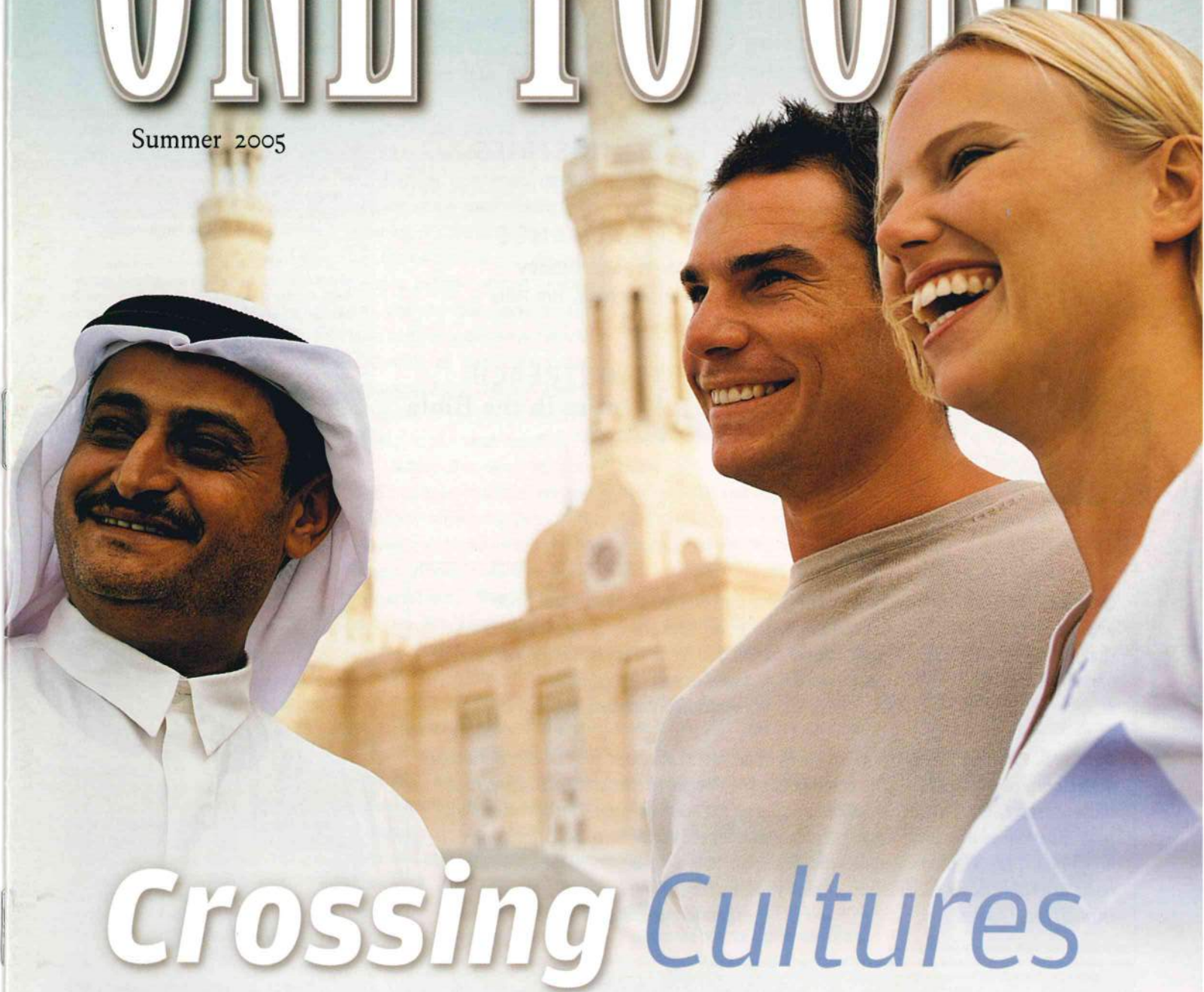


EXTENDING THE KINGDOM OF GOD...ONE PERSON AT A TIME.

