

## Events Schedule

- **September 14-22**  
Eugene Fairgrounds, OR—Evangelistic Series  
Ty Gibson—☎(541)688-5081
- **September 27-29**  
3ABN Camp Meeting, West Frankfort, IL  
Ty Gibson—☎(618)627-4651
- **September 28-30**  
Montana Conference Men's Summit,  
Rollins, MT  
James Rafferty—☎(406)752-5300
- **October 3-6**  
Wahroonga SDA Church, NSW  
Ty Gibson—☎(02)9487 1374
- **October 12-20**  
Papatoetoe SDA Church, Papatoetoe, Auckland  
Ty Gibson—info@papasda.co.nz
- **November 2-3**  
Central California Conference Annual Men's  
Spiritual Retreat—Soquel Conference Center  
Ty Gibson—☎(559)352-8681
- **November 9-10**  
Immanuel SDA Church, Willowdale, ON  
Canada  
James Rafferty—☎(416)223-1992
- **November 9-10**  
Upper Columbia Conference Family Fellowship  
Ty Gibson—☎(509)838-2761

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LIGHT BEARERS

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*Light Bearers is a non-profit ministry based in beautiful Oregon State.  
Our purpose is to help proclaim the gospel  
of our Lord Jesus Christ through the spoken and published word.*

... "Prosperity" continued from page 3

with our material prosperity, but rather with the restoration of His self-giving love in our hearts as the mainspring of all our actions.

Revelation 13 warns that the anti-Christ system will advance its final agenda by means of financial promise and pressure:

"He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name" (Revelation 13:16-17).

If you submit to the dictates of the beast system, you will be allowed to buy and sell, and if you do not submit you will be denied financial freedom. Bear in mind that Revelation 13 anticipates this coercive mandate will be thrust upon the world by an American-based Christianity, and it becomes evident that the situation is rather dangerous for the economically poor nations who have come to look with awe upon American Christianity in its prosperity-gospel form. Imagine what it will be like for those who have bought into the prosperity theology when they are faced with an American-based system, claiming to speak for God, that holds power over their financial freedom. It will be a small step to embrace the beast and its mark when the mind has been educated to believe that God is wherever the money is; that, in fact, financial prosperity is the evidence of God's blessing.

While many believers and non-believers see through the mask of the prosperity gospel, millions of people in Africa are in spiritual trouble and we must come to their aid. Presently this vast continent of precious souls for whom Jesus died is under attack by a rapidly invading spiritual enemy professing to be its friend, promising prosperity in the name of Jesus while hiding the true Jesus from sight. Africa needs to be flooded with the true light of the gospel of Christ as fast as possible. What we find is that the people of Africa are eager to learn the true gospel of Jesus Christ, if they are given a chance. They are hungry for truth. We must gain access to them at a far more rapid pace than we presently are. We are literally in a race with time to claim as many people as possible before they are overrun with a false gospel.

Light Bearers Ministry is uniquely positioned to make a major impact on Africa by flooding its nations with truth-filled literature. Each container we send carries between two to three million publications of sound, Biblical teaching, which will serve as a means of crippling the influence and credibility of false teachers. As the literature is freely distributed, one person after another comes to know and love the one and only true God. They become theologically educated to discern falsehood as it approaches. More national voices are then raised to proclaim the gospel, and more people come to believe the truth as it is in Jesus.

# MISSION UPDATE

The Newsletter of Light Bearers Ministry



## There is a God in Heaven . . .

By James Rafferty

**H**uman pride is the bane of all our humanity. From Cain who thought the works of his hands were as good or superior to anything God required, to Nebuchadnezzar who claimed it was his might and power that framed Babylon, and more recently Karl Rove<sup>1</sup> who has been credited with most of Bush's political success. There is constant temptation for human beings to consider that any influence they have gained is the result of something valuable in themselves.<sup>2</sup>

In stark contrast and often in open rebuke stand those who recognize that God is all in all (1 Corinthians 15:28). Daniel himself was immersed in the finest educational systems of his time when he made this startling declaration: "Daniel answered before the king and said, 'As for the mystery about which the king has inquired, neither wise men, conjurers, magicians nor diviners are able to declare it to the king. However, there is a God in heaven that reveals mysteries,

and He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will take place in the latter days. This was your dream and the visions in your mind while on your bed" (Daniel 2:27-28, NAS).

With this humble, yet truthful, introduction Daniel proceeds to give Nebuchadnezzar insights that make Daniel look 10 times better than all the wise men of Babylon (compare Daniel 1:20 and Daniel 2:1). What is so amazing about the story of Daniel is his complete and continued lack of pride. When asked if he could make known Nebuchadnezzar's dream Daniel intentionally rehearses the failure of all the wise men of the kingdom and then immediately directs the king to God, totally eclipsing himself from view. His answer basically says—the wise men could not, but God can. The issue to Daniel was not education or IQ, it was simply the acknowledgement that God is our wisdom and our boasting is in Him (1 Corinthians 1:30-31).

