



Messages from Jesus or Dad are denoted by bold type. Notes from the editors are either in italics or are preceded by "Editor." Short quotes from the Letters are preceded by a bullet and are followed by the reference.

A barefoot boy's incredible journey

EXCERPTED FROM *UNSTOPPABLE*, BY CYNTHIA KERSEY

He possessed a five-day supply of food, a Bible and *Pilgrim's Progress*, a small ax for protection, and a blanket. With these, Legson Kayira eagerly set out on the journey of his life. He was going to walk from his tribal village in Nyasaland [Malawi], north across the wilderness of East Africa to Cairo, where he would board a ship to America to get a college education.

It was October 1958. Legson was sixteen or seventeen, his mother wasn't sure. His parents were illiterate and didn't know exactly where America was or how far. But they reluctantly gave their blessing to his journey.

Legson wanted to serve mankind, to make a difference in the world. To realize his goal, he needed education. He knew the best place to get it was in America.

Forget that Legson didn't have a penny to his name or a way to pay for his ship fare.

Forget that he had no idea what college he would attend or if he would even be accepted.

Forget that Cairo was 3,000 miles away, and in between were hundreds of tribes that spoke more than fifty strange languages, none of which Legson knew.

Forget all that. Legson did. He put everything out of his mind except his dream.

He hadn't always been so determined. Like many of his friends in the village, it was easy for Legson to believe that studying was a waste of time for a poor boy from the town of Karonga in Nyasaland. Then, in books provided by missionaries, he discovered Abraham Lincoln and Booker T. Washington. Their stories inspired him to envision more for his life. So he conceived the idea for his walk.

After five full days of trekking across the rugged African terrain, Legson had covered only 25 miles. He was already out of food, his water was running out, and he had no money. To travel the distance of 2,975 additional miles seemed impossible. Yet to turn back was to give up, to resign himself to a life of poverty and ignorance. *I will not stop until I reach America*, he promised himself. *Or until I die trying*.

Sometimes he walked with strangers. Most of the time he walked alone. He entered each new village cautiously, not knowing whether the natives were hostile or friendly. Sometimes he found work and shelter. Many nights he slept under the stars. He foraged for wild fruits and berries and other edible plants. He became thin and weak. A fever struck him and he fell gravely ill. Kind strangers treated him with herbal medicines and offered him a place to rest and convalesce. Weary and demoralized, Legson considered turning back.

Instead, Legson turned to his two books, reading the familiar words that renewed his faith in himself and in his goal. He continued on. On January 19, 1960, fifteen months after he began his perilous journey, he had crossed nearly a thousand miles to Kampala, the capital of Uganda. He remained in Kampala for six months, working at odd jobs and spending every spare moment in the library.

In that library he came across an illustrated directory of American colleges. One illustration in particular caught his eye. It was of a stately, yet friendly looking institution, surrounded by majestic mountains that reminded him of the magnificent peaks back home in Nyasaland.

Skagit Valley College in Mount Vernon, Washington, became the first concrete image in Legson's seemingly impossible quest. He wrote immediately to



FROM AN AFRICAN VILLAGE TO AN AMERICAN COLLEGE BY FAITH

the school's dean explaining his situation and asking for a scholarship. Fearing he might not be accepted at Skagit, Legson decided to write to as many colleges as his meager budget would allow.

It wasn't necessary. The dean at Skagit was so impressed with Legson's determination he not only granted him admission but also offered him a scholarship and a job that would pay his room and board.

Another piece of Legson's dream had fallen into place—yet still more obstacles blocked his path. Legson needed a passport and a visa, but to get a passport, he had to provide the government with a verified birth date. Worse yet, to get a visa he needed round-trip fare to the United States.

Thots

"Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around."—Leo Buscaglia (1924–1998), author.

"We as Americans are completely obsessed and wrapped up in a lot of the wrong values—looking good, having cash in the bank, being perceived as rich, famous and successful, or just being famous. It's the most superficial part of the American dream, and who would know better than me?"—Madonna in an interview with the British magazine *Radio Times*.

Again, he picked up pen and paper and wrote to the missionaries who had taught him since childhood. They helped to push the passport through government channels. However, Legson still lacked the airfare required for a visa.

Undeterred, Legson continued his journey to Cairo believing he would somehow get the money he needed. He was so confident he spent the last of his savings on a pair of shoes so he wouldn't have to walk through the door of Skagit Valley College barefoot.

Months passed, and word of his courageous journey began to spread. By the time he reached Khartoum, penniless and exhausted, the story of Legson Kayira had spanned the ocean between the African continent and Mount Vernon, Washington. The students of Skagit Valley College, with the help of local citizens, sent \$650 to cover Legson's fare to America.

In December 1960, more than two years after his journey began, Legson

Kayira arrived at Skagit Valley College, carrying his two treasured books.

But Legson Kayira didn't stop once he graduated. He became a professor of political science at Cambridge University in England and a widely respected author.

He rose above his humble beginnings and forged his own destiny. He made a difference in the world.

"I learned I was not, as most Africans believed, the victim of my circumstances but the master of them."—Legson Kayira.

(Dad:) You cannot stop the man of faith! You cannot dissuade him! You cannot divert him! He'll go on, with or without you, or right over you, if necessary!

How determined are you to make a difference in the world? How hard will you work to reach your goals? How far are you willing to go for the Lord?

This man, motivated by his dream and the little Word he had, gave his all to reach his goal. Will you be motivated by the much greater Word you have and your dreams to reach yours? Will you work toward a goal that will truly change the world by changing the hearts of men?

If you will—if you have the faith, vision, initiative and courage to go all the way for God—then the world will hear about it, and Heaven itself will resound with the praises of the heavenly host and the hallelujahs of those whose souls are saved and whose lives are changed by your efforts! It'll have eternal impact!

Go for it, Family! Little is much if God is in it! He can help you overcome your circumstances, whatever they may be, and rise above any obstacles in your path. With God, nothing is impossible!

News Review: August 2003

Some of the top news stories of the month, in brief (*Reuters/AP/AFP*):

AFRICA

West African peacekeepers, followed by a few hundred American troops, deployed in Monrovia to offer Liberians hope of ending 14 years of war and slaughter. Shortly thereafter, President Charles Taylor fled into exile in Nigeria, leaving his vice president to maintain order. Order outside the capital of Monrovia was almost nonexistent, however, with government and anti-government forces still battling.

Nearly 100 people were killed and more than 1,000 injured in tribal warfare that rocked the southern Nigerian oil city of Warri.

ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Monsoon rains—the worst in 25 years in places—killed 849 people in India, Bangladesh, Nepal and Pakistan, and left more than 12 million homeless or stranded by floods.

Two bomb blasts rocked Bombay, killing at least 50 people, wounding 150 others and shaking buildings. India blamed the blasts on Pakistan-backed rebels seeking independence for Kashmir, and the incident soured relations between India and Pakistan, which had been improving.

Maoist rebels in Nepal walked out of peace talks and said they would end a seven-month truce.

A car bomb killed 16 people and wounded 149 as it ripped through a luxury hotel in the heart of Indonesia's capital.

EUROPE

A heat wave baked parts of Europe in early August, bringing wildfires and some of the hottest August temperatures on record to parts of the continent and claiming up to 20,000 lives from heat-related causes.

LATIN AMERICA

A helicopter carrying Colombian president Alvaro Uribe hastily retreated after coming under machine-gun fire from ambush while preparing to land at a town in northern Colombia. It was at least the third attempt to kill Uribe, who's leading a crackdown against rebels and other illegal armed organizations.

The Argentine Congress repealed two amnesty laws that shielded hundreds of military officers from prosecution for human rights abuses during the "dirty war" era.

A rocket explosion at Brazil's space center killed 21 people as the country attempted to launch Latin America's first satellite.

MIDEAST

Taliban guerrillas have stepped up their attacks against police, aid workers, and anyone associated with the U.S.-backed regime, killing dozens in one of the deadliest months since the U.S. invasion in 2001.

It was also a deadly month in Iraq. A massive car bomb exploded outside the Jordanian Embassy in Baghdad, killing 19 people and wounding 52. Later in the month, a cement truck packed with explosives detonated outside the offices of the top U.N. envoy

in Iraq, killing him and 23 others, wounding 100, and devastating the U.N. headquarters in Baghdad. At the end of the month, a car bomb ripped through a crowd of worshippers leaving Iraq's holiest Shiite shrine after Friday prayers, killing at least 85 people—including a top cleric—and wounding more than 140 others.

A Palestinian bomber triggered an explosion aboard a crowded bus in Jerusalem, killing himself and at least 18 other people and injuring more than 100. Israel responded with missile attacks on Hamas leaders in Gaza and renewed West Bank blockades. Both sides declared the ceasefire over.

NORTH AMERICA

The largest power blackout in U.S. history rolled across a vast swath of the northern United States as well as southern Canada, leaving 50 million people in darkness for more than a day.

RUSSIA/CIS

A suicide bomber driving a truck rigged with explosives blasted a Russian military hospital near separatist Chechnya, killing at least 44 people and wounding about 300 others.

OTHER NEWS

Leaders of the Episcopal Church in the U.S. approved a gay bishop and said that individual churches could choose to bless same-sex unions; a group of conservative bishops called for the creation of a new Anglican province in the United States where homosexuality would remain a bona fide sin.

Contributions to the *END* should be e-mailed to: end@wsfamily.com

The *END* is a nonaligned, nonprofit publication. All articles published herein are for informational purposes only. Opinions and viewpoints expressed in the reprinted news articles are not necessarily those of the *END* editors.

Comments added by heavenly sources or by the earthly editors are copyright © 2003 by The Family.

◆ Wars and rumors of war

Brief notes from the horrific world of lethal weaponry:

(Reuters) **Weapon sales by rich countries were responsible for the proliferation of wars, Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad said.** He said wars were being waged as an excuse to try out new weapons. "If there is no war, then all these very expensive weapons would be a waste."

"Off and on a fairly major war would be launched deliberately for no very good reason. And the weapons are gleefully used in these real-life tests," he said.

Mahathir accused "high pressure arms salesman" of forcing poor nations to buy weapons. "To encourage (poor countries to buy), it was pointed out that their neighbors have already bought or are about to buy these weapons," he said.

(Reuters) **Hiroshima marked the 58th anniversary of the world's first atomic bombing with condemnation of a global trend toward nuclear proliferation.** In an annual ritual of remembrance for the more than 230,000 people who ultimately died from the blast, a crowd of thousands gathered to pray at Hiroshima's Peace Park, close to where the bomb was dropped.

"The world without nuclear weapons and beyond war that bomb survivors have sought for so long appears to be slipping under a thick cover of dark clouds that they fear at any minute could become mushroom clouds," Hiroshima Mayor Tadatashi Akiba told the crowd.

