



CHRIST CHURCH
CROUCH END HILL
LONDON N8 8AX
CROSSLINKS

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A MAGAZINE OF THE CHURCH ON THE HILL



**ALONE WITH GOD IN THE PRESENCE
OF FORMIDABLE ENEMIES**

DANIEL IN THE DEN OF LIONS

Vicar's ten - minute reflection

HOW TO SLEEP WITH LIONS WITHOUT BEING EATEN



I like something that Robert Schuller wrote in the introduction to one of his books. "How much is a sprinkler-head worth?" he asks. "It all depends. Not much on a shelf in the hardware store. But attach it to a water line and it will bring life to plants, flowers, and fruit, feeding the human race. Life and death--they're in the sprinkler head. How much is a pen worth? It all depends. Whose hand holds it--and what that hand does with it. What is a human being worth anyway? It all depends. **A disconnected human life is a waste. Connected to an uplifting faith in a loving Spirit that flows from the living heart of Jesus Christ, this simple person becomes a powerhouse of life-giving hope.**"



And that's the answer to our lives as individuals and as a church. We need to recover our connection to the Spirit of Christ. We need to depend on his power. It is interesting that Daniel and his colleagues made that connection to the living God while they were exiles in Babylon. They had every reason to be despondent: the temple of their God had been destroyed and his people had been scattered as exiles in a foreign land. But Daniel and his friends had a faith that could not be destroyed by the absence of material things, nor could it be swayed by the allure of power and luxury. They believed that God was in control even if all circumstances prevailing suggested something contrary.

The opening chapters of the book of Daniel saw Daniel being catapulted to the position of a prime minister after our God glorified Himself through Daniel's active witness and dedication. His progress brought jealousy among his peers and they contrived a plot which put Daniel in a position between a rock and a hard place.



Of course, when we think of Daniel, we think of the lions' den. In fact, it seems like every time we read about Daniel and his friends, they are going from the frying pan into fire or into the lions' den. Somebody is always trying to either heat them up or to eat them up. It's sad to say, but many Christians never have to worry about either the fiery furnace or the lions' den. Not because fiery furnaces and lions' dens are not around, but because of what you have to do to get in to either one.

You see, the way to be thrown into the fiery furnace is to stand up while the whole world is bowing down to gods of their own making. The way to be thrown into the lions' den is to bow down and worship the living God while the whole world is standing up to be counted in the revelry of sin and compromise.

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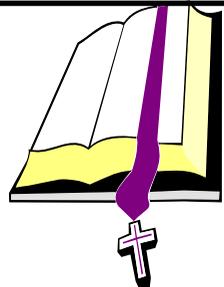
But most Christians today "go along to get along." Not Daniel. Daniel knew how to sleep with the lions without being eaten. He knows the secret of shutting away the cares, fears and worries of this world and gazing only on the living God. Daniel's mind was made up. He might lose his job, he might lose his family, he might even lose his life; but he would not compromise his conviction and lose his touch with God.

Continued on page 6

Memory Verse

The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him, and he delivers them.

Psalm 34:7



A MASTER'S DEGREE IN MARRIAGE



What prepared you for a lifetime commitment to your husband or wife? Were your parents or your marriage counsellors the “professors” who gave you your initial training? Did you learn on-the-job? Wherever you received your training, was it the best place for you to learn the principles of developing an exciting and successful marriage? In far too many cases the answer is a resounding “No!”

Let’s look at it from another perspective: Imagine that your marriage is a university and you are going for your Master’s Degree. Your spouse is your major subject. Some of the courses required will include communication, romance, sex, finances, in-laws, children, spiritual maturity, and a foreign language (the unique language spoken by your spouse).

If you were to be graded in those subjects today by our Lord Jesus Christ, would they be A’s, F’s, or something in between? With that in mind, what do you think you ought to do? Remember that with Jesus and the power of His Spirit, “Failures and Whimps” are transformed to “Success stories and warriors”

Like any academic study at a Master’s level, you need to put in a great deal of effort. During that time most men and women face victories and hardships. There are many hours of study and preparation. Often there are financial struggles. And, at some point, almost every graduate student asks, “Why am I doing this?” But the rewards of graduating are many and they last a lifetime.

