



Christian Report

To Win...To Disciple...To Equip...To Win

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Special points of interest:

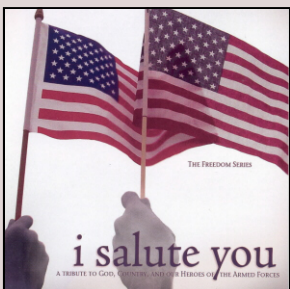
- Don't miss this month's book offer.
- Check out the all new CMF website.

In This Issue:

The Certain in God's Uncertain Plans	1
CD Offer	1
New Members	2
Promotions	2
Book Offer	2
What is Marriage	3
Combined Federal Campaign	3
Nuggets of Faith	4
Eternal Appointments	4
Welcome to the Blogosphere	4
Local Reps Corner	4

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The Certain in God's Uncertain Plans—Pastor Larry Hoskins

Someone once said, "What you see is what you get." We talk about people seeing the world as a glass "half empty" or "half full." The Bible is full of stories that demonstrate over and over the difference one's perspective makes.

When Job and his wife lost their ten children and all they possessed, Job's wife questioned why he held fast to his spiritual integrity, and urged him to curse God and die. Job, on the other hand, asked, "Shall we accept good from God and not adversity?" He fell on his face and blessed the name of the Lord.

On another occasion, the Israelites had turned their backs on the Lord, and God had placed them under His loving, but firm, hand of discipline, yet He was about to restore them back into His good graces. Deborah, a judge God had raised up for that moment, summoned a man named Barak and told him to take 10,000 men from two of the tribes of Israel to gain the

victory. Barak didn't see the word of the Lord as reason enough; he wanted Deborah by his side. As a result, God removed the honor of victory from him and gave it to a woman named Jael who drove a tent peg through the enemy's temple.

Do you remember the story of David and Goliath? The enemy Philistine army was on one side of a great valley, and the Israelite army was on the opposite side. In those days, rather than fighting a whole war, sometimes a champion from each side would fight as representatives of both armies. Goliath, that great champion of the Philistines had been taunting the Israelites for days. He was literally a giant of a man, and his weapons were huge. Not one seasoned Israelite soldier took up the gauntlet. No, it was a youthful shepherd who rose to the challenge. Here are his words to the "tall tree":

"You come to me with a sword, a spear, and a javelin, but I come to you in the

name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have taunted. "This day the LORD will deliver you up into my hands, and I will strike you down and remove your head from you. And I will give the dead bodies of the army of the Philistines this day to the birds of the sky and the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel, and that all this assembly may know that the LORD does not deliver by sword or by spear; for the battle is the LORD'S and He will give you into our hands." (1 Sam 17:45-47)

The rest of the story is history. This rookie recruit without even a suit of armor took five small stones and slung one deep into the forehead of the giant oak. How great was its fall! How great was God's victory! What would have happened if any of the other Israelite soldiers had seen what David saw? What blessings and honor they missed.

(Continued on page 2)

Music CD Offer

The Freedom Series. **I Salute You—A Tribute to God, Country, and our Heroes of the Armed Forces.**

Album Notes: This album was inspired by several things: my work with the U.S. military through the organization Protestant Women of the Chapel, times of ministry at Ramstein

Air Base, Germany, Fort Wainwright, Alaska, Langley Air Force Base, by the events of 9/11/01, my friend, Lt. Cmdr. Brian Birdwell, who survived the attack on the Pentagon, President George W. Bush, the faithfulness of and courage of our troops who bravely fight for and protect the freedom we as Americans hold so dearly, and most of all, by the God Who is the

Author of freedom through His Son, Jesus Christ. —Dennis Jernigan <http://www.dennisjernigan.com>

This music CD is offered free to our membership while they last. You may order this and other resources from the Members Only "Resources" page of our website or call our toll-free number: 1-800-798-7875.

The Certain in God's Uncertain Plans—Pastor Larry Hoskins

(Continued from page 1)

Many of us are having difficulties right now. Some are going through job searches. Others have lost spouses through death or divorce. Others are going through bankruptcy. Some of our children have made choices that deeply disappointed us; some parents have done the same. Some of you have your own Goliaths to face—giants that none of us even know about.