ONE-TO-ONE[®]

Summer 2005



Crossing Cultures

HOW **LOVE** IS TURNING TODAY'S ENEMIES INTO TOMORROW'S **HARVEST**



Contents

Summer 2005

ONE-TO-ONE™

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Reader Feedback

Dear Bro. Simpson: I have gotten some great pastoral letters in the past from you...but this month's...that was one powerful letter! This one is so awesome! I praise God for all you do. You have been a major blessing to me and faithful during my imprisonment. Thank you for the powerful word that gives hope to the hopeless.

—Anthony, Camden, NJ

Dear Bro. Charles: There is so much on my heart since I attended your weekend seminar in Pittsburgh & Greensburg....The first night as you opened to Romans 13:11-14 and read those verses, I began to ponder...about putting on the armor of light. The next morning, I truly experienced a heaviness leave my body as I began to pray these Scriptures and God is continuing to enlighten my understanding. Then, your Saturday message spoke to my heart like I have never experienced...Thank you Lord for coming to me through (the ministry of) Bro. Charles!

—Eleanor W. Duboise, PA

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Storm Stories

FROM THE EDITOR

What is the reason for hurricane season? By Stephen Simpson

THERE IS A PECULIAR, AND NOT at all pleasant sound that the wind makes when it is trying to dismantle your house. The English language comes up a bit short when one is attempting to describe this sound. "Shriek" is one word that comes to mind. "Groan" is another. "Like the gnashing of teeth in hell," is a phrase that also might be appropriate.

I have heard this sound. Our family heard it one stormy Spring night in Texas as a tornado passed overhead. And, we heard it again last Autumn as the terrors of Hurricane Ivan battered and tormented the Alabama and Florida "Emerald Coast" with winds topping 120 miles per hour.

even wonder sometimes if the spiritual storms are actually a lot more difficult than the natural ones.

One of my favorite stories in the Bible is when Jesus was with His disciples in a boat; He was sleeping, they were rowing and watching big storm clouds roll in (see Mark 4 and Luke 8). The wind made a tell-tale whistle in their ears and the fine spray of mist from restless waves soon became bucketfuls of cold Galilee H2O sloshing over the bow and pooling ominously in the bottom of their vessel. As the boat began to fill with water, the disciples panicked...but Jesus continued sleeping.

The terrorized disciples—many who were seasoned fishermen and boaters—rushed to wake Jesus and they cried out, **"Don't you care that we are perishing?"** This speaks volumes about where they were in the storm. They asked, "Don't you care?" We are much the same. We see the waves and feel the wind, and we began to wonder, not only if God is able to deal with our storms, but does He even care?

Jesus arose, rebuked the wind, and told the waves to settle down—and all of nature bowed before the Lord. The wind ceased its shouting and howling and was reduced to a whisper of awed worship. The waves laid down and the sea became like glass.

But Jesus was more concerned about a different kind of storm; the one that was raging in the disciples' hearts and minds. He asked



Volunteers at Christ Church in Pensacola, Florida, clean up in the wake of Hurricane Ivan.

them, "Why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?" Fear cannot exist where faith is present. The disciples were falling apart in the face of adversity because they had thrown out their faith: not only their faith in Jesus' power, but in His love and care for them.

1 John 4 tells us that perfect love casts out fear. Because we have received His love and His call, we need not ever doubt His faithful care for us, even in the worst storms of life. The writer of Hebrews tells us in chapter 10 not to cast away our confidence, in which there is great reward, and that we are not "of those who draw back," but we are of those who press ahead in God.

I was reminded of these truths as I read the articles contained in this issue of **One-to-One**, all of which point to opportunity in the midst of adversity. One of the best

things we can discover in a storm is that God cares and that He will make a way—that we do have a future in Him. I pray you will be encouraged, as I am, by these articles and testimonies.

Please continue to remember CSM in your prayers and in your budget this Summer as we continue to proclaim the Gospel and equip believers in more than 70 nations worldwide. We were born for such a time as this! The opposition is strong, but the opportunities are great. The Lord over the wind and the waves is in the boat with us; don't be afraid. 121

Hurricane Ivan Aftermath: Bridge/Cross photos courtesy The Pensacola News Journal, Lightning photo courtesy Steve Tyrrell. Used with permission.

Stephen Simpson is the Editor of **One-to-One** Magazine. To contact him, please call Charles Simpson Ministries at (251)633-7900 or e-mail: stephen.simpson@csmpublishing.org.

Crossing Cultures

Is our worldview the same as the Lord's?

