



CHRIST CHURCH  
CROUCH END HILL  
LONDON N8 8AX  
**CROSSLINKS**

WHAT IS IN STORE FOR 2005?

A MAGAZINE OF THE CHURCH ON THE HILL

## THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO **BISHOP BIGELOW**

I CAN SEE WHY  
YOU'RE SO AFRAID.  
YOU'RE CARRYING AROUND A  
HAND FULL OF CARNAL  
WEAPONS!



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JANUARY 2005 ISSUE 5.59

## Vicar's three minute reflection HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!

Happy New Year!!! This greeting though simple may be loaded with meaning. Does it mean "Thank God we are in a new year and hope it would bring a greater happiness than the previous one? Or are we implying that because 2004 had a catalogue of unrealised dreams and shattered hopes, we have become blind to the possibilities of unforeseen goodness through God's intervention? It



becomes so easy to become cynical about hope.

When there is talk of pollution, we solemnly assert that the end of the world is not far away. When youth rebellion is discussed, people may be totally blind to the possibilities in the lives of countless young men and women who are seeking a better life and a better world. It is human nature that we constantly think of the unforeseen evil and forget that unforeseen good.



It was so in the time of Jesus. When Jesus left the village of Nazareth to begin his public ministry great crowds followed him. When He started to teach in a way that was unmatched by anyone in history, they listened with eager anticipation. When his hands reached out to touch those that were sick, there was healing power. And when they were told that he came from Nazareth, there was a quick sneer, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?"

There wasn't much to barren Nazareth. Its hillsides were grey and lifeless, except for one or two months in the year. It was an ugly city compared to the others. But it was this city from which Jesus came. However, many good things came out of Nazareth because God was at work. We need this emphasis today, and at the beginning of this new year, to hope in the unforeseen providence of God-in spite of the evil of our world.

The law of the unforeseen is evident in the lives of the disciples.

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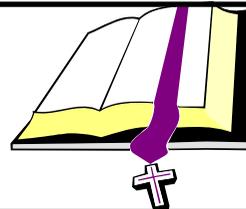
One of these twelve men betrayed Jesus and then hung himself. The other eleven were the most common of men, ignorant as far as the learning of the world was concerned. Who would have thought there was potential for goodness and glory in them? But they spread the Gospel around the world as flaming evangelists. Almost every one of them died a violent death, but when they finished their work the name of Jesus was hailed in all parts of the Roman and Greek worlds. Who could have thought that eleven such men would be the instruments of the power of God to bring triumph for his truth? Can any good thing come out of Nazareth? I say YES with the help of God. My own life was a type of "Nazareth" too, and it is to God's glory that I am who I am today. Something good happened to me when Jesus took over the reign of my life.

Many of us have felt degraded in heart and mind by the consciousness of our many failures. But the glory of the Christian faith is the glory of the unforeseen. No one can measure the potential of a man, a woman, or a young person who is willing to be led by God's Spirit. –With perfect trust in Christ, there is no such thing as hopelessness any more. Often, God in Christ chooses the most unlikely people, places and circumstances to demonstrate His power. Even in the bleak midwinters of life, when spring-time seems so far away, what is there to defeat us when we place our faith in Christ, who lives even now in heaven and whose Spirit draws near to us today, filling our hearts and minds with an unquenchable hope which truly does overcome the world. Can anything good come out of your Nazareth? Yes, through the power of God in Christ Jesus. Amen. Happy New year.

Dele Agbelusi

### Memory Verse

**The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and are safe. (Pro.18:10)**



## SOMETHING GOOD HAPPENED TO HER

In English folklore a story is told of a child of one of Britain's noble families who was stolen from his house by a chimney sweep. The parents spared no expense or trouble in their search for him, but in vain. They finally rested their hopes on Jesus. A few years later the lad happened to be sent by the master into whose hands he had then passed to sweep the chimneys in the very house from which he had been



stolen while too young to remember it. The little fellow had been sweeping the chimney of one of the bedrooms, and fatigued with the exhausting labour to which so many lads, by the cruel custom of those times were

bound, he quite forgot where he was, and flinging himself upon the clean bed dropped off to sleep. The lady of the house happened to enter the room. At first she looked in disgust and anger at the filthy black object that was soiling her counterpane. But all at once something in the expression of the little dirty face, or some familiar pose of the languid limbs,

drew her nearer with a sudden inspiration, and in a moment she had clasped once more in her motherly arms her long-lost boy. Something good happened to her through God's providence. That could be your experience too.