Akiba criticized what he called a sharp world tilt toward war and a serious weakening of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. "The chief cause (of the weaker treaty) is the U.S. nuclear policy that, by openly declaring the possibility of a pre-emptive nuclear first strike and calling for resumed research into mini-nukes and other so-called 'usable nuclear weapons,' appears to worship nuclear weapons as God."

(Heather Wokusch, *The Baltimore Sun*) **Illegal biological and nuclear weapons production is on the rise—in the United States.**

Ignoring the internationally recognized Biological Weapons Convention, the U.S. Army has patented a grenade capable of delivering biological and chemical agents.

The irony wasn't lost on the watchdog group Sunshine Project, which observed, "Hans Blix might have an easier time finding illegal weapons if he were inspecting near Baltimore [at the Army's Edgewood Arsenal facility, where two of the inventors work] instead of Baghdad."

The Pentagon's bid to resume biological weapons research hinges on misleading language: Developing deadly biological weapons is illegal, so the grenade and other potential biowar devices are labeled "nonlethal."



MAHATHIR: WARS BEING WAGED AS AN EXCUSE TO TRY OUT NEW WEAPONS

(Heather Mallick, *The Globe and Mail* [Canada]) **I've found them. Yes, yours truly has tripped over WMD, the "weapons of mass destruction" that Bush and Blair used to justify their conquest of Iraq.** What's more, these WDs are not just M for mass, they're F for forever.

The embarrassing part is they were found not in Iraq but in Vietnam. Despite Colin Powell saying Saddam Hussein was the biggest user of chemical weapons since the First World War, the greater culprit was in fact the United States. From 1961 to 1974, the United States admits that it dropped 72 million liters of chemicals on Vietnam, most of it Agent Orange with a super-toxic strain of dioxin called TCDD. U.S. soldiers dumped an additional 260,000 gallons of herbicide just to empty their tanks. *The Guardian* reports that one soldier regularly dumped his poison into a central drinking water reservoir.

A Canadian environmental science company, Hatfield Consultants, has discovered that the dioxin hasn't dispersed. It has rooted itself in the soil at levels 100 times higher than we would tolerate on Canadian farmland, spreading through water into the food chain and from there into human blood, breast milk and fetuses.

The poison has blossomed through three generations of Vietnamese so far. The birth defects and deformities are unspeakably horrible. Its toxicity is difficult to describe. When General Powell held up a tiny vial of what he said were scary anthrax spores, it hardly compared to a small 80-gram tin of TCDD. That tin would destroy New York City. The United States dropped 170 kilograms of it.

This WMD kills and maims unstoppably. Vietnamese doctors are still attempting to care for Vietnam's 650,000 damaged children (500,000 have already died). In Vietnam, the war goes on, via an American liquid that came in orange cans.

(Dad:) **The wars and atrocities the U.S. has perpetrated and the weapons it has developed are simply horrendous! America has been an agent of death and destruction in many third world nations, almost always leaving them in far worse shape than it found them.**

So the U.S. is no paragon of virtue, but the funny thing is that most Americans don't realize it, or if they do, then they don't generally care much about it. They maintain a mental image of America the righteous, the virtuous, spreading peace and democracy everywhere it goes, and they quickly forget the horrors it spreads.

Maybe it's because they have such a short attention span and memory. As one journalist commented, a short memory is a great boost to self-esteem. It helps when you can so easily forget the past and tune out reality.

So now that the invasion of Afghanistan is over, Americans can forget that the country is as bad off as it ever was—although Afghan men can shave, of course.

Now that the Vietnam war is over, Americans can forget and ignore the millions of Vietnamese who died in it, and the tens of thousands who are still dying from the deadly chemicals and munitions that litter the ground—as many bombs as were dropped in all of World War II.

Now that World War II is over, Americans can forget the horrible effects of nuclear weapons on Hiroshima and Nagasaki and go on to new and improved, much more user-friendly

nukes for use on the next target of American wrath.

And when that time comes, Iraq too will be forgotten or relegated to the back pages of the papers, along with the multitudes who died in Gulf War I and II, the many children and innocents who died from 12 years of sanctions, and the thousands who are continuing to suffer and die from the depleted uranium shells littering the landscape and the unexploded cluster bombs scattered far and wide.

America will move on, leaving a legacy of death and destruction, and Americans will forget—but God won't.



DOVES FLY OVER THE PEACE MEMORIAL PARK IN HIROSHIMA DURING THE 58TH ANNUAL MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR THE 200,000 KILLED BY THE ATOMIC BOMB.

◆ Famine and drought

Climate change accelerating

BY JOHN VIDAL, *THE GUARDIAN*

One of Europe's leading scientists raised the possibility that the extreme heat wave that settled over at least 30 countries in the northern hemisphere in August could signal that climate change is accelerating.

"The present heat wave across the northern hemisphere is worrying. There is the small probability that man-made climate change is proceeding much faster and stronger than expected," said Professor John Schellnhuber, former chief scientific adviser to the German government and now head of the UK's leading group of climate scientists.

He said "the parching heat experienced now" could be consistent "with a worst-case scenario that nobody wants to come true. Most of us were thinking that in 20-30 years time we would be seeing hot spells [like this]. But it's happening now. Clearly extreme weather events will increase."

"We've not seen such an extended period of dry weather [in Europe] since records began," said Michael Knobelsdorf, a meteorologist at the German weather service.

"What's remarkable is that these extremes of weather are happening at such short intervals, which suggests the climate is unbalanced. Last year in Germany, we were under water. Now we have one of the worst droughts in human memory."

Temperatures across parts of Europe have been a consistent 5°C warmer than average for several months, but the heat waves have extended across the northern hemisphere. Temperatures in some Indian states reached 45-49°C (113-120°F), with more than 1,500 people dying as a direct result. There have been near-record temperatures in Canada and the US, Hawaii, China, parts of Russia and Alaska.

The intense heat in some places has given way to some of the most severe monsoon rains on record, a phenomenon also consistent with climate change models which predict extremes of weather.

(Dad:) More record-breaking temperatures, droughts, floods and disasters are to come, as the Lord predicted they would in the Endtime.



BRITISH TOURIST TAKES TO THE FOUNTAIN IN TRAFALGAR SQUARE TO KEEP COOL

As the End draws closer and man becomes more evil and iniquitous, and the Devil asserts more control over the nations and peoples of the earth, the world will become hotter, drier, and more prone to disasters of every type.

In many ways, the weather of a nation is a reflection of the spirit of the people and of their sins—not always, but that's often the case. So as man himself becomes more evil, more yielded to the Devil, to the point that many will eventually even worship "the dragon [Devil] that gave power to the Beast," then his weather and climate will become more evil as well!

Of course, the Lord has a way of using these extremes to bring people to Him. Sometimes a storm or a heat wave or some other disaster will accomplish it like nothing else will—moving some to be "saved by fear" (Jude 23).

It reminds me of the story of some folks in the southern U.S. who suffered through a violent storm one night, and the next morning one asked the other if he'd been praying. He replied, "Of course

I was." Hearing the conversation, a third man commented, "Yes, I expect the Lord heard plenty of strange voices last night!" Ha! When such troubles strike, it can drive lots of new voices to prayer!

◆ Pests and pestilences

Positive effects of SARS

BY ERICH BRIDGES, *BAPTIST PRESS*

Chinese economists have estimated that the SARS crisis might cost their nation more than \$25 billion in lost economic growth. But something far bigger has been lost in China: faith in economic growth and material progress alone as the keys to the future.

"The people of China are scared," one Christian based there observed. "They're thinking about death, they're thinking about eternal matters, and they seem to be even more open to the Gospel than before."

Many reports from Christians in China support his statement. A sample:

• In one city, a university teacher brought 20 depressed, SARS-quarantined students the Gospel by offering Bibles and "Jesus" films to each. Two graduates subsequently recounted that being quarantined gave them lots of time to read, watch DVDs and think about life. After reading the Bible and watching the video, they began to understand that Jesus is the Savior of the world.

• Wang, a taxi driver, sat behind the wheel wearing a two-layered facemask and hoping his next rider would not be carrying SARS. A young man hailed his cab and climbed in. Wang wondered why the man wasn't wearing a facemask, why he seemed so confident and peaceful. He abruptly turned to the passenger and asked, "Aren't you afraid of catching SARS?" The young man replied, "I am not afraid because I trust Jesus with my life and health now, and when I die I trust Him to give me life with Him forever. Who do *you* rely on during times of crisis?" When the passenger climbed out of the taxi, Wang drove off with a new and peaceful heart given to Jesus.

• Many workers left jobless or quarantined inside buildings and homes had nothing to do but search for meaning for their lives. Zhang and Fu were stuck inside their workplace for two months. A Christian co-worker gave them a Bible and they had time to read the entire book. With excitement in their eyes, they exclaimed to their co-worker, "We want Jesus."

SARS has compelled many believers in China to learn anew that the Lord works through all things—particularly crisis. And with up to 20,000 people coming to faith in Christ every day in China, His work continues.

(Dad:) It sure does, but there's lots more to do! Please remember to keep the Family in China in your prayers. It's a difficult field to witness in because of the threat of persecution, the restrictive conditions the Family has to live under, and the language barrier, but they're persevering and bearing fruit. Send yourself as a missionary to China through your prayers and your support!

A carpet of crickets

BY DAVID KELLY, *LOS ANGELES TIMES*

Millions of ravenous crickets, moving like an ancient plague, are on the march across vast swaths of the West, chewing up everything in their path. Traveling in hordes that can measure a mile wide and three miles deep, their wriggling bodies carpet streets and highways.

Officials say a succession of mild winters and drought conditions have combined to create the worst Mormon cricket infestation in 60 years.



THE MAWS OF A MORMON CRICKET. IT CAN CONSUME 38 POUNDS OF PLANTS IN ITS LIFETIME.

So far Utah has been hardest-hit, with \$25 million in damage. Nevada has also been besieged with crickets, spending \$350,000 to contain the onslaught in its worst-hit county.

"They come in droves, in herds," said an astonished George Bosick, a ranch manager about 260 miles west of Denver. "The whole road turns purple."

Grasshoppers have also caused major problems this year. Though not as migratory or numerous as the crickets, the grasshoppers are considered by entomologists even more destructive because they breed more often and eat until a crop is decimated.

"It's horrible," said Tom Mikesell, who manages the 21,000-acre Monument Butte Ranch in Hamilton, a small Moffat County town where grasshoppers are methodically destroying the alfalfa crop. "We've had grasshoppers before but nothing like this." Mikesell said drivers on the ranch sometimes need windshield wipers to see through the clouds of leaping insects.

Jeff Knight, an entomologist for the Nevada Department of Agriculture, said the crickets will basically eat anything. "They will chew through screens and nibble on houses."

State officials said a single Mormon cricket during its lifetime can consume 38 pounds of plants—targeting everything from sagebrush and weeds to alfalfa and vegetable crops.

Mormon crickets were so dubbed after the chewing insects destroyed the crops of Utah's Mormon pioneers in 1848.

According to state history, their unrelenting attack was finally shut down by thousands of seagulls, which answered the religious settlers' prayers by consuming the crickets and sparing their crops.

