

Wholeness

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Gratis.

ENTERING THE PROMISED LAND

Rev. Mike Endicott, Sharing, March 2008

The Genesis picture of Eden reveals the blueprint for creation. In that peaceful garden there were no sicknesses nor injuries, no broken relationships nor damaged emotions. It was very good, even God said so! But then sin arrived, and we had to be banished from that beautiful place - heaven with sin is not heaven, after all.

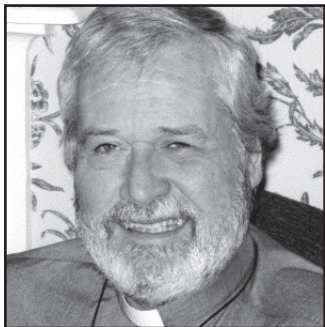
If, instead of Eden, we refer to the idyllic life as the kingdom of God, or heaven on earth, or the Promised Land, then we come closer to understanding the teachings and miraculous works of Jesus. He taught us what it is like, how to live there, and how to be effective ambassadors in extending God's kingdom, manifesting its redeeming power just as he did. I often view the torn temple curtain as the Eden gate thrown wide open for us again. So let's see what it's like, approaching the Promised Land, just as Joshua did. What can we expect?

Joshua brings the people to the Jordan river bank - they are not in the land, but they know of the land, a land full of the promise of milk and honey, overflowing with fruitfulness, a beautiful but temporal image of the eternal kingdom that Jesus displayed and taught. God tells them to take the biggest spiritual risk of their entire lives; but with the rewards being unimaginable. They are to take up the Ark of the Lord, containing everything they believe they know about God, and step into the raging river. There is a risk - to mortal man the task seems insane, if not impossible. Why not wait until the floodwaters have subsided? Why not build a bridge? But there can be no argument when God says "Go!" They step towards the muddy flood; one wrong step and the whole beating heart of the nation will be gone. But it is the only way, just as it is the only way forward for the church today. We have to take exactly the same risk with our out-of-focus Jesus. To step out in obedience will show us who he really is, not the other way around.

Now see his grace! Into the flood of doubt, cynicism and scepticism step the priests. It only takes one toe to demonstrate obedience and trust, and almost instantly they find themselves in the middle of the river, on dry land! And an army of thousands marches past them into the Promised Land - it is as easy, and as difficult, as that.

Straight away they begin to eat the fruits of their new home - and what a joyful banquet this is for them! Then Joshua makes his first contact with what appears to be a stranger; but it is of course the Commander of the Lord's army, the real Jesus come to welcome and assure him that all is well. (see Joshua 5:13 - 15).

As we take the risk, and re-focus our belief systems and our ideas of Christ away from the pale version built from our past experiences, and onto the Holy Spirit revealed truth lifted from the pages of the gospel, he comes to us



Rev. Mike Endicott

too, and tells us that he has given Jericho into our hands. So what is it today that is represented by Jericho in our Old Testament analogy? Well, the walls of innumerable Jericho-like cities litter the landscape. Anywhere that we see people shut up tightly in bondage, these are cities whose walls need to come tumbling down. All our sicknesses and injuries, mental illnesses and

broken relationships; these are the equivalent of the cities and towns that represented sin, these are the things that keep people locked up behind walls separating them from the liberty to be found in Christ.

So how did Joshua do it? How did he get those walls to fall over? He was able to do it surprisingly easily through the revelation of a kingdom secret. Did he gather a large army? No. Did he set up massive Internet prayer chains? No. Did he wage a war of words in the public domain to swing political opinion? No. Did he fast and be vigilant in prayer for weeks in the hope that God would help him? No. So ... what did he do? He simply, and persistently, proclaimed the existence of the living God! He took the Ark of the Lord with the Shekhinah riding atop, the glorious presence of God, the living Word; and he had the people follow it. That's all he did. The trumpeters blew their horns; they boldly glorified God with all their might. And that's the kingdom secret.



To wander through the gospels and the book of Acts shows two words often used together - "teaching" and "preaching". Usually the subject being taught is not mentioned, but the subject being preached or proclaimed is - **it is the good news of the kingdom!** Time after time we read of multitudes of healings happening all around these proclamations. The message is clear - Jesus rarely prayed for the sick; he simply proclaimed the good news and the sick got healed! Kingdom living means proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and watching the Holy Spirit confirming what is said with signs and wonders following.

