Then after being called to the mission field, they journeyed

back to Eastern Europe and continued their life's work for another nine years.

With such a life as theirs, the word retirement has no meaning. We would like, however, to celebrate their devotion and hard work. On Saturday, October 14, 2000, an informal celebration will be held at Grace Baptist Church in Windsor, Ontario. We would be honored if you would be able to attend. We understand that there are certain time constraints and

apologize for this short notice. If you would like to write a note or share an anecdote, it would be most appreciated. Please send them to one of the following addresses before October 5: e-mail tshefin@condor.depaul.edu or Tabita Sherfinski, 4030 West Barry, Chicago, IL 60641 USA.

Thank you for sharing in my parents' ministry.

I hope to hear from you soon.

□

Blessed is the man

požehnaný ten muž

Rev. John E Karenko

However, very few people live with eternity's values in view. Jesus said that most Christians don't live as wisely as non-Christians live: "The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light" (Luke 16:8), i.e., our aims don't live up to our claims! We "say" we will be living in heaven forever, but our "life style" is just like our unbelieving neighbours and friends. Our treasure is not laid up in heaven (Mt. 6:19-21), but in stock, bonds, banks, property and pleasures, i.e., the same way non-Christians live... □

Our Trip to Canada and the USA

George and Ludmila Dedecius

One day my telephone rang and when I picked up the receiver, I heard the familiar voice of brother George Sommer from Philippi, USA. He announced that we were invited to the Czechoslovak Baptist Convention. At first we thought that it was a joke—I have known George since childhood and he has always had a sense of humor.

When we received an official written invitation, we realized that it was meant seriously.

Thanks to God's guidance, our entire journey across the ocean went smoothly, without any problems. What we were able to experience in all the places we visited is difficult to describe in just a few sentences. It was beyond our expectations.

It was a strange feeling to be meeting people whom we had only read about, or whose work we knew from the days of Communism. These included pamphlets with biblical messages by brother Novak and brother Hodul, or the magazine *Glorious Hope*, which some of us in the Czech Republic and Slovakia also receive.

After our arrival at the Toronto airport we were greeted by



Jiří Dedecius

brother Alac, whom we also knew only from the magazine, but soon we felt as if we had known each other for many years. We had to laugh when we discovered that during our studies we had both lived in Brno with the Ransa family (several years apart), and even lived in the same room and slept in the same bed.

We spent wonderful days with the dear Alac family after our arrival in

Toronto and also before our final departure home.

During this time we visited the Toronto Czechoslovak Baptist Church, where we were warmly welcomed by Pastor Banko as well as by the entire congregation. It was very pleasant for us, especially since we did not need to speak a word of English. In fact, during our entire trip we did not need to carry a dictionary in a struggle to understand, but we also realized how true the statement of our first president, Tomas Masaryk, was when he said, "The number of languages you know determines the number of times you are a person." We will still have to learn some English, because it is becoming necessary even in our country, especially in the field of technology.

The visits that we made in Toronto, Windsor, Kingsville, and elsewhere were very dear to us, and we felt that we not only met

each other as people, but we were all joined by God's love and a common goal. Often we had not known each other before, yet we were so close to one another. We realized the truth of God's word, that we are all one family in Jesus Christ.

Taking part in the convention was a great experience for us. The thorough organization of the program in the beautiful surroundings of Alderson-Broaddus College, where George



Marija Sommer, Ludmila Dedeciusová and Natasha Legierski

Sommer works, was like a concert under his baton.

We were able to get to know the president, Dr. Robert Dvorak, much better than when he attended our Czecho-Slovak convention in Brno in 1997. He is a versatile worker in all that God has prepared for him. He can be serious and preach deep truths from God's work, but he was also able to motivate the entire convention with his musical talents as we praised God and sang many familiar hymns. His personal touch during it all was magical. In our country, we have a shortage of this type of person.

During the entire convention we were enriched and filled with gratitude to our Lord for everything we had received.

We spent the second part of our visit with the dear Sommers in their pleasant home.

We would like to thank all those who played a part in our visit to the USA and Canada for their care for us: the Alac family in Milton, brother Banko and his family, the Pojman family, the Legierski family, the Kovac and Hodul families in Windsor, the Sommers in Philippi, and many others. Naturally, we also thank the convention for inviting us and taking care of everything associated with our visit. The Lord has greatly blessed us, and our gratitude belongs to him. We believe that he will repay your love, here on earth and in eternity. We will remain joined with you in prayer and in our thoughts, because now we have bonded together and can picture everyone we have met as if you were now here with us.

Yours in Christ's love,

George and Ludmila Dedecius

Translated by Peter Branda



Minitonas Czech Baptist Church

God's Working!

How Great Thou Art!

When Christ shall come with shout of acclamation,
And take me home, what joy shall fill my heart!
Then I shall bow in humble adoration, and there
proclaim, My God, how great Thou art.



Baptism, June 2000

Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee;
How great Thou art, how great Thou art! Then
sings my soul, my Savior God, to Thee: How great
Thou art, How great Thou art!

That reunion is going to be a celebration that
no party on earth could hold a candle to. We all
should long for that day when we have the glorious
experience of meeting our Savior face to face—the
joy of gathering around the throne where we have
laid our crowns, and singing praises to our God.

But while we wait for that homecoming, God
has called us to serve Him here on earth. God has
challenged us to work together, pray, and reach
those who still need a Savior.