**Something good happened to her through God's providence. That could be your experience too**

A great Scottish preacher said, "The most profane word we use is 'hopeless.' When you say a situation or a person is hopeless, you are slamming the door in the face of God." \* *All Things Are Possible through Prayer*, Charles Allen, 1958, p. 16-17; 4

## IT IS A MATTER OF CHOICE

**HUMILITY** has nothing to do with genetics and it is neither a talent nor the result of one's environment. Humility is a 'heart thing' and a matter of choice every man/woman, old/young, rich/poor, educated/uneducated, spiritual/nonspiritual makes or refuses to make. God made a choice to leave heaven's glory to dwell in this slump called earth. God made a choice to come through a family that hardly had enough to survive on and whose little town was of no significance. God made a choice to be born in the filthy environment of a barn and chose shepherds, people stripped totally of good reputation, to announce his coming - another con man? When He grew up, He chose to associate more with the down trodden while at the same time condemning those that thought they had it all. We are enjoined to willingly clothe ourselves with humility (1 Peter 5:5-6). It is a matter of choice. What choices will you make this new year and for the rest of your life in order to walk humbly before your God?

God made a choice to leave heaven's glory to dwell in this slump called earth...What choices will you make this new year and for the rest of your life in order to walk humbly before your God?

Sunday Bwanhot

### An Unpleasant Surprise

Christmas is a time of surprises. There was a lady who was preparing her Christmas cookies. There was a knock at the door. and she found a man, poorly dressed , obviously looking for some Christmas odd jobs. He asked her if there was anything he could do. She said, "Can you paint?" "Yes," he said. "I'm a rather good painter." "Well," she said, "there are two gallons of green paint there and a brush, and there's a **porch** out back that needs to be painted. Please do a good job. I'll pay you what the job is worth." He said, "Fine. I'll be done quickly." She went back to her cookie making and didn't think much more about it until there was a knock at the door. She went, and the obviousness of his painting was evident: he had it on his clothes. She said, "Did you finish the job?" He said, "Yes." She said, "Did you do a good job?" He said, "Yes. But lady, there's one thing I'd like to point out to you. That's not a **Porsche** back there. That's a **Mercedes.**"

*Bruce Thielemann,*

## FROM THE MOUTH OF BABES

In 1954, a small boy was found outside a hospital in Balrampur, India. Doctors were perplexed by his condition and, after many examinations, were unsure of how to treat him.

The boy had calloused knees and hands, as if he had spent most of his young life on all fours. He had hideously pointed teeth with cracks in his gums, suggesting that he had bitten into stone or very hard wood. He had scars on the back of his neck, suggesting that he had been dragged around by animals with sharp teeth. He spoke no discernible language and seemed unable to communicate with anyone. He had no name, so the hospital staff called him "Ramu."

Ramu showed no interest in other children and was especially frightened by adults. But one day, a hospital employee took Ramu and some other children for a visit to the zoo. The employee noticed that Ramu became extremely excited when he saw the wolf pen. Ramu called to the wolves and seemed to be able to communicate with them.



This led doctors to conduct an experiment. They found that Ramu lapped milk out of a glass rather than drinking it. He tore apart his food and chewed on meat bones for hours at a time. The doctors finally concluded that Ramu was a *ghadya ka bacha*, or wolf boy, who had grown up with the wild animals and, therefore, behaved more like a wolf than a human being.

Where do we take it from here?

Ramu wasn't actually a wolf boy, of course. He was a human being—a little boy like all little boys—"fearfully and wonderfully made" (Psalm 139:14) in the image of his heavenly Father. But he grew up with wolves and became just like one of them.

You may not have to worry about developing wolflike tendencies, but if you allow yourself to be surrounded by people who don't share your beliefs and priorities, you run the risk of becoming just like them. First Corinthians 15:33 reminds us, "Bad company corrupts good character."

## NOTICE BOARD

- **FEBRUARY 5 2005— Renewal of Marriage...**

There would be a service for the renewal of marriage commitment and to celebrate God's love in marriage. This service is for you irrespective of your denomination and church affiliation.

The programme will commence at 11am with a seminar given by a renowned Marriage Counsellor. It will focus on some issues in marriage after which there would be a service of renewal of marriage commitment.

All are invited to join in a buffet lunch afterwards in the Parish hall.

Can you help by passing this good news around?

Any couple married for less than 100 years is very welcome!

Please write to Celebration of Love Committee on or before 31st January 2005 at The Vicarage, 32 Crescent Road, London N8 8AX or e-mail christchurchN8@aol.com, attention Celebration of Love Committee to register your interest. Please give your names, contact address and telephone number.

Alternatively, please register your interest by giving the above personal details on 0208 340 1566.

