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ONE TO ONE®

Winter 2006



THE Prince OF PEACE

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Reader Feedback

Pastor Charles,

I want to thank you and encourage you for your work of love. I was grounded in the Lord in part of the Covenant Church movement, the Shepherding Movement from 1979 to 1987. Those were days of strong growth for us. My wife and five children still benefit from the foundation that you five teachers/leaders poured out. We have been in leadership everywhere we go. We still approach things on a covenant basis and have a healthy marriage due to the grounding we received.

I hope you know that there are probably thousands of us out there who have never written you to thank you, yet are solidly still in love with Jesus. You are far more fruitful than you know and I wanted to take the time to let you know that.

Thank you and God bless you for your labor of love.

—Tom Szczesniak,
President, Oregon Cookies, Inc.

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Peace on Earth?

One ancient roadmap still points
the way *By Stephen Simpson*



FROM THE EDITOR

AS MY FRIENDS KNOW, I enjoy “strange-but-true” news headlines. One of my favorites from years ago is, “PEACE ACTIVISTS RIOT.” Ah, yes, there’s nothing like a little bit of pacifism to finally drive one over the edge.

There’s a lot of talk these days about war and peace; I suppose it’s really nothing new. Even before time began, there was war in heaven; the proud archangel Lucifer had the notion to rebel against God, and he led a mob of malcontent angels against the Lord. The battle went very poorly for Lucifer and his followers, and they were cast out of heaven.

And so, Lucifer eventually found his way into the Garden of Eden—a place of beauty, peace, and harmony here on earth—where God and man enjoyed perfect fellowship. There, in the form of a serpent, Lucifer—who is the devil, Satan, the accuser—tempted Eve, even as a passive Adam embraced a policy of détente and non-aggression. Adam, after abdicating his God-given leadership and protective role, then gave into the devil’s temptation himself, thereby plunging creation under the chaotic curse of sin.

War came quickly into Adam and Eve’s house, as their younger, jealous son Cain murdered his brother, Abel. Even

as Adam and Eve’s other descendants began to multiply and fill the earth, jealousy, striving, and lack of harmony with God caused sinful men to plot and scheme against one another; these plots frequently lead to bloody violence. Even after the flood, when all of mankind perished, except for one righteous man—Noah—and his family, the “war gene” remained in the human DNA. This sin flaw within provoked eventual warfare and splintering in the human family.

Today, we live in the “Age of Grievances” where virtually every people group has a grievance against another. I once heard Pastor Wellington Boone note that among the ancestors of us all are those who were enslaved; and also those who enslaved others. The soil of the five continents is bloody from the battles that have arisen from our fundamental inability to live in peace with one another.

And our fundamental inability to live in peace with one another arises from our fundamental inability individually to live in peace with God. That is, we are unable to have peace with God

in our own strength.

How wonderful it is, then, that enjoying peace with God is a blessing initiated by God Himself towards man, through the life of Jesus Christ. Even today, at the dawn of A.D. 2007, the same gracious offer from God still stands—all who would embrace faith in Jesus can have peace with God. Jesus stands at the door to our hearts and says, “Follow Me!” It is an offer

“Today, we live in an “Age of Grievances” where virtually every people group has a grievance against another.”

made to men and women; boys and girls; to youth and to elderly; to all colors and nationalities; to Gentiles, Jews, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, Presbyterians, and Cafeterians; to straights and to gays; to sinners and to...well, since all have sinned, that pretty much covers it!

Yes, the offer is good to sinners. Perfect people need not apply. We don’t come to Jesus through our perfection, but through His. We don’t have to be perfect to “get into the club.” He brings us in, and then He perfects us.

Peace is not achieved through pacifism; and—though I support a strong national military—I know that peace cannot ultimately be achieved through

guns, either. No, ultimate peace is won by the Lion Who is a Lamb; the little babe in the manger Who became the Mighty Warrior; the One Who triumphed over sin, death, hell, and Satan; the Winner and still champion; the Greatest of all time, Jesus Christ, Lord of heaven and earth!

It is in receiving Jesus, and on that basis alone, that we can have peace with God; peace in our hearts; and peace with one another. The man who is at odds with God will eventually be at odds with his neighbor. However, the one who receives peace with God is not only blessed personally, but also becomes another signpost on the one, true roadmap to peace for everyone.

