

Harry Potter • Eldership Conference • News from Emmaus Bible College

# JOURNEY

EMMAUS BIBLE COLLEGE • SPRING 2001



Today's Youth: Tomorrow's Church

# Features



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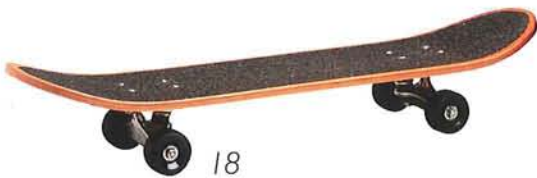
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# From the Editor

Welcome to the premier issue of *Journey Magazine*. The process of its design and production has been a bit of a journey in its own right, as we have undertaken to produce a magazine that will be both helpful and interesting to Christians in all areas of the Lord's work.

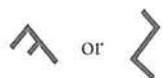
The name is intended to suggest the concept that the Lord's people are called to be "pilgrims and strangers" in this world, that our sojourn here is only temporary while still requiring that we walk with skill and wisdom. It also is reminiscent of the Emmaus road, on which the Lord opened the scriptures to a few as they walked together. Thus, the magazine will strive to be a mixture of spiritual encouragement—"food for the way"—and news from Emmaus Bible College.

*Journey*, however, is intended primarily to be a magazine of and by the Lord's people; its impact and effect will be determined in part by the contributions made by our readers. We have set out to produce a forum for the Lord's people to discuss issues and to present ideas. Some of our regular columns, such as "Ask the Faculty" and "Dr. MacLeod Asks," are designed for this purpose. I thank all of you who responded to these features already, and I wish that we could answer you all individually.

Additionally, we will feature regular portraits of what the Lord is doing in His Church both nationally and overseas. In this issue we spend some time talking with a few who are involved with youth work; in future issues we hope to visit with various assemblies, overseas workers, and behind-the-scenes laborers.

## A note on the magazine's masthead:

Historically, the letters I, J, and Y of our modern alphabet trace back to a single Phoenician letter called *yodh*. The *yodh* was intended to be a stylized representation of a hand with bent fingers and wrist, and was drawn thus:



The Greeks adapted it in a simplified form which became merely a straight vertical line, from which the

Romans developed the capital I. The Romans also needed two variant pronunciations for the letter, and developed the J and Y which we use today essentially unchanged.

It seemed quite appropriate that our magazine's name, which implies the walk of life which we undertake in the company of our Savior, ought to begin with J and end with that letter's perfected form. I selected a type face which offered a low-descending J to suggest the shepherd's crook. (I almost inserted a picture of a sheep in the crook of the J, but exercised restraint instead.) The final Y is a capital in hopes that it will suggest the human hand once again, this time wide open and raised in praise, supplication, and ultimately to grasp the hands of the One Who leads us on our way.

I also include this alphabetical history to bring full-circle what I conceive as a vital connection with the central aim of this new magazine: to help us understand more fully the Hands that were pierced and which continue, two millennia later, to sustain and heal. May we remember to walk in the path which He chooses as we continue on our Journey.

Gregory C. Benoit



Benoit





# Fellow Travellers

Journey Magazine welcomes your letters and e-mail. Please send letters to: Journey Magazine, Emmaus Bible College, 2570 Asbury Road, Dubuque, IA 52001. Send e-mails to: [journey@emmaus1.edu](mailto:journey@emmaus1.edu). Please include your full name, town, state, Emmaus class year (if applicable), and daytime phone number. We reserve the right to edit letters for length and suitability. Opinions expressed in letters do not necessarily reflect those of Emmaus Bible College.

Editor:

Just received our *Emmaus Today*. Fabulous! What a superb and informative publication.

Also like the new logo! To God be the glory!

Larry and Pat Dail  
Irmo, SC

Dear Editor:

I have been very impressed with the new look and attitude of the *Emmaus Today* magazine. I receive mine through my parents, as my wife and I live and work with Wycliffe Bible Translators here in Brazil.

Thank you for the work you are doing.

Bill Carrera  
via e-mail

Editor:

I was looking through the latest *Emmaus Today* and had a couple of comments. First of all, the magazine looks great and I like what you have done with it, but the type that is used on different photos is hard to read—especially the different colored text. Maybe a black drop shadow would help the text to stand out better.

Bill Dewhurst  
via e-mail

Dear Editor,

Our *Emmaus Today* came today, and I was tremendously interested in it and appreciative of it. Certainly the Lord is blessing Emmaus and it was

exciting to read of all the things that are going on there. Thank you for *Emmaus Today*!

But could I make one suggestion: please don't try so hard to be clever with graphics. Your penchant for superimposing text over pictures drives me up the wall!

Norman E. Roberts  
via e-mail

Editor:

Thank you for the good magazine (I refer to *Emmaus Today*) I receive from time to time. The school is moving ahead and I am grateful.

However, let me say I was disappointed and surprised that C.E. Tatham's photo was not included on the front cover [Summer 2000]. I understand the five men represent past and present presidents but there was a time when I was at school in Toronto that CET served as acting president when (if I recall) REH [R. Edward Harlow] was away for an extended period of time. CET is also one of the founders and was an excellent teacher at the school. Surely he should have been included.

Joe Giordano, '46  
via e-mail

C. Ernest Tatham, one of the founders of Emmaus, contributed a very great deal to the Lord's work, and we certainly do not intend any slight. However, while he functioned as president during the absence of Dr. Harlow, he eschewed the title and did not wish to be considered in

that official capacity. It was out of respect for this wish that his picture was not included.

—GCB

Dear Mr. Greg Benoit,

I receive the *Emmaus Today* on a regular basis. Although I am not a graduate I am an advocate and supporter of Emmaus and am always excited about what God is doing at the school.

I wanted to congratulate you on some very nice personnel highlights of this last issue [Summer 2000]—the pieces on Dan Smith, Ken Daughters, and Jim Catron were excellent! What wonderful servants and good coverage to you and your staff in highlighting these men.

Ray Demich  
via e-mail

## Photo from Emmaus Archives

Dear Brothers and Sisters at Emmaus,

Greetings from Quetzaltenango, Guatemala. We'd just like to thank you for your kindness in sending us *Emmaus Today*. We have been especially delighted to see how Emmaus has grown, expanding in numbers of students as well as numbers of courses taught.

We saw the request for information about the picture in the summer issue of *Emmaus Today* and we can give you some information about the picture. It was probably taken sometime between the fall of 1961 and the spring of 1962. We can identify at

least 2 (and probably 3) of the people in the picture.

In the back row (boys), we can identify the 4th young man from the left as John L. Walden, son of John and Nan Walden who founded the Christian Home for Children in Colorado Springs.

In the front row we can identify the first girl on the left. She is Betty Woods, who was one of the children at the Christian Home for Children. The second girl from the left is probably her older sister, Margaret Woods.

Thanks for the good work you are doing there at Emmaus. Our prayer is that there will be many there who will have a desire to reach out around the world to help in these last days as we bring in the harvest! Our Lord is coming soon!

*Jim and Carla Cocking  
via e-mail*

Dear Friends,

Two friends sent me this picture as they were sure I was in it. I went for one year to Emmaus, 1950–51. Some of the students went for street meetings once or twice a week.

As you look at the picture, front row from left to right is Mary Woods from Colorado Springs. I'm sorry I can't remember the next two girls. I'm next (shortest): Vona (Stone) Hoppe; then Mary—I believe her name was Smith. Lydia played the organ and she later married John Rodgers. Back row left to right, third in is Grant Zedicher, then Dick Farstad, and Jim Cook.

The Lord has been very good to me, and I'll always be grateful for my time at Emmaus and the good teaching I had.

*Vona Hoppe, '51  
Phillipsburg, KS*

Greetings in Jesus' Name:

John and Lydia Rodgers sent me their copy of *Emmaus Today* so that we could see a picture of some of us back in 1950. With respect to the street meeting picture on page 22 of the 2000 Summer issue, those standing in the back row from the left are Larry Cantrall, and then two whose faces I can't see; next is Grant Zedicher; Dick Farstad, and Jim Cook.

The girls from the left are Mary Woods, Emma Guikema, Joanne (Peterson) Zelnick, Vona (Stone) Hoppe, and Mary Reynolds. Lydia Speck Rodgers is playing the organ.

The event is a street meeting at 63rd and Halstead in Chicago.

*Dick and Jane Farstad  
via e-mail*



Thank you to all who responded with information about this picture. I regret that there was not room to include them all.

The Emmaus Archives has many more old photographs spanning the past 60 years of the College's history, and I will run them from time to time, as space permits.



# Ask the Faculty

The faculty of Emmaus Bible College address questions from our readers. Address your questions to Ask the Faculty, Emmaus Bible College, 2570 Asbury Road, Dubuque, IA 52001, or e-mail to [journey@emmaus1.edu](mailto:journey@emmaus1.edu). Please include your full name, town, state, Emmaus class year (if applicable), and daytime phone number. We cannot respond personally, but will address one or two submissions each issue.

Should an elder or pastor go home from an open discussion of a church member's private life and tell his wife, seeking to hear her advice? Please base your answer on strong verses and be very specific.

Name Withheld

This question raises the historic tension between confidentiality and communication in a marriage relationship. We will look at the issues separately, then seek a biblical resolution.

Confidentiality is a vital ethical issue in any setting where helping people is concerned. Integrity demands confidentiality, and the scriptures require it as well:

*Debate your case with your neighbor himself, and do not disclose the secret to another; lest he who hears it expose your shame, and your reputation be ruined.*

*Prov. 25:9, 10*

The Old Testament speaks strong words against "talebearers" (Lev. 19:16; Prov 10:18, 11:13, 18:8, 20:19, 26:20,22), and appeals to the believer to "guard his mouth and tongue" (Prov. 21:23).

The New Testament warns against sins of the tongue, particularly gossip (Jas. 3:1-12; 1 Pet. 3:10-12). It is vital that the wife of an elder or deacon avoid "malicious gossip" (1 Tim. 3:11; Titus 2:3). Even in a discussion among elders, biblical integrity requires that only that which leads to edification, for the good of

individuals, be spoken (Rom. 15:1,2; Eph. 4:29). The "let it all hang out" mind-set of our society, and our cultural delight in public scandalizing of individuals, miss the point of David's cry:

*Tell it not in Gath,  
Proclaim it not in the streets of  
Ashkelon....*

*(2 Sam. 1:20)*

Counselling professionals make a point, however, that confidentiality is not the same as secrecy. Secrecy is the absolute promise never to reveal

## Counselling:

Ask the other party whether it is acceptable that you share the concerns for prayer support. Be very careful to honor his or her wishes.



PhotoSpin

information, regardless of the circumstance. Confidentiality is the promise to hold information in trust and to share it with others only if it is in the best interest of the individual or sometimes the interest of society.<sup>1</sup>

The scriptures also give us extensive teaching about the marriage relationship. Some of the terms used in speaking of a biblical marriage relationship—head, helper, joined, love, respect, understanding, giving honor, cherish, affection, heirs together, one, companion, covenant, etc.—imply healthy communication

between a husband and wife. Some of the biographical scenes in biblical accounts of marriages indicate that verbal communication is natural and desirable, but often flawed with emotion and stress (Gen. 16:5,6; 21:9–12).

In recently written books and in marriage seminars, many find it easy to use a few biblical statements as springboards to elaborate “pop psychology” on verbal communication and feeling experiences. This often includes the idea that one must tell a

sensitive matters to his wife and to put the burden of confidentiality needlessly on her. It is a serious thing for a wife to break her husband’s trust by harmfully telling someone else details she learned from him. If an elder’s wife cannot be a part of the solution, why make her a part of the problem? On the other hand, if the group of elders see one or more of their wives to be helpful in ministering to the person in need, perhaps as a group they should ask the ladies to meet with them and to share appropriately the situation

discuss sensitive matters, knowing that information will be held in confidence. We will also give this blest elder one or more mature, godly individuals, mature in people skills, with whom he can find wise consultation within professional confidentiality. He will also be blest with a godly wife of mature Christian character, whose wisdom and sensitivity he values and draws upon. Yet she trusts and respects him enough that she does not pressure his judgments of confidentiality. He makes sure she knows whom he talks with and when and where, but not necessarily all the personal details. This blest elder also walks closely with God, in the Word and in prayer, and knows that he can “lay it all on the table” with God in prayer because his gracious God invites him to cast all his cares on Him because He cares for him.