(Dad:) The settlers fasted and prayed desperately, and the Lord sent seagulls hundreds of miles inland to devour all the crickets! They later built a monument dedicated to the seagulls, and my mother and I saw it when we held meetings in Salt Lake City many years ago.

We found the Mormons to be good people, and they treated us well. In fact, in her younger days, they even invited Mother to speak from the pulpit of the Mormon Tabernacle there—the first woman who'd ever done so!

Maybe the Lord's reminding them they need to pray more. Back in the early days, prayer was all they had, because they were poor, destitute and persecuted. Now they're rich and powerful, and that can make you think you're sufficient in yourself and don't need the Lord quite so much. That's a good lesson for us all. (For more on the Mormons and the miracle of the seagulls, see ML #2889:27-35, Lifelines 21.)

◆ Cloning and genetic engineering

Anything goes

COMPILED FROM ARTICLES BY ZENIT NEWS SERVICE AND IAN SAMPLE AND SARAH BOSELEY, THE GUARDIAN

The annual meeting of the European Society of Human Reproduction and Embryology saw a series of announcements that left observers increasingly alarmed.

A team of scientists from Israel and the Netherlands obtained ovarian tissue from seven aborted fetuses aged between 22 and 33 weeks and managed to keep slices of the ovaries alive for four weeks, raising the

possibility of the ovaries bearing a child. European papers trumpeted the era of the unborn mother.

Criticism came from Archbishop Peter Smith of Cardiff, Wales, who said, "There is something deeply wrong with a society that can even contemplate harvesting eggs from the ovaries of aborted fetuses. How is it that we can recognize that the aborted fetus is human enough to become a biological parent and yet not human enough to have the right to life?"

The next shock announcement came from Sweden, where researchers said it might be possible within three years to transplant wombs. The team, led by Dr. Mats Brännström, of Sahlgrenska University in Gothenburg, declared that last year it had already successfully carried out womb transplants on mice, who later gave birth. Brännström speculated that the technique could even be used eventually to transplant wombs into male-to-female transsexuals, allowing them to become pregnant using donated eggs.

Concerns over the lack of ethical restraint were further increased with the announcement of an experiment that created a hermaphrodite human embryo.

The chimera was formed by placing cells from a newly conceived male embryo into a 3-day-old female embryo, the London daily *Telegraph* reported. The resulting embryo was part male, part female, dubbed a "she-male," and could potentially have developed into an apparently healthy fetus. The embryos were destroyed after several days.

The rash of extreme experiments drew strong reactions. In an article entitled "Playing God," published July 3 by the *Guardian*, Hilary and Steven Rose, respectively a sociologist and biologist, noted: "Anything goes in this technologically sophisticated western world where consumers are king and queen."



THE WORLD'S FIRST CLONED HORSE, PROMETEA, WITH HER MOTHER

The drawbacks of such techniques, they commented, include the crisis to be faced "by a child who learns that she is the product of a fertilized ovum harvested from a long-dead fetus and frozen sperm from an unidentifiable source." We also run the risk of turning children into a commodity, "with product specification, quality control and rejection of substandard products—the wrong sex, the wrong genes."

In an article published July 6 by the *Telegraph*, the Catholic primate of England and Wales, Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor, criticized Parliament for spending so much time in its recent debate over the ethics of fox hunting, while ignoring the problems of such research. "When will we begin to debate the ethics of the future of our species with anything like the passion, and the thoroughness, that we debate the future of our foxes?" he asked.

Paul Serhal, director of the assisted conception unit at University College London, said fertility research was facing a critical question: "How do we prevent people doing monstrous things?"

(Jesus:) Such acts are monstrous in My sight, and both the results and the perpetrators are monsters. Those who create them are like unto them, and deserve destruction as well.

Do you wonder, My children, why I express My anger so strongly against those who do such things? It is because they take that which I have created, life which was made in My image, and twist it, pervert it, distort it, and make it an abomination—less than human, lower than the beasts of the field, a horror!

Those who do such things consider themselves creators as well, on a mission to remake mankind, heal disease, dispense with

deformities, and bring forth a new, improved human being. But in their pride and their blindness they accomplish the opposite. They meddle with things which they do not understand, in realms which are not theirs to tamper with, out of arrogance and ignorance, and they will reap the consequences.

Cloning briefs

- Scientists in China have used cloning techniques to create hybrid embryos that contain a mix of DNA from both humans and rabbits, according to a report in the journal *Nature*. More than 100 of the hybrids, made by fusing



FLOURESCENT MICE PRODUCED BY GENETIC ENGINEERING IN TAIWAN

human skin cells with rabbit eggs, were allowed to develop in laboratory dishes for several days before the scientists destroyed them. (*Washington Post*)

- Scientists in New Zealand have cloned a herd of cows designed to produce genetically enhanced milk that almost turns itself into cheese. (*The London Times*)

- The world's first cloned horse, Prometea, was born in Italy on May 28. The researchers managed to construct 328 embryos, but only Prometea came to birth successfully. (*HealthDayNews*)

◆ Big Brother

Careful: The FB-eye may be watching

BY MARC SCHULTZ, CREATIVE LOAFING

"The FBI is here," Mom tells me over the phone. This must be a joke, I think. But it's not.

"Two FBI agents are here. They say you're not in trouble, they just want to talk. They want to come to the store."

I work in a small, independent bookstore, and I figure, "Sure." Someone I know must have gotten some government work. Background check, interviewing acquaintances. No big deal, right?

When the FBI shows up, they're dressed casually, but they are big. The one in front stands close to 7 feet.

"You Marc Schultz?" asks the tall one. He shows me his badge, introduces himself as Special Agent Clay Trippi. After assuring me that I'm not in trouble, he asks if there is someplace we can sit down and talk.

Then, Agent Trippi asks, "Do you drive a black Nissan Altima?" And I realize this meeting is not about a friend.

They ask me if I was driving my car on Saturday, and I say, reasonably sure, that I was. They ask me where I went, and I struggle for a moment to remember Saturday.

"Were you at the Caribou Coffee on Powers Ferry?" asks Agent Trippi. That's where I get my coffee before work, and so I tell him yes, probably.

"Did you notice anything unusual, anyone worth commenting on?" No.

Then they ask if I carried anything into the shop.

My mind races. "Sunglasses," I say. "Maybe my cell phone?" Not the right answer. I'm nervous now, wondering how I must look: average, mid-20s, unassuming retail employee. What could I have possibly been carrying?

Trippi's partner speaks up: "Any reading material? Papers?" I don't think so. Then Trippi decides to level with me: "I'll tell you what, Marc. Someone in the shop that day saw you reading something, and thought it looked suspicious enough to call us about. So that's why

we're here, just checking it out. Like I said, there's no problem. We'd just like to get to the bottom of this. Now if we can't, then you may have a problem. And you don't want that."

You don't want that? Have I just been threatened by the FBI? Confusion and a light dusting of panic conspire to keep me speechless. Was I reading something that morning?

The partner speaks up again: "Maybe a printout of some kind?"

Then it occurs to me: I was reading. It was an article my dad had printed off the Web. I remember carrying it into Caribou with me, reading it in line. I can't remember what the article was about, but I'm sure it was some kind of editorial that never fails to incite me to anger and despair over the state of the country.

I tell them all this, but they want specifics: the title of the article, the author, some kind of synopsis, but I can't help them.

"Do you still have the article?" Probably not, but I suggest we check behind the counter. When that doesn't pan out, I have the bright idea to call my dad at work, see if he can remember. Of course, he can't put together a coherent sentence after I tell him the FBI are at the store, questioning me.

Eventually I get him off the phone, and suggest it may be in my car. They follow me out to the parking lot, where Trippi asks me if there's anything in the car he should know about.

"Weapons, drugs? It's not a problem if you do, but if you don't tell me and then I find something, that's going to be a problem." I assure him there's nothing in my car. Nor is the article there.

Back in the store, Trippi gives me his card and tells me to call him if I remember anything. After he's gone, I call my dad back. We retrace some steps together, figure out the name of the article, and call the number on Trippi's card, leave a message with the name, author and origin of the column, and ask him to call me if he has any more questions.

To tell the truth, I'm kind of anxious to hear back from the FBI, if only for the chance to ask why anyone would find media criticism suspicious, or if maybe the sight of a dark, bearded man reading in public is enough to strike fear in the heart of another citizen.

My co-worker says that we should probably be thankful the FBI takes these things seriously; I say it seems like a dark day when an American citizen regards reading as a threat, and

downright pitch-black when the federal government agrees.

(Dad:) It is a sad day for America when people are calling the government to report on each other—not because someone is committing a crime but simply because they're reading something that looks suspicious! That's the sort of thing that used to happen in the Soviet Union, but now it's becoming more and more commonplace in the U.S.

The funny thing is, while Americans are very worried and paranoid about terrorists doing something to harm their country, they're off occupying and destroying whole nations themselves, and leading the world down the path toward destruction.

Well, if you folks in the U.S. should ever have such a visit from the FBI or the police, it's a great opportunity to witness! We've got nothing to hide, so you can invite them in, give them some of your GP lit, have the kids sing for them, and tell them how thankful you are for them protecting you from real terrorists. Who knows—maybe some will get saved and join! We had FBI agents live in the Family several times in the early days, and if they want to be disciples, they're welcome to join now too!

Big Brother Briefs

Companies vs. consumers on RFID. (Mark Beard, *Wired*) Facing increasing resistance and concerns about privacy, the United States' largest food companies and retailers will try to win consumer approval for radio identification devices by portraying the technology as an essential tool for keeping the nation's food supply safe from terrorists—enabling them to keep precise track of all goods and help in recall efforts should their products be contaminated or laced with poison during a terrorist attack.

The companies are banding together and through an industry association are lobbying to have the Department of Homeland Security designate radio frequency identification, or RFID, as an antiterrorism technology.

By implanting tiny radio transponders in their product packaging, the companies can instantly track their goods from factory floors all the way to retailers' warehouses. What's more, retailers can get a 100 percent accurate inventory of products on their shelves instantly with RFID detectors. Experts estimate industry could save billions of dollars each year in inventory and logistical costs with RFID.

Trouble is, privacy advocates see RFID as a massive invasion of privacy. They say the technology would let



PACKING CARTON WITH RFID TRACKING LABEL

retailers, marketers, governments or criminals scan people—or even their houses—and ascertain what they own. So, to win the hearts and minds of consumers, retailers and food and drug companies may portray the technology as an antiterrorist tool.

(Dad:) Fear of terrorism as a marketing tool! Companies will use anything nowadays. Well, the U.S. government “sold” the war on Afghanistan and Iraq to a gullible public as a way to stamp out terrorism, and it worked, so it’s not too surprising that private companies would use the same ploy!



CHINESE ID CARD: ABOUT TO GET AN UPGRADE

ping industry, says, “There are no obvious technological barriers to the postal commission suggestion. But do Americans really want every facet of their lives inventoried by a federal bureaucrat? I don’t.”