Have a peaceful Christmas and New Year! **121**

Stephen Simpson is the Editor of **One-to-One** and Pastoral Team Leader of Covenant Church of Mobile. He is also available for ministry in your city. For more information, contact Betty Duke: bettydukeesm@aol.com or call (251) 633-7900.

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because that is what almost all of us want. Peace is the foundation for prosperity, and when peace is taken from us, resources are diverted for survival, defense, and destruction. For things to get better, the true path to peace must be pursued.

Peace is not only the desire of mankind, it is the desire and the provision of our God who was revealed in Jesus Christ—"Prince of Peace." The challenge for us is to find out that peace is a person. Isaiah called the coming Messiah, "Prince of Peace." Zacharias, father of John the Baptist, said that Jesus would "guide our feet in the way of peace." The way *to* peace is *in* the Prince of Peace. Wherever He reigns, there is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit (see Romans 14:17).

What is peace and why is it so desirable...and how do we find it? The truth is that Divine peace is indefinable. The apostle Paul says it "passes understanding" (see Philippians 4:7). However, he goes on to say that it "keeps our hearts and minds."

Some define peace as "the absence of war or conflict." Others see peace as harmony, or a calm state of mind. But the peace of God through Jesus Christ is even much more than those things.

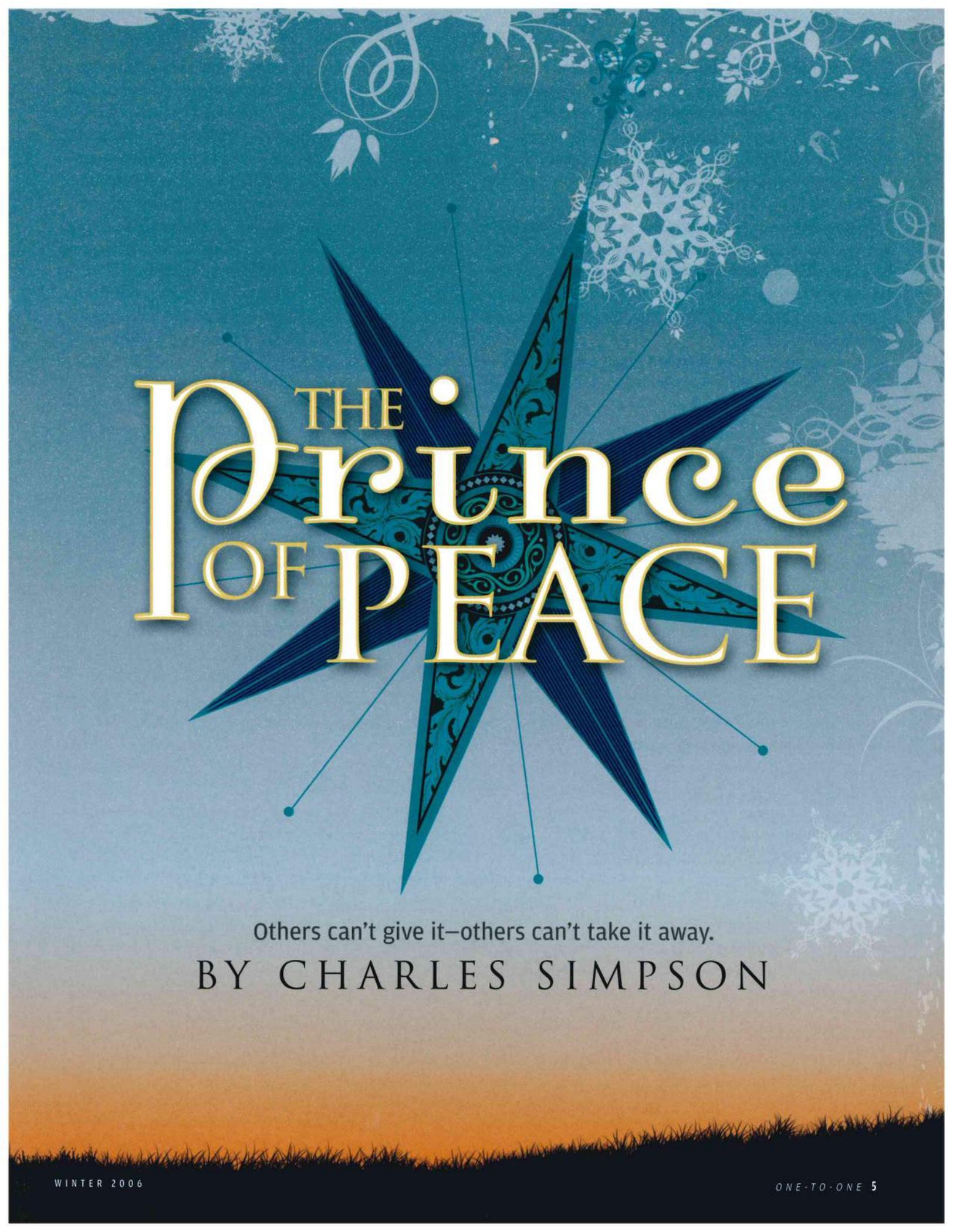
Years ago I enjoyed singing with my friend John Duke the old hymn, "Peace, Peace." The refrain went like this: *"Peace, peace wonderful peace, coming down from the Father above. Sweep over my spirit forever, I pray, in fathomless billows of love."*