In all of these circumstances, what do we see?

Do we see the circumstances and conclude that God is evil and want to curse Him like Job's wife? Do we desire the securing of someone else besides the Lord alongside of us, like Barak did? Do we see the power of the enemy and of our own inability, like the Israelite army?

Or...like Job, do we see that God deserves our worship and blessing whether He gives or takes away? Do we see that God provides opportunities for victory, like Jael? Do we see that God is bigger than hugely opposing circumstances, like David, such that our greatest concern is for Him to get the

glory and recognition that He deserves?

Whatever the darkness, be certain of this: God's plans for His children are good and not evil. He sees the past, the present, and the future with equal clarity, so He is not surprised by whatever we encounter—the circumstances or the emotional, spiritual, and mental struggles that may come with them. He is present everywhere. He knows all things. His power is limitless for His righteous purposes.

There is nothing, no circumstance, no trouble, no testing, that can ever touch me until, first of all, it has gone past God and past Christ, right through to me. If it has come that far, it has come with a great purpose, which I may not understand at the moment, but as I refuse to become panicky, as I lift up my eyes to Him and accept it as coming from the throne of God for some great purpose of blessing to my own heart, no sorrow will ever disturb me, no trial will ever disarm me, no circumstance will cause me to fret, for I shall rest in the joy of what my Lord is. That rest is the rest of victory. —Alan Redpath

You see, we have such limited knowledge and perspective, and God's

plans, to us, have the ring of uncertainty. That uncertainty results from our not knowing, but imagining the outcome. It comes from not understanding God's purposes and from the dissonance of what we are experiencing that does not coincide with our preferences or plans. So often we want out of the trouble and back into the world of comfort rather than the growth that is part of God's design through trials and heartache.

Whatever you are experiencing in God's "uncertain" plans for you, may we all come to see our experiences with the right perspective, to enjoy His peace which passes all understanding, and to life in Redpath's "rest of victory"!

"For I know the plans I have for you," says the LORD. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope." Jeremiah 29:11 NLT

Editor Notes: Larry Hoskins is a graduate of Dallas Theological Seminary and has been the Senior Pastor of Grace Church Aurora for sixteen years. He also serves on the CMF Board of Directors.

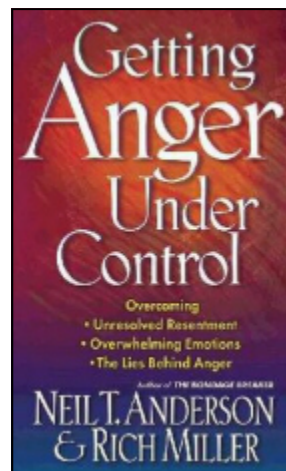
New Members

Mrs. Kathy Belland
LTC Jim & Jane Blue, USA (Ret)
SrA Ashley Bonner, USAFR
Capt. Todd & Teresa Boyd, USAF (Ret)
PO1 Scott & Hilary Brogdon, USCG
Mr. Bob & Tonja Brunn
COL Arthur & Patricia Busby, III, USAF (Ret)
PV1 Stewart Chandler, USA
Ms. Lynda Dearing
SGT Jeremy Henderson, USAR
Mr. Rich & Michele Hust
CH(LTC) Wylie & Karen Johnson, USAR
SGT Mark Isham, USAR
Mrs. Mary Jordan
SFC Michael & Lolita Law, USA
PO1 Michael & Jan McWatt, USNR (Ret)
OS1 Greg & Elizabeth Merten, USCG
LCDR Darrell & Stella Bee Nealy, USN
Mr. Jeffrey & Brenda Nickels
Mr. Michael & Jennifer Peters
Mr. Carlos Reyes
Ms. Daniela Velinova
Mrs. Neta Webb
LCDR David & Dusty Welch, USCG

Monthly Book Offer—Getting Anger Under Control

Overcoming unresolved resentment, overwhelming emotions, and the lies behind anger.

