

# BRINGING THE WORD OF LIFE

## E-MAIL NEWSLETTER

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...that you may know that you have eternal life.' 1 John 5:13

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### Christchurch - New Zealand



**LIKE ANY CITY IN THE HOURS BEFORE DAWN, CHRISTCHURCH, NEW ZEALAND OUTWARDLY WAS QUIET AND ASLEEP. BUT STRANGE THINGS WERE HAPPENING IN THIS CITY - AND MOST OF THEM HAD TO DO WITH ANIMALS**

Many a family couldn't sleep because their normally quiet dog continually barked, demanding to be let out then back in again. Cat owners were wakened to find that their cat was batting them on the face with a paw! A family wondered why its pet rabbit kept bringing its back foot down with loud, rhythmic thumps. And in many households, families had gone to bed distressed because their loved dog or cat had disappeared.

Things were strange, too, out in the countryside. A farmer, bringing his herd in for milking, stared in disbelief as the cows - all 500 of them - suddenly sat down as though the legs had been cut out from under them. Another farmer had just risen to let his agitated dog outside, and he stood for a moment in his doorway. Suddenly, the birds in the nearby hedge started to chirp loudly, the neighbour's pigs began to squeal, and his own cows to bellow.

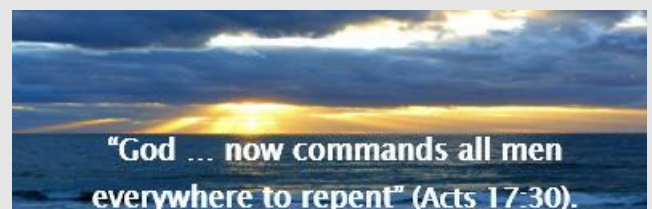
Then, just as suddenly, all went dead quiet. He stood there, unnerved... Something did happen, in the early morning hours a terrifying 7.1 magnitude earthquake hit the area.

Somehow the animals had sensed the coming disaster. No one knows exactly what it is that creatures sense at such a time, although there are theories. What we do know is that the Creator Himself has implanted in animal creation a sensory awareness that you and I know nothing of.

Nothing can prevent an earthquake, even if people could know it was coming. So it is in eternal things. God's judgment is coming on this sinful world and nothing will prevent it. In Acts 17:31 we read, "He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness". In 1995, a major earthquake struck in Japan. Hippopotami in the zoo submerged themselves in their pool - and stayed under! The zoo staff eventually had to drain the pool to "rescue" them. You can't immerse yourself, even in religion, hoping to hide from God's wrath. He'll drain your pool! Neither can you flee, or fly away, as birds have often been seen to do before a big earthquake.

The Christchurch animals' behaviour could have served as a warning to their owners. The problem was that the people didn't realize this until afterwards. Ah, afterwards - when it was too late. But God doesn't leave us puzzled or worried like the animals' owners, then condemn us when it's too late to be saved.

God speaks with unmistakable clarity through His Word, the Bible. He warns of coming judgment and tells us what we need to do about it.



- **God speaks through creation**

Romans 1:19–20 says, "...God has shown it to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made ...so that they are without excuse."

- **God has implanted in every person an "internal warning system". It's called conscience.**

It means that you know when you have sinned.

- **God often uses circumstances; many have testified to a tragic or traumatic event that led them to trust the saving power of Christ's death.**

As with any major earthquake, many strong aftershocks occurred in Christchurch. Some dog owners came to recognize the signs of a coming shake. One persons' dog began a particular low growl that reached a crescendo before a major shake; another took to licking its owner's hand. One dog barked all of the night before the first earthquake, then did the same on a subsequent night, prior to a major aftershock. When it barked the third time, the family recognized the signal. They arranged to stay home the next day – and were comforted to be together when, sure enough, another big shake came. They heeded the warning.

God's word tells us,

**'God may speak in one way, or in another, yet man does not perceive it' (Job 33:14).**

We ignore His voice at our peril.

**'How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?' (Hebrews 2:3).**

Those who live in earthquake-prone areas are regularly reminded to be prepared. But, in spite of the best preparation, when the earthquake comes, you can but hope for the best. That's what many souls do when it comes to their future beyond life – they hope for the best! That won't do!

Listen to the Lord Jesus Christ's promise to those who trust Him:

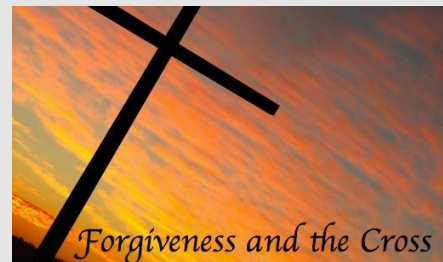
**'I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish' (John 10:28).**

Tell me, why would you not come to the Saviour today and accept His guarantee of safety and security before it is too late? L M Thompson



## ***FORGIVENESS***

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There is one eternal principal which will be valid as long as the world lasts. The principle is – **Forgiveness is a costly thing.**

Human forgiveness is costly. A son or a daughter may go wrong; a father or a mother may forgive; but that forgiveness has brought tears ... There was a price of a broken heart to pay. Divine forgiveness is costly. God is love, but God is holiness. God, least of all, can break the great moral laws on which the universe is built. Sin must have its punishment or the very structure of life disintegrates. And God alone can pay the terrible price that is necessary before men can be forgiven. Forgiveness is never a case of saying: "It's all right; it doesn't matter." Forgiveness is the most costly thing in the world. W.B



## WHO IS A PARDONING GOD LIKE THEE?

Great God of wonders! All thy ways  
Are worthy of Thyself – divine!  
But the bright glories of thy grace  
Beyond Thine other wonders shine.

*Who is a pardoning God like Thee?  
Or who has grace so rich and free?*

Such deep transgressions to forgive.  
Such guilty, daring worms to spare,  
This is Thy grand prerogative  
And in this honour none shall share.

*Who is a pardoning God like Thee?  
Or who has grace so rich and free?*

Pardon from an offended God!  
Pardon for sins of deepest dye!  
Pardon bestowed through Jesus' blood!  
Pardon that brings the rebel nigh!

*Who is a pardoning God like Thee?  
Or who has grace so rich and free?*



## 42 YEARS TO LEARN 3 THINGS

A Christian in the east of England used to say it took him forty-two years to learn three things:

- (1.) *That he could do nothing to save himself*
- (2.) *God did not require him to do anything*
- (3.) *Christ did it all*

If **you** learn these three lessons you will never talk about **your doings**.

**Your part** is to admit that you are a helpless, hell-deserving sinner, unable to do anything to save yourself.

**Your part** is to cease thinking of being saved by anything you can do or feel.

**Your part** is to believe that Jesus did everything that was necessary – that He finished the work of atonement and paid the ransom price with His precious blood.

Whenever you cease trying to be saved by **your doings**, and believe on the Lord Jesus, who did it all and paid it all, you become a son of God, an heir of glory, and joint-heir with Jesus Christ.

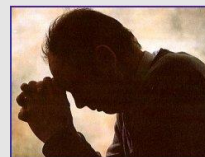
*‘To him that **worketh not**, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness’ (Rom. 4:5).*

**It is finished, yes, indeed,  
Finished every jot;  
Sinner, this is all you need.  
Tell me, is it not?**

If God is satisfied with the "finished" work of Christ, you ought to be satisfied with that which satisfied Him.



## POINT TO PONDER



**Upon a life I did not live,  
Upon a death I did not die;  
Another's life, another's death,  
I stake my whole eternity.**

Horatius Bonar

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