By Charles Simpson



I BELIEVE TODAY'S ENEMIES ARE TOMORROW'S HARVEST.

I believe that based on the history of the Gospel message's expansion, and the promises of Holy Scripture: *"The earth will be filled with knowledge of the glory of God as the waters cover the sea"* (Habakkuk 2:14).

The issue before us is, how will that happen? Obviously the Church has a major role to play in that process. But how can we extend the knowledge of His glory—His goodness and mercy—into what is now considered enemy territory? Will it entail a major shift in how we view the world? I believe so.

JUST WARS

Let me first affirm that I believe that there are just wars. I am not a pacifist. You and I enjoy the privileges afforded by those who fought and died for them—and are still fighting and dying.

The main issue in a just war—or battle of any kind—is the protection of a trust such as David's defense of his father's sheep or his battle against Goliath. Such as a battle is fought under the aegis of civil authority (see Romans 13:1-7).

Civil government exists primarily for protection, the orderly functions of society, and the arbitration of disputes that cannot otherwise be settled. It is established by God and should be a terror to evildoers.

On a personal level, we must also fight battles to defend those under our care. Fathers defend families and mothers defend children,

and so it goes. This is a natural and righteous behavior and ordained of God. We are accountable to Him for what is entrusted to us, personally and corporately. Even Jesus defended His disciples (see Matthew 12:1-8). He also defended the temple as a place of prayer (see Matthew 21:12-13). So I conclude that certain issues require defense — even the giving of life.

ENEMIES

The lawyers asked Jesus, "Who is my neighbor?" In response Jesus gave the parable of the Good Samaritan. A neighbor is someone in need. A good neighbor is someone who is able to cross geographical and cultural lines to give assistance to such a person.

However, I do not recall anyone asking, "Who is my enemy?" Yet Jesus does mention enemies on several occasions (see Matthew 13:25-39 and Luke 10:19). Our enemy is the one who seeks our destruction; our real, ultimate enemy is Satan (see Matthew 10:28; Luke 10:19; 2 Corinthians 10:3-5; Ephesians 2:2) and our real war is in the spiritual realm.

The most difficult issue for me personally, and I suspect for many



others, is how I deal with perceived enemies. I say “perceived” because my perception is not always correct, but it does affect my attitude. The most difficult saying of Jesus—the one I find the hardest to obey—is, “Love your enemies (see Matthew 5:44). He goes on to say, “Bless and do good to them, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven.”

Our Father in heaven loves His enemies. In fact, we were once His enemies. We were, at one time, on the other side of righteousness. His love won us over.

The goodness and mercy of God have their ultimate revelation at the Cross where Jesus said, “Father forgive them for they know not what they do.” It was God’s attitude toward us that moved us from opposition to becoming a part of His harvest in the earth. His love worked behind enemy lines. He is requiring us to learn His heart and strategy toward opponents. Divine love reached behind lines, all lines; geographical, cultural and spiritual. He forgave His enemies.

HISTORY

The Gospel advanced beyond Israel; it was intended for *all men everywhere*. To advance it required those who could love others beyond geography and culture. Israel had a problem; it loved its own and hated its enemies (see Matthew 5:43). Many Christians also have this problem and therefore cannot reach the world with the love of God.

I, too, have had this problem. I am by nature pugilistic and defensive. I did some boxing while in college, loved sports growing up, and was not afraid to battle. David had this nature as well and could not build the temple that he envisioned. He had too much blood on his hands. Solomon, on the other hand received people from many nations.

The apostle Paul had this problem also, as did Peter. It took a revelation of Jesus to change their attitudes toward others. Then they could become major forces in advancing Christ’s Kingdom.

I grew up hating Communism. Unfortunately, I hated Communists as well; they were our enemy. But some believers were able to work



took a long time, but now we see the fruit. Many were—and are still—being martyred in the process. Like the Cross of Jesus, the process is expensive, but it works.

The point is, “God so loved the world,” not just believers. In order to demonstrate that we are His children, and to accomplish His will, we too must love the world—all of it. His love still works behind enemy lines.

ISLAM

A few years ago, two of our dear friends were beaten with the butts of axes and nearly killed for their Christian work in an Islamic nation. Their recovery was miraculous and so was their continued love for the people there. As soon as they were able, they returned to work again in the same city. Now they are seeing a harvest.