I conclude with an observation on confidentiality in the work of elders. There are times when a group of elders will deal with a difficult and sensitive matter, and will find it necessary to take some kind of action with individuals or situations. There are also times when the decision they reach will be heavily based on facts or factors that are not known by the congregation—and which *should* not be known by the congregation. Proper submission to the authority of the elders (1 Pet. 5:5) includes the necessary trust and spirit of harmony and unity in the assembly that avoids the sin of back-biting the leadership. Confidentiality in policy and practice in the eldership will be necessary in order to build such trust.

—Daniel H. Smith



PhotoSpin

## Elders’ Meetings:

Complete confidentiality in policy and practice will be necessary in order to build the congregation’s trust.

spouse nearly everything that one hears or knows. The expression “one flesh” is given as a basis of this idea. We need to remember that the “one” of Genesis 2:24 is compound oneness, not absolute oneness. One does not lose one’s “personhood” or individuality in marriage. The scriptures seem to indicate that the “one flesh” statement largely relates to sexual intimacy (1 Cor. 6:13–20; 27:46; 30:1–2, etc.).

The blessings of trust (Prov. 31:11) and respect (Eph. 5:33) are vital in a marriage relationship. It is unfair for a husband to convey

and request their help in ministering to others. Surely with a godly couple a wife can respect her husband’s commitment to confidentiality and can restrain impulses of curiosity. Elders’ wives, after all, are not elderesses.

Let me suggest an ideal scene, even though in this world there are not perfect people or perfect congregations of believers. An elder in a local church would be grateful for fellow-elders who do not demand that he tell every detail of a situation he knows about, yet with whom he can freely

<sup>1</sup>Gary R. Collins, *Christian Counseling* (Nashville: Word Books, 1988), 307.



# The Lord's Work in Zambia



by Ray Barham

When Terry and I returned to Zambia in 1995 it was to find that the work of Emmaus Correspondence courses had fallen on hard times. The major reason for the decline was that postage rates had risen so much that would-be students could no longer afford to use the mails to send in for courses or to pay to have them sent.

When we were requested to develop an Emmaus work in the Luapula province (the capital of which is Mansa where we live), we realized that any work would have to bypass the post office. But we also found that evangelists, who come to the mission station at least monthly, were keen to act as agents to take the courses to students in the surrounding countryside, and then to bring them back to us for marking.

However, we soon found that few people could afford to buy the courses, even at the low prices which we charge. This led us to develop a system of lending the courses to anyone who would buy the accompanying test booklet (at about 9 cents). Where the questions are included in the course book we subsidize the price to put it within reach of the average person (about 18 cents).

Emmaus correspondence courses began to be translated into Bemba (Zambia's most widely spoken African language) in the 1950s. Over the years, new courses have been added, and today we have 24 courses in circulation. Courses have also been translated into two or three other Zambian languages, and these are being used to good effect by other

missionaries, mainly in the northwest of the country.

In the 4½ years since we started Emmaus in the province we are grateful to report that the Lord has blessed the work, and to date some 21,000 courses have been successfully completed, with about 3,300 students on the records. About 200 have received their 24-course certificates and a further 450 have completed at least 12 courses. We don't keep track of those who report trusting in Christ as a result of studying with Emmaus, but their numbers are significant.

Emmaus has had a big impact in the local prison. The authorities there tell us that behavioral problems are fewer since Emmaus was brought to them. Good as that may be, our primary goal is to have men and

The "little Emmaus complex" in Zambia where Ray Barham works with a team to distribute Emmaus correspondence courses.

Above, a group of local believers, most of whom were baptized in the river last spring.

Ray Barham





women become new creatures in Christ and then grow to spiritual maturity. Many in the prison have found the Lord through the courses combined with the faithful preaching of two young men who meet with the prisoners each week. Last March the prison authorities allowed us to bring a dozen men from the prison to be baptized in the local river. It was a day of rejoicing.

Any correspondence work demands a great deal of office work and we soon realized that we would need help. Not wanting employees but rather fellow-workers, we prayed that the Lord would give us people of His choosing to help with the marking, typing, and record-keeping. He has given us two fine women and three committed men who volunteer their services several mornings or afternoons a week. One of the men is crippled but is happy to spend an hour and a half on his crutches to be here each day.

The Lord has not only provided the people, but also the facilities and

the equipment. We have a compact little Emmaus complex for processing, warehousing, and printing the courses, and for serving the agents. Doing most of our own printing is making the ministry affordable. We can produce test books for a half or a third of what we would have to pay a printer. Again in answer to prayer, the Lord provided a Risograph printing machine which is ideal for our purposes. Since it went into operation 22 months ago, we have printed in Bemba 12,500 booklets and 2,000 course books. We are also using the Risograph to print, for a fellow missionary, 12,000 Emmaus courses and test books in Swahili over a 12-month period. On top of all this, the Risograph has turned out some 360,000 tracts.

The Emmaus agents, who are evangelists, elders, and other committed Christians, are scattered throughout the southern end of our Luapula province. Recently we set up a sub-center in the north and expect a good work to develop in that area. Courses also go into the neighboring northern

province where there is a great need for the gospel.

Without the agents, almost nothing would be happening. They do it as a service for the Lord, but at the same time we let them keep the 9-cent fee charged for each test booklet, as well as a portion of what the student pays if he buys (rather than borrows) a course book. Then, because they use their bicycles doing the rounds of their students, sometimes riding very long distances, we give them a new set of tires and tubes after every 200 courses they bring in. Further, after an agent has brought in several hundred courses, we help him buy a new bicycle. We are grateful that the Lord has been supplying these needs.

There is no question in our minds that Emmaus is contributing hugely to the overall spiritual health of God's people in this area, and we thank Him for giving us a part to play in this vital program. ~

Ray Barham is the Regional Director of Emmaus Correspondence School in Northeast Zambia. He and his wife Terry are commended from Weston, Ontario.



Ray Barham

At left, Ray Barham gathers with some of his "agents." These and many others carry Emmaus correspondence courses to people scattered around the Luapula province, covering great distances on their bicycles to help people study the word of God.

Some of the many young Emmaus Correspondence School students who live nearby.

Charlie Fizer is Director of Emmaus Correspondence School, and can be reached at (800) 397-2425 or [cfizer@emmaus1.edu](mailto:cfizer@emmaus1.edu).



Ray Barham



# “You Shall Call His Name Jesus”

by David J. MacLeod

Mary was going to “bear a son,” and Joseph was commanded to name the baby “Jesus.” In our day names are mere labels, but in biblical times names pointed to the actual character and destiny of the individual.

Some Indian tribes in Mexico have a concept of “face” and “saving face.” When a child is newly born, they say it has “no face;” i.e., the face, they believe, is something that develops out of the child’s life and experience. As a result, an Indian does not like to “lose face” for he has spent his entire life developing it. This is similar to the Biblical concept of a “name.” Like the Indian concept of “face,” the “name” of many Biblical characters developed out of their experience and accomplishments.

## An Ordinary Name

This is especially true of Jesus. *Jesus* is the Greek form of the Jewish name *Joshua* and is a name which underlies His real humanity. It is a holy and sacred name to us, but in New Testament times it was one of the most common of names. At least five high priests had the name. In the works of Josephus there appear about twenty people with the name *Jesus*. So many others had the name that people frequently added descriptive phrases, such as “Jesus, from Nazareth” (Matt. 21:11). Yet, in the Gospels it is the name most commonly used of our Lord, being used of Him almost six hundred times. It is the name by which He was discussed among the people, and it is the name by which they addressed Him.

## An Appropriate Name

The Hebrew name *Joshua* was a sentence name, and in its longer form it meant “Yahweh is salvation,” and in its shorter form it means, “Yahweh saves.” It was the kind of name given to a child by devout believers in the God of Israel. But in this case the name is chosen not by the parents, but by God Himself. Every time that Mary and Joseph called His name (“Joshua!” or “Jesus!”) the gospel was proclaimed: “Yahweh is salvation!” “Yahweh saves!”

Great stress is placed upon the name *Jesus* in Matthew’s account. It is a name with rich Old Testament associations. Joshua was the successor of Moses who led Israel into the Promised Land (Josh. 1–12). Another Joshua, a high priest and a contemporary of Zerubbabel (Ezra 2:2), reestablished the temple sacrifices in the land. So this name identifies Mary’s son as the One who brings in Yahweh’s promised eschatological salvation. The Jews of Jesus’ day waited for such a deliverer—a new “Joshua” who would redeem Israel from Roman tyranny.

The great question for Matthew is “Who will inherit the kingdom?” The genealogy in Matthew 1:1–16 with its references to Abraham and David might have suggested that Jesus was such a nationalistic, political leader. In fact, the angel’s message to Mary in Luke 1:32–33 indicates that Jesus will one day rule over Israel as their king. But the angel says nothing of that to Joseph. Instead, he anticipates the teaching of Jesus who will

say in Matthew 20:28 that “He will give His life a ransom for many.”

Before the kingdom is inaugurated in the end-time, this Joshua—Jesus, the son of Mary—must focus on what really matters: salvation from sins. The problem of Israel was not essentially Roman domination. It was their estrangement from God by their sins. This is true in every age. The problem of America at the beginning of the twenty-first century is not the racial problem, nor weak educational programs, nor dysfunctional families, nor nuclear stockpiles, nor sexual confusion—although all these are symptoms of the problem. The problem is sin, which is the basic cause of all these other calamities. The problem of mankind is that it has not bowed to the great doctrine of original sin—a doctrine slain by human contempt, but documented in every newspaper, newsmagazine, and television news program that we see. This Joshua, this Jesus, the virgin’s son, shall confront the greatest problem of mankind: its sins.

The angel says that Jesus will save “His people from their sins.” To Joseph that would mean the people of Israel. As the Gospel of Matthew develops, however, we learn that “His people” includes not only the believing remnant of Israel but believing Gentiles as well (cf. 3:9; 8:11). The angel does not say just how Jesus will save His people, but it becomes clear later in the book. He saves them by offering Himself as “a ransom for many” (20:28). It is at His crucifixion



that He sheds His blood "for the forgiveness of sins" (26:28).

We should note that the angel says "He [Jesus] will save His people." The personal pronoun "He" (*autos*) is emphatic. The Bible is clear that "salvation is from the Lord" (Jonah 2:9); i.e., it is God who saves. Yet here it is Jesus who saves. In this Gospel we learn that Jesus is entirely human, yet here we see that He is also "thrillingly divine." He is a human Jew; He is also divine Lord—"Immanuel," the "God with us" who saves.

### A Meaningful Name

We would do well to reflect further on the name "Jesus." And here I am going to follow the remarks of the great London preacher, Charles Spurgeon (1834–92).

First, let us remember that it is a name divinely given and explained. It is a superbly appropriate name, for God the Father chose it. It is true to the Lord's person and to His office as Savior, and when we use the name in our prayers to the Father we have the assurance of His attentively listening.

Second, He was called "Jesus" by men. Although appointed by God, it was accepted by men. Both Joseph and Mary united in calling the child this appointed name. And ever after those who are instructed by God the Spirit call Him Jesus, recognizing that Christ is the only source of salvation.

Third, it is the name typically worn by the Old Testament captain of the Lord's host. Above I mentioned Joshua, the son of Nun, who led the people into the land of Canaan, slaying Amalek, overcoming Jericho, and

routing the Canaanites. It was a common name, as we noted earlier, because the Jewish people looked for saviors, but found none until Jesus came. Now the name is reserved for Him alone.

Fourth, the name Jesus identifies Him with His people. He would not be Jesus ("Yahweh is salvation") if He had no people to save. And all of His elect people cannot get along without His salvation. The first link with Christ is not our goodness, but our sins; not our merit, but our misery; not our righteousness, but His grace.