**You will be glad you did.**

### **THANKSGIVING AND PRAYER REQUEST**

- Thank God for His grace and love as we begin a new year. There are many who would have loved to be alive today but are not.
- Pray for all the families that have been affected adversely by the Tsunami disaster.
- This month we pray for members of our church family whose surnames begin with M :

Macauley Grace, Mamas Helen, McFarlane Susan, Meadows Pat., Mercer Richard, Mary and Andrew, Miller Lisa, Moore Michelle, Morrison Karen, Murphy Charles, Myers-Nobbs Andrew.

## Persistence from the life and times of Abraham Lincoln

Probably one of the greatest contemporary examples of persistence is **Abraham Lincoln**. If you want to learn about somebody who didn't quit, look no further.

Born into poverty, Lincoln was faced with defeat throughout his life. He lost eight elections, twice failed in business and suffered a nervous breakdown.

He could have quit many times — but he didn't and because he didn't quit, he became one of the greatest presidents in the history of the United States of America.

Lincoln was a champion and he never gave up. Here is a sketch of Lincoln's road to the White House:

1816 His family was forced out of their home. He had to work to support them.

1818 His mother died.

1831 Failed in business.

1832 Ran for state legislature — *lost*.

1832 Also lost his job, wanted to go to law school but couldn't get in.

1833 Borrowed some money from a friend to begin a business and by the end of the year he was bankrupt. He spent the next seven years of his life paying off this debt.

1834 Ran for state legislature again — *won*.

1835 Was engaged to be married, sweetheart died and his heart was broken.

1836 Had a nervous breakdown and was in bed for six months.

1838 Sought to become speaker of the state legislature — *defeated*.

1840 *Sought to become elector — defeated.*

1843 *Ran for congress — lost.*

1846 Ran for congress again — this time he *won* — went to Washington and did a good job.

1848 Ran for re-election to Congress — *lost*.

1849 Sought the job of land officer in his home state — *rejected*.

1854 Ran for Senate of the United States — *lost*.

*The sense of obligation to continue is present in all of us. A duty to strive is the duty of us all.*

(continued on page 9)

## WISE WORDS FOR THE NEW YEAR.

- **Trying times are not the times to stop trying.**
- **Perseverance is not a long race, it is many short races one after another.**
- **The world has a lot of starters but very few finishers**
- **Hope means to keep living amid desperation and to keep humming in the darkness that God is in control**
- **Why would God promise a refuge unless He knew we would need a place to hide once in a while**

Henri J. M. Nouwen

Neva Coyle

*(from page 8)*

(Abraham Lincoln)

1856 Sought the Vice-Presidential nomination at his party's national convention — got less than 100 votes.

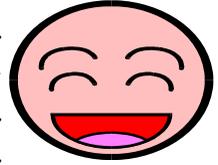
1858 Ran for US Senate again — *again he lost.*

**1860 *Elected President of the United States.***

- *'The path was worn and slippery, my foot slipped from under me, knocking the other out of the way, but I recovered and said to myself, "It's a slip and not a fall."*  
**Abraham Lincoln**, after losing a senate race.

# LAUGHTER LINES

During a long-range planning meeting one woman came up with a great idea. One of the male committee members joked, "It's a miracle that a woman would have such a great idea." Another woman shot back, "The miracle is that a man would recognize such a great idea."



\* Plains Crusader, Date Unknown

Two friends were sitting together on a crowded city bus. One noticed that the other had his eyes closed. He was concerned that the large crowd and warm weather were making his friend ill. He quietly turned to his friend and asked, "Are you getting sick?" The other man never opened his eyes but solemnly responded, "I'm all right. I just hate to see so many ladies standing!"

Rotarian, Sept. 1993, p. 7

Robert Orben noted, "In 1492, Columbus set out for the Orient and ended up in the Caribbean, and thus set a pattern that has continued for over five hundred years. Men still won't ask for directions."

\* Sermons Illustrated, Jan./Feb. 1993

## The Purpose of Prayer

My four-year-old likes to say the blessing at mealtimes, usually repeating the same short prayer: "Thank you, God, for this gracious food. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen."

One evening, however, he thanked the Lord for the birds, the trees, each of his friends, and asked God to watch over his family and help them to be good. I was thrilled that he was finally praying from the heart. But after the "Amen," he took a spoonful of stew, gasped, then dropped his spoon into the bowl. "I should have said a longer prayer," he said. "My food is still too hot."