I believe that the next great harvest will be in the Islamic world. As

“God is requiring us to learn His heart and strategy. Those who are willing to **love others beyond** geography and cultures will advance the Gospel.”

behind enemy lines. People like “Brother Andrew” and also my friend Goos Vedder distributed Bibles and showed the love of God to those behind enemy lines. Yesterday’s enemies became today’s harvest because of those who loved them.

The same thing could be said of China, now one of the world’s most prolific harvest fields. Years ago, people like Hudson Taylor and a host of others loved the Chinese and showed them the love of God. It

I recall September 11, 2001, I am challenged. I was watching TV on that dreadful morning. I saw the pictures of thousands fleeing and as terrified Americans leaped from the towers burning alive. I saw the horror, as you did. Anger and hatred welled up within me. And as I regularly go through airports, I find the anger still there.

I find in me this terrible conflict: “Hate evil and love your enemies.” Believing as I do that the Gospel will break through and cover

the earth, I must find a way to get beyond enemy lines. Only His love can accomplish that. It is easy to look back and see how pagans, Communists, and others were reached by those who paid the price to love. But to look at the **present** and see Jesus is sometimes difficult.

For many years, we have had a great friendship with a courageous minister known as "Brother Luke." He is from Iran and still travels there frequently for ministry. But, when we were first getting to know him, the Lord had to adjust my own perspective and the perspective of my family. Listen to what my son Jonathan says about how God changed his attitude:

When I was approximately sixteen years old, Brother Luke came to stay at our house; he had been invited to speak at our church. Mom and Dad planned to let him have my room for the duration of his stay, but there was one problem...I had a sign on my dresser mirror that said "BOMB IRAN." So, before Brother Luke arrived, Mom had to ask me to take that sign down.

I suppose, like many Americans, I had very negative feelings toward Iran, going back to the 1979-1980 hostage situation, watching Iranians burn the U.S. flag, and so forth. Of course, I took down the sign before Brother Luke arrived, and I relocated myself to another part of the house for a few days so that he could have the room. He was able to enjoy his

stay and never knew about that sign.

Having time with Brother Luke at our house during those days, and hearing him speak at church, I came to realize that there are many Christians in Iran who are suffering for their faith and for the way they were sharing it with Muslims. I saw Luke as my brother in Christ and I saw his compassion and burden to see the Gospel shared in Iran. I was even compelled to give financially toward his efforts. Needless to say, that old sign did not go back up in our house after his visit.

THOUGHTS

The apostle Paul endured much evil and persecution. He was finally beheaded. He writes in Romans 12:17, "Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men." In verse 19, he says "Do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, 'Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,' says the Lord."

Then, in verse 20, Paul says, "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good." Looking ahead in chapter 13, we see Paul continuing the discussion by admonishing us to be subject to civil government and its authority to defend righteousness.

As I reflect upon all of this, I believe some truths from the Lord become clear:

- ▶ When we hate, we are overcome by evil.
- ▶ When we love and do good, we can overcome evil.
- ▶ Civil authority has the right and responsibility to defend righteousness
- ▶ We are right to defend a trust.
- ▶ We are called to love our enemies—even as the civil authority defends us.
- ▶ Jesus overcame evil at the Cross.
- ▶ Jesus loved His enemies. He rebuked Peter for drawing the sword. God needs no defense.

Jesus believed it necessary to change how the apostles felt toward the non-Jewish world. They did change, and affected the non-Jewish world with the love of God.

Paul is a classic example of one who was changed and became a world changer.

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Charles Simpson

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forward *through* adversity

An Interview with Entrepreneur Jim Tully of Bettendorf, IA

By Jonathan Simpson

WHEN YOU ARE IN THE MIDST OF TRIALS, THERE IS A COMFORT AND ENCOURAGEMENT gained from those who have been tested by fire and found faithful. Their strength is not imparted through pats on the back and extensive shoulder crying sessions (although there may be time for that). Their best gift to you is their own faithfulness. It is their living testimony that gives meaning to any words they may offer.