Fifth, the name Jesus indicates His chief work. It is striking that people write of Christ who know nothing of His main work. To have known John Milton, but not as a poet, is not to have known the essence of the man. To have known Albert Einstein, but not as a scientist, is not to have known his greatest accomplishments. There are those who say they know Christ the teacher, but not as Savior. They do not know the Jesus of the Bible at all.

Sixth, the name Jesus is completely justified by the facts. The name was given to Him before He was born. Was it justified? Listen to a Christian on a deathbed sing His praises. Listen to a former drug addict, or alcoholic, or self-centered middle-class American who has been saved tell his story. Jesus saves people from their sins. As Spurgeon says, "Earth knows it, hell howls at it, and heaven chants it.... Time has seen it, and eternity shall reveal it."

Mr. Spurgeon one day passed through a cemetery and noted a

gravestone that read: "Sacred to the Memory of Methuselah Coney, Who Died Aged 6 Months." Methuselah is the Old Testament character who lived 969 years (Gen. 5:26–27). No doubt the parents of Methuselah Coney had grand designs for their boy, but the little fellow's life contradicted their hopes. Unlike little Methuselah Coney, Jesus' name is completely justified by the facts.

Finally, the name Jesus is Christ's personal name forever. It is the name His mother and father gave Him. It is the name above His cross—"Jesus the Nazarene, King of the Jews" (John 19:19). It is the name of the resurrected one proclaimed on the day of Pentecost, "This Jesus God raised up again" (Acts 2:32). It is the evangelist's theme—"Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved" (Acts 16:31). At the very end of the Bible He promises, "Yes, I am coming quickly," and the apostle answers, "Amen. Come, Lord Jesus" (Rev. 22:20).

This is why the name of Jesus is so important. And that is why Paul, in his great passage on the humiliation of Christ, exults, "Therefore also God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow..." (Phil. 2:9–10). It was Bernard of Clairvaux (A. D. 1090–1153) who said that the name of Jesus was honey in the mouth, a melody in the ear, and joy in the heart. One of our great hymns puts it this way:

*Jesus! the name that charms our fears,  
That bids our sorrows cease;  
'Tis music in the sinner's ears,  
'Tis life, and health, and peace.* ~



# What Hath the Potter Wrought?

by Gregory C. Benoit

There recently has been much to do aroused by the *Harry Potter* books of J.K. Rowling, and Christians have been divided over the question of whether they are suitable reading for children. I have read many editorials in which parents are exhorted either to permit or to prohibit the books, but few writers offer to help parents decide for themselves.

To that end, I would like to suggest a few questions which we can use to assess whether *any* book is suitable for a child. These questions, and many more like them, can also help us to assess the deeper lessons to which Christians of all ages are exposed by books, movies, television, music, even advertising—messages which can subtly shape the world view of an adult as much as of a child. These questions are hardly exhaustive, but may serve to start our analysis.

## How does the story fire the imagination?

A good story will capture the reader's imagination, causing him to visualize what is happening and even urging him to imagine how he would behave if he were in the hero's place. It is this very power of the imagination which enables an author to teach, as he gently leads the reader to put himself into unusual circumstances in which he must wrestle with abstract concepts.

Children will pursue the forms of entertainment which their parents enjoy.

This is the very question which has given rise to most of the *HP* debate, as many Christians feel that the books encourage a child's curiosity toward occultism and witchcraft. I personally do not respond to the stories that way. I find the magic elements to be as innocuous as Ali Baba's flying carpet or Aladdin's magical lamp. The magical elements in *Aladdin* or *Sleeping Beauty* or a thousand other children's stories (this is not, after all, a new trend) lend a sense of wonder and fantasy to a story without necessarily becoming the central focus of the story. The central focus of *Cinderella* is on the characters—the conflict between Cinderella and her evil step-mother and step-sisters—not on the pumpkin or the slippers. Similarly, the emphasis in the *HP* books is on the conflicts between Harry and those who oppose him.

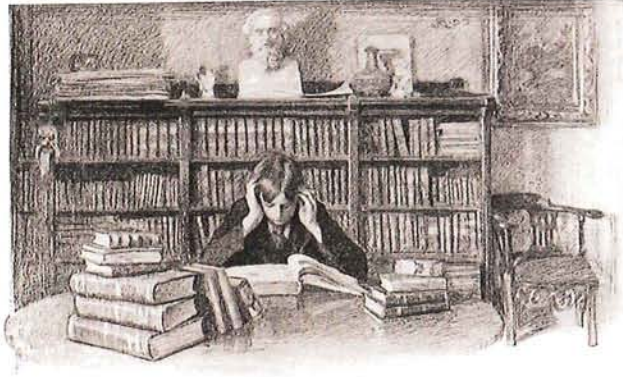
Nevertheless, this is a very personal question. A story may elevate one man's thinking and spur him on to higher good, while not touching his neighbor at all. Thus, I find myself drawn by *HP* into the conflict of good versus evil, into the challenge of solving a riddle and of risking all to defeat the foe. Others, however, might find that their imagination is drawn to learn more of occult powers. This really is an assessment which needs to be made by parents themselves, since they know their own children best.

## What laws of life does the story illustrate?

When an author writes a novel, he creates a world with his own laws and populates it with characters of his own design. That world and those characters can operate on any set of laws or principles whatsoever. Dr.







Seuss can create a Whoville world on a speck of dust; Crockett Johnson can give Little Harold a purple crayon and have him create an ocean simply by drawing waves on a wall. Harold can even draw a little purple boat and climb into it before sinking into his purple sea.

This in itself is not bad; indeed, it is part of the delight which makes *Harold's Purple Crayon* and *Horton Hears a Who* perennial favorites. Most children are not going to develop a distorted world view from these books, since they are capable of discerning that the real world does not work that way.

Trouble can arise, however, when a story demonstrates *moral* laws which are contrary to reality. This is where I personally have some serious problems with the *HP* books. In each of the stories there is some force of evil which threatens Harry or his friends, and the force is not defeated until Harry breaks some rules or tells some lies. The consequence of his rule-breaking and lying is victory and success; indeed, victory in some measure *depends* on his misbehavior.

This concept is reinforced by some of the characterizations in the books. The authority figures who are easy-going and *laissez-faire*, who are happy to overlook Harry's miscon-

duct—characters such as Headmaster Dumbledore—are likeable, trustworthy, and competent. But those authority figures who insist on obedience to the rules and who offer to punish misbehavior—characters such as Professor Snape—are portrayed as sinister and meddling. Argus Filch, whose very name suggests theft and villainy, is a particularly odious rule-enforcer whose ugly cat prowls the halls in search of students who are not where they belong. Out-smarting and humiliating them is positively a virtue.

Conversely, the *Narnia Chronicles* of C.S. Lewis present moral laws which are consistent with reality. For example, in *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, Edmund betrays his brother and sisters to the White Witch, and this brings dreadful consequences to the world of Narnia, leading ultimately to Aslan's death. The physical laws of the world of Narnia may allow mice to talk, but the moral laws require that a character's actions bring consequences.

### Is the hero heroic?

Our culture has few heroes who are truly heroic. We all know people who strive to be like their favorite movie star or rock demi-god, and parents do well to consider what

characters they are presenting to their children for role models.

In this area I think *HP* gets mixed reviews. We've already considered the dangers of Harry's moral misdirections. On the other hand, there is a strong element of sacrificial love in the stories. Harry's methods are not good but his motives always are, and he is ever willing to sacrifice his own interests to help others. His inspiration comes from his own mother, who gave her life to save him from the arch-villain Voldemort; as one character states clearly, "Your mother died to save you. Yes, that's a powerful counter-charm [against evil]."

Harry Potter presents children with a character who sets the interests of his friends above his own, sometimes risking his own comfort and possessions to help the helpless. He risks being expelled in order to save his friend, the bumbling giant Hagrid, from a false accusation. In each book he learns anew the lesson that character counts. As Headmaster Dumbledore explains, "It is our choices, Harry, that show what we truly are, far more than our abilities."

Contrast this idea with many hero-figures admired by adults. Many sports figures, for example, display great athletic ability but a decided lack of moral fiber. Our children will admire the same kind of heroes that their parents admire.

### The Right Questions

It is good to assess the books our children read. Stories are an important part of life; not merely entertainment, stories teach—they help us to bring abstract ideas into practical application. The questions that we ask of Harry Potter can also help us to consider what lessons are being taught in all our family entertainment. ~



# Trail Guides

Books of interest, both recent and classic

## Biblical Eldership

*An Urgent Call to Restore Biblical Church Leadership*

Alexander Strauch

Littleton, CO: Lewis and Roth, 1995

\$14.99, paper

## *Study Guide to Biblical Eldership*

\$19.99, paper

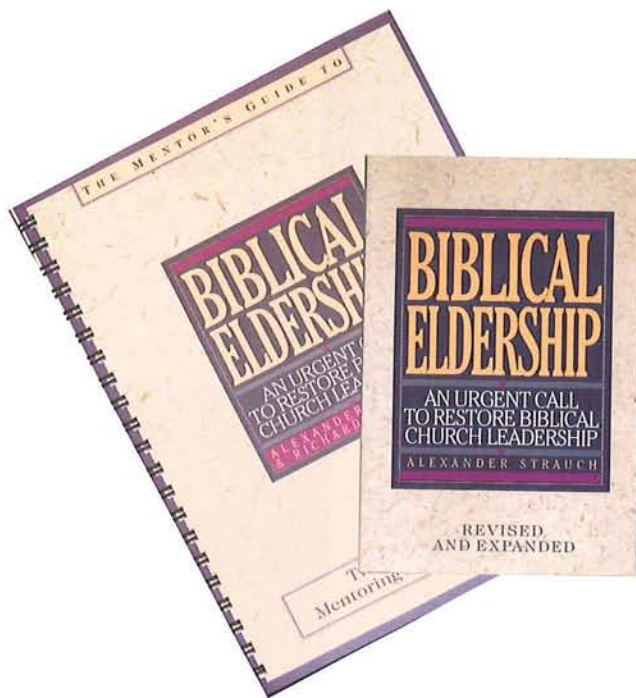
## *The Mentor's Guide to Biblical Eldership*

with Richard Swartley

\$19.99, paper

Strauch's popular work, now in its third edition, presents a thorough study on the topic of church leadership as defined in the scriptures. The two study guides make it an ideal tool for group study, and its eminently readable style is a real pleasure.

Be sure to register for the Church Leadership conference this summer where you can discuss this important topic with Strauch and others.



## Understanding the Church

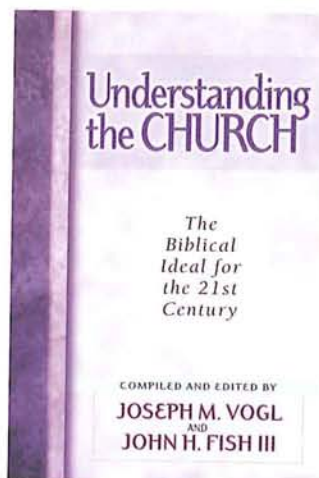
*The Biblical Ideal for the 21st Century*

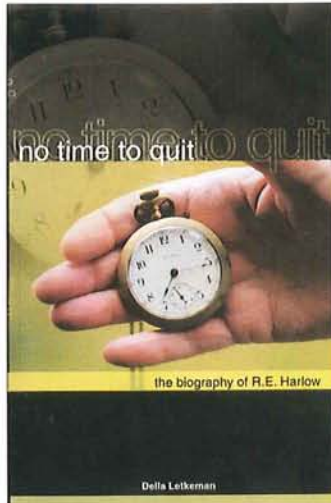
Joseph M. Vogl, John H. Fish III, ed.

Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux, 1999

\$12.99, paper

This is a compendium of essays originally presented at a colloquium, many of which were subsequently published in *The Emmaus Journal*. The numerous contributors address the nature of the church, the character and life of local churches, the autonomy and interdependence of local churches, and the centrality of scripture's teachings which defines the entire issue. This is a useful companion volume to Strauch's *Biblical Eldership*.