Peace comes down from the Father above. It is a substantive gift from God that sweeps over us, as we are aware of His presence. Jesus spoke of that peace in John 14:27, "My peace I give to

you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." Jesus, the Prince of Peace, gives us a different kind of peace that defies natural understanding and situations.

It drives away fear. As an old song says, "The world didn't give it, and the world can't take it away."

I would describe Divine peace this way: It is the awareness of God's



THE Prince OF PEACE

Others can't give it—others can't take it away.

BY CHARLES SIMPSON

sovereign presence that removes fear and stress. His peace is not the absence of something nor is it passive. It is the presence of Someone and the presence of His power, able to overcome any condition. This peace is available to anyone, in any situation, at any time, who comes to the Father in faith through Jesus Christ (see Romans 5:1-2).

We can celebrate and enjoy peace in a world of strife, because this peace is not an earthly condition; it is a heavenly one. It is the heart and mind that has discovered the person of Jesus, the Eternal King. It is an unearthly peace that emanates from eternity into time. It brings an amazing tranquility.

The world rejected the Prince of Peace two thousand years ago, but as many as receive Him even now, receive the same peace He offered then. The world continued in its strife due to its rejection. But to those who receive Him, He still gives the power to become the sons of God. Receiving Him, we receive peace and become peace givers (see John 1:10-13; Matthew 5:9).

STORMS AND STRESS

One cannot fully appreciate peace until they have experienced storms and stress. Because I live near the Gulf of Mexico, I have experienced numerous hurricanes, notably Frederic in 1979, Ivan in 2004, and Katrina in 2005. The howling winds, driving rains, and accompanying tornados are indescribable and devastating.

When Hurricane Ivan hit the coast in 2004, the eye passed right over our house. After hours and hours of merciless and fearful winds, the calm of the storm center stood above us for about 30 minutes. During that same time, just forty miles to the east of us, a forty foot wave swept over the barrier islands and into communities, exploding homes and taking lives.

As the eye of the storm hovered above us, I walked out into the eerie calm to survey the damage. Thankfully it was minor. After awhile, I went back inside as the winds returned from the other direction.

The peace of God is like living in the eye of the storm, or under the eye of God. We can live in an indescribable peace, even as terrible forces rage around us.

There are other kinds of storms that assault our dwelling places. These storms can bring great stress upon us. In 2000, I had a quadruple bypass heart surgery—a dangerous procedure which I had resisted. But terrific pain and the prospect of death changed my mind. I will

never forget the amazing calm from the Holy Spirit that came to me in the midst of that storm and has remained since.

Stress is a major spiritual and health issue for most of us. When storms assail our marriage, our finances, our vocation, or our health, stress can be devastating to mind and body. I recently had cataract surgery. Just prior to surgery my blood sugar was 109. Just fifteen minutes later, after surgery, it was 134. “Why?” I asked the nurse. “I was asleep” I protested. “Stress” she replied. “Your body reacted to stress.” Even subconsciously, our bodies are affected by stress. Stress also affects our cholesterol.

David describes his stress in Psalm 31. He uses words like trouble, grief, sighing, reproach, broken, fear and schemes. Did his stress contribute to moral failure? Probably. He speaks of the “strife of tongues” and prays to be hidden from it. Proverbs describes it as “wood to a fire” or water torture (see Proverbs 26:20, Proverbs 21; Proverbs 19:13).