*Citation: Catherine Jones, Kerrville, Texas. Christian Reader, "Kids of the Kingdom."*

# LAUGHTER LINES

## Alternative Pastor



## Numbers

When the minister announced the first hymn, "Ten thousand times ten thousand!" the little boy turned to his father and asked, "Does he

## Letter to God

A Sunday School teacher challenged her children to take some time on Sunday afternoon to write a letter to God. They were to bring their letter back the following Sunday.

One little boy wrote, "Dear God, We had a good time at church today. Wish you could have been there."

Parish Pump

## A PEEP INTO MY THOUGHTS...

We live in a world where the culture of reward , based on performance pervades. And we easily extend this culture - based attitude to our relationship with God. One of my biggest “open secrets” is the knowledge that God loves me the way I am. If you think his love for you would be stronger if your faith were, you are wrong. If you think his love would be deeper if your thoughts were, you are wrong again.

We must never confuse God’s love with the love of people. The love of people often increases with performance and decreases with mistakes. Not so with God’s love. He loves you right where you are.

I read this from one of my devotionals sometime ago: that one of the sweetest reasons God saved me is because He is fond of me. He likes having me around. He thinks I am the best thing to come down the pile in quite a while. If God had a refrigerator, my picture would be on it. If He had a wallet, my photo would be in it. He sends me flowers every spring and a sunrise every morning. Whenever I want to talk, He’ll listen. He can live anywhere in the universe, but He chose my heart!

O the knowledge to be assured that God is always thinking of you. What a fondness! And to be conscious of this fact just keeps me going. Faith is the belief that God is real and that God is good. It is a choice to believe that the One who made it all hasn’t left it all and that He still sends light into the shadows and responds to gestures of faith. Faith is the belief that God will do what is right.

And this is why I am moved to worship God always. It’s my joy, my delight and my duty. Heaven knows no difference between Sunday morning and Wednesday afternoon. God longs to be worshipped when we sit at dinner table and not just when we come to the Communion table. You may go without thinking of Him, but there’s never a moment when He’s not thinking of you.

**THIS LOVE IS TOO WONDERFUL FOR ME. I AM GRATEFUL.**

Dele Agbelusi

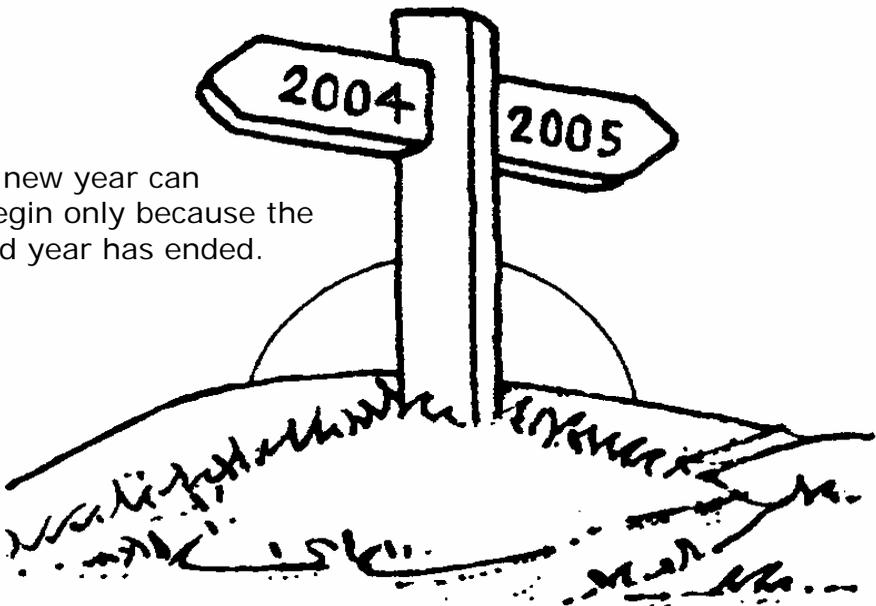
## A LIGHT FOR YOUR PATH IN 2005

A new year can begin only because the old year has ended. The Lord who created you says...“I have called you by name; you are mine.” (Isaiah 43:1 TLB)

We do not need to shout across the spaces to an absent God. He is nearer than our own soul, closer than our most secret thoughts. But we must have faith in Him that he is able to do what he has promised to do.

Michael Card when talking on faith said “it involves waiting on a promise. Our hope is based on a promise. God promised He would be “with us,” not as an unseen ethereal force, but in the form of a person with a name: Jesus

A new year can begin only because the old year has ended.