When students have completed their studies, they look forward to graduation day, when their friends and family will be hugging and shaking hands with pride, and when they will hear their name called to receive that long-awaited diploma. The gratification may have been delayed, but it was well worth the wait.

A Master's Degree in Marriage

Likewise, obtaining the Master's degree in marriage requires that kind of commitment—and more. Studying subjects like “communication, romance, sex, finances, in-laws, children, spiritual maturity, and a foreign language” are not easy and we encourage both marriage partners to work through this process together. However, you can work through this [process] even if your spouse has no interest in participating, because God is working on you alone. Practice being obedient to God's Word, His will and His way apart from the actions of your spouse.

As with any other school in which you enrol, there are guidelines that will guarantee your success. A well-planned course of study will make your learning process easier and more efficient.

Focus Only on Your Efforts. At the judgment seat of Christ, when you answer for the works you did on earth, you will stand alone (see Romans 14:10-12). Your husband or wife will not be there. Even if you try to use him or her as an excuse for any ill-behaviour, you will more than likely hear from the Father, “Yes, I know what he or she did wrong but what did I ask you to do?”

Allow the Holy Spirit to do His work in your spouse. Often we want to play the role of the Holy Spirit in convicting and teaching our spouses. That is not our job. The only thing we are capable of doing is trying to change our spouse's minds. In that regard, a wise person once said, “A man [or woman] convinced against his will is of the same opinion still.”

In areas of growth, your spouse might need a change of heart. This can only be accomplished by Jesus and the Holy Spirit.
(concluded on page 13)

How to sleep with lions without being eaten

We need more men and women today with a fiery furnace faith and a lion's den love for the Lord Jesus Christ. You see, Daniel had one rock-rib he would not give up; he would defy the law before he would deny the Lord. Now somebody says, "But you are to render to Caesar that which is Caesar's." Yes, and you are to render to God that which is God's. Do you know what the difference is? You are to render to God everything; but you are to render to Caesar only what God tells you to do, or allows you to do. There is a limit to the authority of the government, but there is no limit to the authority of God.

Daniel believed in God, therefore Daniel believed in prayer; and because he believed in both, he would not give up either one. It takes courage to walk into the lions' den. You notice Daniel had a quiet courage. He didn't say anything to the king because he didn't have to; he had been talking to the King of Kings.

Someone has defined courage as fear that has said its prayers. He didn't go limping into that lions' den with fear; he went leaping into that lions' den with faith.

Now let me state the obvious. **God did not save Daniel from the lions' den, He saved him in the lions' den and brought him through the lions' den.** Don't think it's strange if you are thrown into the lions' den. Friend, in these days you ought to think it's strange if you are not.

Martin Niemoller was a great German pastor who stood up to the Nazis and stood up for the Jewish people. Finally, they threw him into prison. As he was sitting in his jail cell, the prison chaplain came to visit him, and sat down and said, "Brother, why are you in this jail cell?" To which Martin Niemoller replied, "Brother, why are you not in this jail?" We don't need to be looking for lions' dens, but we don't need to be running from them either.

How to sleep with lions without being eaten

I don't know who wrote these words that I am about to quote, but they certainly could have been written by Daniel himself.

"I am part of the Fellowship of the Unashamed. I have the Holy Spirit's power. The die has been cast; I have stepped over the line. The decision has been made. I am a disciple of Jesus Christ. I won't look up, let up, slow down, back away, or be still. My past is redeemed, my present makes sense, and my future is secure. I am finished and done with low living, sight-walking, small planning, smooth knees, colourless dreams, tame visions, mundane talking, chintzy giving, and dwarf goals.