The results of stress can be seen in hospitals, courtrooms, prisons, families, churches, and battlefields. Much of the stress we bring upon ourselves through selfishness, ambition, and being caught up in the world’s ways. Perhaps there is a benefit to storms; they can drive us to shelter in the Prince of Peace.

FROM HERE TO THERE

How can we find the “eye,” the calm, or the shelter? Martin Luther wrote, as he hid in a castle fortress from would be murderers, “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God.” How can we get to the fortress? Where is it? Remember, the fortress is a Person. The One who *is* peace brings heavenly peace to earthly people.

We can find Him at the Cross where He died for our transgressions and replaced guilt with peace. We can find Him at the empty tomb where He conquered death and hell. We can find Him at the Right Hand of the Father where He intercedes for us. If we can find Him and His presence, we immediately find peace.

Peace is discovering that we are forgiven and can forgive others. It is knowing that He loves us with an everlasting love. It is knowing that even in the valley of the shadow of death, He is with us.

Perhaps we have to discover where peace is *not*, before we discover where it *is*. False prophets said, “Peace, peace,” when there was no peace. Peace is not in false trusts: fantasy, more money, flesh fulfillment, “comfort

food,” drugs, accolades, ambition, or achievement. No, it is not even in self-esteem. These are stop-gap measures, and their effects are sadly temporary. Their glitter is fool’s gold.

Real peace is permanent; indeed it is eternal. David found peace through faith in God and records these declarations in Psalm 31:14-24:

- ✦ *“You are my God.”*
- ✦ *“My times are in Your hands.”*
- ✦ *“Deliver me from the hand of my enemies.”*
- ✦ *“Make Your face shine upon Me.”*
- ✦ *“Do not allow me to be ashamed.”*
- ✦ *“Oh Lord, how great is Your goodness.”*
- ✦ *“You shall hide me in the secret place of Your presence from the strife of tongues.”*

GOD’S DESIRE

The Good News is that God sent the Prince of Peace because He desires for you and me to have peace. God’s very name is Jehovah Shalom—“God is peace.” (Shalom is mentioned 250 times in the Old Testament.) He wants to make peace with us through the Cross. God’s greeting to us is “peace.” Over and over again, Jesus spoke peace to the disciples, to the fearful, and even to the stormy seas. The apostles began their letters with “Peace to you through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Why does God want to give you peace? There are many reasons: Confusion is the occasion for your enemy; strife is destructive; peace is the path to progress and a taste of heaven. It is the sign that we know and trust our God. The peace of God is free. The only cost is giving up our cares to Him and coming to complete trust in Him. The main reason that God gives peace is because He loves us with an everlasting love.

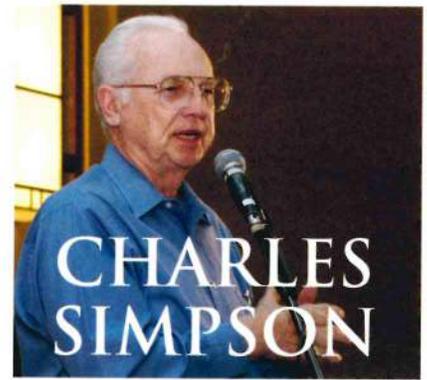
CELEBRATING HIS PEACE

As we celebrate the birth of the Prince of Peace and the beginning of a New Year, God offers us a clear choice: strife or peace, war or peace, destruction or peace. It seems foolish to celebrate a peace that we are unwilling to receive. To acknowledge that peace is the superior choice, but to reject it in favor of turmoil, is unthinkable.

I urge us all now to turn from our own way to His way, from our anxiety and stress to His peace. We can walk out of the howling storm into “the eye,” into the calm, and live in peace with God and one another. It is not about what others are doing; it is about what you and I will do. Others can’t give it and others can’t take it away. It comes from the Prince of Peace.

Shalom. 121

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



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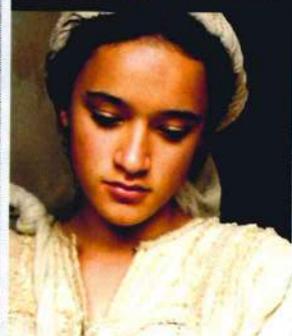
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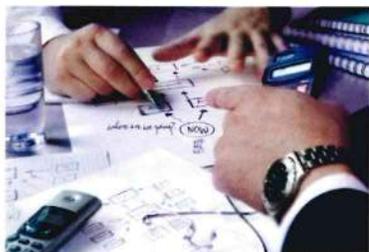
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Buying back your budget

...Is it worth it?

