



Hello everyone

from the Editor

Have you ever asked the question, “What is the greatest need of the church and work of God in our day?” People have many answers to this question. Some suggest that we need better plans and systems of working. Others that we need to improve the way we do things and make them more presentable. and others that we need things to be more appealing, exciting and enjoyable, and many more.

These ideas appear to have much to offer and would make the things of God more attractive to the people of the world. But which things do we update and which way should we do it? Nearly every idea has been tried at some time. People have used entertainment and plays, some ministers have dressed as clowns, jokes and stories have been often used, bright lights and loud music etc.; however, none of these have led people to love and fear God.

We must remember that God uses people, not methods. He does not pour out His Spirit upon schemes but upon humble hearts. The Lord Jesus spent three years training His disciples, not introducing schemes and concerts. When God will do any work He calls and raises up holy men. Those who will trust Him and are men and women of prayer. Moses was called, so was Elijah and all the prophets.

People are looking for better methods, God looks for better men and women: Those who will serve Him with all their hearts; those who will be true to Him and His word; those who will live for Him and walk in His ways; those who will wrestle in prayer.

It is not people with great talents or great learning who are always needed, often these are puffed up with pride, but those who are humble in heart and desire to glorify God in all things. Where do you and I stand on this matter?

The Village Blacksmith

The man who was known as 'The Village Blacksmith' was Samuel Hick, who was born at Aberford, England in 1758. He was one of a family of thirteen children. His parents were very poor but honest and hard-working; they could not afford to send their children to school, so they could hardly read or write.

At the age of fourteen Samuel was apprenticed to Edward Derby to become a blacksmith. Soon a visiting preacher visited the town. He had no church to preach in, so he arranged to preach in a hay barn. The only place Samuel had to sit on was a pile of hay in a



corner. The preacher announced that his heart was on fire for the Lord; Samuel thought that this meant a real fire, so he was fearful that the barn might catch fire. Gradually Samuel was able to sit and listen, but he could not understand the message.

At the age of eighteen Samuel visited a carnival in another town. There he saw a group of people gathered around a man, so he went to see. It was a preacher who stood on a block to preach. Suddenly another minister angrily approached and told him that he had no right to preach there and if he did not stop, he would pull him off the stand. Samuel stepped up to the minister with his fists clenched and said, "Sir, if you disturb the man of God, I will drop you!" The minister grew pale and quickly made his escape. The people were amazed at Samuel's courage. Samuel listened to the preacher and became very fond of him. For a time he travelled to hear him preach whenever he could and was taught a little of God's truth.

Trouble soon came upon Samuel; at this time he was living with his boss. His daughter became very fond of Samuel and he of her, but when the boss found out, he ordered Samuel to leave and Samuel lost his job. The father immediately forced his daughter to marry another man – which she did not want to do. The daughter was dreadfully upset and became depressed. She soon became sick and

died. The father and mother later became very sorry for their actions and acknowledged their wrong doing to Samuel and they became friends again.

Samuel's father helped him to obtain a Blacksmith's shop of his own. He was now independent and able to provide for himself. Soon he felt that he needed a companion – a wife. He began to regularly attend a local Church. At one of the services he saw a girl whom he thought was to be his future wife. After the service, Samuel told the girl his feelings; he stuttered and lisped his words, but they had a good effect, and soon they were married.

Neither Samuel or his wife were saved at this time, and the wife's mother often spoke to Samuel about his need of salvation, and God blessed her words to him. Shortly after this the mother-in-law became sick and died. Samuel was deeply impressed by the peace and joy she had when she was sick and dying.

Three days after she had died, Samuel had a vivid dream about her; he dreamed that she spoke to him and told him that if he did not repent, they would never meet in the paradise of God. Samuel awoke in terror; he jumped out of bed with a shout. His startled wife thought that some sudden affliction had seized him and threatened his life. She was about to call the neighbours, but by his cry, "I want Jesus – Jesus to forgive my sins." she realised his trouble. Samuel had said prayers before, but he had never really called on the Lord with all his heart. Samuel was enabled to believe on Christ and was saved and found peace with God before morning.

He was now a new man in Christ. His conversion was sudden but very real. His heart was filled with love to God and joy in Christ. He resolved to tell all his neighbours and was sure that he could convince them.

The first person he went to was his land-lady. He told her what the Lord had done for him and could do for her. He urged her to pray and believe; telling her that if her sins were not forgiven, she would never go to heaven. The woman was not prepared for such a personal and early morning sermon! She became very angry and ordered him to leave the house by that very evening. Samuel did not

become angry, but quietly left and went into a field to pray. He poured out his heart to God, saying that he had only sought to serve the Lord. He prayed for the woman also. Then he returned to the woman – but what a change had occurred! To his surprise she was in tears, and asked him to forgive her, “O yes, I will, and I will pray for you that the Lord will forgive you too.” He prayed for her and she was led to faith in Christ. So he won his land-lady to Christ the first day he was saved.

Samuel lived all the rest of his life for the Lord and sought to serve him where ever he could, even becoming a local preacher, and many were blessed by his simple testimony and messages. He was always known as the Village Blacksmith.