I no longer need pre-eminence, prosperity, position, promotions, plaudits or popularity. I don't have to be right first, tops recognized, praised, regarded, or rewarded. I now live by presence, lean by faith, love by patience, lift by prayer, and labour by power. My pace is set, my gate is fast, my goal is heaven, my road is narrow, my way is rough, my companions few, my guide reliable, my mission clear. I cannot be bought, compromised, deterred, lured away, turned back, diluted, or delayed. I will not flinch in the face of sacrifice, hesitate in the presence of adversity, negotiate at the table of the enemy, ponder at the pool of popularity, or meander in the maze of mediocrity. I won't give up, back up, let up, or shut up, until I've preached up, prayed up, stored up, and stayed up for the cause of Christ. I am a disciple of Jesus Christ. I must go until heaven returns, give until I drop, preach until all know, and work until He comes; and when He comes to get his own, He will have no problem recognizing me; my colours will be clear."

If you will adopt that as your creed, and commit to it today, I'll guarantee you two things: Whenever there is a lions' den, you'll walk in it with faith, and you'll learn to sleep with the lions without being eaten.

Dele Agbelusi

NOTICE BOARD

ALPHA AT CHRIST CHURCH

The 2010 Evening Alpha will conclude on 30th June. It has been a blessed and enriching time to all those who have participated in this programme which began on 21st April.

Please note that the Daytime Alpha continues at 2pm

SUMMER BARBECUE

Our Annual Summer Barbecue will take place on Sunday 11th July at the Vicarage garden. Time: 12 noon – 3pm. Food will be served from 12noon – 2pm. Tickets are now on sale at £5.00 (Adult), £2.50 (students), and £1.00 (children under 7). There will be lots of fun and a variety of food and a cake stall.

COACH TRIP TO WALTON- ON -NAZE

The Church plans to go on a day coach trip to Walton on Naze on **31 July**. The cost of transportation is £11. A few seats are still available for anyone who wants to join the party. You don't have to be a member of Christ Church to take advantage of the offer.

LADIES' FELLOWSHIP

The last meeting of the Fellowship before the Summer Recess will take place on 4th July 2010 at the West Chapel after the morning worship.

The World will be dark unless Christians have 'spiritual ambition' - bishop

More than 1200 church leaders from 77 countries and 28 denominations attended Alpha International's conference for leaders from Europe, the Middle East and Africa (EMEA) last week at Holy Trinity Brompton in London.

The Bishop of London, Richard Chartres, opened the conference with an address in which he told delegates, "The Christian movement throughout the entire world has really got to develop and increase in this century; proper spiritual ambition for the sake of Jesus Christ.

"This is a very turbulent world, a world where we're facing huge promise and huge peril and unless the followers of Jesus Christ have spiritual ambition and a real burning zeal to present Jesus Christ as part of the truth that will bring to fulfilment the promise of the 21st century, then things will look dark indeed."

He spoke about recent research undertaken of how many Londoners actually passionately want to convert fellow citizens to their worldview. "Thank God the largest group that want to do that are Christians." The second largest group were agnostics and atheists and the third largest group were Muslims, who he said have "burning zeal to see London as one of the great Islamic capitals of the world".

"I believe passionately that if the reference to God as we see him in the face of Jesus Christ is edited out of our world view, then this world becomes a flat land in which the only truth is competing human desires.

"Genuine conversion to the way of Jesus consists in precisely this: Turning away from making a god of our own desires. This is a thrilling agenda for the 21st century. This I believe is the heart of what we're gathered here to be and do together."

LAUGHTER LINES

LOT'S WIFE

A Sunday School teacher was describing how Lot 's wife looked back and turned into a pillar of salt when little Jason interrupted, 'My Mommy looked back once while she was driving,' he announced triumphantly, 'and she turned into a telephone pole!'



GOOD SAMARITAN

A Sunday school teacher was telling her class the story of the Good Samaritan. She asked the class, 'If you saw a person lying on the roadside, all wounded and bleeding, what would you do?' A thoughtful little girl broke the hushed silence, 'I think I'd throw up.'

DID NOAH FISH?