The thing that always amazes me the most is
that God wants to use us to accomplish that task.
Over the last few months, as a congregation we
have experienced God's leading, God's provision,
and God's blessings.

As God's people in Minitonas, we have every
reason to echo the words of King David as he
spoke in Psalm 48:1, "Great is the Lord and greatly
to be praised."

The blessings that our God has bestowed upon us far
exceed our worthiness, and yet we have the privilege of
enjoying His gift to our lives.

Since the last I shared in Glorious Hope, we have seen
God at work in our midst. On June 11, we had a grad service

in honor of our three high school graduates. We joined
together in prayer and the reading of our Church Covenant as
a congregation to commit these young people into God's care
and leading. We promised to encourage and pray for them as
they begin a new chapter in their lives. Our graduates: Trent
Schroeder will be working at NAIM on a short-term missions
project. Vanessa Jersak will be attending Providence Bible
College in the fall. Kristin Mateika is spending a year with Up
With People, traveling the globe. God will use each one of
them in a special way wherever they are.

On June 25 we had a celebration service. Joel Mateika,
Mila Mateika, and Ryan Stewart chose to follow their Lord
in obedience as they walked through the waters of baptism.
Along with this special event we welcomed them and five
more into church membership: Peter and Keri Maess, Lorraine
Seib, and Dennis and Peggy Kalynuk. We stood together
and read our Church Covenant and reminded ourselves
of the pledge and promise we make to each other in the
presence of God.

From Mother's and Father's Day programs, to a rained-out
church picnic which we held indoors, and a community church
service that saw over 250 people come and worship together,
God has shown us His power and majesty.

God's fingerprints could be seen on every week-long or
weekend camp that was held at Northern Manitoba Baptist
Camp this last summer. From changed lives to unforgettable
memories, children and youth headed home challenged



Baptism and new members, June 2000

to walk as Jesus walked. Counselors who tithed their time,
cooks who gave of their skills, directors who supplied the
programs, speakers who shared the message of God—every
person working together in unity to accomplish what God
desires of His people.

God is truly worthy of all the praise we give Him. We

witnessed God's handwork through Rod and Sandy as they led seven of our church youth on a weekend camping trip, August 18-20 at Blue Lakes, Manitoba. Water balloons, water guns, monkey soccer, swimming, volleyball, food, campfires and many other interesting contests filled our time together. Dennis Kalynuk shared from God's Word on Friday night. He challenged us to look at our hearts to see if we were prepared for eternity. As we spent time with these young people, we couldn't help but recognize that "Youth are God's church of today building for God's church of tomorrow." Youth are valuable to God and essential to God's church. Karen and I had the privilege of joining in the fun, to share from God's Word about our testimony of our hearts, to just hang out with young people who have a heart for loving God.

All these things are just a small pinpoint in light of eternity. And yet God has enabled us as a church to witness first-hand His blessings. God has enabled us to move forward and gain a vision for the future. God has enabled us to plan and prepare three new ladies' Bible studies in homes beginning this fall. God has allowed us to have the privilege of hearing two of our missionaries, Rod and Eileen Seib from SEND. God has allowed us to invite Trans World Radio and Dennis Ford to come and share with us what God is doing in Africa. We will rejoice together on September 28, 2000.

God has enabled us to minister to wounded lives and broken hearts. God has enabled us to reach others with God's love through chapel services at the Personal Care Home and Swan Valley Lodge in Swan River. God has enabled us to join together in worship. He has richly blessed this church with wonderful musicians who play their music for God. God has given His people the richness of different worship leaders, who bring their own gifts to the altar and lead us to the feet of Jesus. God has enabled us to serve Him together as His church in Minitonas.

From talented Sunday school teachers to those who sing in the choir, God has given His people a place to worship in love and unity.

We are truly blessed to have a church family like we do. In spite of conflicts, in spite of disagreements that every church experiences, God's people in this church have something that most congregations look for but never find: love for others. My prayer for them as their pastor is that "we continue to glorify God in our public testimony, that we demonstrate a Christ-like attitude to those who gather in this house of God, that we would have a burning desire to share with others who live in our community what Jesus can do for them."

Pastor Garth Priebe

Scranton Road Baptist Church Cleveland

At the Scranton Road Baptist Church in Cleveland, Ohio, the key words continue to be change, transition, hope and prayer.

Change in terms of dear saints tops the list. Earlier this spring, Emily Duricka (89) went to be with the Lord. She lived a

quiet example of singlehood all of her years, encouraging many with her soft words and servant-like example. Anne Bliss and Mary Schoun remain in assisted living facilities. Mary was so blessed to be able to fellowship with so many of you at the convention. Keep her in your prayers.

Pastor Dan Widlicka continues to heal from his unfortunate ankle fracture, which he suffered at the Convention. A special need of prayer goes out to our dear brother Florian Manas. His son Don, 47, was diagnosed as having four tumors around his brain and is currently under treatment and care. Pray for his wife Pam and the whole family circle. We are also losing our dear deacon and Convention board member, Jim Mazur, who is moving to High Point, North Carolina, with his job. Jim has a dear heart for the lost and hurting and will be sorely missed.

The past six months at SRBC has included two weddings, five new babies, seven baptisms and potentially twelve new members (completed or completing the class). It is a sensitive time as well. Five families have recently been hit with unemployment, and the Lord has continued to place us in front of the homeless, incarcerated and those struggling with addiction. Please pray for good spiritual health for "the well" so that we can effectively encourage the hurting.