Videocams record flights. (Elisa Batista, *Wired*) Southeast Airlines said it plans to install digital video cameras throughout the cabins of its planes to record the faces and activities of its passengers at all times, as a precaution against terrorism and other safety threats. In addition, the charter airline will store the digitized video for up to 10 years. And it may use face recognition software to match faces to names and personal records, the airline said.

While other airlines have not announced similar plans, privacy and consumer advocates are alarmed by the tiny airline. They said the move is a big invasion of privacy and see no reason why an airline needs to retain video.

“What’s the point of keeping track of everyone?” said Lee Tien, senior staff attorney for the civil liberties group Electronic Frontier Foundation.

Tien said the airlines and law enforcement would be able to track private, personal information. Not only would they keep a record of every recreational or business trip, they could record conversations between spouses and capture every book title or magazine a passenger reads.

Tien said he recently read a book by the U.S. government titled *Who Becomes a Terrorist?* “It’s creepy that they would know what it is I am reading,” Tien said. “I could see what it would look like on a screen. I don’t think I should have to feel funny about things like that.”

China readies super ID card. (David W. Chen, *NY Times News Service*) Starting next year, Chinese citizens will receive an upgrade on their ID card: an electronic card that will store vital information for all 960 million eligible citizens on chips that the authorities anywhere can access.

Officials hope that the technologically advanced cards will help stamp out fraud and counterfeiting involving the current cards, protecting millions of people from those problems and saving billions of dollars. Yet many of China’s toughest critics, at home and abroad, are skeptical.

“Given the record of the Chinese government on protecting the privacy of its citizens and given the prevalence of corruption, how can we ensure that this information will be managed properly?” asked Nicolas Becquelin, research director at the Hong Kong office of Human Rights in China. “It’s scary what the Chinese government is doing.”

While it may make sense to track would-be terrorists, the cards would also make it much easier for the government to monitor political or religious dissidents. After China’s 1989 crackdown on pro-democracy demonstrators, the government televised photographs and identification card numbers of student leaders being sought. Under the new system, tracking dissidents would be much easier.

Black box in car. (Juliette Jowit, *The Observer*) [British] drivers face automatic speeding fines without being caught by the police under a proposal being studied by the government to fit all cars with satellite tracking devices.

Under the plan being examined by the Department for Transport, all vehicles would be fitted with a “black box” to charge drivers according to the type

FBI targets Net telephony. (Declan McCullagh, *CNET News*) Internet telephone calls are fast becoming a national security threat that must be countered with new police wiretap rules, according to an FBI proposal presented quietly to regulators.

The FBI-drafted plan seeks to force broadband providers to provide more efficient, standardized surveillance facilities. The new rules are necessary, because terrorists could otherwise frustrate legitimate wiretaps by placing phone calls over the Internet, warns a summary of a July 10 meeting with the FCC that the FBI prepared.

According to the proposal that the FCC is considering, any company offering cable modem or DSL service to residences or businesses would be required to establish a central hub for police surveillance of their customers. The proposal has alarmed civil libertarians, who warn that the existence of such hubs could facilitate broad surveillance of other Internet communications such as e-mail, Web browsing and instant messaging.

Postal Service researches “smarter” mail. (Dan Verton, *Computerworld*) A presidential commission charged with studying ways to make the U.S. Postal Service more efficient has recommended that the agency work with the Department of Homeland Security to develop sender identification technology for all U.S. mail.

The commission says sender identification technologies such as “personalized stamps” that embed digital identification information would not only improve mail tracking and delivery operations but would also enhance the security of the entire mail system.

But civil liberties groups and some private-sector technologists fear that requiring intelligent mail for all users of the Postal Service is overreacting to the threat of terrorism.

Ron Quartel, chair and chief executive officer of FreightDesk Technologies, which develops technologies for the ship-



of road they are using and when they are driving. The equipment could also find [and perhaps fine] drivers who have not paid vehicle duty or insurance.

But transport experts believe the equipment will pave the way for 24-hour monitoring of drivers to see if they break the

speed limit. In fact, the government is backing trials of an advanced system which would tell the black box when it entered a speed limit and prevent the vehicle going faster.

The company behind the technology said the only problems were political. But with speeding being the biggest single cause of death on the roads, there would also be pressure to introduce it.

Edmund King, director of the RAC Foundation, said drivers should be concerned. "Do we want all our movements to be monitored 24 hours a day?"

(Dad:) Between automobile black boxes, surveillance cameras on streets, in planes and businesses, chips embedded in your clothes and household goods, surveillance on the Internet or of the post, it's practically becoming impossible not to be monitored! In most of the West these days, the choice is simply between heavy and light surveillance.

"How would you like your surveillance today, sir? We have well watched, medium monitored, or rarely spied on. There are side orders of webcams, spy satellites, embedded chips, biometric devices, GPS devices, databases to record your every transaction, and more! You can get anything you want at Big Brother's restaurant!"

◆ Racing toward the Mark

Let the chips fall...

JOHN W. WHITEHEAD, *RAZORMOUTH*

"Government by clubs and firing squads is not merely inhumane (nobody much cares about that nowadays); it is demonstrably inefficient—and in an age of advanced technology, inefficiency is the sin against the Holy Ghost."—Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World*.

Caught up in a web of fear, the American people are nervous about terrorism, terrified of crime, leery of foreigners and suspicious of their neighbors. In fact, Americans have become almost paralyzed by fears both imagined and real.

As sociologist Barry Glassner points out in his book *The Culture of Fear: Why Americans Are Afraid of the Wrong Things*, Americans often "compound our worries beyond all reason," overreacting to the slightest concern. "[H]igh levels of fear and anxiety also create unfortunate social conditions, like people being more willing to give up civil liberties."

It is within the context of this culture of fear that we must view America's



SHOT FROM A SECURITY CAMERA. YOU CAN GET ANYTHING YOU WANT AT BIG BROTHER'S RESTAURANT.

current love affair with security. Alarmed by the government's vague warnings about terrorist attacks that could take any form, at any time, anywhere, many Americans have exhibited an amiable tolerance for intrusions into their private lives.

Indeed, from government watch lists to secret wiretaps, Americans, especially since 9/11, are increasingly and willingly becoming targets of government surveillance. For example, under the guise of aiding in the search for terrorists, the Pentagon's Total Awareness Program was designed to collect a person's financial, medical, communication and travel records in a massive database. Yet the definition of a suspected terrorist under the infamous USA Patriot Act is so broad that it can include anyone.

Innocent, law-abiding citizens are being watched, photographed and catalogued in government files. The logic is deviously simple: to be sure of apprehending the criminal minority, it is necessary that the law-abiding majority be supervised. In this way, every citizen would eventually be thoroughly known to the police and would live under conditions of discreet surveillance. As Barry Steinhardt of the ACLU has said, "Many people still do not grasp that Big Brother surveillance is no longer the stuff of books and movies."

The proffered rationale for this super-surveillance—this use of technology to create an electronic concentration camp—is to anticipate and forestall crime. However, unlike the methods of the Nazi regime, there will be no overt suffering associated with this national/international concentration camp in the world of the near-future. In this world, the police exist only to protect "good" citizens.

Such protection will require that the police track the movements of all citizens with the use of computers and electronic devices.

Low-cost microchips are currently available and can be grafted under the skin (some test humans have already had this done), planted in wristwatches or even

on the clothes you buy (a technique presently being used by many clothing retailers). Pinpoint computer chips and tiny antennae—less than the size

of an ant's head—are also being used to track inventory and prevent theft of items like razor blades and medicine in grocery stores and pharmacies. Within two decades, the minuscule transmitters are expected to replace bar codes.

These chips can also act as homing devices to locate you anywhere, at any time, through a multitude of special sensors or by satellite. Called radio frequency identification, this technology will eventually allow whoever is in control to access all the information contained on a chip, including its exact location, even from great distances.

Supporters of these surveillance systems suggest that only individuals who are "up to no good" would object to having their whereabouts known at all times. Others insist it is simply the price we pay for the luxury of progress—or that's what we will be told by the media and our government.

Given the willingness of the popu-

lace to buy the argument that such intrusions into our private lives are necessary to combat crime or the ever-present threat of terrorist attacks, life in the electronic concentration camp seems inevitable.

(Constitutional attorney and author John W. Whitehead is founder and president of The Rutherford Institute.)

(Dad:) The war on terrorism has been a big boon to Big Brother, the Antichrist and his agents. After all, in past wars, the enemy could be defeated—this or that nation would be forced to surrender, the leader would be captured or killed, and there would be a definite ending of some sort. Then things would return to normal and wartime measures would be toned down or reversed.

With the war on terrorism, though, there's not an ending, not a definite time when the U.S. will be able to declare victory. Killing Osama bin Laden or Saddam Hussein won't mean the U.S. has won, because terrorism will continue and probably grow worse than ever.

In fact, there's not only no definite ending to the war on terrorism, there's no definite enemy! First Osama was the evildoer, then Saddam was, since he had all these "weapons of mass destruction" that

seem to have become invisible. Maybe the Iranians will morph into the enemy next, or the Syrians, or the North Koreans. After all, there are



SECURITY IN AMERICA—SOMETIMES INVISIBLE, BUT PRESENT NONETHELESS



HEADING FOR THE "ELECTRONIC CONCENTRATION CAMP"?



NEW YORK CITY TOURISTS BED DOWN OUTSIDE HOTEL FOR FRESH AIR DURING THE BLACKOUT

◆ Techno Topics

Unplugged

BY JOEL ACHENBACH, WASHINGTON POST

The grid was out there all along, huge, humming and yet forgotten. Technologies start as novelties, as toys and gizmos and contraptions, but when fully mature they become invisible, like the air. And when they vanish, we gasp.

"All of a sudden it seemed like we were in a fog," says Thomas Homer-Dixon, a political economist trapped all night in blacked-out Toronto. "As soon as the grid went down, we lost access to information. We didn't have TV, we didn't have the Internet, a lot of cell phones went down. ... No one really knew what was happening. It was really disconcerting."

Former energy secretary Bill Richardson said that if this had been terrorism, "the whole country could have been blacked out, because our grids are all interconnected." Fortunately, this time only the financial center of America, huge chunks of the Northeast, Midwest and Canada, and 50 million people were affected.

Henry David Thoreau was possibly the first American to go off the grid, when he went to the woods near Walden Pond. There was no electrical grid then, but there was an Industrial Revolution.

Thoreau wrote: "Our inventions are wont to be pretty toys, which distract our attention from serious things. They are but improved means to an unimproved

end, an end which it was already but too easy to arrive at; as railroads lead to Boston or New York. We are in great haste to construct a magnetic telegraph from Maine to Texas; but Maine and Texas, it may be, have nothing important to communicate."

Perhaps this is time for everyone to take stock of their dependence on invisible technologies. We should think like Thoreau. We should imagine our lives without the grid.

