



From the President's Desk -

Isn't it strange how when you are engaged in a conversation with people, God seems to drop into your heart a little gem from His Word that has absolutely nothing to do with the conversation you are presently engaged in. Once God has placed it in your mind, you just can't seem to shake it off until you do something with it. Such is the case that has caused me to write this article.

I was engaged in a conversation with Tony Vaughan before our morning prayer time together, when my mind drifted to the scripture where Jesus said that He was the vine and we were the branches and how it is the vine that carries the branches, but the branches that bears the fruit. Now, after praying with Tony my thoughts raced on, imagining the condition of the branches in relationship to the vine, and that if the branches were not bearing fruit, they would be cut from the vine.

What then are we left with? Only the vine remains until new fruit bearing branches form and grow out from the vine. What if Jesus was to return today, how would His Bride appear to him? Broken, grief-stricken, disillusioned, wretched and remorseful; or full of life and vitality, singing songs of real praise and full on spiritual worship, eagerly waiting our Master's return?

I was led to the book of Ezra, chapters 1 and 2. These chapters explain the end of the Babylonian captivity and how Cyrus would be King of Persia after being stirred in his spirit by God's Word, which was brought by the prophet Jeremiah who made a royal proclamation throughout his Kingdom in writing. **Ezra 1:2** "Thus saith Cyrus King of Persia, the Lord of heaven hath given me all the Kingdoms of the earth; and He hath charged me to build Him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah". The chapter goes on to explain how all the provisions of silver, gold and the precious things, including the temple vessels that Nebuchadnezzar had brought as bounty out of Jerusalem when he was King of Babylon (before being sacked by the Persian armed forces), had to be returned to their rightful place at Jerusalem.

Ezra 2:1. Now these are the children of the province that went up out of the captivity, of those which had been carried away, whom Nebuchadnezzar the King of Babylon had carried away unto Babylon, and came again unto Jerusalem and Judah, every one unto his city. In the year 536 B.C. the remnant of 49,897 of God's chosen people finally return to the promised land of Canaan, which they had occupied for some 800 years, but sadly, sinfully breaking covenant with God, they wrote the darkest historical chapter of God's people. This included all manner of sin, debauchery, idolatry and immorality, resulting in God banishing them from their homeland and placing them in exile for 50 long years - bringing them up short that they would repent of their sin and return not only to Jerusalem, but more importantly to God.

On their return to the land that they had left as teenagers, what would they have experienced now as old men? Put yourself in their shoes: the land they left was lush with crops, running with milk and honey, sporting magnificent buildings including the Temple of God, the Palace and Throne of King David - now completely destroyed. Would your heart sink in despair? Fields you once laboured in that brought forth crops of 30, 60, and 100-fold now an entanglement of thorns and briars; hard ground untilled sun leached. It would have been heart-breaking soul destroying. What of the young people that came with you, filled with hope and great expectations by the stories told during your captivity? How sorrowful, distressed and regretful

they would they have been. What is left?

What of our once great fellowship and our personal relationship with the true vine the Lord Jesus Christ, if He was to return today how would He view us? Jesus left us with all the attributes needed to grow His Church, to be the fruitful branches He commanded us to be, but we, like the returning Remnant to Jerusalem, now ask "What's Left?" I believe today's church is in self-imposed exile, separated from God, following the devices and desires of our own hearts and leaving the Holy Spirit of Almighty God outside, for as Jesus said in **John 16:7**. *Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you and when He comes, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.*

Friends we need help and the best help comes from God. The helper in this passage is the Holy Spirit and He and Jesus work together. **John 15:5**. *I am the vine, you are the branches, He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.* If there is to be unity in our day and we are to be recognised as the New Covenant people of God, it must be in the Body of Christ Jesus; one new man in Christ Jesus reaching a lost world that is heading for a Christless eternity.

It's high time that we came out of our Babylonian captivity, shook off the heavy bands that ensnare us, get a fresh infilling of the Holy Spirit and get about the work He has called us to do. For when He returns and He will, let it be to a Bride that has oil in her lamp while she is waiting. What's Left? Everything we need. We have the Word of God the Bible, we have the rich teachings that it affords us, we have the sin cleansing power of the Blood of the Lamb, we have the might of the Holy Spirit, we have the power of our testimonies, we have new life in Christ Jesus, and we have the love of God and much more.

Len.

Coffee & Conversation with James By Ron Oastler

We were well ensconced in coffee and conversation at the marina when a large Tour Group entered the café. Boarding had been delayed due to some very choppy conditions on the Port, blowing in from the east. The folk were filling in time observing the rocking of the cruisers and yachts in the harbour, while enjoying coffee and gateau.

'The delay will probably be less than an hour,' was James stated forecast - observing further: 'Nice to see that the atmosphere is not negative but convivial and there is quite some social interaction taking place.'