### No Time to Quit

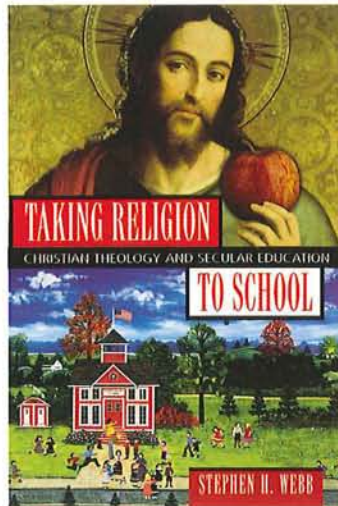
*The Biography of R.E. Harlow*

Della Letkeman

Scarborough, ON: Everyday Publications, 2000

\$9.99, paper

Dr. Harlow, one of the founders of Emmaus, is still serving the Lord in his 90s. This excellent biography presents us with a picture of a man of God who has served the Lord faithfully in the various efforts to which he has been called, and who had a vision which has become a thriving ministry. In his own words, "The apparent catastrophe in a life can turn out to be just the first steps to some larger advance."



### Taking Religion to School

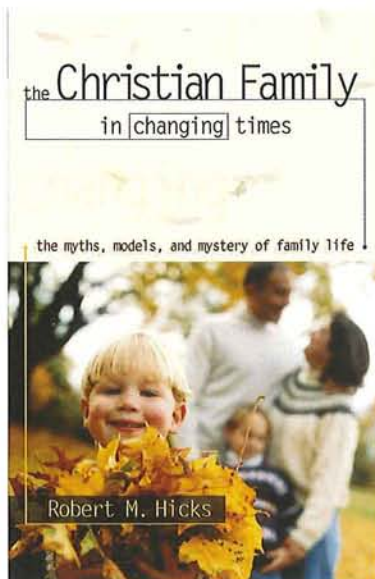
*Christian Theology and Secular Education*

Stephen H. Webb

Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2000

\$19.99, paper

Webb offers a penetrating look at the place of religion in secular high schools and colleges. He addresses the current climate of secular humanism, especially the academic hostility toward Christianity, and produces an analysis that will be of benefit to teachers in secular institutions as well as to the parents whose children attend them.



### The Christian Family in Changing Times

*The Myths, Models, and Mystery of Family Life*

Robert M. Hicks

Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, July 2001

\$12.99, paper

Hicks challenges popular Christian stereotypes of the American family and turns to scripture to establish a new model of the Christ-centered home. His thoughts and insights may prove unsettling or even threatening, but they will certainly inspire a reader to turn back to scripture for the final answers.



### And Then I Had Teenagers

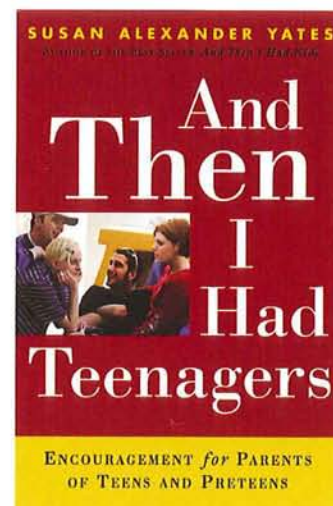
*Encouragement for Parents of Teens and Preteens*

Susan Alexander Yates

Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, August 2001

\$12.99, paper

This is the forthcoming sequel to Yates' popular *And Then I Had Kids*, in which she addresses the issues and struggles common to bringing up teenagers in our unstable culture. Each chapter also includes discussion questions for use in small group study.



### In God We Trust?

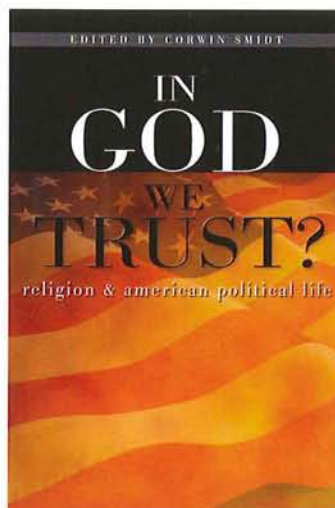
*Religion and American Political Life*

Corwin E. Smidt, ed.

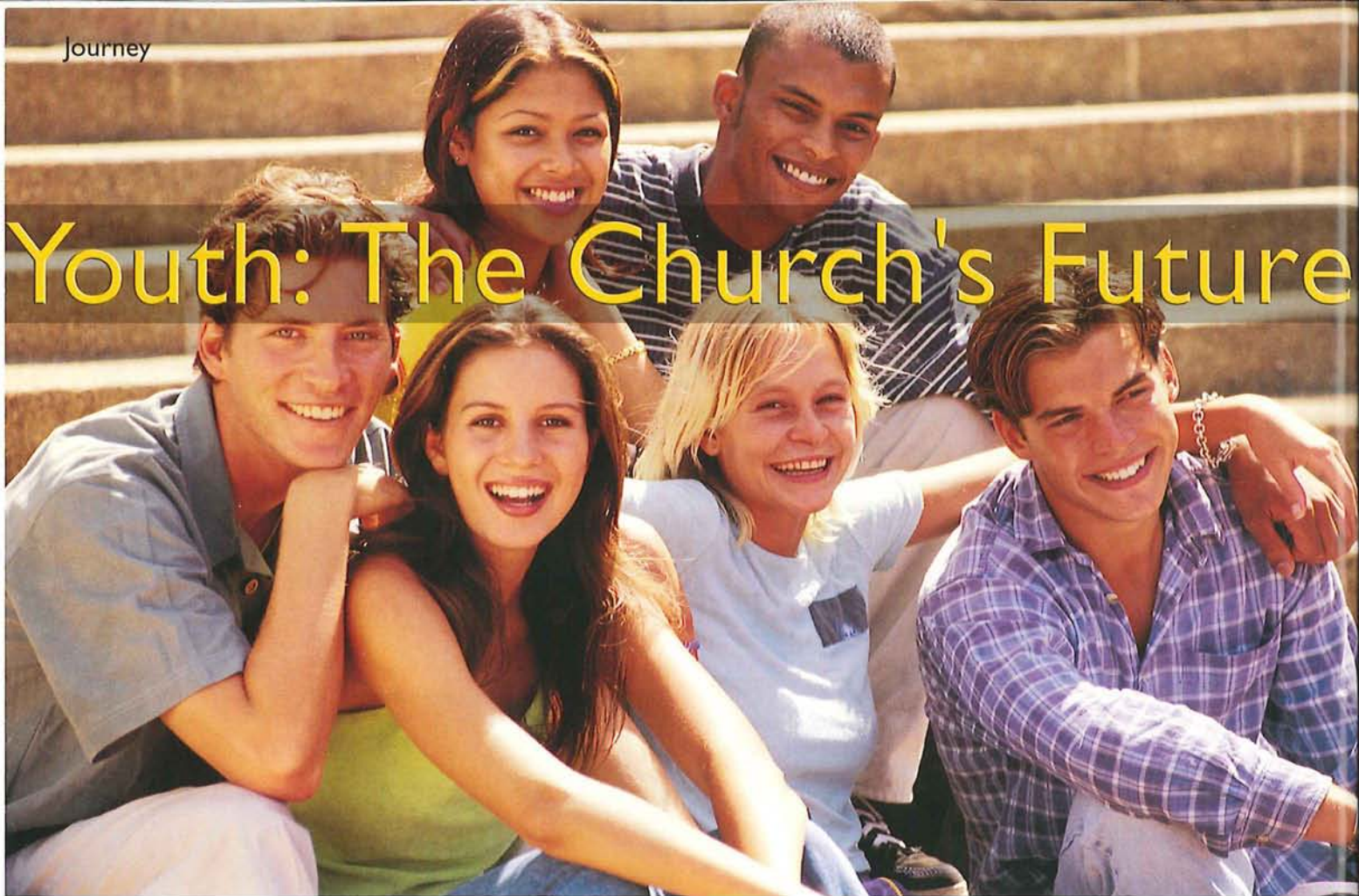
Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, May 2001

\$24.99, paper

In this year of political and election turmoil, Smidt presents a book which is intended to be a companion to typical political science texts. He approaches the topic in tandem with standard texts but offers insight into the role that religion plays, a subject which is ignored in most introductory political science textbooks. For each standard chapter on American politics he offers a corresponding chapter on the relationship between religion and that particular topic.



# Youth: The Church's Future



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Youth work does not fit neatly into a formula for the simple reason that it is a ministry to people, and people are unique individuals. There are, of course, principles which hold true for all people, but there are a diversity of methods and approaches; "different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit" (1 Cor. 12: 4). To this end we talked with youth workers who are active in different regions of the country, seeking to find both universal principles and unique applications.

**Jack Faulkner** is the camp manager at Sandy Creek Bible Camp in Washington, TX. He has been involved in youth work since the late '70s and has ample experience in overseeing programs for large groups.

**George Groezinger** is a commended worker at Gwinnett Bible Chapel in Lilburn, GA. At the time of the interviews he

was heading the youth work there, though he has since taken on a ministry in Spanish Wells, Bahamas.

**Jack Correll** is a commended worker with Guelph Bible Chapel in Guelph, Ontario, and has been involved in youth work for over 30 years.

**Andy Bonner** is a high school teacher in Westerly, RI, and has worked with teens in both church and parachurch settings for the past 20 years. He co-directs the teen camp program at Camp Berea in Bristol, NH.

**Bob Tissot** is the Executive Director at Bair Lake Bible Camp in Jones, MI, and he has been involved in ministering to young people since 1973.



Ask any youth worker for his views on youth ministry, and the chances are that the topic of discipleship will come up. This is certainly the case with the five we spoke with in these interviews. Each stressed the importance of "deliberate discipleship"—that discipleship needs to be a planned effort, not a haphazard afterthought. And this, of course, requires planning as well as manpower.

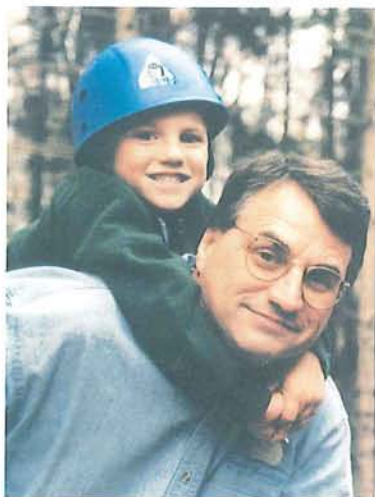
Andy Bonner emphasizes that "kids respond best when you contact them on a one-to-one basis, whether going out for ice cream or just listening to them for a few minutes." He finds that "getting them out of their everyday environments" with activities such as camping or hiking will take the young people "out of their comfort zone," encouraging them to think about the deeper issues of life. The question is how to do this, and the answers are as diverse as the men and women who minister to kids. One theme, however, which was common to all was the need to develop a structured program of discipleship.

Bob Tissot started the discipleship program at Bair Lake in 1998. It is a residency program for which young people must apply, and those who are accepted into the program must live at Bair Lake for 1½ to 2 years. They have a regular schedule of meetings for Bible study, discipleship, and accountability, working very closely with ministry coordinators Alex and Marcie Rahill. They set very clear expectations of the young people in all areas of their lives—spiritually, academically, and socially. Each participant understands what is expected of him or her from the beginning, and Bob and his co-leaders work closely with

them as they grow in their understanding of the Christian life.

George Groezinger emphasizes the need to serve others with his youth group. "I believe that teens *want* to live out their faith and to serve others, but they need a vehicle in which to do it. If you give them a practical way to serve they will follow." The Gwinnett Bible Chapel youth group makes monthly visits to nursing homes where they sing, give their testimonies, and just spend time visiting the elderly. The kids have built lasting relationships with the people who live there, and what's more "the kids love it!" The young people were so enthusiastic about reaching out to others that they asked George if they could get involved with Project Angel Tree, which delivers Christmas gifts to children of prison inmates. So each year they go shopping as a group for presents, get together to wrap them, and finally deliver them to inner-city homes. In addition to providing profitable group activities, the young people have found it to be a "real eye-opener—our kids gain real compassion for those who are far less fortunate, and they also see for themselves what happens to adults who get into trouble."