Isaiah 30 tells us that the Lord gives us “the bread of adversity and the water of affliction” but it also promises that we will have teachers who will say “This is the way, walk in it.” Jim Tully is such a teacher. Jim owns Tully Automotive and is also a church leader in Bettendorf, Iowa. He is the husband of Judy and the father of Tim, Dan, Joie, and Jimmy (who went to be with the Lord). He has a passion for cars, a love for the church congregation that he pastors, and is never caught without a fresh joke or funny story. Make no mistake, when it comes to his work, Jim means serious business. It has been said that “adversity introduces a man to himself.”

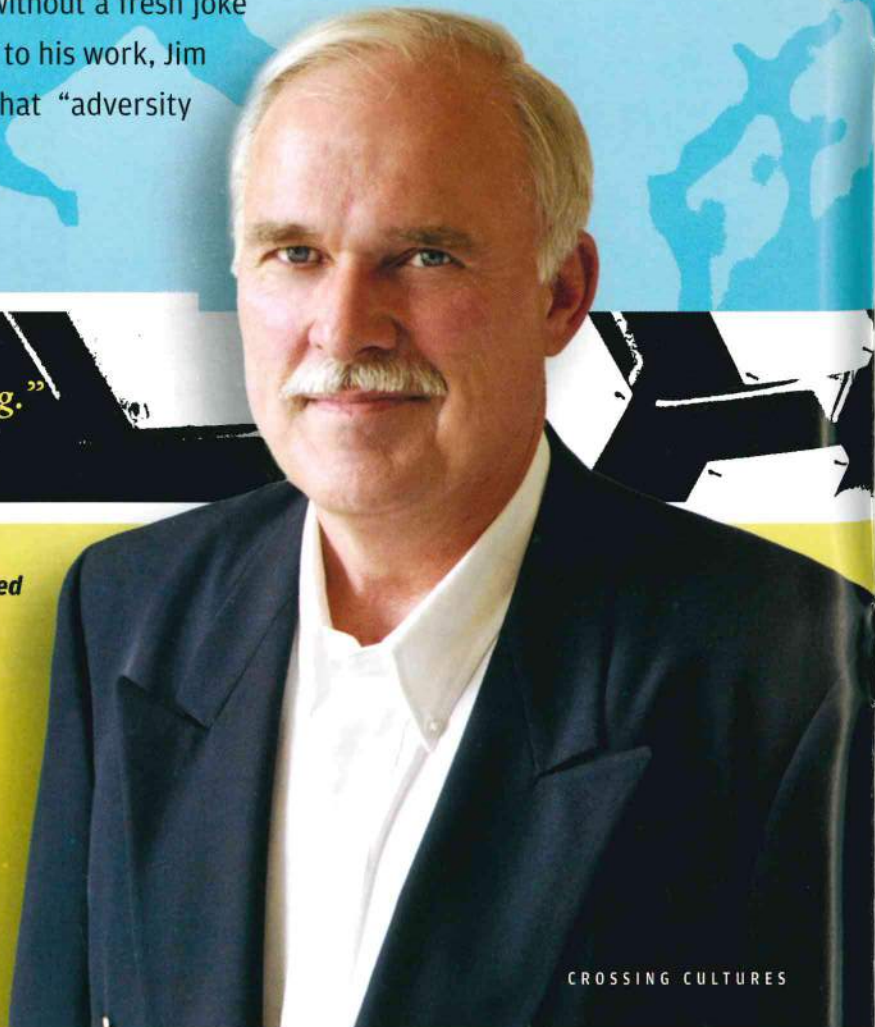
...**Meet Jim Tully.**

“If you’re going through hell, keep going.”

—Winston Churchill

121: Tell us how your enthusiasm for cars began and led to the establishment of Tully Automotive?

JT: I grew up on a small farm in Illinois. We had a tractor and other small farm equipment. My initial mechanical education came from working on these. When I was a junior in High School, I bought my Aunt’s 1931 Ford coup and put in a ’57 Buick fuel injected V8.





numerous other upgrades made to the car that, needless to say, turned it into a hot rod. It was also at this time that Jim was in a sledding accident that cracked his back and ended up paralyzing his knees.

I went to an orthopedic doctor and I was healed. By the time I was a senior in high school, I sold the car because I knew I was leaving home. I graduated in 1960 and moved on, doing mill and railroad work.

inevitable race between he and his brother-in-law took place.