And then go to the store and buy batteries.

(Dad:) Yes, it's a good time to get some batteries if you need them, but especially to check your little survival store of drinking water and food, in case you haven't done so lately. You never know

when the lights will go out, the water will stop running, and the stores will close, and you wouldn't want to wind up hungry and thirsty, as well as in the dark.

Actually, that sounds like what Iraq has been going through for months now, as the Americans just can't seem to get the electricity up and running the same way Saddam did! Some Iraqis said it was poetic justice that the U.S. would have to suffer the same things they did, even if only for a short time. Others suggested that the Americans should ask the Iraqis how to get their power going again, "since Iraqis have had a lot of experience in such matters." Ha!

Well, it's more than poetic justice; it's God's justice. It gives the U.S. a touch of what they've inflicted on others, and reminds them that they're not quite as powerful as some of them think they are!



OHIO MERCHANT WORKING BY FLASHLIGHT

vacancies on the "Axis of Evil" now that Iraq has been occupied.

So the war on terrorism will go on, with different characters playing the role of the villain, and under the AC the villains will be those "religious extremists and terrorists" who are such a menace to his society, doing awful things like causing droughts and famines, turning water to blood, calling down plagues, and even being able to destroy their enemies with fire! (See Rev.11:5-6.)

In the meantime, since the war on terrorism continues around the world, then wartime measures like surveillance will continue, and the "electronic concentration camp" does become inevitable. After all, anyone could be the next enemy, so surveillance measures should be in place to watch everyone—or so they'll say. It's all part of the AC's plan to "enter peaceably even upon the fattest places," and the U.S. sure qualifies on that count! His progress toward the Mark goes racing on! Keep racing toward your goal, Family—spreading salvation and the love of God to as many as possible! God bless you!



NEW YORKERS THROUGH THE STREETS TO WALK HOME AFTER THE LIGHTS GO OUT

after she started giving to her church, the largest one called and offered to write off half the debt. After settling that bill, another creditor called with the same offer. "When I began to be obedient, the creditors stopped calling."

Andrew Stull, a 25-year-old environmental health specialist, felt led to start tithing when he heard Luke 16:10: "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much, and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much."

Often broke in college, after finding full-time employment Stull wondered why he didn't have more money left at the end of the month. Then he started tithing and saw a huge difference. "After a month or two I always had plenty of money to go around," said Stull. "And I was able to build my savings back up."

Diane Graves had seen her family's debts mount to \$25,000. So after the

woman who led her to Christ in 1980 told her she needed to tithe, Graves protested that she simply didn't have the money.

"You have God's money; you just don't have *bill* money," the woman replied. "You're supposed to give God 10 percent of your earnings."

After promising she would when things improved, Diane sensed the Holy Spirit saying, "If you can't trust Me when things are hard, you'll steal from Me when times are good."

Initially, her giving was sporadic. When she failed to tithe, mishaps occurred—the car broke down, her children got sick, or the family ran short on food. Finally, Graves said, "Okay, God, I'll give You Your money."

After that, the Orlando hairdresser secured a new client who gave her \$100 a week regardless of how simple a service she performed. Later, still

◆ Religion in the News

Tithing pays

BY KEN WALKER, BAPTIST PRESS

They have suffered bankruptcy, car repossession, staggering credit card bills, and scratching for cash to buy their next meal. However, since they started tithing, Christians said they have more than enough money to provide for their needs, as well as making positive contributions to God's work.

Raquel Perez of Elizabeth, NJ, recommended, "Give because it's an indicator of your heart toward the Lord. What you love you put your money into. We're not to serve God for what we can get out of Him."

For Perez, tithing is the key that enabled her to get out of debt two years after she started. Once stressed out by the flock of creditors who hounded her,

struggling to make ends meet, the family faced foreclosure on their home. Two weeks before that was to happen, a friend offered her \$5,000, money the friend had made on some investments. Her only condition: Anonymity.

"That was the beginning of the miracles I saw with tithing," Graves said.

Although he became a Christian in 1983, Jim Alafat struggled with the concept of tithing until he read Malachi 3:10, "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in Mine house, and prove Me now herewith," saith the Lord of hosts, "if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it."

Since then, Alafat has paid off more than \$10,000 in debt and found a job that pays far more than any previous position.

When Sheri and Rodney Stewart moved to Georgia five years ago, they brought along \$10,000 of credit card debt. Since they began faithful giving, the couple has always had enough money. "We've never struggled because of tithing," Sheri said. "When we weren't, we were struggling to put food on the table and we never had enough money. If you don't tithe, you're missing out on all that God has for you."

(Dad:) You can't outgive God! You never lose by giving to Him in the form of your tithe. In fact, you lose when you don't give to Him, as these examples show and as many of you can probably also testify. When you're stingy with Him, He's apt to take a collection! And not only that, but you miss out on all the blessings He wishes He could have heaped on you for your obedience, as well as all that you would have received by giving to support His work and workers.

So "give and it shall be given unto you, pressed down, shaken together, and running over. With the same measure that you mete out, it shall be measured unto you" (Luke 6:38). That's a spiritual principle or law of God's Word, as definite and as sure as the law of gravity. He even invites you to "prove Him" on it, to test Him and see! Give Him a try, if you haven't already!

◆ Men's Corner

The homecoming

ADAPTED FROM HIGHLIGHTED IN YELLOW
BY H. JACKSON BROWN, JR. AND ROCHELLE
PENNINGTON, RUTLEDGE HILL PRESS

A man returning from a trip was greeted by his family in the baggage claim area of the airport. He reached for his younger son and gave him a loving hug. "I missed you so much," he said to the boy. "Look at how big you are."

"I missed you, too," the boy said, holding on to his father. An older boy approached the two, hugged them both and said, "So much happened while you were away, Dad. I can't wait to tell you everything!"



DON'T HOPE FOR A WONDERFUL MARRIAGE. DECIDE.

"I can't wait to *hear* about it! I know you took care of things while I was gone." The man hugged his sons again and then looked upon the smiling face of his wife.

"Welcome back, honey," said his wife, inviting him into a lengthy, amorous kiss.

A stranger, moved by this display of genuine affection, asked, "You have such a beautiful family. How long have you been married?"

"Twelve years," the man replied proudly, still gazing into his wife's adoring eyes.

"Have you been gone a long time?"

"Yeah, two days. I'm so happy to be back home with my family."

"Two days? Wow!" said the stranger. "I hope that someday when I get married I will still feel that passionate after 12 years."

The man looked the stranger in the eye and said, "Don't hope, my friend. *Decide.*" He smiled once again and retrieved his bag from the carousel. Before he walked away with his family, he nodded to the stranger and repeated, "Decide."

(Dad:) It takes a definite decision, men, a definite commitment to your wife and marriage. It's a bit like joining the Family—even though you may have joined many years ago or even been born in the Family, you have to decide to join anew every morning. You make a fresh commitment to love the Lord, to draw close



MAKE YOUR MARRIAGE ALL YOU WANT IT TO BE.

to Him through His Word and prayer, and to work for Him.

Marriage is similar. No matter how many years you've been married, you make a fresh commitment to your marriage every morning. You decide to love your wife, to draw close to her, and to work together with her. It's a series of little decisions that manifest your love for her. If you keep making the right decisions, you'll keep getting closer and closer, and things will keep getting better and better. Decide for love!

The macho factor and skin cancer

BY TIMOTHY GOWER, THE LOS ANGELES TIMES

Here's some advice more guys should follow: Keep your shirt on. While you're at it, find yourself a hat with a wide brim and learn to love sunscreen too. Skin cancer rates are rising, and men are far more likely than women to develop the disease and to die from it.

There is evidence to suggest that men are much less likely to use sunscreen, and to use it properly, than

women. Part of the male aversion to sunscreen—and skin care in general—may be cultural. Young women are encouraged early on to use various skin lotions and moisturizers as a way to enhance physical beauty.

Most maturing boys, meanwhile, don't get beyond Clearasil. As a result, "men never get in the habit of applying things to their skin," says Boston University dermatologist Barbara Gilchrest.

Fussing over your skin just doesn't seem manly in some circles, whereas having a tan does. But if you still think a deep, dark tan makes you look more macho, talk to someone who has battled melanoma. "Patients who get skin cancer," says Gilchrest, "quickly change their ways."

Tight tie may increase the risk of blindness

BY CELIA HALL, ELECTRONIC TELEGRAPH

Men who wear tight ties could be more at risk of developing glaucoma, the potentially blinding eye condition.

Researchers have discovered that ties worn too tightly increase blood pressure inside the eye in the space of a few minutes.

Raised blood pressure inside the eye is the most important known risk factor for glaucoma, say Dr. Robert Ritch and colleagues, reporting their findings in the *British Journal of Oncology*. They believe the effect may be caused by constricting the jugular vein, which raises blood pressure in the eye.

◆ Ask Dad!—No.18

Subject: Current Comments

■ Afghanistan—where poppies bloom

The drug situation in Afghanistan is crazy as can be! Afghans have grown poppies for years, because it's one of the few crops that's profitable in that desolate, dirt-poor, war-ravaged country. The peasants take the poppies and make them into opium, which is what heroin is made from, and they sell truckloads of it to local warlords, drug lords and criminals.



AFGHAN FARMER CHECKING ON HIS CROP OF OPIUM POPPIES

When the Taliban took over, they cracked down on the production of opium and virtually wiped it out, as well as a lot of the warlords and folks who were making lots of money off its production and sale. The few who survived fled to the north of Afghanistan and kept fighting the Taliban, calling themselves the Northern Alliance.

Well, when the U.S. invaded Afghanistan, they bribed the Northern Alliance to help them fight the Taliban, and since the U.S. won, the Northern Alliance did too. It now controls most of the country, and it's gone right back to growing opium again. In fact, they just had one of their best years ever, producing an estimated 4,000 tons!

The crazy thing about it is, since the U.S. is in league with all these local warlords because it needs their help to keep fighting Taliban guerrillas, it tolerates them growing and exporting all that heroin. And most of it probably makes its way to inner cities in the U.S., where it kills addicts and where U.S. police lock up anyone caught trafficking it. So the U.S. is practically encouraging drug production in Afghanistan, and those same drugs are then shipped to the U.S., where they kill people, finance criminals, gangs, and violence, and where Americans found with those drugs are arrested and locked up! It's as if the U.S. government itself has turned into a drug dealer, but yet it cracks down on the people its drugs are sold to!

Afghan farmers have even learned how to make a profit from the "not growing poppies" business. Anti-drug agencies and aid workers come along and pay them to wipe out their acres of poppy fields to get rid of the opium. But the farmers save the seeds and plant bigger fields next year, so that the next time the workers come around they can get paid more because they've destroyed more acres

of poppies. Or, if the aid workers and agencies don't come, they just sell the opium and make even more money! What a country!