No sooner had he made the latter observation than our attention was captured by a raised voice. 'What did you say was your name?' We overheard the question being asked of a young man (not only in a loud voice but also in a rather surprised tone), as some of them took seats at a nearby table.

A little embarrassed, the young man replied: 'David Hill ... why do you ask?'. The enquirer explained that he had a work associate who looked like the young man - and he was surprised to hear that he had the same surname. We could not help hearing the revelation that followed - the work associate and the young man were in fact father and son.

Well, I was not at all surprised to hear James' muted comment that followed. 'How wonderful ... and I wonder what other aspects there are to this plot. The overall narrative reminds me...', James continued

without drawing a breath: '... of a lesson that I learned about the sovereignty of God in dealing with fathers and sons – and mothers and daughters too, of course. I saw it happen several times over the years.'

'I recall a number of experiences involving fathers and sons, one being a particular "mid-week" public meeting we had arranged in a suburban auditorium in Sydney's Lower North Shore. The timing and location aspects set it apart for starters. We were blessed to have a popular overseas speaker available for this meeting and he was supported by some top-level musicians who were just right for that night.'

'It was a wonderful meeting. We had a time of uplifting praise and worship, led well by the music team. One of the musicians shared his testimony of coming to faith in Christ Jesus as Lord and Saviour; it was very personal, highly relevant and entirely credible – the very essence of an effective testimony. This was a wonderful precursor to the main speaker.'

'Our speaker presented a powerful message from the Scriptures, based on his testimony, focusing upon God's call and claim on our lives, ... and the response we need to make by accepting Jesus as Saviour and Lord.'

Opportunity was given for folk to respond personally, there and then. A number did so, and we were able to counsel with each and every one. As it happened, I had the opportunity to speak with a young man in his high-teens, Peter. He was a fine young man, well presented, highly intelligent and an incisive thinker, who knew exactly what he was doing in committing his life to Christ. I was really drawn to this young man; it was as though I knew him. He prayed with confidence and received counsel willingly, bringing joy to my heart.'

'As I concluded my time with Peter, I asked him what his family name was. "Bell" he replied.'

'I said to him "That is interesting Peter, I have a work associate by the name of Graeme Bell, who is a Systems Engineering manager, and you look so much like him." It did not take long to confirm that they were indeed Father and son – or son and father if you wish. Now, while I had not shared faith directly with Peter's father on a one-to-one basis, he was one of the many staffers who fell within my sphere of influence. So, I rejoiced in God's sovereign work.'

'A second incident that our Lord used to encourage me,' James continued, 'occurred at the conclusion of the Sunday morning service at a church that I was visiting. At the informal "coffee time" I met with a young man in his late twenties. He asked me how I came to be visiting and I told him a friend – mentioning his name - had suggested this was a great church. "How do you know him?" he asked. To which I replied: "We worked together for quite some time."

"Oh, then you may know my father, he was a sales manager there." he quickly interjected. "His name?" I asked. "Robert Chappell – I am his son Richard." Now, Robert Chappell was one of my subordinate team managers to whom I had witnessed, though without seeing him come to faith. However, Richard assured me that his father was close to making that life changing decision. Thank you, Lord!'

James really shifted gear as he described his final example. 'Perhaps one of the most encouraging instances for me, involved another subordinate manager, with whom I had some difficulties that required real grace and faith on my part. What stood out in this experience was a move that was the sovereign work of the Holy Spirit – not once but twice.'

'The first move' James explained 'was at a major public outreach meeting of the Fellowship with some five hundred or so attendees. We had top musicians, wonderful worship, powerful testimonies and a high-profile international speaker. It was an up-lifting night. The word from God was riveting. The call to "be reconciled to God" was unmistakable. The way of Salvation was absolutely clear. No wonder that many responded to receive

Christ as Lord and Saviour. All of this was praiseworthy in itself.'

'One of those who came forward to receive Christ, with whom I had the privilege of praying, was a young man by the name of Anthony, whose mother was accompanying him at the function. When we had counselled and prayed together, I enquired as to his family name. Upon hearing the name, I further enquired as to his father. "Yes," James said to me "you guessed it; his father was the very man with whom I was having a hard time. God was sovereignly at work in this situation and in the life of this family.'

"Ah, but it did not end there," he continued "there was a second move, a couple of years later. I was asked to speak at a Church Men's Breakfast on the Central Coast. It was there I met Michael, a fine young man and a relatively young Christian. He was a specialist in the IT Industry and said that he chose IT because his father was a sales manager in the industry."

"You guessed it again" was James statement "here was another son of the very man with whom I was having such difficulty. So I asked him about his father ... and to my absolute joy he said that he and his mother and brother had been encouraging his Dad, who had started to attend church with them - and he had recently committed his life to Christ.'