From the pulpit, Pastor Joe is completing his "Cruise through Second Corinthians." This has been supplemented with adults' studies on James and on anger management. Pastor Joe and two other members had the privilege of spending a total of five weeks in Tanzania, East Africa, visiting members Dr. Craig and Patsy Kent (Mission: Moving Mountains). The similarities and challenges of tribal and inner city ministry are striking and are still being processed.

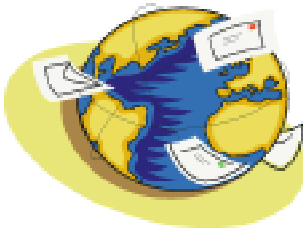
The summer has also been a blessing in many ways. Vacation Bible School in July averaged 85+ kids from the immediate neighborhood. The kids' ministry will culminate in a summer celebration on August 19. The Lord has allowed the use of the basketball court to run junior and senior high basketball tournaments. One of our former "youth," Kyro Taylor, who now teaches at the area high school, conducted the tourney. The second week saw twelve teens open up their hearts to Christ's call upon their life. Please pray for effective discipleship.

Summer Sunday nights have staged outdoor services, with only one rainout in the past 8.5 years. This year we have only been outside twice! Frustration and question consumed our hearts, until it was evident that the Lord was calling us to a season of prayer and confession. It has been wonderful!

As we head into the last half of 2000, exciting challenges are on the horizon. First, we have purchased property next to our parking lot with the hopes of seeing God raise up a family ministry center. Second, one of our younger deacons is leaving his engineering position to begin a sister community development ministry alongside of the church. Lastly, we are still praying that the Lord might raise up an African-American or Hispanic assistant to move the ministry forward.

□

From Our Readers



Liberty, Missouri, October 2000
Dear George and Marija,

I've just finished the book *Guarded City* and am in awe of the dedication, faithfulness, creativity, perseverance, and joy of the Christians who have lived out this story. You come

out of a heritage of faithfulness that humbles me as well as inspires me.

I trust you are both well and happy. Enjoy the beautiful fall coloration on the West Virginia hills for us. Even with a very dry summer we have beautiful colors here, too.

Love, *Anne Sizemore*

[Dr. Chris Sizemore is a former president of Alderson-Broaddus College.]



Dear George, Parma, Ohio, 10-18-2000

Perhaps you have heard that my dear sister Ruth Orstreicher was called to her heavenly home on October 11, 2000. Her last months and weeks were very uncomfortable and she was very sick. The Lord was merciful to take her, though we will miss her very much.

She would have loved to come to the Convention but was unable.

We expect to see you in Campbell soon. In Christ
"Hello" to Marija. *Esther Widlicka*



10-19-2000

I am enclosing a gift in memory of my very dear friend Ruth Oestreicher, who went to glory October 11, 2000. We grew together in Chicago Lowndale Church. She was Ruth Bohatec and later the Bohatec family moved to Cleveland but Ruth stayed in Chicago because she married Roy Oestreicher, who was our leader in the youth group. Our young people did so many great things when Roy and Ruth were leading our young people's group. We had over two hundred young people and we would always be doing things or going places to let young people know about the Lord. We rolled tracts in cellophane and made cellophane uniforms and got to pass out tracts at special occasions. Roy and Ruth were great leaders. I am grateful that I grew up in an active church like that.

Sincerely in Christ, *Helene Mikulencak*



September 25, 2000

The enclosed check is in memory of our youngest son, Joe Mesko, who passed away August 19, 2000, at 42 years of age. The lord gives and He takes. Blessed be the name of the Lord! In Christ

Dick and Grace Niswonger



Dear Vera,

Sure was great seeing you at our convention. Thank you for all you are doing for us and our precious Lord.

Please accept this check in memory of Arthur Friedman.
With all my love, *Helen Senak*



Dear Vera,

August 3, 2000

Greetings from the hot Sun City, Arizona, where the temperature is soaring in the 100's and over.

I'm trusting that you and your family are well and happy.

I did plan to get to the Convention this year but because Faith, Lillian Hudacek's daughter, became ill, Lillian had to change her plans of going with me, so I was unable to travel alone. I'm sure you all had a blessed time.

I love you all and God bless you in doing his work.

In Christian love, *Lennie Wilcox*



Dear Vera,

August 17, 2000

We are sorry we were unable to attend the Convention this year. Our prayers were with you.

Please pray for my dad, Mike Sivulka, who has been diagnosed with a tumor deep behind his nasal passage. He will be undergoing radiology treatments for 6 weeks to help relieve the pain and shrink the tumor.

Recently, while we were at the Brea Hospital, we met Vera Chocholaty, who attended the Czechoslovak Convention years ago. That was a nice treat.

Keep up the good work and may our Lord bless you- real good.

Love in Jesus, *Judy Shoff*



Dear George and Marija,

November 20, 2000

May the Lord bless you and yours.

We had a good trip here. Bro. Smilek of Brno met us at the airport in Vienna on Thursday, November 16, and then brought us here to Mikulov. We have a nice comfortable place on the ground floor. Yesterday (Sunday) he came for us and took us to his church in Brno. We also got to attend his granddaughter's wedding in the afternoon. It takes about 45 minutes to Brno by car. We even got to greet several people we know, like Brother and Sister Dedecius.