Today, in sad contrast, we use all the secular and religious techniques we can muster to try and persuade heaven to intervene; and too often turn our faces from unresolved prayer requests for fear of losing faith. But wait, there is great hope - there is still the God-ordained, God-inspired, way of doing things, the kingdom way! Of course some will ask: "Does everyone get instantly healed?" Joshua did not win every battle. It was certainly God's will that they should have the land, just as it is God's



From the
Editor

Proclamation of Power, Heart of Humility

Adapted from an item in
"Faith for Daily Living" by John Borman.

"I tell you the truth, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name." (John 16.23)

At first glance, Jesus' promise to the one who asks: "... in Christ's name!" would seem to be an open cheque, giving a guarantee of their request being summarily granted as if the words were a magic incantation. However, it isn't the words that allow God to move, as the seven sons of Sceva found out in Acts 19, it is the heart of the person confessing the words.

Jesus' teaching in John 16 was within the context of bringing glory to God the Father through the Son. In particular, Jesus' words on answered prayer were inextricably related to all that he had just said about being one with the Father. As a result of his perfect union with the Father, Jesus prayed to God in a spirit of complete obedience and total love. Therefore, we are to understand Jesus' words as meaning: "When you live in complete union with me and the Father - the same sort of loving union as I enjoy with him - you will ask only for what is in complete harmony with the Father's will, and I will work in you and through you in a way that glorifies the Father in granting your request."

We gain a similar appreciation of how answered prayer relates to the state of our heart from John 15.16, 17: "Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. This is my command: Love each other." How necessary it is for us to fulfil Jesus' command to love each other, if we are to indeed see our prayers answered in the way Jesus has said they will be.

Both conditions, of glory being brought to God, and of love being our inspiration, are re-emphasised in John 14.12-14. "...I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it. If you love me, you will obey what I command."

"If you love me, you will obey what I command." This is the key for us to have our prayers answered. We discern the same message in John 15.4: "Abide in me, and I in you." While the verse is short, the response required is the very heart-beat of Christian faith. Challenging, yes ... but liberating, totally and eternally! In Christ we can truly do all things; let us be in Christ. Amen.

will that we should have the kingdom, but he had to fight for it, and so will we. He lost some and won most, but in the end they got there. So will we!

So here's the question - are we prepared to give back to God all we think we know about the healing ministry, and step out into the flooding river? Are we ready to ask for, and to apply, the freely-given dynamic knowledge of the good news of the kingdom? It's worth it; the kingdom of God is near to you, Jesus said so, and multitudes wait to follow over the river and into the Promised Land. Open ears can hear the Holy Spirit saying once again: "Step forward! Go!"

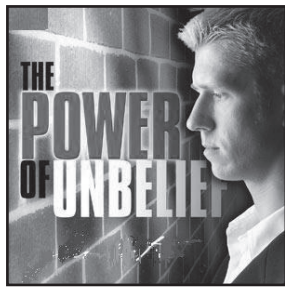
WHY DO SOME NOT BELIEVE IN HEALING

Francis MacNutt, Christian Healing Ministries 2008

Even as we see God at work healing the sick through our prayers, we are also very aware of the scepticism of some believers, even Christian authors of great repute. They may even advise Christians to cool their ardor, and to stop encouraging people to look to God for their healing. To these leaders, false hope is engendered by people like us who are encouraging Christians to launch out and pray for the sick to be healed. Some of these authors are undoubtedly gifted, with great insights into the Gospel; indeed, I personally have been greatly blessed by reading their books. However, they say that in their experience people who pray for healing are usually disappointed, and that we should stop giving them false hope. "Miraculous healing just doesn't happen." It doesn't?

There is an answer to those who would say you are just setting people up for heart-break. Those who are not healed deal with it in the same way as they deal with disappointment when medical treatments don't cure them. They still know that doctors are dedicated to bringing a remedy; how much more can we be assured that God still loves us, and has a plan for us, irrespective of the physical evidence of our ailment, serious or not, cured or not.