Jack Correll and his co-leaders take young people on an annual short-term missions trip. Participation in the trip is restricted to those who have met some clear-cut qualifications of Bible study, memorization, and reading. They have taken young people to a variety of mission fields at home and abroad where they have had hands-on ministry experience teaching Bible studies and reaching out in evangelism, as well as doing manual labor projects.



Bob Tissot (left) works with young people at Bair Lake Bible Camp in Jones, MI.

George Groezinger (right) has recently headed to Spanish Wells, Bahamas to be involved with a youth ministry there.





### Keeping Bible at the Core

One of the perennial struggles of youth work is finding a balance of fun social activities and serious Bible study. Groezinger has found that, while his kids need time to play together, "they really *want* times of Bible study and prayer." Correll adds, "If you want to entertain kids they will let you, but if you challenge them they will rise to that challenge."

But what sort of spiritual food is best for today's youth: milk or meat? The answer ultimately is both; feed the hungry with what they are able to digest. Bonner says "give them the gospel. I've tried to concentrate on the basics to spiritually ground kids in our post-Christian society." Ironically, this has led him to use adult-level or college-level Bible studies which he tailors for the younger audience. "The kids respond well to being treated with these high expectations."

Tissot says "give them meat." His young people are at least 18 years of age and have finished high school, and they tend to be more mature and hungry for solid spiritual food. The goal of discipleship is to prepare the *discipled* to become *disciplers*, and they must learn to rightly divide the Word of Truth. "We were seeing so many kids coming out of high school—good Christian kids—who were having their faith shaken in college. They hadn't had a chance to make their faith their own." Participants are required to meet for two hours each week for a discipleship class (they are currently studying *Experiencing God* by Henry Blackaby), a weekly in-depth group Bible study, and one-on-one accountability meetings with a member of the leadership team.

Group Bible study is only one portion of the discipleship process, however. Spiritual growth requires that each

believer spend time alone in the Word, communing with the One Who is faithful to complete His work. Here, again, there are two basic approaches which youth workers have found important: encourage young people to read, and teach them to memorize.

Correll has made personal reading an integral part of his discipleship program. He requires those who go on the annual missions trip to be maintaining a regular regimen of personal Bible study, and he also has them supplement their reading with challenging books. He provides his kids with a reading list at the beginning of each year and requires that they read a specified minimum. He changes the list each year so that they will always be finding new material, but he is careful to include missionary biographies and challenging books on Christian living—books that model godly manhood and womanhood.

He also requires them to work on scripture memory. "We give them homework each week which includes memorizing passages of scripture. We generally select passages that tie in with the scripture that we are studying in our core group Bible study, which helps make the study itself more meaningful."

Tissot urges participants in Bair Lake's discipleship program to be taking classes at one of the local colleges. He feels that this is important both to prepare young people to take a leadership role in the future and also to train them to stand for their faith in areas where it might be challenged.

### Building a Leadership Team

Obviously, discipling young people is no small task. The time and energy required to minister closely to one



Jack Correll (left) and his wife Mae have worked with young people in Ontario for over 30 years.

Andy Bonner (right) works with youth (and with pizzazz) in New England.



Benoit



or two young people is enough to keep any youth worker busy, especially if he has family and career obligations. But time and energy are not the only reason for working closely with other leaders: one-man leadership is dangerous. Each of the youth workers emphasizes that he works in close association with other leaders for the primary reason of accountability.

Tissot meets regularly with his board of directors, who hold the entire leadership team accountable. He also meets with four other youth workers for professional support and accountability, and he meets each week with two close prayer partners who uphold him and his family in prayer.

Sometimes, though, getting the help one needs can in itself be a daunting task. The secret, reiterated by each of our leaders, is to work together with people who *want* to work with young people. As Bonner points out, youth leaders should be "people with a passion for kids." Groezinger elaborates: "Those who get involved with youth—not as a responsibility but because they *want* to be with kids—they're the leaders who will stick." Correll even asks for a four- or five-year commitment from his co-leaders so that they can see the kids all the way from 9th grade through graduation.

"The key to leader retention," says Correll, "is encouragement." He likes to encourage his co-workers by urging them to try new things, to "stretch" themselves and to develop their gifts. Jack Faulkner takes the flip side of this approach by ensuring that his co-leaders get time for rest and refreshment. "We allow counsellors [at Sandy Creek Bible Camp] occasional breaks by having our staff direct camp activities." Others make it a point to ask parents to get

## Recommended Resources

Here are a few of the most popular resources that our youth leaders mentioned. Turn to them for ideas, Bible study materials, etc.

**Christian Camping International:** CCI produces a variety of books and periodical materials. They have a useful website at <http://www.cciusa.org>.

**Youth Specialties Idea Book Series:** Youth Specialties produces a line of books with very helpful ideas on group games and activities.

**Conferences:** Youth Specialties, Christian Camping International, and other youth organizations sponsor frequent conferences for youth workers which provide a good source of resources.

*Experiencing God*, Henry T. Blackaby (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1998).

*Lifeguide Bible Study Series*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

*Hot Illustrations for Youth Talks*, Wayne Rice (Chicago: Zondervan, 1994).

*The Tale of the Tardy Ox-Cart (And 1,501 Other Stories)*, Chuck Swindoll (Nashville: Word Books, 1998).

*Baby Busters: The Disillusioned Generation*, George Barna (Chicago: Northfield Publishing, 1994).

*The New Tolerance: How a Cultural Movement Threatens to Destroy You, Your Faith, and Your Children*, Josh McDowell, et al. (Wheaton: Tyndale House, 1998).

*A Generation Alone*, William Mahedy and Janet Bernardi (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1994).



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involved in special activities as drivers or chaperons, taking some pressure off the leadership team.

### Be On Guard

Accountability and burn-out are just two of the pitfalls that the leaders mentioned. Each had some sound advice, often learned the hard way, of things to avoid.

Some activities sound good in the planning stages but don't quite work out as intended. Faulkner tried strobe volleyball at Sandy Creek once... and only once! Another time a "date night" started well but went somewhat awry when the kids didn't want to stop "dating" when the dinner was over.

Priorities for the youth group itself is another area that requires constant monitoring. Groezinger points out that youth leaders need to deliberately "block out" time for their own families lest the young people take priority over one's own kids. Bonner emphasizes that people are more important than programs. "You don't take a really great scavenger hunt to heaven!"

Closely related to this are the attitudes of the leaders themselves. Correll warns that youth workers must take care not to become dependent on the respect and admira-

tion of the kids. "It's easy for a leader to start liking the kids to look up to you. You can end up coming between the parents and their kids." He suggests that leaders ask themselves whether the youth group would collapse if they should leave; if so, then the leaders need to correct their own attitudes.

Tissot sums it up nicely: "Don't forget your own walk. We must be careful not to focus on what the Lord is doing *through* us versus what He's doing *in* us." He recommends seeking the "sanity of solitude and silence"—getting away alone to commune with the Lord. He takes a three-day retreat alone each year to be quiet before the Lord, allowing Him to redirect his focus.

Is it worth all this work? A resounding, unanimous YES! Groezinger tells a story about William Booth, founder of the Salvation Army. Upon returning from a crusade, one of Booth's workers asked him if any people were saved. "Yes," he replied, "four and a half—four children and one adult!" His point was that the children have their whole life ahead of them, whereas the adult has already lived his out halfway. "This is why youth work is so valuable," says Groezinger. "If we can get them started toward serving God they will have a whole life of godliness ahead of them." ~



Benoit



# Turning Hearts

## The Youth Ministry of Jon Glock

*To turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous—to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.*

Luke 1:17

*Only be careful, and watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them slip from your heart as long as you live. Teach them to your children and to their children after them.*

Deut. 4:9

As our nation slips away from our Judeo-Christian roots, it is increasingly important that the church be training up a new generation of godly men and women. This responsibility needs to fall squarely on the shoulders of parents, most particularly on fathers. It may be that the mission of the church in the coming generation will be to “turn the hearts of the fathers to their children” and vice versa, and part of this process may include committed men and women who will deliberately turn the hearts of youth in that direction.

Jon Glock is just such an individual. Jon is involved in the youth ministry at College Heights Chapel in Murfreesboro, TN, where he serves as the AWANA commander and the coordinator for various programs which minister to kids grade six and up. He is also very popular with young people around the country, frequently speaking at camps and youth retreats. When he’s not busy with these commitments, Jon also travels around the country as a recruiter for Emmaus, and somewhere in that schedule he even finds time to sell billboard

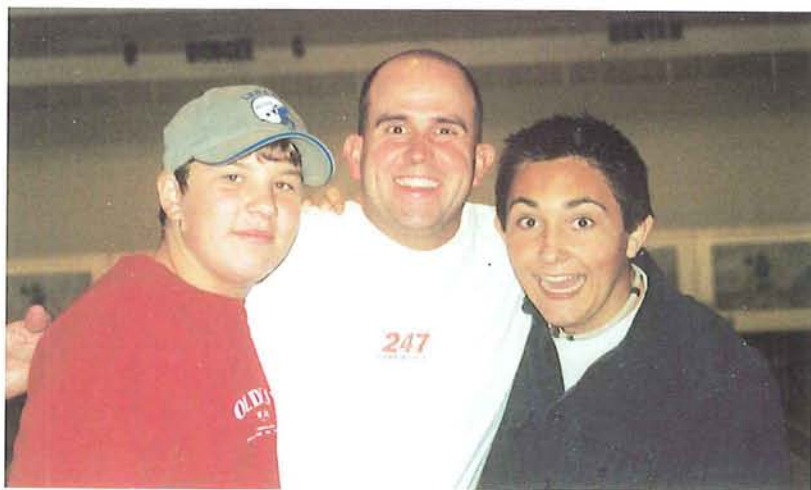
advertising for his employer, Decker Displays.

Jon graduated from Emmaus Bible College in 1991 with a degree in Biblical Studies, then received his MABS degree from Dallas Theological Seminary. “Biblical training is vital for the godly youth worker today,” he states, “but it’s only half of the picture.” The other half, he insists, is a clear understanding of the kids themselves. “You can’t minister to people you don’t know.”

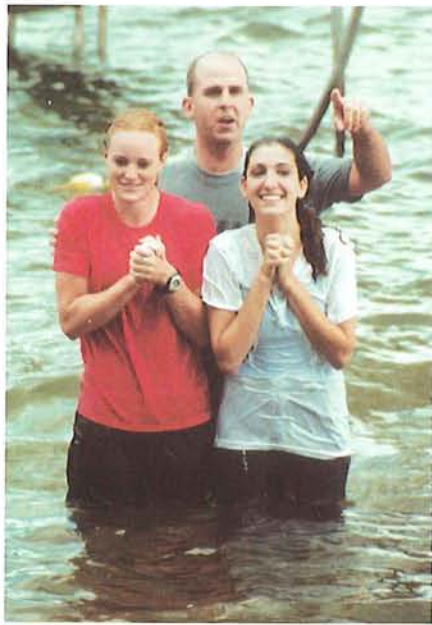
### Understanding Our Youth

Jon has gained good insight on today’s youth from books such as *Baby Busters: The Disillusioned Generation* by George Barna and *The New Tolerance* by Josh McDowell. Understanding the background of our American generations will help adults prepare the next generation to lead their nation back toward God.

According to Barna, the generation that served in World War II had a solid commitment to the work ethic and understood the vital importance of loyalty to family and Christian ministry. They were more committed







Benoit

“It’s all about people. That’s what the Lord invested in; that’s what we need to invest in—people.”



Benoit



Benoit

to serving others than to serving self; as Jon puts it, “When the church doors were open they were there.”

But the next generation, commonly known as the Baby Boomers, adopted their parents’ work ethic without the commitment to serving others. They were more committed to serving self than to serving others, and this led, according to Barna, to two-career marriages, divorce, and growing materialism and hedonism.