■ Bhutan—poison in paradise Bhutan is a little Buddhist kingdom tucked away in the Himalayas, bordering Tibet, India and Nepal, with a population of around 700,000 people. It's a remote, sleepy little place which Buddhist monks originally created as "a refuge from the ills of the world," the country that the novel and movie *Lost Horizon* was based on.

About four years ago, though, Bhutan introduced TV—the last country in the world to do so—and now it's anything but a refuge from the world's problems! They never had much serious law-breaking before, but since TV came along they've had a wave of drug abuse, shoplifting, burglary, fraud, corruption, violence, and even murder, as the people have been exposed to all the evil that the outside world holds via 46 cable channels!

Imagine, here's a country that didn't even have schools, roads, paper currency or electricity until the 1950s or '60s, didn't have diplomatic relations with any other country until 1961, and didn't allow Western visitors until the 1970s, and now the outside world is flooding in all at once, bringing lots of evil with it! Television has become poison in what they considered their little Eastern paradise.

Now half of the kids watch TV up to 12 hours a day, a lot of the girls want to look more American, the boys are into wrestling and action movies, the women are fascinated by ads for expensive new furniture and fancy cars, and many of the parents would rather watch TV than talk to their children! In one area, so many of the farmers were captivated by TV that they lost their entire harvest. The country went from almost total isolation to all the worst that the modern world has to offer, piped right into their living rooms by cable TV.

It goes to show what power the media has on poor innocents who've never been exposed to it before—and it's a sobering illustration of what it can do to your own innocent kids if you're not careful to monitor what they watch, parents.



BHUTANESE MOTHER AND BABY

■ Zimbabwe—on the verge of catastrophe?

Inflation is spiraling out of control in Zimbabwe. The government says it's around 96 percent—in other words, prices have only doubled—but a lot of people say the true rate is closer to 700 percent—meaning prices are seven times as high as they used to be! That's the sort of thing that happens when people lose faith in a government; they lose faith in its money, too, which is often only propped up by their faith, without much else behind it.

Since it costs a lot more to buy almost everything, people are going down to their banks to withdraw whatever savings they have, but the banks are so low on money that they're only giving \$10 or so to each customer. Even the banks are short on cash, and the government can't print more cash because they don't have the money to import the ink or the paper to print it on. It's reached the point that they're talking about printing traveler's checks, if nothing else, to get more cash in circulation.

They'll never catch up, though, because prices are rising so fast and people are losing faith in the money so quickly.

It eventually gets to the point that the only things of value are commodities like food and goods. Remember the true story I told you about

Germany in the days before Hitler, where inflation was so bad that the government was printing billion-mark notes, and it still took loads of them to buy anything? A couple of women took a laundry basket full of German marks to the store, and when they set it down, someone grabbed it, dumped the marks out, and ran off with the basket! It was worth more than the money! (See ML #243:21, Vol.2.)

Economists say Zimbabwe is now the world's fastest-shrinking economy. When a country sinks into such a serious situation, it's usually on the verge of collapse or catastrophe. The poor have no money to buy food, which they can't afford anyway, so there are runs on banks and riots in the streets. Factories and businesses can't tell what the prices on their goods should be because inflation pushes costs up every day, so they lay off people or close to wait things out. And finally the situation gets so dire that there's either a collapse or a change of government or both, which sure seems to be the way Zimbabwe is heading!

Pray for the poor people of Zimbabwe, who are also facing famine, food shortages, and a government that's a virtual dictatorship. They need a miracle to turn that country around, which used to be one of the most prosperous in Africa!



A ZIMBABWEAN MAN WITH THE EQUIVALENT OF US\$1000 (APPROXIMATELY 5 MILLION ZIMBABWE DOLLARS).

■ Iraq—things are getting hot

Things are heating up in Iraq, and not just the weather, although that's plenty hot too! Baghdad recently had more than a solid week of weather where it was 115 degrees every day. Soldiers said it was like living in a blow dryer, especially since they wear body armor and helmets that make it 10 or 20 degrees hotter, and patrol in tanks or armored personnel carriers that are like ovens. They have to wear extra T-shirts, because otherwise the sweat that gets trapped between their bulletproof vests and their skin can start to boil and burn them.



U.S. SOLDIER SWELTERING IN BAGHDAD HEAT

The fighting is also

growing hot. More than 143 U.S. soldiers have died since the U.S. declared war was over in Iraq. President Bush landed on an aircraft carrier back in May, proud as can be to strut before the cameras in a glorious photo opportunity, to declare that major combat in Iraq was over. Well, major combat might have ended, but the guerrilla war was just beginning, and the U.S. has seen more of its soldiers killed in that war than in the major fighting to invade and conquer Iraq.

The U.S. averages a death every day as its troops patrol the streets of Baghdad and other cities in the north of Iraq. Guerrillas target individual soldiers with rifles, and jeeps or Humvees with rocket-propelled grenades, or U.S. convoys with car bombs and land mines, or even by dropping grenades on them from overpasses. Planes trying to land at Baghdad airport have had surface-to-air missiles fired at them! Whether you call it war or guerrilla warfare, many Americans are dying—and more are getting wounded, which doesn't make the news so much, but is just as devastating to those who are hit and lose a limb or their sight and are handicapped for the rest of

their life. Apparently the official number of Americans wounded since the invasion began is around 800, but the unofficial estimate is thousands. Military hospitals are reported to be "overflowing."

These guerrilla attacks make U.S. forces very nervous, jumpy and trigger-happy, and they react the way teenage soldiers usually do when they feel threatened—they shoot first and ask questions later. So hundreds of Iraqis have been killed just for doing something that looked threatening—driving too close to a U.S. patrol, running a checkpoint, being on their rooftop to escape the heat inside their houses as a patrol drove by, etc. The carnage has been terrible. Cars full of women and children have been filled full of bullets. Since the war began back in April, some 8,000 Iraqi civilians are estimated to have been killed, along with some 30,000 Iraqi soldiers.

Many Iraqis were glad to get rid of Saddam's oppression and atrocities, but they're not exactly thrilled to have exchanged it for U.S. oppression and atrocities, no matter how repentant the U.S. acts when it makes a mistake. For example, when U.S. forces mistook an Iraqi child on a rooftop for a sniper and shot him, they sent someone around to ask the father what sort of compensation he'd accept. "Ten dead Americans," the father replied. That's likely to be the attitude more and more among Iraqis as guerrilla attacks increase—they'll attack the U.S. forces who are occupying their country, those forces will become more angry and brutal and kill or imprison more Iraqis, and the Iraqis will respond with even more attacks, and the spiral of violence and death will continue. It's only going to get hotter!

The U.S. really shot itself in the foot when it invaded Iraq. It said it was going in to stop terrorism and eliminate a threat to Americans. Instead, it's created the perfect breeding ground for terrorism, and put some 150,000 American troops in a giant shooting gallery at a cost of \$1 billion a week to the U.S.! Iraqis have made it pretty obvious that they're not going to let the U.S. make any profit off Iraq's oil, either. They've sabotaged or blown up oil pipelines and installations so that oil can't be exported, and if the U.S. wants to protect those places, it's going to have to send more troops into the Iraqi shooting gallery!

So the Iraqis are suffering and dying and the U.S. troops in Iraq are suffering and dying, and if this continues, it'll be Bush's chances of re-election that are suffering and dying. That'd serve him right, but it's not going to help the thousands who've been wounded or killed because of his pride and arrogance, and because his advisers wanted to build an American empire.

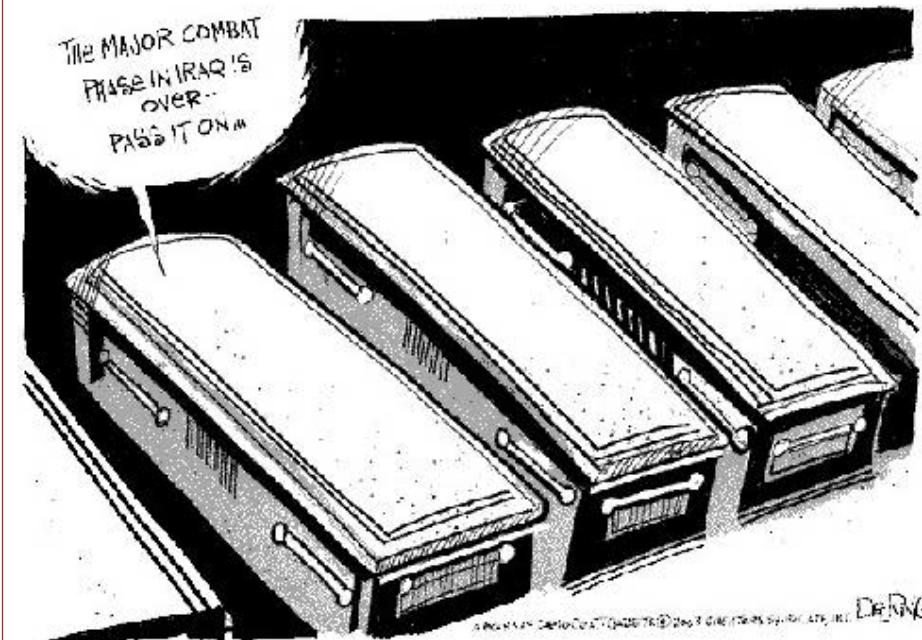
Please keep the poor Iraqis in your prayers, that the Lord will keep them from further bloodshed and violence and help them rebuild their country. Pray for an end to the killing, peace and protection for the Lord's children there, and food, water, electricity, relief, health care and help for those who have suffered through wars and sanctions for decades now.

■ Israel and the Palestinians—what roadmap?

The U.S. was trying to mediate a "roadmap to peace" between Israel and the Palestinians, but it's been a complete dead end so far! There's not even a road there, no sort of pathway that would lead toward peace, so I don't know if you could even say it went so far as a dead end, much less to the point where any sort of map would be required! It's just been a flat-out failure.

The deal was supposed to be that the Israelis would dismantle some of their settlements on Palestinian territory, take down some of their checkpoints that have strangled the Palestinian economy and existence, and release thousands of Palestinian prisoners, many of which were being held without charges. In return, the Palestinians would stop their attacks and especially the suicide bombings that were killing Israelis. It was supposed to be a cease-fire while both sides tried to figure out some way toward peace.

Well, the Israelis reneged on almost every aspect of the deal, in a very underhanded way! They'd make a great show of dismantling some settlement outpost, hauling away a trailer on a desolate hilltop, and the settlers would go plant one on another hilltop, a better one, once the reporters and soldiers were gone. So the settlements are growing instead of diminishing, and the





PALESTINIAN CHILD THROWS ROCK AT ISRAELI TANK

Israeli government has even established a new grant of \$11,000 for any young couples who are willing to move to the settlements! (And when I say “settlements” here, I hope you understand I’m talking about armed enclaves of Israelis occupying Palestinian lands that they’ve often seized violently or appropriated illegally.)

