

MISSION UPDATE

APRIL 2016

WHAT IF THE GOOD NEWS IS BETTER THAN YOU THINK?

TY GIBSON

AFTER EXPLAINING THAT CHRIST is “the Word” and “the Light” to every person in the world (John 1:1-9), John makes an enormous, encompassing, extravagant claim:

“Of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace” (John 1:16).

The word “fullness” (*pleroma*) means *completeness* or *totality*. The “all” in this text is clearly the entire human race. So the gospel proclaims an unreserved, unconditional giving of Christ to every person.


“He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?” (Romans 8:32).

Incredible!

Christ is the one gift in which all God’s gifts are given. In giving Jesus, God gave all He could possibly give. And to whom? To “us,” Paul says. To every man, woman and child!

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life” (John 3:16).

Yes, one must believe in order to possess eternal life, but before there was any believing on the part of any person, there was a complete giving on God’s part. The “Word became flesh and dwelt among us” (John 1:14). Or as Hebrews 7:26 says, He “became us.” To say He “became flesh” is to say He “became us,” for we are, all of us, the flesh He became. He did not merely dwell “among” us, in our geographical proximity. Rather, He literally dwelt within us, within our actual human nature. God literally became a human being. Jesus was given to humanity as a full-fledged member of our race—an irrevocable gift never to be taken back.

The very fact that God “became us” in Christ logically makes the gift of salvation free *to all* before it can be made experientially personal to *any*. “He came unto His own, and His own received Him not” (John 1:11). Whether we receive Him or reject Him, He came to us just the same. “But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name” (John 1:12). To receive Him and believe in His name are vitally indispensable for entering into the personal experience of salvation. And yet, if He had not first given Himself freely *to all*, out of sheer love, there would be absolutely nothing to believe or receive. 



TWELVE

DAVID ASSCHERICK

ON FEBRUARY 8, ARISE Australia's fourth three-month session began enthusiastically here in Kingscliff, Australia with students from all around the world. Norway, Germany, Finland, the United States, Canada, and South Africa, in addition to Australia of course, are all represented!

I've been doing this for fifteen years now, ever since Pastor Nathan Renner and I co-founded ARISE in partnership with the Michigan Conference. We were super enthusiastic for our first-ever class, and that enthusiasm for training, discipleship, and teaching remains absolutely undiminished.

One of the quotations that really stoked our fire in those early days was this: "With such an army of workers as our youth,

rightly trained, might furnish, how soon the message of a crucified, risen, and soon-coming Savior might be carried to the whole world! How soon might the end come—the end of suffering and sorrow and sin!" (Education, p. 271).

Here at Light Bearers, our passion for training and discipleship grows deeper and stronger every year. We sincerely hope you share that passion. It was, after all, the passion of Jesus Christ while He walked the earth!

Let's be honest, the size of the evangelistic enterprise before us can be absolutely overwhelming. Like you, probably, I cannot conceive of what the number seven billion actually *means*. Sure, I can write it out, but I do not understand it. Jesus might have been similarly overwhelmed with the size of the evangelistic task before Him. But what did He do in the face of such a confronting and confounding challenge?

He did the unexpected.

He called 12 Israelites to be taught, trained, and discipled.

Not 1200. Not 12,000. And not 12,000,000. Just 12.

“Then He appointed twelve, that they might be with Him and that He might send them out to preach” (Mark 3:14). The secret is found in this simple, easy-to-miss phrase: “that they might be with Him.” The early church, not many years later, would effectively turn the Greco-Roman world upside down. The book of Acts tells the first part of this world-changing story, and no verse in Acts is more significant than this one: “Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus” (Acts 4:13). Note that carefully: “*they realized that they had been with Jesus.*”

ARISE is a place to be uniquely and uninterruptedly *with* Jesus.

The plan had worked! And marvelously at that!

All along, Jesus’ plan was simple: surround Himself with a small group (hey, aren’t we hearing a lot about “small groups” nowadays?) of sincere followers who could be grown and nurtured into mighty men of God. When they were first called—fisherman, tax collectors, and ordinary folk—they scarcely seemed like world changers. And yet, here we are 2000 years later basking in the glory and grandeur of the work God accomplished through them by His Spirit.

The key to their power could be summarized in that simple word: *with*. In fact, this word is at the very core of Jesus’ ministry and incarnation. “Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel, which is translated, ‘God with us’” (Matthew 1:23).

God *with* us! There’s the “secret” right there. It was Jesus’ secret, the disciples’ secret, and the early church’s secret.

And it is our secret at the ARISE program!

Many have asked about the success of the ARISE program over the years. How have we managed to stay the course year after year? How have we been able to create a program

that has been instrumental in changing and equipping hundreds of lives for a life of ministry? Many might suppose it’s the list of extraordinary instructors, trainers, and staff we have. Many might suppose it’s the dynamic teaching, the stunning campuses, the powerful outreach ministries, or the amazing fellowship.

These all play a role, but the real power is found in something more simple and ancient: ARISE is a place to be uniquely and uninterruptedly *with* Jesus. And that’s where the *real* power is found—in Him.

This year, ARISE Australia boasts nearly three times Jesus’ original number of 12, and we think that’s a good thing. We’d love to see even more attend. Hundreds, thousands, millions . . .

But we always come back to the 12 and to their secret. They were “with Jesus.” And that’s what we want for our students. Simple, yet, powerful.

Twelve isn’t many, but it’s enough.

At least Jesus thought so. 🔥



ARISE AND BE WITH JESUS

If you’ve been longing to know Jesus more, consider coming to ARISE and see how much of a difference being with Jesus makes in your life. Learn more at arisehub.org.

SPEAKING SCHEDULE

APRIL 1-9

College Place Adventist Church
College Place, WA
villageadventist.org / 509.525.0882
James & Risë Rafferty

APRIL 2

ASI Mid-America Conference
Ramada Plaza North, Denver, CO
asimidamerica.org
Jeffrey Rosario

APRIL 7-9

ASI Southern Union Spring Conf.
Cohutta Springs Conference Center
Crandall, GA
asisouthernunion.org
Ty Gibson

APRIL 15-16

ASI Lake Union Spring Fellowship
St. Joseph, MI
www.asilakeunion.org
Ty Gibson

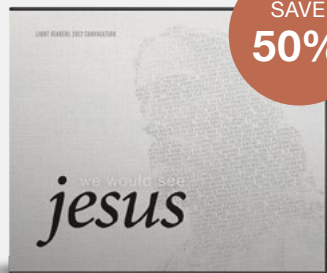
APRIL 21-24

ASI Northwest Chapter Convention
Eagle Crest Resort, Redmond, OR
asinw.netasi.org
James Rafferty

APRIL 21-24

Princeton University, NJ
craveseminar.com
princetoncrave@gmail.com
Ty Gibson

see more events at lightbearers.org



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