The following generation, known as Generation X, adopted *their* parents’ self-serving mentality without the accompanying work ethic. Jon describes these young people as very apathetic, enmeshed in a culture of entertainment and recreation. He feels that, to understand the attitudes of young people, a youth worker needs to be familiar with the ideas that the young people are being taught through popular entertainment.

“Popular musicians today speak for our kids—the kids would rather buy music than eat.” He points to popular songs such as Bon Jovi’s “It’s My Life” (“It’s my life/It’s now or never/I ain’t gonna live forever/I just want to live while I’m alive”) or Sheryl Crow’s “All I Wanna Do (Is Have Some Fun)” as encapsulating much of the world view which our young people take for granted. “Our kids hold a ‘whatever’ view of life, while at the same time

feeling very persecuted and down-trodden.” They lack any understanding of absolute truth; what is true today will probably not be true tomorrow.

“Society calls these kids Gen-X, but what we really have is a generation of latch-key kids. They’ve been left to themselves to raise themselves, and they have adopted a very self-structured, self-defined lifestyle and world view.” Jon quotes Tony Campolo:



Benoit



"What the youth of today need more than anything else is order, structure, and manners."

### Meeting Their Needs

The best thing youth workers can do for their kids is to give them what they need, which, in the long run, is also what they want the most. "Our kids want to know what we expect from one week to the next. They want to know, not what is fun or cool, but what *we* want from *them*. They want order and consistency."

It is consistency, Jon insists, that leads to an adherence to absolute truth. "If the rules keep changing—if our expectations of moral behavior keep changing—then there must not be anything at all that is *unchanging*." Jon is convinced that kids today have a deep hunger to find something that is unchanging, something eternal which transcends current events and fads and trends. "They are searching for 'the real thing'—the thing that is solid and everlasting."

Obviously, this can only be found in God's Word, and Jon is finding that young people have little knowledge of the Bible; even those who are growing up in the assemblies do not have the depth that they should.

"The Bible has to be the very core of any youth work. Fun stuff has a

place, but the kids deep down want something more lasting than a good game." Jon insists that Bible teaching be the center-point of any youth ministry, not something added on as an afterthought. The College Heights Chapel youth group meets on Sunday nights for fellowship, games, Bible study, prayer, and worship. On Thursday nights kids attend a Bible study where they investigate God's word in greater depth. "It's understood by our young people that we are here to learn about and to obey the Word of God—and they're comfortable with that. It's what *they* want, too."

Jon also finds ways to spark an interest in the kids to dig into the Word on their own. "This summer at one of the camps I was involved with I had them doing sword drills. They *loved* it! They didn't know it was 'old school'!"

The key, as he sees it, is consistency, but consistency which includes the leaders as well as the young people. "The leader is the one who is modeling the truth that they're studying; he's the practical illustration for how to do it." This means that youth workers must first be certain that their own lives are consistent with the Word of God, and should then tell the kids to imitate them. This is the secret of discipleship: "Whatever you have

learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice" (Phil. 4:9).

### Discipleship

This kind of modelling requires close personal involvement of youth leaders in the lives of their kids. "This is the hardest part of youth ministry," Jon is quick to point out. "It requires a huge amount of time, and it forces the leader to be *real*." It also is the vital ingredient in any church's ministry to the next generation, as it is the very thing that the kids are asking for. "Remember what these kids are saying: 'show me something *real*, something that *lasts*.' We need to show them Jesus Christ in our own lives."

How is this done? What exactly is discipleship? The best answer is to follow the biblical model, to imitate the Inventor of the idea. Jon turns to Mark 3:14, where Jesus "appointed twelve... that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach."

The first step, says Jon, is to "appoint," to select young people who are ready to *be* disciples. "Choose wisely: you don't want to try to force discipleship on a kid who isn't interested." He suggests that a youth worker should concentrate his greatest efforts on one or two young people







Benoit

"The Bible is always central.  
Always!"

who are interested in a deeper understanding of scriptures, finding ones with whom the leader feels some degree of natural affinity.

The second step is the most important: being with them. "Jesus spent *time* with His disciples, and that's the whole focus of what discipleship is all about."

This is a two-stage process. The first is to take part in *their* lives. "You've got to enter their world, to show them that their lives are important to you." Jon and his co-leaders at College Heights Chapel make a deliberate effort to attend the functions of the kids in their group, going to sports events, recitals, graduations—anything that is important to the kids.

The second stage is to invite the young people into *your* life, to include them in your plans and activities. Jon has taken one or two of the young men in his circle along with him on speaking engagements or recruiting trips. Others invite their young people on simple mundane things such as shopping trips or leisure activities. "We want to spend time with our kids, and we want them to *know* that

we want them along."

Finally, a discipler "sends out" the disciples to go and do likewise. "The goal is to train the next generation to take over my ministry, to carry on the work of the Lord, making disciples of *their* kids."

#### In a Nutshell

"The top priority in any youth program is this: give 'em the Bible!" Today's youth are tomorrow's church, and what we pass on to them will partly determine what the church will become. Jon turns to Deuteronomy 11:18–21 as the central text:

*Fix these words of mine in your hearts and minds; tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Teach them to your children, talking about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates, so that your days and the days of your children may be many in the land that the LORD swore to give your forefathers, as many as the days that the heavens are above the earth.* ~



Benoit

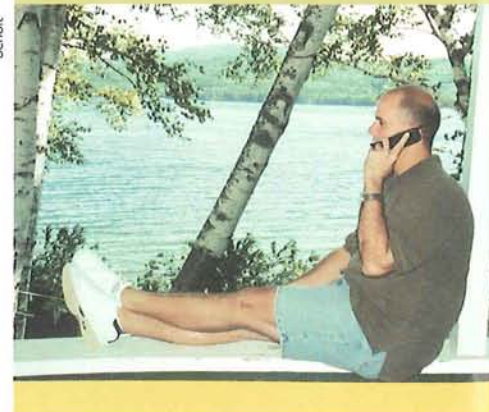
### Contacting Jon

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Benoit



# Dr. MacLeod Asks

Faculty member Dave MacLeod leads us in a public forum to discuss issues pertinent to contemporary Christian life. The question this issue for consideration is:

Those of us who are dispensationalists tend to view the current unrest in the Middle East largely in perspective of that region's importance in biblical prophecy. Some of our non-dispensational brethren say that we should be more interested in basic issues of righteousness and political justice. Are these just the complaints of amillennialists or those who are politically pro-Arab, or do they raise a valid point?

Please send responses to Editor, Emmaus Bible College, 2570 Asbury Road, Dubuque, IA 52001, or e-mail to [journey@emmaus1.edu](mailto:journey@emmaus1.edu). Include name, city, state, and daytime phone number.

## How can the church today best minister to our youth?

Scripture speaks strongly of the church's responsibility to minister to her youth. Christ gladly received children, comparing them to aspects of His kingdom, and even pronouncing judgment on those who would lead a young one astray (Mt. 18:3-6). The upbringing of our youth is obviously something that God considers very important, a sacred trust not to be taken lightly.

Throughout His word, God places the responsibility for the training of the next generation with the parents, most specifically with the father. He is the one in authority, the one God will hold accountable (1 Sam. 3:12-14). The Lord specially recognized Abraham because he taught his family to follow God (Gen. 18:19). Many times in the book of Proverbs, Solomon emphasizes the importance of the father's leadership. It is no wonder, then, that well-behaved children are required if a man is to be considered for church office (1 Tim. 3:1-5). Conversely, children are bound by God to respond in obedience (Eph. 6:1-3).

Clearly, the bulk of the "youth ministry" is to take place in the home, at the parents' knees (Deut. 6:4-7). Therefore, the church's primary responsibility to her youth is to equip parents to minister to the needs of their own children, then to reinforce parental leadership. The main goal of all involved in youth ministry should be to turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the children to their fathers (Mal. 4:6). Even the most elaborate youth program is in vain if it is not based on strong families led by God-fearing parents. Those with a burden for youth would best serve by being available to support and reinforce the parents' desires for their children, holding them to the standards God requires to be examples of the believer (1 Tim. 4:12), teaching them to be sober-minded (Titus 2:4-6), and helping them to put away childish things (1 Cor. 13:11).

Young men and women want to be seen as real people, an untapped resource capable of countless contributions to the local assembly. They desire to feel worthwhile as they serve

alongside adults, meeting the needs of the community and the Body of Christ. They are hungry for teaching and grounding in the Word, not just more of the same "fun-and-games" atmosphere that the world provides. They don't want more playmates, but are crying out for adults who will model mature, Christ-like behavior that they can respect. They long for the encouragement that comes from knowing that adults value them enough to challenge them, spending time on their knees for them, sacrificing, investing their lives in the next generation.

The church cannot afford to neglect her youth; they are her future, the next generation of pastors, teachers, preachers, missionaries, and leaders. May we not shrink from the challenge God has placed before us, but by His grace raise up a generation that will be mighty in His Spirit, advancing the cause of Christ, and bringing glory to His name!

*Toni M. Casassa  
Sealy, TX*

I am writing in response to the question posed in the latest issue of *Emmaus Today* about how we can best minister to today's youth. I want to offer a perspective that may differ from most you receive.

Being a teacher, I work with a subset of a subset of a subset of children. I work with missionary kids, which compose a subset of Christian kids, which compose a subset of the general population. I have experience teaching in the Chicago Public Schools as well as here in Brazil. I have noticed, not surprisingly, that in the Chicago Schools my students didn't have a grounded basis for any of their beliefs. In fact, it could be said they had no beliefs, only seemingly unrelated experiences as they wandered through their school years. I was very surprised when I discovered that same thing true here in Brazil, although in a lesser fashion. Some of my students have [no] basis for what they believe, no grounding. I have had students tell me, "I can lie about my age and get drinks because everybody does it so it must not be wrong. It's not really a lie."

Recently my church in Chicago (Northwest Bible Chapel) did a weekend for our youth about why and what we believe. This I think was a great idea. In fact, I wish they would do it on a regular basis and expand it to topics dealing with the creeping attacks that our anti-theistic culture mounts on them from media sources and schools. This to me is the greatest need that I see, and is perhaps one way that we could address it.

*Bill Carrera  
via e-mail*

1. Include them in the congregation with the adults.

2. Have a children's part of the Bible hour near the beginning of the service: reserve the first row or two in the sanctuary for the children to come sit in during this period. Have a special message for them from 2 to 15 minutes (share the burden of teaching amongst the members of the body). Use object lessons—e.g., a jar with water in it into which you drop something that makes it black—and talk about sin. This solves the problem of having the children taught while having the parents part of it. Remember that our Lord called the children to himself in the midst of the crowd. Do the same.

3. When a child is old enough to repeat sentences back to you, have him start repeating Scripture verses back to you. By the time he is 6 years old ask him to start memorizing one page of scripture per day.

4. One night a week in the evening have "character clubs for kids" where the kids come with one of their parents (preferably their father, but their mother if he is not able), and you work on developing believers and specifically believers with godly character.

5. Have the parents read a chapter from Christian biographies to their children as a family each evening. The children grow up wanting to live similar lives to those whom they hear about. (Not to mention the incredible faith building and fleshing out of doctrine for the adults!)

6. Have an in-house training program under the tutelage of the elders for those interested in learning to do the works of ministry.

*Paul Vermillion  
via e-mail*

There are many examples of irresponsible parents in the Bible: Eli, Samuel, David, Lot, to name a few. The fool of Proverbs tells us about the responsibilities and discipline of parents to their children.

I believe the church can best minister to *our* youth by having Christian parenting classes to teach the dangers of involvement in the world and to instruct parents to continually hold the word of God before their children through Bible study, memorization of scripture, and practical application. Of course, if the parents themselves are not walking closely with the Lord what will the children become?

Today's youth should be home-schooled, no TV, and continuously reminded that the Lord Himself is the one to whom they are responsible. I do not believe churches need razzle dazzle AWANA groups, basketball nights, etc., or build million-dollar gymnasiums for youth activities.