## The Day God settled the “Bible Question” for Billy Graham

With his 1949 Los Angeles crusade fast approaching, Billy Graham was the one in need of revival. Outwardly his career seemed to be on the upswing. Two years earlier at age 29, Graham became the youngest university president in America when he succeeded fundamentalist patriarch William Bell Riley at Northwestern Schools in Minneapolis. Now after a number of successful smaller crusades, he readied for his biggest challenge yet—Los Angeles

Yet inwardly Graham's faith wavered. Reading Reinhold Niebuhr and Karl Barth, he began to question the "old-time gospel" he embraced as a young man. At issue was nothing less than the reliability of Scripture. The Bible's seeming contradictions haunted Graham.

"I was not a searching sophomore, subject to characteristic skepticism," he said of the awkward timing of his doubts. "I was the president of a liberal arts college, Bible school, and seminary—an institution whose doctrinal statement was extremely strong and clear on this point."

### **The duo divided**

While shaken by the neo-orthodoxy of Niebuhr and Barth, Graham was much more severely disturbed by the doubts of his evangelist friend, Charles Templeton. During the 1940s Templeton and Graham were Youth for Christ's dynamic duo. Though Graham routinely induced better results with his altar calls, Templeton was widely considered the more gifted preacher. Handsome, suave, intelligent, and charismatic, Templeton lacked only a formal education to validate these talents.

So in 1948 he decided to enroll at Princeton Theological Seminary and invited Graham to join him. Graham acknowledged his own lack of education—this university president had only a Wheaton College bachelor's degree—but he balked at Princeton's liberal reputation. He made a counteroffer: "Chuck, go to Oxford and I'll go with you."

But Templeton had his eyes set on Princeton alone. The following winter they met in New York City to discuss Templeton's first semester. Princeton clearly had a profound impact on Templeton.

"Billy, you're 50 years out of date," Templeton prodded. "People no longer accept the Bible as being inspired the way you do. Your faith is too simple. Your language is out of date. You're going to have to learn the new jargon if you're going to be successful in your ministry."

(Continued on page 15)

## Billy Graham continued

Templeton's training in theological liberalism exposed Graham's intellectual shortcomings. But Graham was not prepared to surrender just yet. "Chuck, look, I haven't a good enough mind to settle these questions, Graham said with characteristic humility. "The finest minds in the world have looked and come down on both sides of these questions. I don't have the time, the inclination, or the set of mind to pursue them. I have found that if I say, 'The Bible says' and 'God says,' I get results. I have decided I am not going to wrestle with these questions any longer."

Templeton's instinct for persuasion kicked in. "Bill, you cannot refuse to think," he chided. "To do that is to die intellectually. You cannot disobey Christ's great commandment to love God 'with all thy heart and all thy soul and all the mind!" Not to think is to deny God's creativity. It is to sin against your Creator. You can't stop thinking. That's intellectual suicide."

Continued in February issue

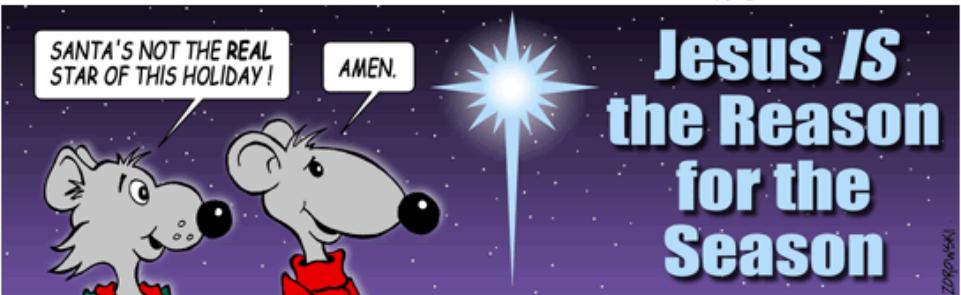
# Church Mice

A Christian comic by Karl Zorowski



## Church Mice

Copyright 2004 Karl A. Zorowski



Motto /Text for the year

**“I CAN DO EVERYTHING THROUGH HIM WHO GIVES  
ME STRENGTH” *PHIL. 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 trying 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 / **5pm** from 31st October

### **ACTIVITIES FOR THE WEEK**

Monday - Baby n' Toddler Group (**10.00 am to 12 noon** ) -Term time only

- Brownies meeting in Church ( **5.30 pm**)

- Prayer meeting 13 December(**8pm**)

Wednesday - Alpha Programme/ Bible Fellowship in the Hall (**7:30pm**)

Thursday - Home Group 17 Coleridge Road N8 8EH (**9:30 am**)

Friday - Home Group at Flat 10, 3 Waverley Road, N8 ( **2.30 pm**)

- Scouts meeting in church and hall (**6.00 pm**)

Enquiry/Counselling - please phone 020 8340 1566

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