Perhaps the critics of healing prayer simply haven't seen anyone healed through words of faith. How do we resolve this enigma; of a Christian not experiencing answers to prayers



of healing, when our own reality is that prayer is surely answered, often with amazing results? One consideration is that the minister of healing prayer needs to have experienced the Baptism of the Spirit. On the day of Pentecost a real change took place in the lives of the Apostles, and of the 3,000 people who were baptized. They

were endued with power from on high! Can we expect to do what they did without the same power? O wonderful promise! "...how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!" (Luke 11.13)

Another key to healing is that the person who prays needs to have expectant faith. If we pray without believing that God wants to heal his child, will it be surprising if no healing takes place? Jesus' rebuke to his disciples seems harsh, but if he walked on the earth today perhaps we might hear similar words: "O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you?" (Matthew 17.17) How merciful, gracious and longsuffering is our God towards us.

Whatever the reasons for prayers having remained unanswered, we can't ignore Jesus' commission in Mark 16: "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation."

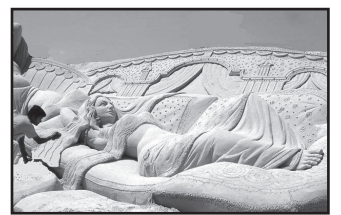
Nor can we fail to anticipate the promised results of that preaching: "...they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well."



THE SCULPTOR

V.J. Hargreaves, Manna Healing Centre, NZ

During a recent summer I took a stroll along the local foreshore. To my delight it was a hive of activity, with artists carving the most incredible statues out of stone; creating something wondrous out of something very ordinary, rocks! It was with true amazement that I stood and watched a masterpiece emerging--a new and unique creation. The artist knew exactly what he wanted, and what was needed to produce the image he had in mind. He worked with a sense of purpose and direction, knowing which tools to use and how to use them with the utmost skill.



This all resulted in an incredible amount of stone chips steadily falling to the ground; chips without use or purpose.

We too are a work of art, and the master artist works steadily and patiently with us to bring about the image He has of us in his heart, the image of His Son. Are we smarting under the hammer, the chisel or the file? He knows it hurts, but He wants us to bring those hurts to Him. Are we focussing on the chips that need to fall from our own lives? Are there things we need to let go of but keep holding on to? Throughout our lives we constantly face a series of great opportunities, too often seen as insurmountable obstacles due to our fears and to our reluctance to allow change. How liberating for us to see each challenge as an opportunity for God to show his faithfulness. How blessed to rejoice in each chip being removed by our creator as being another step towards our destination. "... being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus." (Philippians 1.6)

Victory in Jesus!

The Forerunner, May 1997

35-year old Kausalya, mother of four children, lived in Kartarpur village in India. Her third child had been crippled by a bout of polio, and wherever his mother went he had to be carried about on her back. To the poor woman the situation seemed totally hopeless, leaving her without any peace or even a reason to live. She used to perform various pujas and rituals to appease her gods in order to get some relief from her distress. Everyone in the neighbourhood knew about her pathetic condition.

Then one afternoon, as Kausalya passed by a painted board, her curiosity was aroused as she read about a person who prayed for the sick. On a Sunday morning Kausalya and her son came over to hear what the 'padri' (pastor) had to say. Yesudas opened his Bible and began sharing about the woman who had suffered an issue of blood for 12 long years, given up by the doctors, but healed by Jesus.

Back at home Kausalya gently massaged her son's legs, saying the words "Jai Masih Ki!", which means: "Victory in Jesus!" In the third week an incredible miracle occurred; the boy who had needed to be carried around came walking to the prayer meeting! The neighbours were so surprised to see the one who had been a cripple now walking and playing freely that they too had to know about the preacher who prayed for the sick, and soon a steady flow of visitors began attending the prayer service.