"He lost." Jim said with a casual confidence. "I was a fanatic," he added. Jim's brother-in-law must have not had hard feelings because it wasn't long after that Jim went to work for his brother-in-law's car dealership. Before this, Jim had been working as a welder for John Deere, but made the switch after listening to older

"I was a fanatic... I bought a 1955 Chevy 210 Series. The Mississippi River divided the town and **I had the fastest car** west of the river and my brother-in-law had the fastest car on the east side."

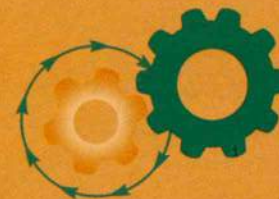
During that time, all of my buddies loved cars, as did I. I bought a 1955 Chevrolet 210 series. The Mississippi River divided the town where I lived. I had the fastest car west of the Mississippi and my brother-in-law had the fastest car on the east side.

Jim set the scene of evening hot rod races where crowds gathered and the

workers at John Deere complain about not following their dreams when they were young.

"That is what triggered me thinking that I should make a change," Jim said.

Working for his brother-in-law, Jim was now gaining more experience doing what he loved best, mechanical and body work.



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"Back then there were no technical schools. I figured I would work in the industry and receive a hands-on education. I was married to Judy in January of 1963, the same day of her birthday. Now, I only had one date to remember."

In 1965 Jim had gone back to John Deere but was building his mechanical and body shop business on the side in his own garage. Finally the day came when he went full time for himself. His business was growing and he had his own auto shop in the downtown business district. It seemed Jim was living his dream until 1970, when a horrible gas fire at Jim's shop left him in critical condition for 14 days and incapacitated for 9 months. With no insurance it almost cost Jim his business but, with the help of his wife Judy, one employee and his brother-in-law, the business survived.

121: How were things for you spiritually during this time?

JT: I had grown up devout Catholic. I have brothers that are priests and sisters that are nuns, but it was not a good family situation growing up. The year that I really met the Lord was 1972, when everything hit at once and brought us to an awareness of our vulnerability. Before, we thought we could conquer the world.

I had just received a large loan to start a parts store in addition to the body shop. The first few months went well, but then energy crisis hit and my business crashed. During this time also, my wife almost died because of hemorrhaging with the delivery with our son Jimmy. At one point the doctor had even said, "she's gone." *It was during these pressurizing times that Jim says he "got saved and filled with Holy Ghost."*

121: Did you go to a Charismatic Catholic Church?

JT: No, we were Charismatic members of a regular Catholic Church. Soon after our conversion experience, our daughter Joie,

who was three years old, suddenly became very ill and unresponsive. We took her to the hospital where, after four weeks and many tests, the doctors said she had three days to live due to a blocked liver.



"A horrible gas fire at Jim's shop left him in critical condition for 14 days and incapacitated for 9 months."

Now, as a believer and man of faith Jim told me how he and Judy cried and prayed there at the hospital, then went into their daughter's hospital room. Suddenly, Joie seemed fine. She sat up in her bed and greeted her parents.

During the drive back from the hospital that evening, we recognized God's healing. The next day when we arrived to the hospital, Joie's doctors approached us. Two of them said "We have no idea what happened" but that Joie was doing fine and had no more signs of illness. The third doctor, with tears in his eyes, said that he could not understand how the other doctors were not believers in Jesus. This had been a true miracle. Joie was able to leave the hospital the next day. That was confirmation that what we believed was real.

*Jim and Judy became increasingly involved in their church. With the permission of their priest, they began leading prayer meetings and home group meetings teaching from the book **What is a Christian Family?** Soon, there began to be a real move of the Holy Spirit within the church. "We started getting magazines such as *New Wine and New Covenant*," said Jim.*

During this time Jim became the Vice President of the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship in his area. It wasn't long before the news of what God was doing had spread and Jim and Judy were invited to lead similar home group meetings at a nearby Lutheran Church while remaining members of the Catholic Church.

Real relationships were being developed. People were receiving the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and there was cohesion among us. But our Priest left the church and we got a new priest who did not approve of our being involved outside of the church. He insisted that all church needs were to be met within the church.