Yours in Jesus, *Richard and Cora Mazanec*



Dear George and Marija, November 20, 2000

Thank you for your loving concern for my dad [Mike Sivulka]. He was well loved by many people and his memorial service on Sunday afternoon at his church, First Baptist of Fullerton, California, was a true victory celebration.

I'm enclosing a copy of the bulletin we passed out at the service.

I thought it would make a fitting obituary notice for him.

We have asked that folks send any gifts to the Czechoslovak Baptist Convention in his memory.

Thanks so much, in Jesus' love,

Judy and Don Shoff



V Ostravě dne 31.10.2000

Milé sestry,

Především vás srdečně zdravím. Téma mého dopisu snad nejlépe vystihuje text z čtvrté kapitoly epištoly Filipským: „...dary, které jste mi poslali—jsou vůni příjemnou, obětí vhodnou, Bohu milou. Našemu Bohu a Otcí sláva na věky věků.“

Chci vám srdečně poděkovat za váš společný dar. Tak jako kdysi dávno odevzdal apoštolu Pavlovi Epafrodita dar Filipských, tak odevzdal váš dar bratr Jiří Sommer.

Projekt *Senior—Centra*, který jsem zaslala na letošní konvent jsem předala předsedovi staršovstva našeho sboru spolu s žádostí o bezplatný pronájem potřebných prostor a zařízení sborového domu. Staršovstvo vyjádřilo souhlas s činností *Senior—Centra* a stanovilo některé podmínky, například, že všechny prostory sborového domu budou nekuřácké a k dobrovolné spolupráci budou přizváni především členové našeho sboru. Pak bylo nutné žádost se souhlasem staršovstva předložit k projednání sborové schůzi.

Schůze se konala 24. září t.r. V rámci programu předseda staršovstva, bratr Ing. Bohuslav, upřesnil některé detaily mé žádosti s tím, že za rok provedeme kontrolu činnosti *Centra*. Sbor pak absolutní většinou hlasů žádost schválil. Podpora sboru je pro mne velmi důležitá. Jsem vděčná i za sestry a bratry, kteří jsou ochotni spolupracovat.

Sestry, které jsem o vašem daru informovala projevíly také svoji vděčnost. Pevně doufám, že po ukončení některých závazků, které ještě mám v péči o seniory se budu moci v dohledné době věnovat víc organizaci činnosti *Senior—Centra*.

Určitě bude pro mne posilou vědomí, že naši práci v Ostravě předkládáte na modlitbách našemu nebeskému Otcí. Často na vás vzpomínám, především na ty, které znám, ale také na ty, které poznávám na stránkách *Slavné naděje*. Všem Vám přeji Boží požehnání.

Ještě jednou děkuji a zdravím všechny sestry Československé baptistické konvence v USA a Kanadě.

Lydie Jariabková



Dear Sisters.

Warm greetings to you all! The subject of my letter is perhaps best summarized in the text from Philippians, chapter 4: “...the gifts you sent - they are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God. To our God and Father be glory for ever and ever.”

I sincerely thank you for the gift you have sent. Just as Epaphroditus brought the gift to Apostle Paul, Brother Sommer delivered your gift to us.

The Senior Center project that I had sent to the convention was presented to our church elders along with a request for the use of available space in our church building. The elders have approved the plans for the Senior Center, under certain conditions; for example no smoking will be allowed on church premises and the volunteer positions will be primarily offered to members of the congregation. After the elders approved the project it was necessary to present the request to the

entire congregation.

The meeting of the congregation was held on September 24, 2000. During the presentation the chairman of the elders brother Bohuslav clarified certain details of the request and we agreed that in one year the activity of the Center would be formally evaluated. An absolute majority of the congregation was in favor of the project. The support of the congregation is very important to me. I am grateful for all the brothers and sisters who are willing to help.

The sisters whom I informed of your gift are also grateful. I strongly believe that after completing certain responsibilities that I still have in caring for seniors, I will be able to devote more time to the organization of the Senior Center.

The knowledge that you present our work in Ostrava to the heavenly Father in prayer would certainly be an encouragement to me. I often think of you, especially of those that I know personally, but also of those who I only know from the pages of the *Glorious Hope* magazine. May God bless all of you.

Once again I would like to thank you, and I greet all of the sisters of the Czechoslovak Convention in USA and Canada.

Lydie Jariabkova



Executive Secretary ... Continues from page 142

- Date for the 93rd annual convention is tentatively set for June 27-30, 2002.
- Next mid-year meeting of the General Board will be in Scranton Road Baptist Church, Cleveland, Ohio, in October or November 2001.

There will be a lot of exciting events during the 92nd annual convention. Come and see!!

We will have more information about the annual convention in the next issues of *Glorious Hope*.

Have a blessed Christmas and happy New Year 2001.

George Sommer, Executive Secretary



Michael Sivulka

December 19, 1908 – November 12, 2000

A life well-lived and a man well-loved

The following was written by Pastor Jim Welch (Mike's granddaughter's husband) for his church bulletin on October 15, 2000.



Sometimes blessings come from least expected sources, but this one I should have seen coming! This week Christie and I went to Fullerton to visit her grandfather. Some of you were here a year and a half ago on Father's Day when Great-grandpa Mike shared of God's faithfulness.

2000 has been a tough one on him physically. At 91, a series of falls and strokes and various other maladies have left him immobile, practically blind and deaf, and in daily

pain. He fell again last week, so we went to see him, wondering if this would be our last visit this side of heaven.