"Then the disciples went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed his word by the signs that accompanied it." (Mark 16.20)



"Think of three things - whence you came, where you are going, and to whom you must give account."
(Benjamin Franklin)

The Bible Tells Us

- In Matthew - He is the Messiah
- In Mark - He is the Wonder-Worker
- In Luke - He is the Son of Man
- In John - He is the Son of God
- In Acts - He is the Holy Spirit Moving and Working among Men
- In Romans - He is the Justifier
- In I and II Corinthians - He is the Sanctifier
- In Galatians - He is the Redeemer from the Curse of the Law
- In Ephesians - He is the Christ of Unsearchable Riches
- In Philippians - He is the God who Supplies All our Needs
- In Colossians - He is the Fullness of the Godhead Bodily
- In I and II Thessalonians - He is Our Soon Coming King
- In I and II Timothy - He is the Mediator Between God & Men
- In Titus - He is the Faithful Pastor
- In Philemon - He is the Friend of the Oppressed
- In Hebrews - He is the Blood of the Everlasting Covenant
- In James - He is the Lord who Raises the Sick
- In I and II Peter - He is the Chief Shepherd Who Soon Shall Appear
- In I, II and III John - He is Love
- In Jude - He is the Lord Coming With Ten Thousands of His Saints
- In Revelation - He is our King of Kings and Lord of Lords

All Saints Church, Hamilton, NZ

ORDER OF ST. LUKE

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contact "Wholeness" using the addresses on page 4.



The New Zealand Warden writes: "In the fifteenth year of the reign of the Emperor Tiberius....". Luke 3.1

I am writing this during the season of Advent, and even though it will be a while after this that you read these words I want to make some comments about the gospel reading from the Second Sunday of this special season of the church. In the opening verses of Luke 3 we are told that John the Baptist came into the region around the Jordan 'proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.' This he did in preparation for the coming of one greater than himself - Jesus, the long awaited Messiah.

In these verses Luke says all this happened when:

- Tiberius was emperor of Rome
- Pontius Pilate was Governor of Judea
- Herod was ruler of Galilee
- Philip was ruler of Ituraea and Trachonitis
- Lysanias was ruler of Abilene
- Annas and Caiaphas were high priests.

In other words, what Luke is saying, is that this is no 'fairy tale'. It happened at a specific point in time, in the real world, among real people. The preaching of John the Baptist, and the birth and ministry of Jesus of Nazareth are historical events. God entered our world in the person of Jesus of Nazareth!

The other thing that Luke is saying here is that the coming of John the Baptist and the

birth of Jesus in Bethlehem represented a real challenge to the power brokers of this world. Events in an insignificant corner of the Roman Empire were God's way of challenging those who appear to order human affairs, and of changing our attitudes to power for ever. And so it was that John and Jesus so challenged the powers of their day, both civil and religious, that they were put to death. But out of Jesus' death arose an unstoppable movement of God that has never been defeated by the powers of this world, no matter how hard they have tried, nor ever will be. In recent history alone we have witnessed how the authorities in places like China and Eastern Europe have tried to destroy the church. Today these are the very places in the world where the church is growing mightily! We have also seen how people like William Wilberforce, in the power of Christ, challenged the evil of slavery and eventually prevailed. As followers of Christ we may not be called upon to directly confront the global powers of this world, but we each have the God given power to challenge sin and evil wherever we live and work. Last, but not least, these words in Luke remind us that in a world where terror, destruction and sin seem to be getting the upper hand, God is still in control and always will be; His is the final word.

Lionel Brown



Rev. Lionel Brown

FORGIVENESS SETS FREE

Bronwyn O'Neill-Corsan, Above Rubies, Feb. 1997

When my second son was born he became sick, and every six weeks needed frequent medication and cool baths to bring down a soaring temperature. This would last for a week, then disappear until the next six-weekly cycle. I took him to the doctor many times. He was hospitalized and tested but they could find no cause for the illness. However, the malady kept recurring and I was exhausted. In desperation I rang a prayer chain and asked if they would pray for him.



Two answers came back. Firstly, something had happened to him when he was six weeks in the womb. Another person had a vision of a train going very fast on the tracks; and then I knew immediately what God was saying. My brother, who lived in Australia, was killed by a train, and when my sister called to break the news to me she did it in a rather hard and blunt way. All the pain and shock I received from the call went straight to my unborn baby who was only six weeks formed. Although I was unaware of it, I had harboured unforgiveness towards my sister. I prayed a prayer of forgiveness, and my son was both totally healed and set free.

"Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective." (James 5:16)

Before I take the body of my Lord



Before I take the body of my Lord,
Before I share his life in bread and wine,
I recognise the sorry things within –
These I lay down.

The words of hope I often failed to give,
The acts of kindness buried by my pride,
The signs of care I argued out of sight –
These I lay down.

The narrowness of vision and of mind,
The need for other folk to serve my will,
And every word and silence meant to hurt –
These I lay down.

Of those around in whom I meet my Lord,
I ask their pardon and I grant them mine,
That every contradiction to Christ's peace –
Might be laid down.

Lord Jesus Christ, companion at this feast,
I empty now my heart and stretch my hands,
And ask to meet you here in bread and wine –
Which you laid down.

*Faith for Daily Living
Contributed by Mrs B.J. Cooper (90 years old)*

Prince's Story

By Jean H. Woodger

Hi! My name is Prince. I am a beagle cross spaniel. Both my parents had pedigrees, but then an accident occurred – that accident was me! I have black spaniel colouring but the rest of me is beagle – short hair, long ears and so on.



One day when my mistress, Jean, was in bed with the flu I was playing alone in the garden. Being rather bored I tried to jump over the hedge. Ouch! A sharp pain ran down my back and into one of my rear legs. I gave a loud yelp of pain. Jean came out to see what was wrong with me. I was sitting by the back door, my eyes bright. She could see nothing wrong so went back to her rest.

That night Jean noticed that I could not get on her bed. Her usual problem was to keep me off! She put a biscuit in the middle of the bed, but I made no attempt to reach it. Then she put a chocolate right in the centre of the blanket. I looked at her, saying with my eyes: "Don't torment me. You know I can't get it." That was when she knew that there was something seriously wrong with me, for if ever a dog likes chocolates, it's me.

The next day my mistress took me to the vet. He said I had a pinched nerve in my spine. (A slipped disc to you non-medical people.) He said it often affected dogs with long backs like mine. He gave Jean some anti-inflammatory tablets to give me, but said I would not get better quickly. Jean was very upset - she thought I might have to be put to sleep. I was only 18 months old.

A day or so later a clergyman gave Jean a small bottle of holy oil that he had blessed. She was very pleased - she wanted to use the oil on me!

When Jean came into the sitting room I was lying on the carpet. I did not bother to move. She knelt down beside me, put some oil on her finger, and made the sign of the cross on my forehead twice, saying: "I anoint you in the name of the Father and of the Son..." My forehead felt so

good that I wanted her to put the last cross on my sore back, so I wriggled so she could no longer reach my forehead. She put the last cross on my back, where the pinched nerve was, saying "... and of the Holy Spirit. Amen."

Woof! Did I feel good! The pain immediately left my back and my leg. I leapt to my feet and gave the biggest bark of my life, telling Jean I wanted to go for a run IMMEDIATELY. She took me for a long run, and I have had no problems since - I have not yelped with pain while standing still nor had to run on three legs again. Woof!

Jean knew that Jesus said that God cared for every sparrow that fell to the ground. She loved me and did not like to see me in pain, and she thought that Jesus would love me even more than she did. And He did, for He healed me!

This is a true story, except for my guessing that Prince hurt his back by trying to jump over the hedge! Isn't it wonderful that we never have to guess whether or not God wants to bless us.

THE PRESENCE OF GOD

Daily Bible Verse, Dave Whitehead, Senior Pastor,
Grace NYC

"Now Joseph had been taken down to Egypt. Potiphar, an Egyptian who was one of Pharaoh's officials, the captain of the guard, bought him from the Ishmaelites who had taken him there. The Lord was with Joseph and he prospered, and he lived in the house of his Egyptian master. When his master saw that the Lord was with him and that the Lord gave him success in everything he did, Joseph found favor in his eyes and became his attendant. Potiphar put him in charge of his household, and he entrusted to his care everything he owned." (Genesis 39:1-4)



Up to this point in Genesis, Abraham, Isaac, & Jacob have experienced miracles. God has been very visible and audible, through numerous visions and appearances. But when we get to the abduction and selling of Joseph into slavery there seems to be silence. But God's silence is not his absence. When Joseph is thinking that he has been doomed to destruction, God is preparing for the opposite, for a day when Joseph would save not only his own family but much of the ancient world.