A Sunday school teacher asked, 'Johnny, do you think Noah did a lot of fishing when he was on the Ark?' 'No,' replied Johnny. 'How could he, with just two worms.' because God told Noah to take two of each specie.

HIGHER POWER

A Sunday school teacher said to her children, 'We have been learning how powerful kings and queens were in Bible times. But, there is a Higher Power. Can anybody tell me what it is?' One child blurted out, 'Aces!'

BEING THANKFUL

A Rabbi said to a precocious six-year-old boy, 'So your mother says your prayers for you each night? That's very commendable. What does she say?' The little boy replied, 'Thank God he's in bed!'

LAUGHTER LINES

TIME TO PRAY

A pastor asked a little boy if he said his prayers every night. 'Yes, Sir,' the boy replied. 'And do you always say them in the morning, too?' the pastor asked. 'No sir,' the boy replied. 'I ain't scared in the daytime.'

SAY A PRAYER

Little Ricky and his family were having Sunday dinner at his Grandmother's house. Everyone was seated around the table as the food was being served. When Little Ricky received his plate, he started eating right away. 'Ricky! Please wait until we say our prayer.' said his mother. 'I don't need to,' the boy replied.. 'Of course, you do,' his mother insisted. 'We always say a prayer before eating at our house.' 'That's at our house,' Ricky explained. 'But this is Grandma's house and she knows how to cook!'

THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD

A Sunday School teacher decided to have her young class memorize one of the most quoted passages in the Bible - Psalm 23. She gave the youngsters a month to learn the chapter. Little Rick was excited about the task - but he just couldn't remember the Psalm. After much practice, he could barely get past the first line. On the day that the kids were scheduled to recite Psalm 23 in front of the congregation, Ricky was so nervous. When it was his turn, he stepped up to the microphone and said proudly, 'The Lord is my Shepherd, and that's all I need to know.'

WITH JESUS NO MISSION IS IMPOSSIBLE

Howard Hendricks in a book called *Say It With Love*, tells one of the most marvellous true stories about a lovely young couple who lived in Dallas, Texas. The husband sold his business at a loss, went into vocational Christian work, and things got very rough financially. There were four kids in the family, and one night at family worship the youngest boy, Timmy, said, "Daddy, do you think Jesus would mind if I ask Him for a shirt?"

The Dad said, "Well, no, of course not. Let's write that down in our prayer request book Mother," So she wrote down "shirt for Timmy" and she even added "size 7." Well, every day Timmy saw to it that they prayed for that shirt.

After several weeks one Saturday the mother received a telephone call from a clothier in downtown Dallas, a Christian businessman. He said, "I have finished my July clearance sale, and knowing that you have four boys it occurred to me that you could use something that we have left. Could you use some boys shirts?"

She said, "What size?" He said, "Size 7." With great hesitancy she asked, "How many do you have?" He said, "Twelve." Well, she picked up those shirts and where most of us would have just stuffed them in the drawer and made some casual comment to the children, this wise mother and dad did something different. That night, as expected, Timmy said, "Don't forget Mommy, let's pray for the shirt." His Mommy said, "We don't have to pray for the shirt Timmy." He said, "How come?"

She said, "The Lord has answered your prayer." He said, "He has?" She said, "He surely has." She nodded to his older brother, Tommy, who went out and got one shirt, brought it back in and put it down on the table. Well little Timmy's eyes got big as saucers. But then Tommy went out and got another shirt and brought it in, went out and got another shirt and brought it in, until he piled twelve shirts on the table.

There were so many shirts there that Timmy thought God had gone into the shirt business!

With Jesus no mission is impossible

Today there is now an older kid in Dallas by the name of Timothy who believes there is a God in heaven interested enough in his needs, and powerful enough in His greatness, to provide a little boy with a size seven shirt, and in fact, provide enough for twelve disciples!

So I don't know what you're going through. I don't know where you are in your life. I don't know what you're facing, but there is one thing I do know, with Jesus no mission is impossible.