Mishandling anger, stuffing it, or just trying to "manage" it can lead to conflict, bitterness, and physical, emotional, and mental problems. Not only can it damage you, it can ruin relationships with friends and loved ones. Authors Neil Anderson (Bondage Breaker) and Rich Miller show you how God can set you free from self-deception and self-sufficiency so that you can be who you are in Christ. They explain the difference between righteous and unrighteous anger, and how living in grace and forgiving others allows you to throw off anger's chains.



This book will help you break strongholds of anger in your life so you can begin resting in the presence of Jesus and walking in the power of the Holy Spirit. You can experience liberation and fulfillment and come to enjoy the riches of God's mercy and grace in greater ways than ever before.

This book is offered free to our membership while they last. You may order this and other resources from the "Resource" page of our website or call our toll-free number: 1-800-798-7875.

Promotions

CMSgt Bill Holm, USAF
LCDR Iain McConnell, USCG
AVT1 Johnathan Meus, USCG

What is Marriage—by SGT Juan Lugo, USA (deployed in Iraq)

There is no subject more misunderstood today, in my opinion, than marriage. Hold on, don't get mad. The marriage of today has lost its foundation—it seems to exist as if it were granted the status of an historic building — too quaint to demolish, but too expensive to remodel.

Because the institution of marriage is the keystone of the family and the fundamental building block of our society, its success becomes a benefit to the entire population. Likewise, its failure becomes an affliction whose effects persist for generations.

Is the “two becoming one flesh” still the keystone today? Marriage today has become a virtual media circus.

There is not a day that goes by that marriage and its participants are not scoffed at, loathed, debased, and paraded across the news. Our youth conclude that marriage is just a contract with prenuptial agreements, caveats, and escape clauses instead of the holy covenant authored by Almighty God.

The search for the perfect mate seems now like a treasure hunt reality show that mimics the studio casting calls of old. Today you “test drive” a husband or wife like you would a new car — picking and choosing the accessories. There are no responsibilities, just benefits. Sadly this behavior exists even among Christians who are endeavoring to find “compatibility.” What is found instead, is the gravity of sin that permeates our soul and starts the crumbling of the foundation like saltwater on the concrete pilings of a great bridge.

Even Black's Law Dictionary has stated for at least two centuries that, “Marriage...is the civil status of **one man and one woman united in law for life**, for the discharge to each other and the community of the duties legally incumbent on those whose association is founded on the distinction of sex.” Notice the specificity, “united in law for life.”

The traditional marriage ceremony with its time-honored words of, “for richer or poorer, in sickness and in health” speak of the necessary self-sacrifice and perseverance that leads to the greatest of all rewards, genuine

love.

God has given us many stars by which we can remain on course as we navigate the marriage relationship. Unfortunately, most of us are completely oblivious to their existence! Ephesians chapter 5 exhorts repeatedly for husbands to love their wives and wives to respect their husbands! The problem comes in the expression of this in the correct language. Husbands need to realize that the wife has built-in insecurities with regard to being loved. She requires **daily reaffirming of your love** in those little daily expressions. When the wife is insecure, then her whole world is out of tune until things are made right.

For the husband, the love language he needs is “respect!” Wives then need to make that volitional choice to **communicate on this channel**. When a wife criticizes her husband, in her mind she is being helpful. In his mind, she is shouting, “stupid!”

Neither of these miscommunications does justice to the idea of marriage representing the relationship between Christ and His Church. The word “sacrifice” keeps popping up again and again in my head. The word I see in our society at-large is “selfish,” even though we are to “do nothing out of selfishness or or empty conceit.” (Philippians 2:3)

Today it is all about “hooking-up” and “hanging-out” to meet the needs of the day in a “relationship.” Never mind that sex outside marriage is still a sin that leads to a “depraved mind” (Romans 1:28). Yet this too has become acceptable in our society and is actually highly encouraged through our media “(who) also give hearty approval to those who practice them” (Romans 1:32).

As men, we must do more than just “flee fornication;” we must also deal with the “lust of the eyes,” (the gateway to our soul), so that we are not defiled by the adultery of the heart. But again the current environment seems to cheer us on to be eager to get into each other pants.

Yet because we are men and are visually wired, we must make a covenant with our eyes (Job 31:1) so that

we are not stimulated outside of our marriage. We must be looking toward our wives only for our fulfillment. Anything less is sin that darkens our heart and separates us from God.