"So, my friend," God sometimes moves sovereignly through sons and daughter – as well as wives! – to bring a man to faith. We should be encouraging lads and lasses, and young men and women, to come to faith and to share that faith with their fathers."

A wonderful way for us to fulfil the command to '*win and disciple folk to Christ*', I declared to James.

Mike Hedley (Part 2) – Missionary At Large



Mike & Anna

After moving to Australia from the UK in 1971 and ending up back in the electronic industry, my wife Anna and I finally made a firm decision to accept Christ into our lives on 9th hour, 9th day, and 9th month 1981 in Brisbane. From that day on, we both experienced an amazing peace and joy that no man can give or take away. Now we feel his presence continually and listen to his voice. On one occasion, I was discussing the idea of starting a business, but complained about lack of finance. My wife reminded me that we now have a relationship with God, so we waited on him, and he did supernaturally provide for us. We commenced "**Mike Hedley Cables**" early 1982 and the cash flow just happened. **My God shall supply all my needs. Philippians 4: 19** (New Testament)

We were operating from home and wanted to purchase a warehouse, but our accountant laughed. I travelled overseas for a short-term mission trip and whilst away, the cash flooded in which enabled us to place a deposit on a warehouse and move in. To this day our accountant is still scratching his head and we are praising

God. Mike Hedley Cables rapidly increased in sales and profits and we began to realise that we have an amazing reliable God, who is there for us at all times, if only we could learn to trust him and shine his light. **Matthew 5: 16 Let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.**

Because we loved the Lord so much, we were doing this by openly sharing our faith and spending time getting to know our clients over coffee etc. and we were never too busy for them. Clients would drive to our office just to have a chat with us and purchase one cable instead of courier delivery. Anna came up with the idea of placing a small sticker on every box that went out by courier daily. We would have scriptures, mainly from proverbs, on each sticker. One day we had a phone call from an angry university staff member who complained about our stickers and was abusive until Anna told her that we are the bosses.

John 1: 5 The light shines in the darkness and darkness has not overcome it. One courier man was always cranky, but we kept loving him and asking if we could pray for his situations. One day he drove a long way back to tell us that we had not put our sticker on the box.

Anna and I went on holiday, leaving our son to run the business and we heard a wonderful story upon our return. A Brisbane radio station was running a competition called 'Above and Beyond'. One of our clients was feeling low when our box was delivered. He read the scripture and was touched, because it spoke to his situation. He was so excited that he rang the radio station. The result was that Mike Hedley cables won the prize for that week.

We received free advertising for a week and a big box of goodies and flowers. It was not a coincidence but a God incidence. Another example was when I had a bad day at the office and put my head on the desk and called on God to do something. Immediately an old missionary friend walked in the door. He did not know that we had moved office and that we were located in a back road, yet this man walked into my office. I said, let's have coffee. He took one look at me and said "yeah, let's go".

He ministered to me and went on his way, never to pass our office again. **Jeremiah 33: 3 Call to me and I will answer you, and I will tell you great and mighty things, which you do not know.** Part of our business was data cable installation into offices around Brisbane. Because most of our clients knew we were Christians, they would not ask for quotations.

We soon learnt not to hide our faith, but to shine it at every opportunity. **Matthew 5: 15 – 16 We do not light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. (16) Let your light shine before men, that they**

may see your good works and glorify your Father in Heaven. It does not matter how bad our problems may be. We **can** call upon God. **Warning...**God is not our servant, even though he loves us. Trust him.

Mike Hedley Cables traded for 25 years, including overseas business travel combined with mission work.

To be continued....

The consequence of our decisions

By Ian Eckel

Everyone learns at school about Newton's third law; that for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction, and no one has to be told that anyway as its common sense. However, common sense is not all that common. A few cases that have just presented themselves lately have made me stop and think - of my own actions and what reactions they have caused.

A young man (let's call him Absalom) was talking to me confidentially about his past life, and how his father's actions caused him to walk away from church attendance as soon as he left home. He had left home to get out from under his domineering father, who became a born again Christian a long time ago. I'll have to give him a name instead of referring to him all the time as his father, let's call him Spartacus, as that name fits his aggressive hard-nosed way of presenting the gospel to everyone. Absalom related how Spartacus made him live according to the rules; he even got a flogging for not going to church once. And a list of things that would take another chapter to explain.

Spartacus preached the gospel but never applied it to himself, so that people who knew him well spoke of him as a double minded man. What he said to others never matched his actions. Being a hard task master to your children can and in most cases is the reason why, the children push Christianity away. I always say that if you want to do or say anything the right way, do it the way Jesus did it. Which means renewing your mind; easy to say but hard to do, as it means changing who you are. Becoming a different personality. The monkey on our back that hangs on after a commitment to Christ is a thing called learned behaviour. Something you subconsciously learned when you were growing up. Let me tell you a story.