*Benjamin Barker  
Granville, NY*



# News from Emmaus

## Elders' Conference • Ensemble Tour • Student Interns

### Rally in the Rockies

On the weekend of March 9–11, teenagers from all over the nation will convene in Colorado Springs for a youth retreat, the Rally in the Rockies.

George Groezinger, youth worker from Spanish Wells, Bahamas, will be the featured speaker, and the Colorado Springs Christian School is hosting the conference.

The cost is only \$65, including all meals and two nights at the Radisson Hotel. Information: (800) 397-2425, ext. 4; info@emmaus1.edu; www.emmaus1.edu.

### Iron Sharpening Iron

Emmaus is sponsoring a retreat and conference for elders and leaders of assemblies all over North America called Iron Sharpening Iron. This is designed to be a time for leaders to gather together to share insights on

church leadership, as well as a time of spiritual refreshment and challenge.

We will enjoy the teaching of Alex Strauch along with several of the Emmaus faculty. Strauch is the author of *Biblical Eldership* and is an elder at his home assembly of Littleton Bible Chapel in Littleton, CO. He is also an accomplished teacher and speaker.

This will be a time of interactive learning, as we will learn not just from the plenary speakers, but also from those who are attending. Leadership teams from several assemblies will discuss their varied approaches, and we will encourage interaction from all who attend.

Emmaus has received a generous gift which is covering the cost of the weekend, including room and board and all conference activities. (We will ask attenders to make a small contribution to help defray the college costs

of the students who are serving.)

The dates are May 24–27, 2001. Information: (800) 397-2425, ext. 4; info@emmaus1.edu; www.emmaus1.edu.

### Emmaus Before College

This year we are introducing a new concept in college prep: Emmaus Before College. We will afford high school seniors an opportunity to interact with several popular youth leaders on the topic of what to expect in college and how to be prepared for it.

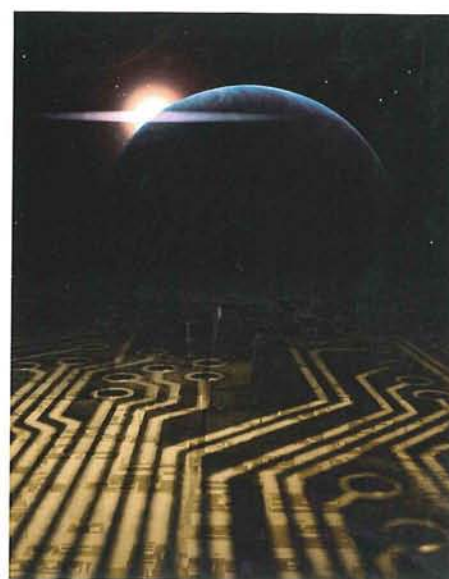
Jon Glock is a regular speaker at retreats and camps around the country, as well as a leader in the youth programs at his home assembly. Floyd Schneider is a gifted evangelist who has much to say on letting our light shine in dark places. Steve Witter is our Dean of Students, and knows

## Assembly Internet Connections

Emmaus Ministry Resources is launching a new web site which is designed to link assembly ministries worldwide at one convenient internet address. It will enable you to connect to any camp, church, missions, or ministry work with a single mouse-click.

We invite you to be a part of the inception of this new ministry. If you already have a web address, send us a link. We will also provide web hosting for your page at no cost for assembly ministries, and we have Computer Systems majors who will design your site free of charge. It is our desire to help assembly ministries worldwide to become connected on-line in any way we can, from linking to your page to providing you free technical help and hosting.

Please contact Mark Woodhouse for more information at mwoodhouse@emmaus1.edu or (800) 397-2425.



PhotoDisc





PhotoEssentials

## High School Seniors:

Planning on attending a secular college or university? Emmaus Before College can help to prepare you. Learn how to defend your faith and how to live what you believe. Be taught by Jon Glock, Floyd Schneider, Steve Witter, and other Emmaus faculty. Start your library with \$125-worth of books. Meet other college-bound seniors. All for only \$47.50!

**May 31–June 3**

**June 21–24**

(800) 397-2425, ext. 4  
[info@emmaus1.edu](mailto:info@emmaus1.edu)

what life can be like on the secular campus.

The dates are May 31–June 3 and June 21–24. The cost is only \$47.50, including room, board, and all sessions. Information: (800) 397-2425, ext. 4; [info@emmaus1.edu](mailto:info@emmaus1.edu); [www.emmaus1.edu](http://www.emmaus1.edu).

### Daniel H. Smith Hall

This past October, Emmaus Bible College students, faculty, staff, trustees, and alumni gathered together to dedicate our new building, Daniel H. Smith Hall. It was an exciting time as we

had the opportunity to see the first phase of the project nearly complete.

Of course, once the first phase was fully complete, we still needed to move in. In some ways, this was the hard part, as we were moving offices for the Correspondence School, Trust Services, maintenance, and accounting departments... more than 20 people with all their furniture, records, and tools.

Fortunately, the servants' spirit of the Emmaus family came to the fore, and we accomplished the entire move in just one cold November morning.

This was a move which ought, by all measure, to have taken several weeks of concerted effort, but most of the student body joined together with faculty and staff to get the whole job done smoothly. The Lord was our Overseer, and there were no mishaps in the process, either!

### New Computer Facilities

Housed within Smith Hall are the new computer lab and the new computer teaching facilities.

The computer lab offers terminals where students can work on



## Rally in the Rockies

**March 9-11, 2001**

(800) 397-2425, ext. 4  
[info@emmaus1.edu](mailto:info@emmaus1.edu)



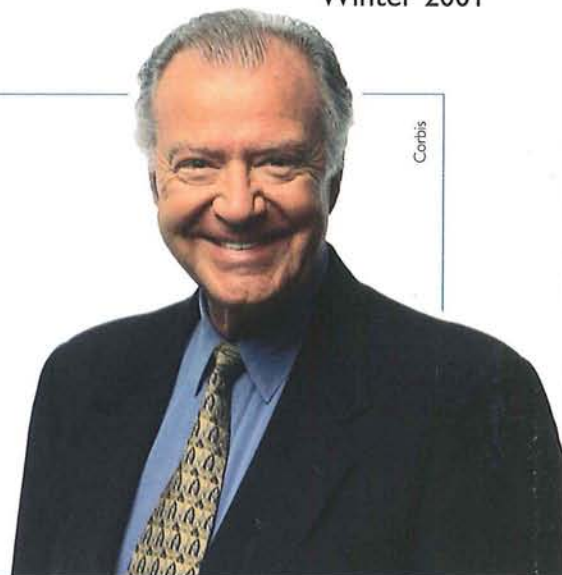
Corbis

## Iron Sharpening Iron

Interact with those in leadership ministries from Assemblies around the country; learn from author Alex Strauch about the role of the elder; study church theology with members of the Emmaus faculty.

**May 24-27**

(800) 397-2425, ext. 4  
info@emmaus1.edu.



papers, check their e-mail, do internet research, work on computer-assisted Bible study, and much more. It is one of two sites which affords students computer access at any time.

The computer classroom can accommodate 32 students on individual PC work stations, and it is here that most of the computer classes take place. This room also features a rear-projection screen for video and computer projection, as well as a Mimio board, which captures whatever is written on it and digitizes it for the computer.

Altogether, we have added 47 new computers to the lab and classroom, all of which are fully networked with high-speed internet connections. By next fall, we expect to have added digital network connections in every dorm room, which will provide students with e-mail, voice mail, and network access in their own rooms.

### Student Internships

Each spring, Emmaus sends out students all over the world to work in various internship programs.

Three students will be going abroad with our Inter-Cultural Studies department. **Melissa Strong** will be travelling to London to work with the Kurdish population, under the direction of Beth Grove. **Katy Harris** will be working with Arabic people in France under the guidance of John and Ruth Hanley. **Rebecca Morris** has just completed a 9-month internship, teaching English in China.

Three others will be conducting their internships in the States with the Youth Ministries department. **Sarah Sutter** will be working at High Point

## Emmaus Ensemble Tour

Friday, March 9	Erie, PA: Grace Gospel Chapel
Saturday, March 10	Pittsburgh, PA: Browns Hill Bible Chapel
Sunday, March 11	Arlington, VA: Cherrydale Bible Church
Tuesday, March 13	Baltimore, MD: Loch Hill Chapel
Wednesday, March 14	Toms River, NJ: Bethany Bible Chapel
Thursday, March 15	Cleveland, OH: Westlake Bible Fellowship
Friday, March 16	Warrenville, IL: Warrenville Bible Chapel

Please call (800) 397-2425 for more information, or e-mail lbeatty@emmaus1.edu.



## Computer Classroom

Our new Daniel H. Smith Hall contains brand-new computer facilities which will help the entire student body, as well as those double-majoring in Bible and Computer Systems Management.

At left, Mark Woodhouse teaches a computer class.

## Computer Lab

The new computer lab provides computers for students to use in research, paper writing, and computer-assisted Bible study.

At right, students work on studies during one of the more quiet moments in the lab.



Chapel in Davenport, IA; **Tim O'Byrne** will be at Asbury Community Chapel in Dubuque, IA; and **Jenny Leverentz** will be working at Nashville Gospel Chapel and Horton Haven Christian Camp in Nashville, TN.

### New Faculty

We are pleased to welcome **Chris Lange** to the faculty. Chris comes to Dubuque from Loveland, CO, where he taught English at the high school level for over 20 years. He will be

helping to share the English curriculum, teaching Freshman Composition and Introduction to Literature, as well as teaching all the American studies classes. He and his wife Nancy have four children.



## The EMR Team

**Nancy Ferguson**, **Sam Bhatt** (center), and **Jesse Lange** have taken on the responsibilities of the new Emmaus Ministry Resources (EMR). They will be conducting the Rally in the Rockies youth retreat, working to recruit new students, and helping to coordinate the many new ministries of EMR.



# Emmaus On the Road



## Northeast

Ken Daughters, Bible Conference, Prospect Street Bible Chapel, Hartford CT Mar 16-18; Jim Dunkerton, Hillendale Bible Chapel, Baltimore MD Jul 1; Ken Fleming, MOPS Conference, Greenwood Hills PA Jun 9-15; Dave Reid, Groton Bible Chapel, Groton CT July 29; Terrill Road Bible Chapel, Fanwood NJ Aug 1-2; Camp Berea, Bristol NH Aug 11-18; Floyd Schneider, Camp Li Lo Li, Blasedell NY Aug 19-25, Sep 7-9; MOP Conference, Greenwood Hills PA Jun 9-16; Dan Smith, Camp of the Woods, Speculator NY Sep 22-28

## Southeast

Frank Couch, College Heights Chapel, Murfreesboro TN Mar 11, May 20, Jun 17; Ken Fleming, Bayside Community Church, Tampa FL Mar 4; Dave Glock, Horton Haven, Chapel Hill TN Apr 27-29; Dan Smith, Park of the Palms, Keystone Heights FL Feb 3-10; Southeast Workers' Conference, Raleigh NC Feb 19-21; West Virginia Bible Conference, Bluestone WV Aug 4-11; Steve Witter, Horton Haven Christian Camp, Chapel Hill TN May 27-Jun 9; Mountain Top Youth Camp, Pinnacle NC Jul 29-Aug 4

## Southwest

Dan Smith, First Colony Bible Chapel, First Colony TX Apr 8; Sandy Creek Bible Camp, Washington TX Apr 9-13

## Midwest

Lisa Beatty and Emmaus Ensemble, Atlantic Evangelical Free Church, Atlantic IA Apr 6; Cob United Methodist Church, Colo IA Apr 7; Hillside Bible Church, Oskaloosa IA Apr 8; Frank Couch, Small Group Seminar, Columbus OH Feb 3; Small Group Seminar, Stevens Point WI Feb 10; Leadership Conference,