The Israelis have also gone full-steam ahead on their “security fence” that they’re building between them and the Palestinians, on land that they’ve seized. It’s more like the Berlin Wall, turning a lot of the West Bank into a giant prison, just like Gaza already is. This little “fence” will be an average of 25 feet high, extend 220 miles, and have armed concrete towers, as well as a buffer zone of about 100 to 300 feet, for trenches, razor wire, cameras, sensors and security patrols!

The Israelis also pulled back some of their checkpoints—they put them in different places—and pulled the tanks out of West Bank cities, stationing them right outside where they could go back in if they wanted to. And they’ve released some Palestinian prisoners—those whose sentences were almost up anyway—while they’ve rounded up more for “questioning!”

So Israeli compliance was pretty superficial, for the sake of appear-

ance, but even so, Palestinians were thankful for any sort of improvement in their lives, and the militants stopped their attacks on Israel. Things were proceeding relatively peacefully for a while, and frankly, I think the Israelis realized if it continued they’d have to make some real concessions and sacrifices rather than just acting like

it. So they started assassinating various Palestinian militants under the excuse that they had been planning attacks on Israel, knowing full well what the reaction would be, and they got just what they’d hoped for. Palestinians started suicide bombings again in retaliation, both sides called off the ceasefire, and they’re back to murder and mayhem, as bad as ever!

There’ll be no peace there until there’s a solution to the Israeli occupation, just as there’ll be no peace in Iraq until there’s a solution to the American occupation. The Israelis are demonizing the Palestinians because they’re resisting their occupation and subjugation, and the American government is supporting the Israelis, as usual.

So there’s as little peace and justice in the Mideast as there’s ever been, and we’re moving toward the End quicker than ever. Work while you can, while there’s still peace where you are, and pray for your brethren and other Christians who minister in these hot spots and war zones, and pray for the poor and needy and oppressed who are so affected by the violence and who suffer on a daily basis. Work and pray while it’s still day, and help all you can while you can! God bless you, dear Family!

◆ Tips for “professionals” Watch your thoughts

ADAPTED FROM *TAMING YOUR PRIVATE THOUGHTS*,
BY JAY DENNIS AND MARILYN JEFFCOAT

Every action begins with a thought. In fact, Jesus said that a person’s thoughts determine who that person is—they’re that powerful. Thoughts have enormous potential for either good or evil in your life. But if you don’t work to renew your mind, your thoughts will default to a pattern set by our fallen world. That’s why so many people struggle with unhealthy thoughts such as worry, hatred, or fantasies about pursuits that will only bring them harm.

Here are some ways you can change your thoughts:

Pay attention to your thoughts.

Notice how you think in different situations, and try keeping a record of your thoughts for a while so you can go back to it and study it later to better understand what goes through your mind. Pay special attention to how physical or emotional stress affects your thoughts, and be aware that you’re especially vulnerable during times when you’re hungry, tired, or upset about something.

Consider what you’re allowing to come into your mind through your senses. What are you reading, listening to, or looking at? Does it honor God? If not, why are you drawn to it, and how can you take your underlying needs to God rather than turning to another source to try to meet them? Ask God to help you choose better words, sounds, and images to feed your mind. Avoid going to places that fuel unhealthy thoughts for you, and stop meeting with people who entice you to think in unhealthy ways.

Recognize that your mind is a spiritual battleground. Although evil forces want to bombard your mind with negative thoughts, the Holy Spirit offers you greater power to think positively. Understand that there’s much at stake in this battle: the way you think will influence all your actions, shape who you are as a person, and influence your eternal destiny.

Read the Word often, and meditate on what it says. Ask God to help you absorb the truths in His Word so they begin to transform you.

When you confront a negative thought, pray about it. Don’t expect that your thoughts will improve without the Holy Spirit’s renewing power. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you not just get rid of negative thoughts, but also to fill your mind with positive thoughts.

Ask God to show you issues in your life that are blocking intimacy with Him, then face those issues and deal with them. God can help you change even if you’ve been struggling with the same issues for a long time.

Ask a trusted friend who has a mature relationship with Christ to help you be accountable in your thought life. Meet with this person regularly to candidly discuss your thoughts and pray together to keep growing.



Be patient and thorough as you deal with negative thoughts, taking each one captive and making it obedient to Christ. Realize that this is an ongoing process rather than a one-time event.

Study Christ's life to discover how He thought. Think about how His thoughts of love, peace, forgiveness, compassion, joy, obedience, faith, and commitment influenced His actions.

(Dad:) These are good and helpful tips to help you win on one area of the spiritual battleground—your thoughts. For some more point-by-point counsel from the Lord Himself, see "The Gift of Heavenly Thought Power" (ML #3377:42–43, GN 974). You too can have heavenly thought power, with your mind renewed and the very mind of Christ present in you! Be transformed by the Word of God, praise, prophecy, obedience, and the power of the keys.

◆ Words for the wise

Dog Days

BY JOE RAO, SPACE.COM

Everyone talks about "dog days of summer," but few know what the expression means. Some say it signifies hot, sultry days "not fit for a dog." Others claim it's the weather in which dogs go mad.

But the dog days are defined as the period from July 3 through Aug. 11, when the Dog Star, Sirius, rises in conjunction (or nearly so) with the Sun. As a result, some felt that the combination of the brightest luminary of the day (the Sun) and the brightest star of night (Sirius) was responsible for the extreme heat that is experienced during the middle of the summertime. Other effects, according to the ancients, were droughts, plagues and madness.

In ancient Egypt, the New Year began with the return of Sirius. It was,

in fact, the "Nile Star" or the "Star of Isis" of the early Egyptians. Interestingly, some 5,000 years ago, this "heliacal rising" (appearing to rise just prior to the Sun) occurred *not* in August, as is the case today, but rather on or around June 25.

When they saw Sirius rising just before the Sun, they knew that the "Nile Days" were at hand. Its annual reappearance was a warning to people who lived along the Nile River. The star always returned just before the river rose, and so announced the coming of floodwaters, which would add to the fertility of their lands. People then opened the gates of canals that irrigated their fields.

Sirius is the brightest star of the constellation Canis Major, the "Greater Dog" in Latin. The star appears a brilliant white with a tinge of blue. At a distance of just 8.7 light years, Sirius is the fifth-nearest known star.

◆ Tidbits


The most watched film in history. (BBC) Forget *Titanic*, *Star Wars* and *Gone With the Wind*. They're small fry compared to the

Jesus film, which has been watched by more than two billion people and translated into more than 760 languages and dialects. **(Dad:) Praise the Lord! "This Gospel of the Kingdom is being preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations" (Matthew 24:14).**

TV swearing devastates communication skills? (Reuters) Swearing on television is increasing fast and "devastating" communication skills, according to a media watchdog. Nearly 40 years after the f-word's TV debut, it is now being actively projected into living rooms around Britain, Mediawatch-UK said.

"Far from there being a natural evolution in language, there has been a consistent effort to promote obscenity, swearing and profanity against the wishes of most people," it said. "The effect of this on educational standards and communication skills has been devastating," it added. It blamed parents for allowing a culture to develop in which children spend several hours per day in front of their television or computer. **(Dad:) Garbage in, garbage out, as the saying goes. If you're careful about your input, you won't have as much trouble with your output—your speech and your actions.**

How bad do you really want to succeed in life? (Doug Firebaugh) How bad do you really want to succeed in life? A little? A lot? Are you willing to fight for it?

 **(Jesus:) Are you willing to be a professional disciple?** If so, the stakes are high. The rewards are even higher. You will not see them all in this life, but in the life to come, when you enter My heavenly realm, you will see that the choice you made was the right one. C'mon! Who's on the team? I need professionals! (ML #3399:293,294, GN 993).

Let the fighting spirit in you refuse to give up. He did. He came home, slammed the books down on the table, ran upstairs, slammed the door and broke down and cried. It was his 10th grade year. His

mother came in, and said, "Son, what's wrong?" Through a 15-year-old's broken heart, he said, "I didn't make the team ... they said I was too small."

With incredible wisdom, the mother said, "Son, it's not the size of the person in the game, it's the size of the game in the person."

It clicked. The next morning, he got up at 4:30 AM and started practicing—every morning, every evening, every day, every week, every month, relentless, nonstop. He gave up movies and things that he did before.

He kept saying, "It's not the size of the player in the game, but the size of the game in the player." And when the season came around again, he tried out with a focus so strong that it intimidated even the coach. And he made the team. The next year he made the team. And he went on to explode.

His name? Michael Jordan.

Prayer promises. (Kathryn Lay, *Christian Reader*) "I'll pray for you." How often have I said this? Yet, how often have I gone my way, forgetting about the promise? I am sincere in my desire, but don't always follow through.

So, how do I remember the people and things that I've promised to pray for? Three things have helped me.

1. Write it down. I've always kept a small notebook in my purse for jotting down quick thoughts and writing ideas. Now I keep the first pages available for promised prayers, writing them down as soon as I've made that commitment. The notebook is always with me and easily reviewed when free time comes—whether it's while waiting in a traffic jam, in line at the grocery store, in a doctor's waiting room, or some other unhurried place.

2. Do it immediately. Another way to keep my promise is to stop right then and pray with my friend. It is better not to make a promise than to make it and break it.

3. Be alarmed. I take a specific time to pray for those promised prayers. I carry an electronic organizer in my purse. It has an alarm that I can set to go off every day at the same time.

Stargazers get down to the nitty-gritty. (*The Age Melbourne*) For those who have wondered, there is now an answer: The universe has many more stars than there are grains of sand on Earth—70,000 million million million stars, to be precise.

According to Simon Driver from the Australian National University, there are probably 10 times as many stars as grains of sand. Dr. Driver said his team had not counted every star. Instead, they surveyed a strip of the heavens.

Within that strip, as wide as the moon and reaching almost halfway across the sky, they located 10,000 galaxies and measured their

brightness.

Each galaxy's light revealed how many stars it contained. The astronomers multiplied that figure by the number of similar strips needed to



cover the entire sky. That result was, in turn, multiplied “out to the edge of the observable universe.” **(Jesus:) It is a great and glorious universe, full of wonders. And the realm of the spirit, that which exists within and beyond this universe, is even greater and more wonderful!**

Guardian angels come to picnic. (*News-net5*) In the movie “The Sixth Sense,” a young boy said he saw dead people. In Cincinnati, a boy said he could see angels. News-Channel5 reported that the boy, Ryan Reynolds, died in April from a brain tumor. Before he died, he told his mother he had a great time at a family picnic because he was surrounded by his guardian angels. Family photos from the picnic revealed peculiar white spots—almost shaped like fish—on the pictures.



FAMILY PHOTOS REVEAL GUARDIAN ANGELS

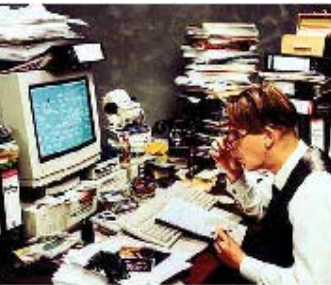
“My parents died way before he was ever born, and he said, ‘Mommy, your mommy and daddy,’” said Shirley Reynolds, Ryan’s mother. “I said, ‘Yeah, what about them?’ He said, ‘Is that them in the picture on the wall?’ And I said ‘Yes.’ And he said, ‘Mom, I just wanted you to know, they’re both OK.’ He said, ‘They’re just as pretty as they are in that picture, except they have wings and they’re waiting for me.’”