The rewards of
budgeting and
strategic planning
for your business

By Jonathan Simpson



 IF FISCAL YEAR AND calendar year are the same cycle in your business, 2007's budget planning process might well be at hand for you. Pat yourself on the back if you've already dealt with it, but for many businessmen and women it looms, taunting them, daring them to do more than dutifully get out their dart board and dust off their crystal ball.



“Get this formality out of the way, then its back to business as usual” is the attitude taken as they file into the conference room. You don’t need a crystal ball to see those same perplexed prognosticators by year’s end disappointed with results, unhappy in their work, and feeling less job security. If you can relate to this from years gone by, here is your challenge: Buy back your budget. Why use the words “buy back”? Because it’s going to cost you. But, here’s the deal; it will cost you more if you don’t.



obtain the highest return. You also are trying to avoid being blindsided midway through the year, so, for instance, when your industry has changed software, you’re not in a panic playing catch-up.

PLANNING

If you’re with me up to this point, brace yourself. You can’t take a serious crack at the budget without first undergoing some strategic planning. This is one of those “be strong and very courageous” moments. Strategic planning does not happen in a vacuum. With the right group of people and agenda, it will be enlightening to examine who you are, where you want to go, what you’re good at, what you’re not so good at, what your competition is doing, what your clients are telling you, what the market trends are, and other key issues. Who knows, maybe you’ll discover an unmarketed service that was a hidden profit center? But be prepared to have your stored up, brilliant ideas tested. They should be.



Before your session gets too caught up in blue sky or down roads to nowhere, remember this exercise must be leading to a focus. You will soon be laying out your budget, so the discussion should be directing you toward where to invest company money so as to

Examine who you are...
Where do you want to go?
What are you good at? Not so good at?
What is your competition doing?
What are your clients telling you?
What are the market trends?

YOUR BUDGET AS A GUIDE

When you are ready to put numbers to the plan, don’t view your budget as restrictive just because it is giving you boundaries. It’s there to guide you away from pitfalls. It’s a beacon calling you back when you’re heading off course. Remember, money can be

reallocated during the year when situations warrant. Keep your original budget on file, knowing that the budget is really a living document with flexibility because you can’t foresee everything that is going to come up. Plan to make adjustments. A good budget will require discipline, provide accountability, and

be a motivational instrument so long as you keep it in front of you.

Should you find that income and expenses will run closer than you thought, you will probably need to go a step further and project monthly cash flow. It’s better to know ahead of season if you’ll need to make loan arrangements.

In his book **Good-to-Great**, Jim Collins says: “In a good-to-great transformation, budgeting is a discipline to decide which arenas should be fully-funded and which should not be funded at all. In other words, the budget process is not about figuring out how much each activity gets, but about determining which activities best support the hedgehog concept and should be fully strengthened and which should be eliminated entirely.” **(Note: the “hedgehog concept”**

is about being the best at what you do, not just good.) The author goes on further to give an illustration using Kimberly-Clark, who decided to eliminate their paper business, sell the mills, and invest all of the money into emerging consumer business. Budgets are great illustrators of opportunity cost. Funding one area is a choice to not fund another. Choose wisely.

“Kimberly-Clark decided to eliminate their paper business, sell the mills, and invest all of the money into emerging consumer business.”

THE COST

This is where we come back to the “it’s gonna cost you” part. When you tamper with the budget, you are most likely making a change in the way someone does his or her job or maybe eliminating a job altogether. When you cut their funding, be ready to hear about it. Realize that you may be forcing change upon yourself. Are you willing to pay the price? Will you be able to persuade the once sunny, now sullen faces around you that you’ve made the best decision for the company?

If you mull all of this over and begin to doubt that you are able to make the right decisions, don’t worry... you’re on the right track. You’re probably right; you may not be “smart enough.” Not on your own. Now it’s time to turn to the One who sees the beginning and the end all at once, who has the power to bless, prosper, and grant favor among men; who established and rules the universe, yet cares about your budget and your business. If He is for you, who can be against you? Did He bring you this far to watch



you drive off a cliff? No! We know that fruitless fig trees anger Him, but God’s Word also tells us that Jacob held on until he got the blessing.

Maybe you’re not the only one on the strategic planning team who realizes the need for wisdom and discernment from the Father. Seek out that other person or persons and pray together—but don’t stop there. You’ll need prayer throughout the year.