Seeing the Queen

A young boy wished to see Queen Victoria. He got ready and walked to Windsor Castle where the Queen lived. He politely said to the guard at the gates, “Please, Mister, I want to see the Queen.” “You can't see the Queen. Run along home.” snapped the guard.

The boy was bitterly disappointed and went home crying. Suddenly a gentleman stopped him, “What are you crying for, my little man?” “Please, Sir, I went to see the Queen, but that big guard would not let me.” “Come with me.” replied the man kindly.

They came to the Palace gate; the guard presented arms and they both walked in. They went inside the castle, up a private stair case; the gentleman knocked at a door, “Come in.” a voice said. The gentleman opened the door and said, “Mother, here is a young boy to see you.” This man was the Queen's son, Edward, the Prince of Wales. This little boy had tried to see the Queen by himself, but with the Queen's son, he was immediately admitted into her presence.

This little story illustrates an important spiritual truth; we cannot come directly to God ourselves, but only in and through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth and the life, no man cometh unto the Father but by Me.” John 14:6.

A Convict Murderer

Two convicts, Riley Jeff and John Conway, both bushrangers, were condemned to be executed in Launceston on July 26th 1843 for having shot Mr Ward, a Constable at Avoca in Tasmania.

Soon after this trial, Riley Jeff requested Henry Dowling, a Baptist minister to visit him. At his first visit to Riley, Mr Dowling went in much fear and trembling, not knowing what would happen, but he was sure that the Lord's grace was almighty and able to save such a lost sheep.



Mr Dowling clearly explained to him what Christ had done to save sinners and that He is the Son of God. He explained the way of salvation, as well as the condemnation of the wicked.

Riley Jeff, from all appearances, was found of God. He was humbled under a sense of his sins, and conscious of his guilt; then he was led by the grace of God to the Saviour of sinners and found life and salvation in Him.

The last two days of his life were scenes of real blessedness. His love and faith abounded, and his hope in Jesus Christ was firm to the end. He seemed to have the grace of one who had known the Lord for many years. He rejoiced in the Lamb of God; his attitude was humble, grateful and looked to the Lord alone. He went to the place of his execution as though he was going to a place of rest and enjoyment. He declared, "I am not going to die: I was dead in sin, I am now dead in the law, and soon I shall live forever." He exhorted his fellow prisoners and spoke of the love of Jesus to them, and died rejoicing in the fact that the blood of Jesus cleanseth from all sin. He was a striking example of the fullness and freeness of Divine grace.

Four days later, Mr Dowling spoke to a large congregation, using this man's experience as his topic, and a number of people appeared to be deeply moved by this message.

Did the convict kill the pastor?



Samuel Marsden was an Anglican priest who came to Australia from England, in 1794. He sought to spread the gospel of Christ among the early settlers in Sydney, but found the work very hard.

Because he had no regular church, he accepted other work as well as preach where he could. He

supervised two schools for orphans and helped distribute clothing to those who were very poor. He also became a magistrate and judged a number of cases. When he ordered criminals to be punished, some people thought that he was severe.

One day he was walking by the banks of a river, when a convict plunged into the river. Mr Marsden threw off his coat, and immediately plunged into the river after him and endeavoured to bring the man to land. The convict however, tried to hold Mr Marsden's head under the water - so a desperate struggle took place between them; till Mr Marsden, who was the stronger of the two, managed to get to shore, dragging the man with him.

The poor fellow was struck with remorse and confessed his intention. He had determined to have revenge on this senior chaplain because he had preached a sermon which deeply convicted him of his sin and he thought that the preacher sought to hold him up to scorn before the congregation. He knew also that the sight of a drowning man would move Mr Marsden to try to rescue him. He hoped to drown Mr Marsden and then make good his own escape.

The convict became very sorry and also became a useful member of society. He now was greatly attached to his deliverer; afterwards

Mr Marsden took him into his own service, where he remained for some years and faithfully served him.

This event clearly showed that Mr Marsden was not uncaring and severe as some people accused him of, and it also demonstrates the anger some people have when they are told about their sins, just as King Herod did when John the Baptist reproved him for his sin.

~The Divine Weaver~

Behind our life the Weaver stands and works His wondrous will;
We leave it all in His wise hands, and trust His perfect skill.

Should mystery enshroud His plan and our short sight be dim
We will not try the whole to scan, but leave the thread to Him.

Not till the loom is silent, and the shuttles cease to fly,
Will God unfold the canvas and reveal the reason why

The dark threads are as needful, in the Weaver's skilful hand
As the threads of gold and silver in the pattern He has planned.

The all-important test

The well-known missionary to China, Hudson Taylor, was met by an old man who wished to ask a question. He said, "My name is Dzing. The question which distresses me, and to which I can find no answer is, 'what am I to do with my sins'? Our scholars tell us that there is no future state, but I find it hard to believe themOh, sir, I lie on my bed and think. I sit alone in the daytime and think, but I cannot tell what shall be done about my sins. I am now seventy-two years of age. I cannot expect to live much longer. "Today knows not tomorrows lot', as the saying goes. Can you tell me what to do with my sins?"