Three different cameras using three different kinds of film were developed at three different places and all had the same transparent white shapes.

It takes more than a band-aid. (*HealthDayNews*) So you’ve stopped the bleeding from the cut on your finger and have it covered with a bandage. Everything’s OK, right? Maybe not. If you didn’t clean the wound properly, you may end up with an infection, says the U.S. National Institutes of Health.

You should always wash your hands with soap before and after you do first aid to prevent the wound from developing an infection.

Don’t assume that a minor wound is clean just because you can’t see any dirt or other material in the wound. You must wash the wound. **(Dad:) Good counsel for spiritual wounds as well—the cuts, gashes, injuries and sores caused by problems with disunity, disobedience, bitterness and pride. Clean them thoroughly by drenching them with the water of the**



WORK CAN BE A NIGHTMARE

Word so there’s nothing left that will fester and infect (John 15:3).

“Give me a sign, Lord.” (*AP*) Damage to a church in Forest, Ohio, is estimated at \$20,000 after a preacher asked God for a sign. A member of the First Baptist Church said a guest evangelist was preaching repentance and seeking a sign from God when lightning struck the steeple. Ronnie Cheney called the incident “awesome, just awesome!” Cheney said the lightning traveled through the microphone, blew out the sound system and enveloped the preacher, who wasn’t hurt.

Afterward, services resumed for about 20 minutes until the congregation realized the church was on fire. The building was evacuated. **(Dad:) Maybe it was also a sign that the Lord’s not pleased with their church building and would rather have them on fire in the streets, witnessing!**

Worried staff find that work is a nightmare. (*Electronic Telegraph*) Stress at work is contributing to a regular nightmare for one in two adults. Research among 1,000 Britons found that 51 percent suffered work-related nightmares at least once a week,

with the figure rising to 61 percent among Londoners. Sunday nights were the worst as the subconscious went into overdrive about the week ahead. The survey found stress and an inability to switch off from work were cited as the most common causes of the dreams.

Needles and diseases. (Web reprint) Tattoos and body piercing can come at a price. Body modification involves breaching one



CLEAN WOUNDS—BOTH PHYSICAL AND SPIRITUAL

of your body’s main protective barriers—the skin. That poses a high risk of infection if done improperly. In fact, people with tattoos are nine times more likely to carry the hepatitis C infection. In a study published in the March 2001 issue of *Medicine*, 33 percent of people with a tattoo had hepatitis C compared with 3.5 percent of those with no tattoos.

The vast majority of those with hepatitis C

experience no symptoms until many years later when they develop liver cirrhosis or liver cancer. Hepatitis C can be passed through tattooing by reuse of tattooing needles or dye, inadequate sterilization of tattooing needles between customers, or breaks in sterile technique, such as the artist pricking the back of his or her hand to test the needle’s sharpness.

Other possible infectious risks from the tattoo needle include tetanus, tuberculosis, and HIV. Less serious surface infections around the site after the procedure can cause illness, deformity and scarring. **(Dad:) Getting a tattoo or getting pierced is serious business and requires serious prayer because the consequences are serious! You’d better pray as if your life depended on it. It might.** (For more on tattoos and body piercing, see “Man Looketh on the Outward Appearance, Part 2,” *ML #3125:81–100, 154–179, Lifelines 24.*)

Discouraged? (Dr. Adrian Rogers) Martin Luther, the Protestant Reformer, was often discouraged. It got to the point that his wife thought the only way to help him was to shock him out of it. She put on a black dress and veil as if she was going to a funeral. When he asked her who had died, she said, “Martin, haven’t you heard? God has died.” He declared, “That is blasphemy!” His wife said, “Aye, husband, and it is blasphemy for you to be living as if God is dead.” Needless to say, Martin snapped out of it.

Survival tactics. (Zig Ziglar) The giraffe is the largest mammal that gives



TOUGH LOVE FOR GIRAFFE YOUNG

birth while standing up. I can imagine what the baby giraffe must think when he bounces on the ground from that great height. He just left warm, cushioned quarters in which all his needs, comforts and security were provided. Now he finds himself bouncing off (comparatively speaking) hard, cold, unwelcoming ground.

Almost immediately thereafter, a new trauma occurs in the baby giraffe’s life. As he struggles to his knees, Mama Giraffe “persuades” him to stand up. She does this as he wobbles to his feet by giving him a swift kick to prod him to faster action. No sooner does he reach his feet than Mama delivers a booming kick that knocks the baby giraffe back down.

That process is repeated several times because Mama Giraffe loves her baby. Mama Giraffe knows that the only chance for survival her baby has is to be able to quickly get up and move out of harm’s way. Yes, kicking the baby up and down seems like a strange way to show love. But for a baby giraffe it is the ultimate expression of love.

That approach definitely won't work in the "people" world, but the principle will. Real love is evidenced when you do what is best for the other person, whether or not they appreciate it at that moment. Think about it. **(Dad:) "Faithful are the wounds of a friend" (Proverbs 27:6). Is your love and friendship great enough to tell your friends the truth even though it might be painful, and to disagree with them when you know they're wrong?**

Christians and ethics. (Charles Colson, *BreakPoint*) Last year, Zogby International took a poll of American college seniors in which 97 percent said that they believed their professors had given them a good education in ethics. But when asked what those professors had taught them, 73 percent responded, "What is right and wrong depends on differences in individual values and cultural diversity." Only a quarter of them said they had learned that there are "clear and uniform standards of right and wrong."

Similarly, a reporter for *Forbes* magazine observed an ethics class at Harvard Business School in which the professor and students discussed case studies but avoided coming to any moral conclusions. Students were graded on how well they could logically defend their position, not on whether their position was actually defensible. The reporter wrote that students in this kind of class, rather than developing moral principles, merely "develop skills enabling them to rationalize anything short of cannibalism."

A recent poll by George Barna showed that even 54 percent of people who called themselves born-again

Christians do not believe in ultimate moral truth—without which, of course, there can be no ethics. But if we truly believe in Christ, then we can't help bringing that worldview into every sphere of life.

(Dad:) Yes, there are absolutes, as I've often said, and you've got to have values you're willing to both live and die for. Otherwise you'll compromise, which goes over great in the world but not with God. For example, consider the fellow who listened to Jesus speak about truth, and then blew Him off with the words, "What is truth?"—Pilate! There is absolute truth, as Pilate discovered later, and compromising doesn't pay in the long run!

How can you lose? Only through disobedience. (Glenn Penner, *Voice of the Martyrs* magazine) A year ago I was traveling in northern Nigeria with a local evangelist. He told me about some of the attacks he had endured, how Christians were facing increasing violence from their Muslim neighbors, and how being an evangelist to Muslims was certainly not the safest of ministries. At one point, he broke out in a big smile and said, "This I know. If I live, I win. If I die, I win. Either way, I win."

Tom White often tells the story of a Vietnamese pastor who once told him, "Suffering is not the worst thing that can happen to us. Disobedience to God is."

As much as it may surprise us, to the mind of God, suffering is not the worst thing that can happen to His people. Disobedience is. **(Dad:) Suffering can drive you nearer to God.**

Disobedience drives you further away from Him, and brings on suffering to boot.

"Is God there?" (*Religion Journal*) A woman whose phone number is the same as God's in the hit movie "Bruce Almighty" is taking advantage of the unusual opportunity. The woman, identified only as Jenny, is "getting bombarded with phone calls from guys who are looking for God," said Wayne Pederson, president of the Mission America Coalition.

Jenny changed the message on her answering machine to share the Gospel. Her new message says: "Looking for God? Well, I'm not Him, but I do know Him. And knowing Him has changed my life. You can know Him, too. In fact, it's a local call. To get to God, call on Jesus. Jesus said that He is the way, the truth and the life. So, if you want to have a relationship with God, your sins forgiven, hope in this world, and eternal life when you die, call upon Jesus Christ and you'll have a direct connection to God. You won't regret it."

No appreciation for art. (*AP*) The phrase, "I could do that" is often heard at modern art museums. Some electricians working at the Dia:Beacon museum [in Beacon, NY] tried to prove it. After viewing abstract sculptures by John Chamberlain crafted with materials such as crushed automobile parts, a group of electricians created their own work and placed it alongside Chamberlain's. About a week passed before anyone noticed the addition to the exhibit. When they did, the museum threw away the electricians' sculpture. **(Dad:) If you ask me, it's a lot of modern art that belongs in the dump!**

◆ A few for fun

The ants are our friends

(*AFP*) Mark Raboo speaks of the moment when he wished the floor had opened and swallowed him. The 24-year-old was jamming with a rock band when a guitarist launched into the opening chords of The Who classic "I Can't Explain," and he joined in on vocals.

"The real lyrics were 'A certain kind, can't explain,'" says Raboo. "But I misheard them as 'Been circumcised, can't explain.' The laughter ended that song pretty quickly."

For Lisa, death by ridicule occurred when she took the microphone at a karaoke party to celebrate her 20th birthday. Her nemesis, in front of 250 guests, was Marvin Gaye's "Sexual Healing."

The real lyrics ("Darling, you're so great/I can't wait for you to operate")

had always been understood by Lisa to be "Darling, you're so great/I can't wait for you to ovulate."

"Hilarity ensued," Lisa recalls bleakly.

Mark and Lisa are casualties of something called a mondegreen: when you mishear a lyric in a song and even if the words seem a bit daft or total nonsense, they simply stay in your head and you always sing them that way.

For example, there is that Bob Dylan protest song with the refrain, "The ants are our friends/They're blowin' in the wind," and the Cuban song "Guantanamo," which some mondegreen victim, presumably not a Spanish speaker, construed as "One-ton tomato."

Spare a thought for the unfortunate who misheard a line from Irene Cara's "Flashdance" ("Take your passion and make it happen") and spent much of

his life singing it as "Take your pants down and make it happen."

Jon Carroll, a *San Francisco Chronicle* columnist and mondegreen collector, says the most frequent submission to his "Center for the Humane Study of Mondegreens" is "Gladly, my cross-eyed bear"—a distortion of an old hymn, "Gladly My Cross I'd Bear."

Why are they called "mondegreens"? The term was invented in 1954 by a writer, Sylvia Wright, who described how she had misheard part of a Scottish ballad, "The Bonny Earl of Murray."

"They hae slay the Earl of Murray/ And Lady Mondegreen," was how Wright interpreted a stanza.

For years, Wright mused about the enigmatic Lady Mondegreen who had died so tragically with her liege.

Only later, much later, did she discover that the villains had slain the Earl of Murray—and laid him on the green.