A new bride was cooking their first roast lamb and her husband asked her why she cut the leg of lamb in half to cook it. After a moment's pause she said that was the way her mother did it, so on their first visit to mum's place the husband asked the mother-in-law the same question to which she replied, that's the way her mother did it. So when they visited grandma the same question was asked, to which she replied that when she was first married they could only afford a small pot so she cut the leg of lamb in half and cooked the two pieces

EVENTS – See webpage for details



**INTERNATIONAL
Our Mission**

FGBMFI is one of the largest Christian business organizations in the world. Founded in 1953, we are in 142 nations - meeting in over 7,000 chapters. Our members and leaders include every race, culture, social status and language.

By God's grace, we connect people with opportunities to reach out and help others find a better life and work together to build better communities.

We do this by:

Calling people back to God...

There is a better life by following Jesus Christ.

Promoting integrity and good character...

Being a reflection of God to our world.

Participating in God's good work...

Releasing gifts, talents and resources to help others.

Working together to build better cities & nations...

Impacting our leaders and our culture.

Taking the message of God's love to every family...

A true grass roots effort that is changing the world.

"The mandate from God is that we break the chains of despair in the world. Our mandate is to destroy the isolation of loneliness, and link the world to God!"

Demos Shakarian, Founder



"I... business center, every marketplace, every government center and university... every nation, city, town and crossroads of the world. People of faith, shining with God's glory, bringing the uplifting message of God's power... reaching out, helping, encouraging and lifting. Today, through our efforts, we believe that over 2 million people come to God each year."



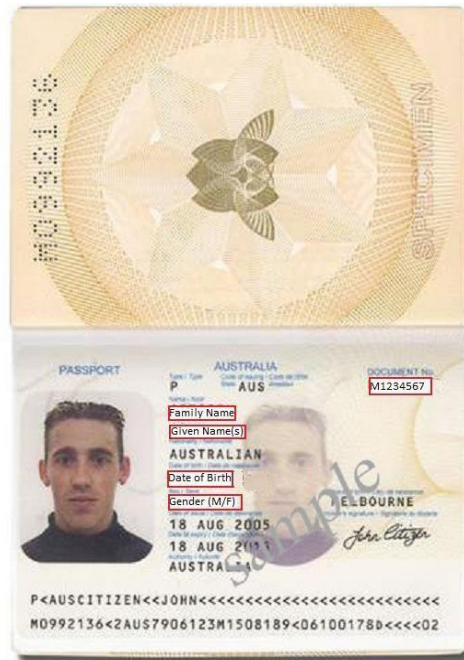
International President Mario Garcia



separately.

Back to the first story, Spartacus was the product of his own father; subconsciously emulating his father's attitude because that's the way the grandfather treated his son. Our forefathers went through some very tough times, like the great depression that hardened the hearts of men. So, becoming a Christian is supposed to break the chains that have held us captive to these learned behaviours. I wrote previously of the four areas of our psyche, and the last one is the hidden one, that only God can help us with. I learned to ask God to show me where have I gone wrong in my attitude to my children. He impressed on my heart, regardless of what has transpired up to now, now is the time to pour out God's love on my children, because love conquers all.

DO YOU HAVE A PASSPORT AND IS YOUR PASSPORT UP TO DATE?



One of the earliest known references to paperwork that served in a role similar to that of a passport is found in the Bible Nehemiah 2:7-9, dating from approximately 450 BC, states that Nehemiah, an official serving King Artaxerxes I of Persia, asked permission to travel to Judea; the king granted leave and gave him a letter "to the governors beyond the river" requesting safe passage for him as he travelled through their lands.

To travel to another country, you normally need a current passport. So, what is our passport to go from this universe and become a citizen of heaven? It is accepting Jesus Christ as our Lord and saviour and living a life that lifts up His name until he calls us home. Some people start by having a current passport and then backslide never renewing their passport. The Bible tells us that the road to destruction (Hell) is wide and many will take it – no passport required there! You can live life here on earth as you like but when your life ends and you do not have a current passport, you will by default, reside in a place of torment for eternity with no possibility of escaping this situation. You can drift into Hell, but you cannot drift into Heaven – you need a passport.

Brothers in Christ, we need to be out and about giving the Good News to those that are perishing, so they can be snatched from the fire and provided with a passport of joy and happiness for eternity with Jesus Christ. Time is of the essence as we see daily the decline of our society where full-term abortions are now legal in many countries. Lawlessness is present and Jesus talks about this in the last days. What you need to know is that **YOU** were born for such a time as this and we can make a difference through the saving Grace of Jesus Christ.