Emmaus Bible College Dubuque IA May 24-27, Jun 1-3; Ken Daughters, Bible Conference, Topeka KS Mar 10-11; Northwest Bible Chapel, Chicago IL Apr 15, 22, 29; Bible Chapel, Prairie Du Chien WI May 6; Oak Lawn Bible Chapel, Oak Lawn IL Jun 10, Aug 12, 19; Koronis Bible Camp, MN Jul 22-28; Upper Peninsula Bible Camp, MI Jul 29-Aug 4; Jim Dunkerton, Asbury Road Bible Chapel, Dubuque IA Feb 18, 25; Emmaus 60th Anniversary Homecoming, Oct 19-21; Ken Fleming, Missions Conference, Detroit MI Jan 20; Asbury Road Bible Chapel, Dubuque IA Feb 4; Christian Assembly, Prairie Du Chien WI Feb 11; Countryside Bible Chapel, Stratford IA Jun 24; Dave Glock, Bethany Chapel, Cedar Falls IA Feb 4, 11, 18, 25; Koronis Winter Retreat, Paynesville MN Mar 2, 3, 4; Lombard Gospel Chapel, Lombard IL Mar 11, 18; Oak Lawn Chapel, Oak Lawn IL Apr 7, 8; Keith Leverentz, Stratford IA Jul 6-8; Koronis Bible Camp, MN Jul 23-29; Minneapolis MN Sep 1-3; Dave MacLeod, Asbury Road Bible Chapel, Dubuque IA Apr 1, 8, 15, 22, 29; Oak Lawn Bible Chapel, Oak Lawn IL May 6, 13; Lake Geneva Summer Conference, Williams Bay WI Jul 21-29; Story Book Lodge, Gilbert MN Aug 12-18; Woodside Bible Chapel, Maywood IL Sep 2, 9, 16, 23, 30; Sarah Poling, Lake Geneva Youth Camp, Lake Geneva WI Jun 23-30, Jul 14-21; Dave Reid, North Shore Bible Chapel, Zion IL Apr 1, 8, 22, 29; Lombard Gospel Chapel, Lombard IL Jun 10, 17, 24; Warrenville Bible Chapel, Warrenville IL Jul 1, 8, 15, 22; Oak Lawn Bible Chapel, Oak Lawn IL Sep 2, 9, 16, 23, 30; Floyd Schneider, Billy Graham Evangelical Conference, Chicago IL Jan 18-20; Longlake Chapel, Minneapolis MN Mar 25; Urban Ministries Conference, St. Louis MO Apr 27-29; Cedar Falls Chapel, Cedar Falls IA May 6; Leadership Conference, Emmaus Bible College Dubuque IA May 24-27; Dan Smith, Building on Blessings, Des Moines IA Feb 16-18; Northern Hills Chapel, Cincinnati OH Feb 23-25; Building on Blessings, Detroit MI Mar

2-4; Bethany Bible Chapel, Wheaton IL Mar 11; Northwest Bible Chapel, Chicago IL Mar 16-18; Believers' Bible Chapel, Rockford IL Mar 30-Apr 1; Building on Blessings, St. Louis MO Apr 7; Building on Blessings, Chicago IL May 19, 20; Leadership Training, Emmaus Bible College, Dubuque IA May 24-26; Emmaus Before College, Emmaus Bible College, Dubuque IA May 31-Jun 2; Prison Coordinators' Conference, Emmaus Bible College Dubuque IA Jun 6-8; Volunteer Work Retreat, Emmaus Bible College Dubuque IA Jun 30-Jul 7; Oak Lawn Bible Chapel, Oak Lawn IL Jun 22, 29; Lake Geneva Family Camp, Lake Geneva WI Aug 31-Sep 3; Park Manor Bible Chapel, Elgin IL Sep 9, 16; Mark Stevenson, Oak Forest Bible Chapel, Oak Forest IL Mar 18; Park Manor Bible Chapel, Elgin IL Jun 3, 10, 17, 24; Asbury Road Bible Chapel, Dubuque IA Jul 1, 8, 15, 22, 29; Steve Witter, Warrenville Bible Chapel, Warrenville IL Apr 1, Aug 1

## West

Frank Couch, Rally in the Rockies, Colorado Springs CO Mar 16-18; Small Group Seminar, Meza AZ May 5; Dave Glock, Des Moines Chapel, Seattle WA Mar 23-25; Dan Smith, Limon Bible Chapel, Limon CO Apr 20-22

## Canada

Frank Couch, Small Group Seminar, Rexdale ON Mar 3; Dan Smith, Grace Bible Chapel, Timmins ON Mar 23-25; Shore Acres Bible Chapel, Burlington ON May 5-6

## Foreign

Dave MacLeod, European Workers' Conference, L'Eterlou France Aug 25-31; Ken Fleming, Easter Conference, Singapore Mar 13-22; Dave Reid, Holy Land Study Tour, Israel May 15-30



# Readings

The masses are capable of far better judgments about world affairs than the intelligentsia. If I wanted a good moral judgment about the war; I should a thousand times prefer to get it from a garage man, a filling-station attendant, a WPA worker; a grocer's clerk, or a delivery boy, than from 23 Ph.D. professors I know about in just one American university. The reason is not difficult to find. The educated know how to rationalize evil; the masses do not. Evil to them is still evil; they have never learned to sugar-coat it with sophism. They never got enough smattering of Einstein to sophomorically pontificate: "everything is relative." If they do wrong, they still call it wrong. Their judgments are better because their moral sense is higher; for virtue does not increase in direct ratio with learning.

Fulton J. Sheen  
in *War and Guilt* (1941)

"God help me! I am the weakest of the weak," groaned Alleyne. "I pray that I may have more strength."

"And to what end?" she asked sharply. "If you are, as I understand, to shut yourself forever in your cell within the four walls of an abbey, then of what use would it be were your prayer to be answered?"

"The use of my own salvation."

She turned from him with a pretty shrug and wave. "Is that all?" she said. "Then you are no better than Father Christopher and the rest of them. Your own, your own, ever your own! My father is the king's man, and when he rides into the press of fight he is not thinking ever of the saving of his own poor body; he recks little enough if he leave it on the field. Why then should you, who are soldiers of the Spirit, be ever moping or hiding in cell or in cave, with minds full of your own concerns, while the world, which you should be mending, is going on its way, and neither sees nor hears you? Were ye all as thoughtless of your own souls as the soldier is of his body, ye would be of more avail to the souls of others."

Arthur Conan Doyle  
from *The White Company* (1891)

Our soul, whose country's heaven, and God her father;  
Into this world, corruption's sink, is sent;  
Yet so much in her travel she doth gather;  
That she returns home wiser than she went.

John Donne  
from *Verse Letter to Sir Henry Goodyere* (1608)



## In the Current Issue of *Emmaus Journal*

WHAT IS MAN? THE DOCTRINE OF THE HUMAN BEING, by Larry Dixon

THE GREAT EMANCIPATION: AN EXPOSITION OF GALATIANS 1:1-5, by S. Lewis Johnson, Jr.

THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST, OR THE ANOINTING OF THE KING, by David J. MacLeod

THE PURPOSES OF THE LAW: AN EXPOSITION OF EXODUS 19:16-20:21, by William J. McRae

JESUS' USE OF THE TITLE 'SON OF MAN' IN MTT. 26:64, by Steven Sanchez

A STRUCTURAL SYNTHESIS OF 1 JOHN, by Jim Townsend

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# Stop Complaining!

by Mark R. Stevenson

Most people do not need much prodding to let you know what really irks them—complaining comes all too naturally for many of us. From the endless irritations at work, to the neighbor's barking dog, to the long line at the grocery store—there seems to be no shortage of things to complain about. Perhaps the most troubling thing about our penchant for complaining is that we are not troubled by our penchant for complaining. However, the Scriptures clearly teach that the Christian is not to be characterized by a spirit of complaining.

The apostle Paul, for example, says to the Philippians, "Do all things without complaining or disputing" (Phil. 2:14 NKJV). The statement comes in a context where Paul is exhorting believers to let their conduct be "worthy of the gospel of Christ" (1:27). As the gospel is fleshed-out in our lives (2:12–13), complaining is to have no place. And when this is true, believers "shine as lights" (2:15) in a world characterized by selfishness and self-pity.

The issue however is not merely complaining. Complaining is the symptom of a deeper spiritual problem.

## Lack of faith

The classic example here is the children of Israel's desert wanderings. They developed a pattern of complaining, despite the repeated demonstrations of the power and faithfulness of God to care for them. The height of their faithless complaining is reached in Numbers 13 and 14, on the threshold of the promised land, where the Israelites refuse to believe that God will deliver it into their hands. They grumble and weep all night. Finally the Lord speaks to Moses and says, "How long will these people reject Me? And how long will they not believe Me, with all the signs which I have performed among

them?" (Num. 14:11 emphasis mine).

Complaining exposed the Israelites' unbelief. The author of Hebrews also uses the example of Israel's complaining in the wilderness to warn his readers against "an evil heart of unbelief" (Heb. 3:12, cf. 1 Cor. 10:10).

## Lack of contentment

G.K. Chesterton once said, "True contentment...is arduous and it is rare." Paul admitted that contentment was a virtue he *learned* in various circumstances (Phil. 4:11–13). Nevertheless, contentment ought to characterize the people of God (e.g., 1 Tim. 6:6,8; Heb. 13:5), but a sure sign of its absence is the presence of complaining.

## Heart of ingratitude

The antithesis of complaining is thanksgiving. Paul says that what is appropriate for believers—indeed, what ought to be "the distinctive mark of Christian speech"<sup>1</sup>—is thanksgiving (Eph. 5:4; 5:19–20; 1 Thess. 5:18). A person who is constantly grumbling is not likely to be characterized by thankfulness.

## Lack of joy in the Lord

"Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!" (Phil. 4:4; cf. 3:1). Before we charge Paul with not understanding our circumstances, we ought to remember (as his readers would have) that he modelled this exhortation in the worst of circumstances. When Paul first preached the gospel at Philippi, he and Silas were beaten with rods and thrown into prison. Battered, bruised, their feet in stocks, the prisoners around them heard—not bitter complaining—but joyful praise. "At midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them" (Acts 16:25). The ground of Paul's joy was not his circum-

stances, but the Lord Himself. Thus his exhortation to rejoice *in the Lord*. Paul was so focused on the glories of Christ that trying circumstances did not make him bitter. If we are chronic complainers, it is probably a sign that we are not walking with the Lord and delighting in Him.

The question becomes, how do we fight a grumbling and complaining spirit? Let me suggest three fundamental ways.

## Develop a habit of thanksgiving

The next time you are tempted to complain, pause and, instead of grumbling, give thanks. Think of all the blessings you enjoy from the hand of God. Think of the beauties of Christ. Think of the hope of heaven. Complaining will not survive long when thanksgiving takes over.

## Learn to rest in Providence

If we really believe that God is at work in our lives (Phil. 2:13), if we really believe that He is in control and that He is working all things together for good (Rom. 8:28), then we will not complain. We will rest in His promises and providence.

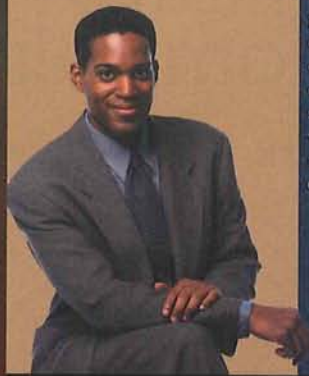
## Stay close to the cross

A moment's reflection on the cross of Christ will transform grumbling into gratitude. The sufferings of Christ bring a certain perspective to our own trials, hardships, and inconveniences. Thus complaining ought to evaporate when we call to mind the glorious truth that "he Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed" (1 Pet. 2:24). ~

<sup>1</sup> Peter T. O'Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians* (MI: Eerdmans, 1999), p. 361.

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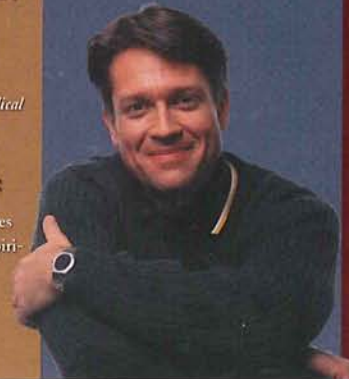
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