Have a blessed 2007, and be strong and courageous! 121



Jonathan Simpson is the Director of Development for CSM.

Reader Feedback

Continued from page 2

Dear Bro.Charles,

My father was a student at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, preparing to be a Baptist minister when he heard about the good things going on in your church in Mobile. Over a few years, he visited your church and sat under your ministry. In fact, you prayed for him to receive the Baptism of the Holy Ghost. That experience changed my father’s life.

Over the years, my dad made it a point to pray for you and to support you. I am sure that you received many letters and prayer cards from him. In fact, your ministry sent flowers to his funeral when you heard of his death in August of 2002.

Recently, some of my father’s land sold, and my sisters and I agreed that Daddy would have liked nothing better than for part of the proceeds to go to you in the furtherance of your ministry.

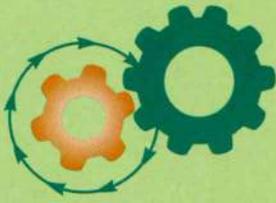
May many more come to know Jesus because of what you do and preach!

—**Beverly M.** Uvalda, GA

Dear Bro. Charles.

Your newsletters never fail to bring encouragement into my spirit. I pray that God grant you long life and bless you in every way.

—**Pastor Daryl Bent**
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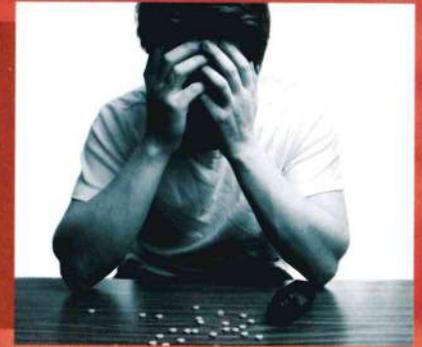
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How to
Complete the
Great
Commission
with Joy

By Gary Henley

GOD'S RESPONSE TO THE NEED of humanity is a wonderful fragrance both in heaven and earth. The apostle Paul wrote, "Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a **fragrant offering and sacrifice to God**" (Ephesians 5:2, emphasis added).

In this passage, Paul is comparing the sufferings of Christ on the Cross to the release of the aroma of Old Testament sacrifices of animals as described in Exodus 29:18 and numerous other places. Something was released in both Old Covenant and New Covenant sacrifices which pleased God immensely.

However, Paul also said that a similar fragrance is released in the earth when believers reach out to the lost around us.

But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place. For we are a fragrance of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing" (2 Corinthians 2:14-15).

I doubt that I grasp the full meaning of this. However, as director of International Outreach Ministries (IOM) for the past sixteen years, I believe I have enjoyed something of the same pleasant sensation as I have watched numerous missionaries sacrifice in going to other nations and peoples.

I recall the amazement of many when Dean and Autumn Jordon went to

the Congo with their six children. Dr. Timothy Henry and his family have served that country also in a medical clinic 600 miles from the nearest paved road. Congo is an extraordinarily difficult and dangerous country, and they have endured two civil wars which killed more than four million people. Today, both families are still there, and thousands of lives have been affected by the fragrance of their sacrifices.



OTHER HEROES

Then there is "Linda" (not her real name) who went alone in her 40s to one of the toughest Muslim people groups in Asia. She was expelled once, but went

back when the tsunami of December 2004 struck the very people group to whom she was ministering; the terrible wave destroyed virtually everything for miles. Knowing the people, the terrain, and the language, she guided recovery ministries, and has also touched the lives of the same people who expelled her a few years ago.

I have been with Larry and Beverly Neese in Kenya. In their late 50s, they made a great sacrifice, saying their good-byes to loved ones, including grandchildren, so Larry could develop the successful satellite schools of Kenya Ministry Training Institute. Larry is a go-getter who earned the name "Father Hurricane" from the Kenyans. But I know that his "hurricane" travels on arthritic knees which give him constant pain.

"Ellis" was the pastor of a church he had founded in the Northeast, when he and his wife "Emma" (not their real names) accepted an invitation to use their skills as church planters in a vast Muslim country. They left three grown sons behind, took two daughters with them, learned two different languages to communicate, and have been harassed by the government there for the past several years. They also survived a midnight attack by masked men who nearly killed Emma with a hatchet.