He was sitting in a wheelchair when we arrived, so we whisked him onto the patio of the nursing home. It was cool out there, but tranquil and beautiful. He was having a good day, and in spite of a couple of cotton balls shoved in his ears, he could actually hear us if we shouted! And we could almost understand him. We caught every fifth word or so, but enough to know he was praising the Lord, reciting scripture, and asking about our kids, and, of course, how the church was going!

He had the same old mannerisms and expressions we've grown to love over the years. He indicated he was in some pain all the time, but would quickly compare his experience to that of Job. Grandpa never complained. He never blamed God. He just cited Job's hope, that one day soon he would see God face to face! He knows that his redeemer lives and that he will stand with Him some day soon. And so no matter what life brings, Grandpa Mike knows God's grace, and therefore hope prevails.

In the midst of our visit we had to sing. With him practically blind and deaf and us barely able to carry a tune, we sat in the patio singing at the top of our lungs...at least grandpa sang as loud as he could! The words? "O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder..." You've never heard "How Great Thou Art" sung with such gusto in all your life, including the big ending!!

How marvelous to have lived a long life and then in spite of suffering, still praise the sovereign God of heaven. That's faith! That's godliness. That's the result of living life day by day in constant trust in God and His ways. For you see, it's

more important how you finish the race than how you start the race. If you run in such a way as to build endurance, when the sun sets, you'll see its beauty, not its pain. Don't forget to look beyond today to what God has in store tomorrow. Only a close walk with God, firmly grounded in His Word, will reap such joy at the end of days.

So is your heart singing this morning? Why not? Don't you know that your redeemer lives? There's a certain saint that, if he knows it's the Lord's Day, will be singing this morning with all of his heart. That's the least we youngsters can do!

Today we rejoice with Grandpa Mike. This afternoon he sings in glory songs of praise to his beloved Savior. Join with the family and worship God for a life well lived and a man well loved. May we never forget to sing God's praises all along life's journey.

Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. For by it the men of old gained approval. By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible.

...and all these, having gained approval through their faith, did not receive what was promised, because God had provided something better for us, so that apart from us they should not be made perfect. Hebrews 11:1-3, 39, 40

Helen M. Struharik



Helen was called home to be with the Lord on November 23, 2000. She was born on September 2, 1921, in Campbell, Ohio, to Paul and Susan Ferko Struharik. The youngest of seven, Helen leaves three brothers, Paul Struharik and John Struharik of Campbell, and Samuel Struharik of Virginia; two sisters, Susan Stacy and Irene Jeren, both of Campbell;

and several nieces and nephews. A sister, Anna Lukich, is deceased.

Helen was a 1939 graduate of Campbell Memorial High School and then went on to Youngstown State. She received her master's degree from the University of Pittsburgh. She was a teacher for the Youngstown City School District before retiring in 1984.

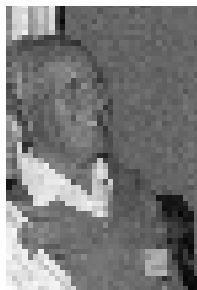
Helen was a member of Christ Community Church, formerly

the First Baptist Church of Campbell, where she was very active. She was the Sunday School superintendent, church moderator, president of the Lydia Circle, and in charge of the Flower Committee. Helen was also the church organist for 55 years.

Helen was active in the Czech Baptist Convention and served as the treasurer and president of the Women's Union.

Helen will be sadly missed by friends and relatives. She has touched many people's lives over the years. Helen was a faithful servant to her church and her God.

Tony Springle



The Springle family has been a part of the convention for many years. Many of the next generation relatives are keeping the tradition of attending the convention every year.

The convention brings people together to fellowship with one another, but most importantly we go to serve the Lord.

Anthony Springle was born in Mirotin, Poland, on April 13, 1916, to his parents Elizabeth and Teofil Springle. When he was nine years old, the family, consisting of four sons, moved to Czechoslovakia, where they lived for eleven years. At this time Tony went to school, which included one year at Charles University in Prague. In 1936 Tony and his parents immigrated to Canada just prior

to World War II. When they came to Canada, they settled in Minitonas, Manitoba, where Tony's oldest brother Josef had settled when he had come two years before. On July 10, 1940, Tony married Tona Reichert in Minitonas, Manitoba. Shortly after they were married, they moved to Toronto, in 1942. They began to attend the Czechoslovak Baptist Church in February 1942, when it was founded, and have been members there since that time. They were blessed with three children, Dennis, Milan and Donna. This family attended the Czech church and contributed their love of music through singing in the choir and playing the piano. Throughout the years, Brother Tony Springle carried out a variety of tasks in the church. He

was the treasurer for many years, church pianist, a deacon and a strong member of the church choir. He passed down his talent to his sons

and daughter as Donna accompanies on the piano and organ to this day, and his granddaughter shares her love of singing in the choir. The family attended many of the Czechoslovak Baptist conventions wherever they were held. Tony was a member of the General Board for many years.

One of his children and two of his grandchildren are still actively involved with the convention. Brother Tony's faithful love and devotion to God are an encouragement and an example to all generations.

Our brother Tony, after a long struggle with Alzheimer's disease, went to be with the Lord on August 8, 2000. His life was full of love and joy, and his memory will always live in our hearts. He touched the lives of everyone he met, and he will be greatly missed by all of his family and friends.

