



MISSION UPDATE

APRIL 2018

THE FOOLISHNESS OF THE CROSS

FRED BISCHOFF


JESUS' WORDS, "THE FLESH profits nothing" (John 6:63), explain the mess the world is in. Except for the human Jesus, we each are born "of the will of the flesh" (John 1:13). This is human nature left to its sinful condition. It gives to us only a life "under the law"—on the law's bad side, out of touch with God's love. From that inheritance we have nothing but "guilt and the sentence of death" (Ellen White, Letter 68, 1899, par. 15).

But good does exist, and in the midst of the mess we find grace, even in those who don't officially know God. How can this be, except that God's Son was "made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law" (Galatians 4:4-5)? "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us . . . full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). He was one of us, but He connected in Himself God and the sinful race (John 1:51). "And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 1:14). Indeed, "the grace and the truth through Jesus Christ did come" (John 1:17, YLT). Thus we "are not under the law, but under grace." Do you realize everything good anyone has received comes through Jesus?

Recognizing that "the flesh" is the source of all the problems should lead us to confess more and more deeply, "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwells no good thing" (Romans 7:18). We should learn more and more not to trust the sinful nature, to "have no confidence in the flesh" (Philippians 3:3), but with Jesus say, "I will put my trust in Him" (Hebrews 2:13).

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Jesus became one of us, "made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death" to "taste death for every man" and "through death . . . destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil" (Hebrews 2:9, 14).

This is the foolishness of the cross (1 Corinthians 1:17-31)—that One would leave the unselfish environment of heaven and come to where unselfish love was lacking, to love us to death, and thus restore love to us. Loving His enemies cost Him everything but His faith and love. "He abides faithful: He cannot deny Himself" (2 Timothy 2:13). 



A CHANNEL OF LIGHT

JAMES RAFFERTY

AS I MOVED THROUGH our publishing house today, checking the inventory, I felt a sense of urgency to get literature out the door. Things are changing. The world is changing. The ability to send gospel-filled containers around the world is changing.

Great changes often happen quickly and without notice. In Christ's time, John was preaching in the wilderness, pointing people to Jesus. The next thing we know, he's being persecuted by civil authority for opposing immoral lifestyles. Does that sound familiar?

Today, we in America still have a good amount of freedom compared to some other nations where gospel literature is

forbidden. We can still be like John, who bore "witness of the Light, that all through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world" (John 1:7-8).

That's what we've always believed about Light Bearers. We are a channel of light. Or, as John says, we are not *the Light* but we *bear witness* of that Light. Jesus Christ is the true light and He lights every man coming into the world. That's why we print literature, so we can scatter it like the leaves of autumn. We've printed over 688 million pieces in 42 languages in the last 30 years, because we believe that we are a channel through which God sends the light of His love to the world.

By the time you read this, our third container for 2018 will have shipped. Each container is filled with two million pieces of gospel literature. The containers to English speaking countries, like Zambia, South Africa, and Jamaica, will be supplemented with Bibles, *The Great Controversy*, and a

variety of donated books, magazines, and studies sent in from churches, ministries, and individuals who no longer need them. Some folks even go to secondhand stores and buy Bibles to donate to us—a great ministry for those who have extra time and funds.

Each container is filled with two million pieces of gospel literature.

Speaking of Bibles, there is probably nothing more vital than getting the Word of God into the hands of people who've never read or owned this life-changing book. We have a donor who spoke to me this week about wanting to distribute one million Bibles across the globe. How fast could we accomplish this goal if we were to empty our shelves of all those Bibles that are just sitting around, gathering dust? Here's a challenge. Grab every Bible in your home, office, or church that has not been used for the last year and send it to Light Bearers. Organize your youth group, Bible study group, women's group, Pathfinder group, or recovery group to find Bibles. Scavenge them up and send them in. We'll ship them out.

If you don't have extra Bibles or time to collect them, please consider donating to Light Bearers to help support the worldwide General Conference emphasis on Total Member Involvement (TMI). Light Bearers has been supporting TMI by sending containers of literature to supply the lay member's efforts to reach their friends and neighbors all over the world. Literature in the hands of lay members empowers them, allowing them to prepare for the living preacher talked about in the following statement:

"I have been shown that but few have any correct idea of what the distribution of papers and tracts is doing. The missionary work, in circulating the publications upon present truth, is opening doors everywhere, and preparing minds to receive the truth, when the living preacher shall come among them. The success which attends the efforts of ministers in the field is not due alone to their efforts, but in a great degree to the influence of the reading matter which has enlightened the minds of the people and removed prejudice. Thus many are made susceptible to the influence of the truth when it is presented before them" (*The Publishing Ministry*, p. 398).

There you have it! You may not have known this, but the tracts from Light Bearers are literally blowing up evangelism all over the globe. But it's not us, we're just a channel. It's the Holy Spirit working through pieces of paper with words printed into sentences which form paragraphs, and those paragraphs emit light to all the world. And it's you. You, taking the time to send in those material donations and financial donations moves the gospel literature through our channel and into the hands of people. And someday those people will tell you their names and stories and you'll realize the difference you made. You do make a difference. You can make a difference. You may not be able to give a million Bibles, but you can give one and that will make a difference for someone. An eternal difference. Amen. 🔥

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SPEAKING SCHEDULE

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High Springs, FL
Ty Gibson
floridaconference.com/events/2018-camp-meeting

MAY 27-31

Carolina Conference of Seventh-day Adventists
Lake Junaluska, NC
Ty Gibson
www.carolinasda.org/camp-meeting

JULY 3-7

Light Bearers Convocation
Jasper, OR
www.lightbearers.org

MAY 18-20

Digging Deeper Young Adults Retreat
Camp MiVoden, Hayden, ID
Ty Gibson
diggingdeeperretreat.com

JUNE 6

3ABN Spring Camp Meeting
West Frankfort, IL
James Rafferty
www.3abn.org

see more events at lightbearers.org

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Light Bearers Convocation | July 3-7, 2018 | Jasper, OR

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