Consider one more example from

the Bible. Nehemiah, after gaining so great an influence over the [Persian] monarch in whose court he lived, and over his people in Jerusalem, instead of ascribing praise to his own excellent traits of character, his remarkable aptness and energy, stated the manner just as it was. He declared that his success was due to the good hand of God that was upon him. He cherished the truth that God was his safeguard in every position of influence. For every trait of character by which he obtained favor, he praised the working power of God. And God gave him wisdom, because he did not exalt himself. The Lord taught him how to use the gifts entrusted to him to the very best advantage, and under the supervision of God, these talents gained other talents.

The bottom line for Nebuchadnezzar, Karl Rove and us is—there is a God in heaven, and we are not Him.

<sup>1</sup> *The Week*, August 24, 2007.

<sup>2</sup> *Upward Look*, p. 243.

## CONSIDER THIS . . .

Let us be diligent in the distribution of literature that has been carefully prepared for use among those not of our faith. Let us make the most of every opportunity to arrest the attention of unbelievers. Let us put literature into every hand that will receive it. Let us consecrate ourselves to the proclamation of the message, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God."

Ellen G. White,  
*Christian Service*, p. 169

Medical missionary work is the right hand of the gospel. It is necessary to the advancement of the cause of God. As through it men and women are led to see the importance of right habits of living, the saving power of the truth will be made known. Every city is to be entered by workers trained to do medical missionary work. As the right hand of the third angel's message, God's methods of treating disease will open doors for the entrance of present truth. Health literature must be circulated in many lands. Our physicians in Europe and other countries should awake to the necessity of having health works prepared by men who are on the ground and who can meet the people where they are with the most essential instruction.

Ellen G. White,  
*Counsels on Health*, p. 219

We are to give the last warning of God to men, and what should be our earnestness in studying the Bible, and our zeal in spreading the light! Let every soul who has received the divine illumination seek to impart it. Let the workers go from house to house, opening the Bible to the people, circulating the publications, telling others of the light that has blessed their own souls. Let literature be distributed judiciously, on the trains, in the street, on the great ships that ply the sea, and through the mails.

Ellen G. White,  
*Gospel Workers*, p. 353

We should treat as a sacred treasure every line of printed matter that comes from our publishing houses. Even the fragments of a pamphlet or of a periodical should be regarded as of value. Who can estimate the influence that a torn page, containing the truths of the third angel's message, may have upon the heart of some seeker after truth? Every page that comes from the press is a ray of light from heaven, to shine into the byways and the hedges, shedding light upon the pathway of truth. Let us remember that somebody would be glad to receive every page that we can spare.

Ellen G. White  
*Publishing Ministry*, p. 283

# A PLAGUE OF "PROSPERITY"

BY TY GIBSON



Soberly consider the following numbers. According to a recent Christianity Today article, in 1970 about seventeen million people in Africa identified themselves as Pentecostal/Charismatic. Then Trinity Broadcasting Network came to Africa, which is the world's largest religious broadcaster, and imported its health and wealth version of Pentecostalism. The result has been an explosion of charismatic growth with an emphasis on miracles and material wealth as the evidence of God's blessing. Fast-forward just one generation: today 147 million Africans adhere to a brand of American "Christianity" known as the "prosperity gospel." The current population of Africa is 890 million, which means that the "health and wealth" movement claims one sixth of the Africa's masses, and it is growing faster than all other religions

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combined, including Islam.

As the largest African nation, 26% of Nigeria's population is part of the charismatic movement; 34% of South Africa and an amazing 56% of Kenya. It is easy to see why the prosperity gospel has such appeal in Africa. About 315 million Africans live on less than one dollar a day, and one in three suffer from malnutrition. Average life expectancy is 41. Into this bleak situation comes a message promising material riches and physical healing to anyone who has enough faith to make God act. Of course the formula for "being blessed with God's best" is always the same: give the big-time TV prosperity preacher a faith-size offering, then watch out because you will be flush with money in no time. Consider also the attraction to supernatural demonstrations in a culture that has been traditionally steeped in spiritualism. These factors combine to create in Africa a strong susceptibility to this form of the

charismatic movement.

What exactly is the theological essence of the prosperity gospel and the charismatic movement from which it hails? As with all religions, at its core the prosperity gospel holds a particular picture of God. After all, that is what all theology is—ones picture of God is ones theology, and one theology is ones picture of God. In the charismatic worship service, the words employed to invoke God's actions, the self-centered focus of mind generated in the worshiper, the high-pitched emotional and physical orchestrations, all of it comes together to configure a picture of God strikingly similar to the worship ceremonies of ancient paganism. In paganism God was to be moved upon by human rituals and deeds to act in accordance with human desires. The ancient pagan worshiper would go through a series of mental, emotional and physical gyrations for the purpose of getting God to act favorably. God was conceived of as a

manageable power to be harnessed for the purpose of supplying human needs and desires rather than as a personal God to be known and loved and obeyed.

Certainly the Bible does teach that God is eager to bless and prosper us, but never as the gospel itself, never as the point of our worship, and never as an effect to be attained by mere miraculous power. Rather, the focus of Scripture is on calling human beings to know and love God through His self-revelation in Jesus Christ; to come to God through Christ in repentance for sin in the motivating light of His goodness; and to obey His good laws, all of which are benevolence-based, from which blessing emerges as a residual effect upon the giver. There is no doubt that God could simply pour material wealth on anyone who is confident enough to believe He will, but God is not primarily concerned

*continued on page 4 . . .*