Amy Nesvadba, granddaughter

My Dede Amy Nesvadba

*My Dede as a kind and generous man,
Always lending a helping hand.
His heart was filled with love and joy,
He shared it with every girl and boy.
Every Sunday in his pew,
Even if there were only a few.
Always encouraging me to practice my Czech,
Now I know I will never forget.
Although we must move on from the past,
Our memory of him will always last.
It was his time to go,
He is with our Lord, we know.
Our reunion will be sweet,
When in heaven we meet.*

Two Babes in a Manger ... Continues from page 140

much, so I thought about what I had that maybe I could use for a gift. I thought maybe if I kept him warm, that would be a good gift. So I asked Jesus, 'If I keep you warm, will that be a good enough gift?' And Jesus told me, 'If you keep me warm, that will be the best gift anybody ever gave me.' So I got into the manger, and then Jesus looked at me and he told me I could stay with him—for always."

As little Misha finished his story, his eyes brimming with tears, he put his hands over his face. His shoulders shook as he wept.

The little orphan had found someone who would never abandon or abuse him, someone who would stay with him—for always.

Thomas Cosmades



Dvě děťátka v jesličkách ... Pokračování ze strany 140

Myslel jsem, že když ho budu zahřívát, může to být jako dárek. Zeptal jsem se tedy: „Když bych tě svým teplem zahříval, mohl bys to přijmout jako dárek ode mne?“

Ježíš mi řekl: „Budeš-li mne zahřívát, bude to ten nejlepší dárek, který jsem kdy dostal.“

Lehl jsem si tedy do jesliček, Ježíš se na mne podíval a řekl mi, že tam s ním mohu zůstat—na vždycky.“

Při posledních slovech měl Míša plné oči slz, zakryl si tvářičku rukama a jeho ramínka se chvěla pláčem.

Malý sirotek našel někoho, kdo ho nikdy neopustí ani mu neublíží. Někoho, kdo s ním zůstane—navždy.

Thomas Cosmades



Two Babes In a Manger

In 1994 two instructors responded to an invitation from the Russian Department of Education to teach morals and ethics (based on biblical principles) in the public schools. They were invited to teach in prisons, businesses, the fire and police departments, and a large orphanage. About 100 boys and girls who had been abandoned, abused and left in the care of a government-run program were in the orphanage.

The two instructors shared the Christmas story at the orphanage. They told the children about Mary and Joseph arriving in Bethlehem, finding no room in the inn, and being sent to a stable, where Baby Jesus was born and placed in a manger.

After the story they gave the children three small pieces of cardboard to make a manger. Each child was also given a small paper square cut from yellow napkins to tear up for straw, and small squares of flannel for Baby Jesus' blanket.

While the orphans assembled their mangers, the visiting teachers walked among them to see if they needed any help. One of the teachers came to a little boy named Misha. He looked to be about six years old and had finished his project. However, he had two babies in the manger.

Through a translator the teacher asked the boy, "Why two babies?"

Crossing his arms in front of him and looking at this completed manger scene, the child began to repeat very seriously the story he had been told, until he came to the part where Mary put the baby Jesus into the manger. Then Misha started to ad lib. He made up his own ending to the story. "Jesus looked at me and asked me if I had a place to stay. I told him I have no mamma and I have no papa, so I don't have any place to stay. Then Jesus told me that I could stay with him. But I told him I couldn't, because I didn't have a gift to give him like everybody else did. But I wanted to stay with Jesus so

Dvě děťátka v jesličkách

V roce 1994 přijali dva instruktoři pozvání Ruského odboru školství k výuce morálních a etických zásad (postavených na biblických zásadách) na základních školách. Byli také pozváni k výuce ve věznicích, v podnicích, při požárních a policejních útvarech a do velkého dětského domova. Dětský domov byl spravován vládou a žilo tam okolo 100 opuštěných a nešťastných dětí.

Během návštěvy v sirotčinci vyprávěli dětem o narození Pána Ježíše. Pověděli jim o Josefovi a Marii, o tom, jak přijeli do Betléma a nenašli nikde místo k ubytování, proto byli posláni do chléva, kde se Ježíš narodil a byl položen do jesliček.

Potom děti dostaly do ruky tři malé kousky tvrdého papíru, ze kterého měly vyrobit jesličky. Každé dítě

dostalo kousek žlutého ubrousku, ze kterého měly natrhat slámu a kousek flanelu jako přikrývku pro malého Ježíše.

Pozvání učitelé potom procházeli mezi dětmi a dívali se, zda-li některé nepotřebuje pomoci. Jeden z nich přišel k malému chlapci, který se jmenoval Míša.

Vypadal asi tak na šest roků a svou práci již ukončil. V jesličkách však měl položená

dvě miminka.

Pomocí překladatele se učitel zeptal: "Proč tam jsou dvě miminka?"

Chlapec se díval na své vyrobené jesličky se založenými rukama a začal velice vážně opakovat celý vánoční příběh. Došel k místu, kde Marie položila malého Ježíše do jesliček a začal improvizovat. Vymyslel si svůj vlastní konec.

„Ježíš se na mne podíval a zeptal se mne, jestli mám kde bydlet. Řekl jsem mu, že nemám ani maminku ani tatínka, ani nemám kde bydlet. Ježíš mi řekl, že mohu zůstat s ním. Řekl jsem mu, že nemohu, protože nemám pro něho žádný dárek. Chtěl jsem však s Ježíšem tak moc zůstat! Napadlo mne, že bych mohl použít jako dar to, co přece jen mám.