A Master's Degree in marriage (from page 5)

It takes time to obtain a master's degree. Should we not at least give as much concentration to our marriage (in which we promised God and each other "until death do us part") as we do to an earthly education? The truth is there is no way to judge the condition of our marriages until we do it God's way.

During those years, you will be planting precious seeds of hope, faith, and love into your marriage. Remember, a tiny acorn develops into a giant oak tree. Your friends and family members will one day be able to sit in the shade of your marriage and realize what happens when people are genuinely committed to each other and to God.

This process, although tremendously rewarding, is not easy. Many of our old negative and destructive patterns have to be destroyed—and those things don't die easily. An accumulation of wrong information may have contributed to your marriage's lack of growth or even its deterioration. That wrong information needs to be replaced with God's wisdom and direction.

Only the strong will survive, but whenever you are feeling weak, remember: "I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13).

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

ROMANS CHAPTER 8

Romans 8 is remarkable when we talk about Prayer. Prayer is fundamental to man but it is an impossible task without supernatural aid. We do not know what to pray for (vs. 26). Trust God when He says you do not know something - He means it no matter how much you think you know. He has got real help for you (vs. 26).

In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express (vs.34)"... Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us". "...because he always lives to intercede for them." (Heb. 7:25).

If both Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit are engaged in intercession for you right now, you cannot afford to be slothful in your own prayer life. You have to labour alongside them in prayer since it is for your good. Secondly, what do you hear them petitioning on your behalf? Is it for material or spiritual prosperity? Would it not be better you align your own prayer with that of both Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit? Think through and act according to the answers you come up with.

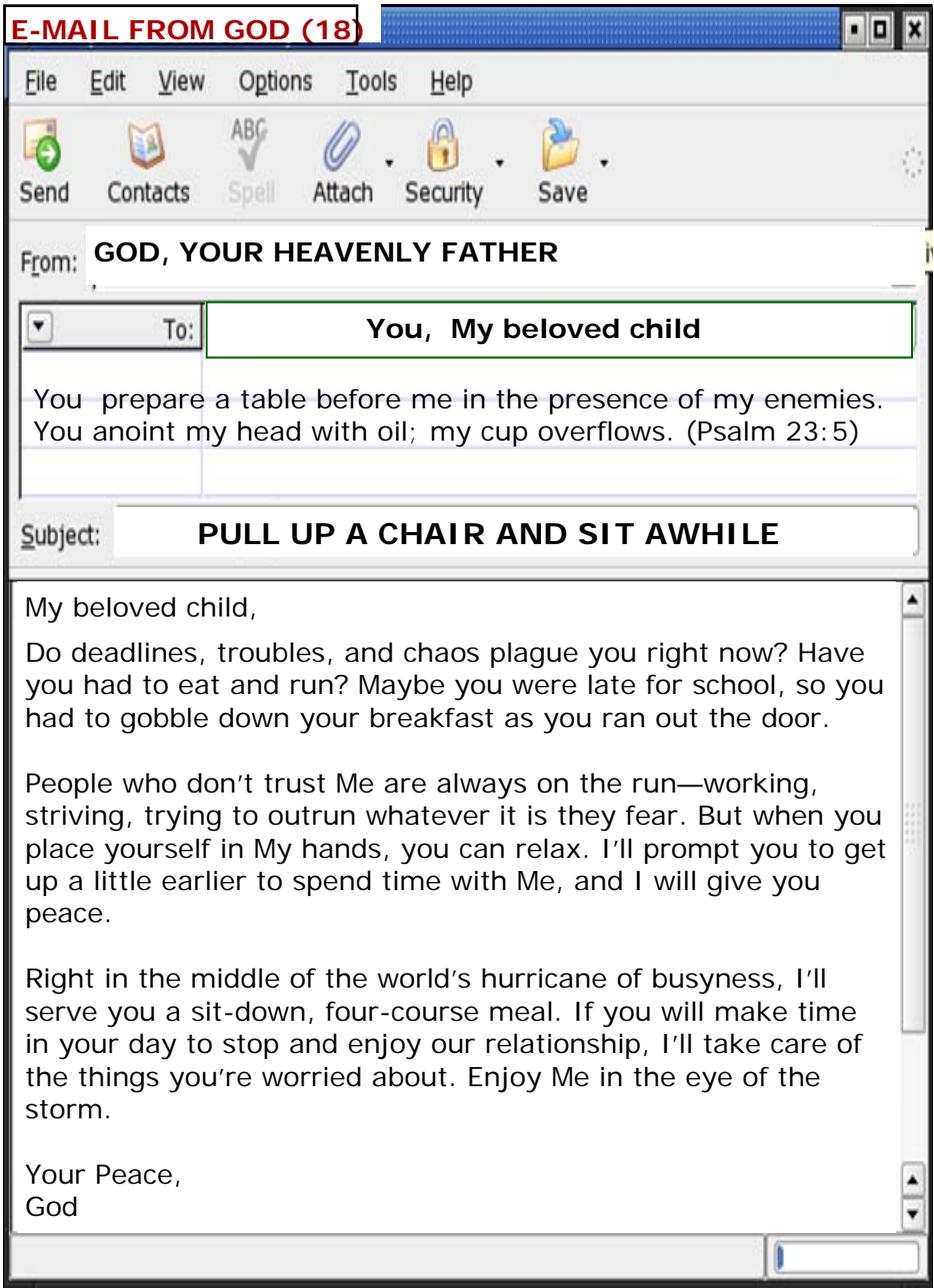
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GOD CANNOT CHANGE