Jim decided it was time to leave. Not long after, at a Christian Fellowship conference in Chicago, Jim received encouragement from Pastor Hap Arnold to continue working with those that God had joined to him through the home group meetings. Jim returned to Bettendorf with the desire to let God establish whatever would happen next. Bettendorf Covenant Community Church began with Jim's family, two other couples and a few friends who looked to Jim for spiritual leadership.

When the Postmaster told me that our church name would be shortened at the post office to "Bettendorf Coven," we decided to change our name to River of Life Church. In 1997, we were able to purchase our own church building. Today Judy and I are really just Mom and Dad encouraging them to build one-to-one relationships. We must walk in a way that brings them into that same way of walking; my wife and I must be a model. We try to have a spirit of helping. You can get by saying tough things if you say it with compassion.

121: Give us an update on your business. What are the challenges you face?

JT: Besides the body shop we have expanded into the industrial line, painting custom colors on backhoes for example, and powder coating for custom lighting. This business, located in Davenport, is facing lean times. In recent years, fifteen companies who did business with us have gone bankrupt. Besides losing their business, a substantial amount of money they owed us could not be paid.

121: When your business is in a downturn, what is the best way to respond?

JT: Every day trust God and work the best you know how. God asks us to overcome depression and unexpected change. I'm not talking about losing 10 pounds. Being the boss, I am in the shop. If someone is sick, I do their job. My employees say "I have never seen a boss work like you do." I also had to get rid of all dead wood. God just gave me one talent; he didn't give me ten. I want to give him some return on that talent.

God is going to test our faith...it's not going to be a written test. It will include loss. Don't look at the circumstance and lose sight of the big picture. Go to war and go to the Cross. I listen to many people today who think that God wants to fulfill their dreams. I've been reading Hebrews 11 recently...what about those who were cut in two? We can't make the world into heaven.

The energy crisis was a world situation that affected me personally. When the parts store collapsed during the energy crisis, it took me seven years to pay back the loan, but God was in that. What would I be like if I had gotten "my dream"? I was capable to be blind to what God wanted and wide eyed to what I wanted.

121: Do you think your sense of humor has helped you face adversity?

"Adversity does not have the final say, God does."

JT: You have to be able to laugh in the middle of adversity because it helps break the tension. Remember, adversity does not have the final say, God does.

121: In your body shop you have been able to apprentice several men. How did you know when they were ready to be promoted?

JT: It's pretty easy to see. They have to carry within themselves a desire to accomplish, not just put in time. That is a commodity that many people don't have. They have to understand, not just do it because they are told. They must have the right attitude, to be able to think through the situations and do the small things well. Everybody working for me understands, you don't get paid because you are here. And should they get promoted, they can't get the "boss syndrome." To be a good boss you must be a good servant.

Even when adversity comes, stay encouraged as you run the race! **121**



Jonathan Simpson is the Director of Development for CSM.

Charles Simpson
continued from page 7

OPTIONS

We are faced with several options: We can seek to escape the world around us through an escapist theology or isolation. We can draw lines and perceive every one who opposes us as enemies. We can hate them and destroy ourselves, proving that we have not the heart of the Father. Or we can follow those who knew Him and love our enemies. **We can see today's enemies as tomorrow's harvest.** These options apply not only to Islam; they apply to all kinds of people who are much closer in proximity. They apply to neighbors, the needy, to perceived opponents, and to the other guy on the same road.

The love of God is the motivation for evangelism. Perhaps we can measure our love by our ability to get behind enemy lines and do good to those who spitefully use us. Our real victory is not simply to win in battle; it is to love beyond the battle.

I confess to you that I have not always loved my enemies. But, I am convicted. I have been invited to speak to a large gathering of former Muslims who are reaching behind the lines. They have committed their very lives. I am challenged to be properly motivated as I encourage them to train others who will go beyond the lines.

I have just returned from Siberia, deep in the heart of Russia...another place where yesterday's enemies have become today's harvest. I need your prayers and support. Please pray with me that I can help those who go behind enemy lines and reveal the love of God. Where the gospel is concerned—there are no boundaries. **121**

Charles Simpson is Editor-in-Chief of *One-to-One* Magazine. He ministers extensively throughout the United States and among the nations.

The **strongest** promise in the Bible

...and how it is for today By Gary Henley

IN REVELATION 7:9, WE READ A PROPHETIC WORD PICTURE OF STAGGERING PROPORTIONS:

"After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from EVERY nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb" (NIV) (emphasis added).