Repent Or Perish

Rev. John Karenko

According to a Gallup poll, about 90% of Americans believe in God; however, 98% think that they will go to heaven when they die.

Yet statistics show that less than half attend church and worship on weekends, although the Bible teaches (Heb. 10:25) that we should not neglect "to meet together, as in the habit of some." The Bible enjoins: "Search the Scriptures" (John 5:39) and yet most people don't (v.40). The Word of God instructs us to "Honor the Lord with your substance" (Prov. 3:9), but most rob God of His tithes and offerings (Mal.3:8-10). Before taking communion we are admonished to "examine ourselves" whether we are taking part in "an unworthy manner" lest we eat and drink without discernment, thus bringing "judgement against ourselves." For this reason many of you (Christians) are weak, ill, and some have died (1 Cor. 11:29-32), so there is a problem.

God has spoken! "Go, Grow, Give, and Remember" are only four of the many commandments that guide the lifestyles of real Christians! There should be some repenting taking place, as Christians "prepare to meet God" (Amos 4:12)

Jesus said: "Unless you repent, you will all perish" (Luke

13:3,5). The Greek work "repent" is in the present tense and indicates a continuing process, i.e., a daily practice for us to follow. As you kneel in prayer at the close of the day, is "repentance" a part of your prayer? Are you keeping "short account" with God? This is a do-it-yourself project. We are individually responsible to God and will give account to Him (Rom. 14:12). It is wise to be ready for that eventually. All Christians face the judgment seat of Christ (2 Cor. 10:5), and rewards or losses will depend upon our works.

The seven churches of Revelation are addressed seven times with the admonition to repent (Rev. Ch. 2-3). Most of these churches no longer exist, having failed the test of repentance. Are you tender to the loving call of God to return and repent, thus finding renewal and restoration?

King David grievously sinned but repented, confessing his sin. God graciously forgave him and restored to him "the joy of salvation" (Psalm 51:12). God is holy and requires holiness in us; will we pass the test of humbly repenting and find full forgiveness? It is available to anyone and everyone who sincerely asks (Matthew 7:7,8)...



Keep in touch

What's new

Rachel Novak

My Name is Rachel Novak. I attend Oakville Trafalgar High School, and I'm in my last year of high school, grade 12 (I'm fast-tracking). I'm seventeen years old and I am the eldest of six children. My grandparents are Joe and Rose Novak. Next year I'm planning to go to Bible College, and then my plan is to go on to art college (Ontario College of Art and Design, or Sheridan College). I'm not sure exactly what I'm going to be when I'm older, but I definitely hope it is art-related.

I enjoy pencil sketches the most but also really enjoy everything from clay and sculptures to oil painting and water colours. I'm passionate about my walk with God, my loving family and my love for art..



All convention gifts may be sent in the enclosed envelopes: US residents may use the **Business Reply envelope** or send their gifts to **Vera Dors, 6621 Elmdale Rd., Middleburg Hts, OH, 44130**, and Canadian residents may send their gifts to **Henry Pojman, 1516 Pembroke Dr., Oakville, ON, L6H 1V9, Canada**. Make checks payable to **Czechoslovak Baptist Convention**, and on the bottom write to what account you are sending your gift: **Convention, Glorious Hope, Trust Fund, or Scholarship Fund**.



MOVING ?

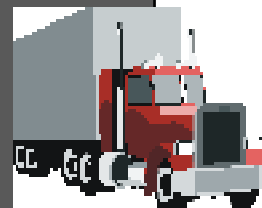
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From the President

Another year is upon us. How quickly! It was only a brief time ago that we were trying to figure out whether the world could successfully navigate from one millennium into another. Well, of course, we did, amid enormous “hullabaloo” about how momentous and threatening the crossing was likely to be. It turned out pretty much to be like the migration of any old year into a new one. Who even thinks much about it anymore? We got ourselves reasonably quickly into the routine of writing “2000” on our checks, letters, and documents. No particular trauma, and here we are quite used to the life that comes after the 1990s.

Not only that, we’re ready to push the numerals once again. Now it will be ‘01. And still God is taking care of us—promising to keep on with necessary provisions. Summer and winter and springtime and harvest/ sun, moon, and stars in their courses above/ join with all nature in manifold witness/ to thy great faithfulness, mercy, and love. As many cycles of time and history as God may send us, just that long will the surrounding care of God last.

St. Paul taught us a very long time ago that “all things work together for good to those who love God and are called according to his purposes.” You will find it written, and a whole lot more besides, in Romans 8 of the New Testament—a great passage, tremendously comforting (and also tremendously challenging to your ability to fit stuff together about this life). As a year goes by—most any year—some things transpire that



are unquestionably good, and there are plenty of things which do not seem all that hot. It will be that way again this coming year. Whoever you are, and wherever you are reading this, you can be sure that the same mix of good and not-so-good will come upon your scene. In the down times, when you cannot push any further for resolution, relief, improvement, or recovery, perhaps the only thing left to do is throw hands into the air and declare, “What’s a body to do!” (as my mother occasionally would say; it was one of her memorable lines). What to do? Nothing, maybe, but wait it out. One has to trust that the old apostle knew whereof he spoke. “All things.” All things!