In the midst of it all, they have trained hundreds of young church planters and touched thousands of lives who might have never heard the name of Jesus if the heavenly fragrance of this family had not wafted through their country. The same aroma also spilled over into an adjacent and equally tough country where teams now minister. I smile often when I think how God has enjoyed the aroma of their sacrifice.

DISTRIBUTING GRACE

Evangelization does not happen without sacrifice. The sacrifice of Jesus,

of course, is the basis of God's forgiveness which we offer to others. But that forgiveness would be offered to no one if someone didn't lay aside their own security, their preferences, their homes, their families, their reputations, and their right to live in freedom. Paul, speaking of the sufferings of Christ, said, "Now I rejoice in what was suffered for you, and I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions" (Colossians 1:24).

Did Paul mean that Christ's afflictions were not enough to save us? No, he meant that without additional sacrifice on my part and yours, this wonderful salvation would never reach some others. The Cross of Jesus was **the point of redemption**, but the cross borne by His followers becomes the **point of distribution**.

I could tell you dozens of other tales of sacrifice, but even these pale in comparison to the 160,000 believers who are martyred every year for their faith in Christ. Jesus' word to them is, "Rejoice and be very glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you" (Matthew 5:12).



Even giving to spread the Gospel can be the source of a sweet aroma in heaven, if it is done with some sacrifice. Paul said to the Philippians who, by the way, were the only church supporting him, "I received the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, and acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God."

But later, speaking to others about the same Philippians givers, he said,

"Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints. And they did not do as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then to us in keeping with God's will" (2 Corinthians 8:2-5).

These same Philippians were the ones to whom Paul gave the promise, "And my God will meet all your needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19).



THE REWARDS

Forgiveness is for those who believe; but the **rewards** go to believers who sacrificially give to those in need, and who go to those who have not heard! Jesus said that the tiny gift of the widow at the temple was actually more than that given by ALL the others, because it was sacrificial (see Luke 21:2-4).

Because of sacrifices such as these I have listed, we live in an amazing day. More people place their faith in Christ each day than ever in history. The evangelical population of the world grows about 21,000 each day. Today, we are approximately one out of every eight people in the world.

Rejoice! You are part of the most fruitful generation in history in fulfilling the Great Commission. The question is, "How much a part are you?" Are you a source of fragrance, a part of the sacrifice that is winning the world? Are you paying a price for someone else's salvation, or just enjoying your own? **121**



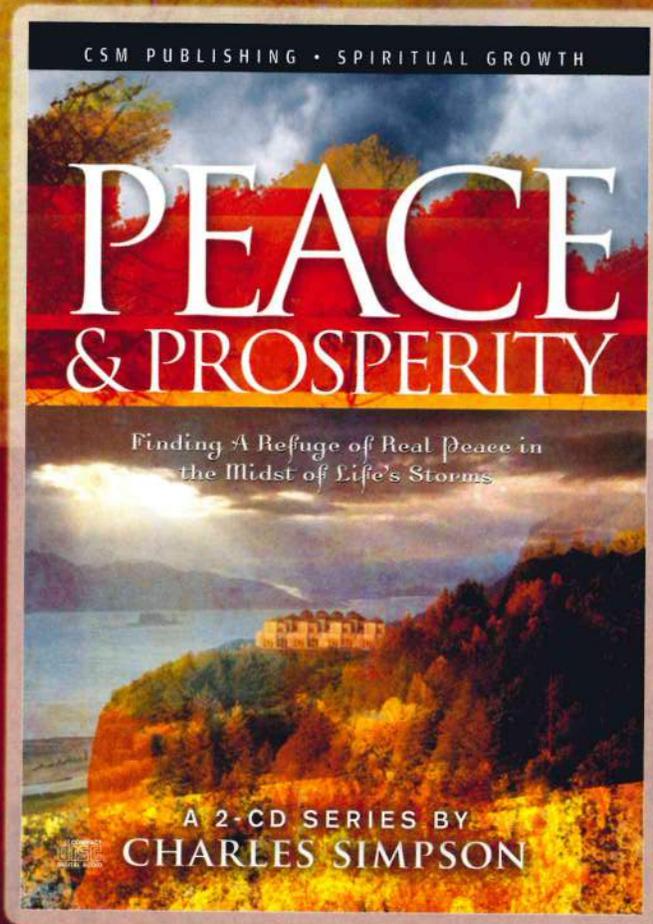
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