"I can indeed", replied Mr Taylor, and he told him the story of the cross, how Christ died to save us from sin and blot them out forever. The man departed was comforted and trusted in Christ for salvation. Only the gospel of Christ has the answer for sin - how it may be pardoned, cleansed and removed forever.

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We invite you to worship the Lord with us each Sunday.

~Smile a-while~

Twinkle smile: Older people's teeth are often like stars – they come out at night!

Sheepish: A man went into a butcher's shop and asked the server, "Have you got a sheep's head?" "No" he replied, "it's just the way I part my hair."

Hog's conclusion: What did the pig say when the farmer grabbed him by the tail? 'This is the end of me'!

Perfect record: Which driver has never been known to commit a traffic offence? 'A screwdriver'.

Medical Skill: '*Dealing with hallucinations*':-

"Doctor, I feel like a spoon!" "Please sit down and don't stir".

"Doctor, I feel like a pair of curtains." "Well, just pull yourself together."

"Doctor, I feel like a pack of cards." "Sit down and I will deal with you later."

"Doctor, I can't get to sleep at night." "Try lying on the edge of your bed, and you'll soon drop off."

"Doctor, I keep thinking there's two of me." "Only one at a time, please."

"Doctor, I keep feeling I'm covered with gold paint." "That's nothing really to worry about, it's just a guilt complex."

"Doctor, I keep thinking I'm a dustbin." "Please, don't talk such rubbish."

"Doctor, I've swallowed the film out of my camera." "Oh, I hope nothing develops."

"Doctor, Will my measles be better by next week?" "Well, I hate to make rash promises."

"Doctor, I keep seeing little black spots before my eyes." "Have you seen a doctor before?" "No. just black spots."

"Doctor, I think I am a clock." "Well, don't get wound up about it."

“Why are you so crazy?”

Vietnam is a country where Christians have been persecuted for their faith for many years. One of these Christians is a man named Trung. He was imprisoned for three years in 1996 because he preached the gospel to the tribal people. When he was imprisoned Trung boldly spoke to the other prisoners about Jesus and many of them became Christians too. This made the authorities so angry that they doubled Trung's sentence to six years and stopped his wife and children from visiting him, and from bringing food to him.

Some of the prisoners shared their food with Trung so that he would not die of starvation. Occasionally he was given lollies. Whenever he received the lollies, he wrote a Bible verse of the wrapper (such as John 3:16 or John 3:36) and returned it to the prisoner, hoping he would question its meaning and give Trung an opportunity to share the message of God's love in the gospel.

Trung's behaviour puzzled many people; the chief of police said to him, “I really need to ask you, what is it that makes you so crazy? You are prepared to go to prison, you are repeatedly beaten and at times you are more dead than alive, and yet you will not deny Christ.” Trung made it clear to the man that he was willing to endure all this because he had dedicated his life to Christ and was determined to follow the Lord no matter what happened to him, because of all that Christ had done for him.

After six years, Trung was released from prison and immediately he began to preach the gospel of Christ. The police continue to watch him and try to exert pressure to stop him from preaching. But they never have been successful because Trung is a man, who like the apostle Paul believes that “to live is Christ and to die is gain.” (Philippians 1:21) At times there are more police at his Sunday services than Christians, but this does not bother him or cause him to change his message. Instead, Trung rejoices in the opportunity to witness to these men who hate Christ and His gospel.

From: Sunday School News, N.Z.

Praying for young people

My early life was in a Christian family. As a young boy in the 1940s and 50s, I always attended Church. Christian Endeavour at 10am, Church service 11am, Sunday School at 3pm. But I did not take heed to the many Gospel messages that I heard.

In the Church I attended there was a godly man – a deacon. The Lord placed on his heart a special burden for my salvation. He would often speak to me about the necessity of coming to Christ for salvation. Year after year he fervently prayed for my salvation, but there was no response from my heart. When I entered into my later teen age years, I left off attending the Church and went my own way into the world; as a result I lost contact with the prayerful deacon.

About 25 years later, and then living in another Australian State, I heard the old gospel message broadcast over the radio. This time it 'struck a chord' in my heart, and I was led to accept Jesus Christ as my Saviour. I still remembered and thanked the Lord for that Deacon's faithful prayers. (Proverbs 22:6)

I then began to teach Sunday School at a local Church, and later extended my service to the Lord by joining the Postal Sunday School Movement (P.S.S.M) Teaching children by correspondence.

The years rolled on; and I lost all contact with the deacon. However, after some 60 years, I had an opportunity of meeting with the wife of the late President of Postal Sunday School. During the conversation with her, we recalled various times and places, she mentioned the very name of that deacon, saying that he used to be one of the very faithful supporters of the P.S.S.M.

I am now no longer a lad, but rather elderly. I was very surprised to find out that the praying deacon had become involved in the same work for the Lord as the one for whom he had faithfully prayed for.

James 5:16 says, “The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much” - with God's blessing prayer will have a great effect. May we all remember to pray earnestly for those who are young.

Sam Mitchell