In that confidence I am hoping for your peace of heart and success of hand in the turning of still another year. Mostly, too, that you can live for the long haul by a steady faith that the One known as Alpha and Omega knows the beginnings and endings of “all things” about you! Life in 2001 will be okay (and even more—rich!) when this additional year’s life journey can be understood and interpreted in terms of “all things working together.”

I am counting on that very same promise for the Czechoslovak Baptist Convention as we seek to enlist a fresh hold of our mission to service Christ and the gospel at home and abroad this new year. We have missed some of our convention “regulars” over the last couple of summer gatherings. Some have left permanently—to go home to God. Others have simply been

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From the Executive Secretary



The mid-year meeting of General Board met on November 3, 2000, in Christ Community Church, Campbell, Ohio (former First Baptist Church). After the meeting and a delicious dinner, the evening service was led by the local pastor, Bill Rotar, a talented young lady from the local church sang a few solos, and then we heard messages from John Banko of Czechoslovak Baptist Church (Toronto) and from President

Robert Dvorak. After that we enjoyed an Old-Fashioned Hymn Sing, with Robert Dvorak at the piano. As always, singing culminated with the Lord’s Prayer..

Christ’s Expectations of Us.

If you love me, you will keep my commandments.

John 14:15

That is the theme and verse of the 92nd annual convention, which has been set for July 5–8, 2001, in Philippi.

- Starting with the next convention, Canadian delegates will be paying the registration fee, meals, and accommodation in Canadian dollars.
- We are also preparing a special program for the 4th of July for those who will come early. There will be a picnic, campfire, game playing, singing, and of course fireworks.
- There will be a camp for young people during the convention. More information about the camp can be found in the next issue of Glorious Hope.

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Jana Personal Testimony of Jana Totbova, Slovakia translated by Ljuba Canji

I don't know why it took me so long to find real life with the Lord. I was born in the Czech Republic to Polish parents. I was only four months old when my mother died suddenly and my father gave me up for adoption to a family who moved to Poland. As far back as I can remember, life was difficult.

As the oldest of 11 children, my parents expected me to take care of myself and the rest of the children.

Many times I wondered why my life's path was covered with thorns but no roses. My father was a Jehovah's Witness. He would read from his Bible but he held a Bible in one hand and a bottle of whiskey in the other. When he was drunk, he beat and abused his children, and I was the first in line. We would run and hide in the fields or at our neighbours'. It was a living hell in our home. At 18 I left home, found a job, and lived on my own.

In my young heart I deeply believed that the Bible was the true word of God and that Jesus loved me. I loved and memorized 1 John 4:16.

Before long I married a young man who was a Communist. Whenever he found me reading my Bible or praying, we would argue and he beat me physically. I left him, taking my Bible with me—my only possession.

Now I was lonely. I had no money and no job. I lived on the street and slept in ditches. One day I met a woman who suggested I go to Germany and find work there, so I did. Again, I had only

my Bible. There, in a strange country I found a job and found my new husband. We got married and had two sons. My husband was a Jehovah's Witness. We returned from Germany to Levice where I too became active in this organization. I spent days and hours on

the street with my two boys, giving out literature. But deep in my heart I was not satisfied. One day I was standing in downtown Levice and I spotted a big tent with a sign, "The Tent of Hope."

I went in and heard beautiful music, a youth choir, and a sermon preached by Vlado Canji. I went forward at his invitation and prayed with my counselor, Ljuba Canji. She put a packet of literature in my hand. I was depressed and confused, and I cried for a long time.

My turning point was the day someone put the Jesus film in my hand, for free! No one ever gave me anything for free. In the past I had given money and time to my religion and I got nothing in return. But now I got this expensive video for free. I watched the video with my family. In prayer I gave my heart completely to the Lord. I went to the Baptist church in Levice, where I understood

the Word of God and in obedience to Jesus' command, I was baptized last December. Now my

whole family worships together every Sunday. My favourite verse is Isaiah 45:22, "Turn to me and be saved, all you ends of the earth, for I am God, and there is no other." □

Problems come, problems go,
who can ever know
what good things lie ahead
for those who persevere instead
of giving up or running away,
when trouble comes up to say
will you stay and fight
or run away in fright?

I could never go through life alone
I know I would need you in my life
just to go on and live.

Elizabeth Legierski

From the President ... Continues from page 142

hindered from leaving home at convention time for one reason or another. So I pray for a long memory of those who have passed, and I pray also for the quick return of ones who have recently been prevented from sharing the experiences of convention week with us in West Virginia. And I have one other prayer: for the gain of new members and friends who can sense the depth of this convention's calling and bless us (and themselves) with their great interest, support, and participation.

This coming summer, incidentally, at convention the first week in July, we are planning the following: 1) a children's and youth camp experience on the Alderson-Broadbush campus in Philippi, WV, concurrent with regular convention schedule; 2) cost reductions for Canadians, who bear an extra economic

burden because of the monetary exchange rate; and, 3) a program spiritually crisp and strengthening, accentuated by the kind of fun and fellowship that befits a family of Christ glad to be together. Please, won't you reserve July 5-8, 2001, on your calendar, whether you are regular, returning, or new to the convention. And, the preceding day, July 4th, will feature a festive pre-convention holiday picnic and party for all who can arrive that day earlier. West Virginia in the summertime, friends, is "next to heaven." (Regarding winter there, I cannot go quite so far.)

Remember, all things, all things! In God's hands—you, me, the convention. All God's people now, in the new year, and for all time! Good news, or what?

Robert Dvorak