Sounds great, doesn't it? Very encouraging! But I can tell you by personal experience, we are certainly not there yet! The fact is, we have had 2000 years to reach the people of the earth, and today, less than one-third would even generally define themselves as "Christian." In fact, I was in Bangladesh a few weeks ago, and it was hard to find a Christian anyplace among those millions of people thronging the streets.

How can we know that **EVERY** nation, tribe, people and language will actually be represented before the throne one day? **We know because it is based on the strongest promise in the Bible.**

THE STRONGEST? Oh, yes; this is a "double-double dare you" kind of promise repeated many times throughout Scripture. By the way, it is also the foundation of the Gospel itself, the reason we non-Jews were included in God's Kingdom, and the promise itself is identified in Scripture as "*the Gospel in advance*" given when there may have been only one "for-sure" believer on the face of the earth.

That one "for-sure" believer was the son of an idol worshipper, and he was raised in the worst idol-worshipping city of his day. One day, with no warning that we know of, God said to this man, "If you will leave everything and go where I tell you to go, I will bless you, and you will be a blessing, and all the peoples of the earth will be blessed through you" (Genesis 12:1-2).

We don't know HOW Abraham knew this was the voice of God, let alone to act on it and wander out into the wilderness not knowing where he was going. We are just told that "Abraham believed the Lord" and because he did, God regarded him as righteous.



That promise is known as the Abrahamic Covenant. It is the basis of our covenant with Jesus Christ today.

Peter quoted it when he explained the Resurrection of Christ and the miracles of Pentecost to the Jews in Solomon's Temple. Basically, he said to the crowd that everything that had happened to them in Acts 2 and 3 was based on this short statement (see Acts 3:17-25). According to Scripture, five thousand men instantly believed, and Peter and John landed in jail within "a New York minute". Why would a 2000 year-old promise to Abraham create such a ruckus?

"God announced the Gospel in advance to Abraham" when he made this promise; this was Paul's even more striking claim! In advance? Yes, and Paul also said God sent Jesus to fulfill that promise so we unqualified heathen could receive *"the blessing given to Abraham"* and *"the promise of the Spirit"* (see Galatians 3:8, 14).

It is obvious that Peter and Paul thought this promise was critical. But I still haven't told you why it is **the strongest promise in the Bible**.

Here's why...when God made that promise to Abraham, He did something He never did to back up any other promise: **He swore by Himself that it would surely be fulfilled!**

"I swear by myself" declares the Lord . . . "I will surely bless you. . . and through your offspring ALL nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed me."

WHY, with all the promises in the Bible, would God go all out and actually swear by Himself with regard to this one? The writer of Hebrews says it was for one reason:

"Because God wanted to make the unchanging nature of his purpose very clear to the heirs of what was promised, He confirmed it with an oath. God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we ... may be greatly encouraged. We have this hope as an

anchor . . . " (see Hebrews 6:17-18).

Apparently, God thought the Christians of the Twenty-First Century might look at the difficulty of evangelizing the world, at the sorry statistics so far, at all the money it takes from the local church budget to support those missionaries, at all the unsaved heathen after 2000 years, at all the Muslims and Hindus and communists who thumb their noses at us, and God thought we might actually think He had changed His purpose!

NO! "Because God wanted to make the unchanging nature of His purpose very clear to the heirs . . . He confirmed it with an oath."

Don't ever think that "missions" is not the most important thing going on in the earth, or that maybe it won't work, or that God has other priorities!

He **SWORE** on Himself to Abraham, His **OATH** was the reason Jesus rose from the dead, His **STRONGEST PROMISE** was the reason He redeemed you and gave you His Spirit, and He confirmed it *"by two unchangeable things (His promise and His oath) in which it is impossible for God to lie"* (see Hebrews 6:18).

A great multitude that no one can count—from **EVERY** nation, tribe, people, and language—will stand before the Throne and in front of the Lamb, and every knee will bow, and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. God swore on Himself it would happen, and it is His number one priority in the earth today.

Now, doesn't that make you want to become a missionary? **121**



Gary Henley, the Director of International Outreach Ministries, travels widely encouraging missionaries around the globe.

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