When God seems the most hidden, he is working nonetheless. His presence is not dependent upon our circumstances, nor upon our feelings; it is dependent upon his faithfulness, which is absolute.

PRAYING FOR THE FRUIT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Intercessors for New Zealand

Patience

In this day of "hyper-speed" communication and "instant" everything

Lord, please give me patience... and please give it to me right now!

patience is not generally seen as a virtue – more of a hindrance! And who wants "long-suffering"! But how gracious is God's provision of the fruit of the Spirit, particularly the one that takes us from self-control to serenity. May we fully realise how we need patience with:

1. Ourselves. There is no such thing as instant maturity.
2. Others. They can't always do everything instantly either, nor can they be perfected according to our schedule!
3. God. One of the ways God tests our faith and our trust in Him is by testing our patience – delaying the answer. Never forget that God's love for us means He will be thorough, and His timing will be perfect.

Forbearance is something we certainly all need. So, please pray:

- For the gift of patience for God's people – patience with ourselves, with others and with God
- For patience when our love, joy and peace are being tested
- For patience when "things go wrong"!
- For patience as God works out His purposes in our lives and in the lives of others
- For patience when our prayers are not immediately answered

LORD, PLEASE BLESS MY BOSS!

Remarkable answers to Prayer, Compiled by Alex Woods

The distressed young man came for counsel: "What shall I do? Our firm has run out of work and we may get laid off. We are already on part time. I can't afford to pay our mortgage!"

"Have you ever prayed for the Lord to bless your boss's business?" I asked.

"No, I've never thought of it."

"If your boss gets blessed so will you. We will pray now." So we committed his employer's prosperity to the Lord.

The next week he came back beaming: "It worked! The boss wrote up more than a million dollars worth of orders, and now we are on overtime!"

The message from the bible about our attitude to work is very clear: "... obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to win their favor, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord. Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving." (Colossians 3.22-24)

In terms of having respect for our employer, and integrity in fulfilling our responsibilities, we can learn a lot from Joseph. His was a perfect example of how diligence with a little leads to positions of ever greater trust; not to mention blessings for employer and employee alike. Joseph's status in life went in stages from the lowest point a human being could be at, sitting in a pit facing death, to becoming prime minister of the most powerful country of his era. Truly, the potential for our own lives to count is also limitless, for we can rely upon God to bless anyone who follows his advice: "Whatever your hand finds to do, do with all your might." (Ecclesiastes 9.10)

THE INDISPUTABLE EVIDENCE

Faith for Daily Living, John Borman

"He showed them his hands and side". Jn 20:20

We often say: "Seeing is believing!" And in a court of law the witness who can say: "I was there, and I saw this and that happen", is the one whose testimony will carry the most weight in reaching a decision. In one sense the



resurrection is the hardest miracle in which to believe. In another sense, when you weigh up the evidence in the stories told, it is difficult not to be convinced that it really did happen. Jesus knew that the disciples would be stunned by his appearing. They would wonder if the person before them really was himself, or someone like him, or a ghost. Then he showed them his hands and side; there were the nail-prints in his hands, and there was the wound made by the spear in his side. Only he – the real Jesus – could show evidence like that. No doubt their eyes popped out of their heads at the sight.

Certainly their minds must have boggled, before they experienced unimaginable joy; joy far greater than the brief understatement in scripture would imply: "He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord." (John 20.20)

We have not seen what they saw. We believe, though, because they saw – and we believe because of their testimony. They played pivotal roles in the gospel story. Without their having seen him alive after the crucifixion, and without their having faithfully passed on that record, we would have nothing to believe in. They not only passed on a narrative, they passed on a faith – and this is the faith by which we live today. If they had not told their story, and passed on their unwavering belief, then the story of Jesus would have been nothing more than that, a strange tale from antiquity.

As it is, it is the indisputable evidence of a living faith, the unshakeable foundation of the only true hope for mankind.

"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. We write this to make your joy complete." (1 John 1.1-4)

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If God is your co-pilot....
it's time to switch seats.

Whitiora Bible Church, Hamilton, NZ

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