As A W Tozer points out, God cannot change, for all change must be in one of three directions: (1) From better to worse;(2) From worse to better; (3) From one order of being to another. God's perfections rule out all possibilities. "The law of mutation," writes Tozer, "belongs to a fallen world, but God is immutable, and in Him men of faith find at least eternal permanence.

In coming to Him at any time we need not wonder whether we shall find Him in a receptive mood. He is always receptive to misery and need, as well as to love and faith. He does not keep office hours nor set aside periods when He will see no one. Neither does He change His mind about anything. Today, this moment, He feels toward His creatures, toward babies, toward the sick, the fallen, the sinful, exactly as He did when he sent His only begotten Son into the world to die for mankind. "God never changes moods or cools off in His affections or loses enthusiasm... 'I am the Lord, I do not change.'"

HEAVENLY CORRESPONDENCE



Adapted from 'e-mail from God for Teens'-Clonigers

MOTTO/TEXT FOR THE YEAR

“I CAN DO EVERYTHING THROUGH HIM WHO GIVES ME STRENGTH” *PHILIPPIANS 4:13*

FINDING OUT ABOUT ...CHRIST CHURCH?

Tel/Fax: 020 8340 1566

We are a family of men and women, boys and girls who are resolved to live for God in a world that has largely chosen to ignore Him.

We believe that it is God's world and that He has given the answer to all human problems in Jesus Christ. As a body of believers, we offer to all who come, regular opportunities for worship and service that point the way to God as our strongest resources in all aspects of life.

We will be pleased to welcome you to any of our activities. You will find a warm welcome at Christ Church.

Times of worship and fellowship are shown below:

- Sunday** - **8.00am.** Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)
- **10.30am.** Main service with Crèche facilities

There is family/parade service once every month– usually the third Sunday of the month unless otherwise indicated.

- **6.00pm.** Evening worship

ACTIVITIES FOR THE WEEK

- Sunday - Choir practice in church (**9.30 am**)
Monday - Baby n' Toddler Group (**10.00 am to 12 noon**)
- Brownies meeting in church (**5.30 pm**)
- Prayer meetings in church - 5th and 19th July (**8 pm**)
Wed.- Bible Fellowship in church - West Chapel (**On Recess**)
Friday - Daytime Alpha in church - West Chapel (**2.00 pm**)
- Scouts meeting in church and hall (**6.00 pm**)
- Music Team practice in choir vestry (**6.00 pm**)

Enquiry/Counselling/Prayer Lifeline - please phone 020 8340 1566

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YOUR COMMENTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS ARE WELCOME

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