Marriage is a covenant with God and each other of lifelong companionship. The difference between marriage and living together lies in this covenant relationship. A sexual relationship does not create a marriage. It is the covenant that creates the marriage, and this union of hearts and minds in the presence of God is beautiful!

Dear Lord, Your Word tells us that from the very beginning You created marriage as a one-flesh covenant relationship — that what You joined together, no man should separate. I pray that You restore the marriages Satan came to destroy. Teach us to approach Your throne of grace daily with confidence seeking what we need to meet the demands of the day. I give thanks that all things are possible with You, God. You alone give us “peace that surpasses all understanding and guards our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.” You Word assures us that the hearts of our beloved spouses are in Your hands, and that you direct their hearts like a watercourse wherever You please. We know they can't plan or understand their own way, because You determine and direct their steps (and ours). Amen

Editor Notes: Juan Lugo is a CMF Local Representative currently serving in northern Iraq. Pray for this dear brother, patriot and his family.

Combined Federal Campaign

Please help us continue to serve the troops. Consider CMF when it comes time to designate your giving through the CFC.



The Nuggets of Faith— by SMSgt Tony (T-Bar) Barnes, USAF

Sleep apnea? How can that be? Never in my wildest dreams did I ever imagine I would be a candidate for a CPAP (Continuous Positive Airway Pressure) mask. Yet, there I was at the hospital being hooked up to “jumper cables” that led to a miserable night. I would have tossed and turned, but instead I lay there frustrated, not able to roll over onto my side.

This kind of sleep study is conducted on people suspected of having problems sleeping peacefully throughout the night. Those found to have more severe cases of sleep apnea often slumber with a CPAP mask for the rest of their lives. During episodes of difficult breathing, the mask forces oxygen into the lungs (that Darth Vader sound). Although it seems sleeping with a mask all night would inhibit quality rest, most report more energy and a feeling of rest.

For folks with sleep apnea, the key to a better quality of life is a correct diagnosis. In our spiritual lives, the key

to a higher quality of life is also a correct diagnosis. You won't have to put on dozens of wires and wear a mask for this diagnosis. The simple diagnosis is answering this question: Have you come to the place in your life where you recognize your need of a Savior? It is that simple.

God created you because He wants to be your friend. He also created you to be involved in the “family business.” But, before you can become that friend and that trusted member of the family you must come to a point of decision. We must all realize that apart from Jesus Christ our future looks very dim. In fact, without Jesus Christ your future is actually very frightening.

However, the GREAT news of the gospel message is that God so loved you that He sent Jesus Christ to this earth to pay the fine for your sin. Christ was able to do what you could not...He lived a sinless life and yet still chose to be punished for sin.

Now for the diagnosis: All have

sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. The cure? Accept Jesus Christ's sacrifice on the cross for yourself and invite Him to manage your life for eternity.

No one will force you. There is no salvation mask that we can put on your head for spiritual apnea. Salvation in Jesus Christ involves a willingness to humble yourself and cry out for the Savior because you have come to the realization that you can't save yourself. Once you come to that realization and confess with your mouth that Jesus Christ is Lord and has risen from the grave, you are saved. Then, buckle your seat belt...because once you experience salvation, you are in for the ride of your life! Salvation is the gateway to joy, peace and a fulfilled life.

Editor Notes: Tony Barnes is a long-time CMF member, Local Representative, and member of the Board of Directors. He is currently serving at the U.S. Air Force Academy.

Eternal Appointments— by Jane Arsenault

On 9/11/2007, my friend Leslie and I made a platter of homemade cookies and brought them, along with my CMF tracts and brochures, to the Army Reserve Center. Before she left her home to meet me, she had a time of prayer with one of her friends. Her friend had prayed that both Leslie and I would end up being a “God-send” to the Reserves.

Well, our cookie platter and gifts were extremely well-received. The reserves asked if we would consider getting involved in their Family Readiness group. We said we'd be happy to help out at holidays, etc.

As we were leaving, the Sergeant said that they were very excited to have our volunteer help and that we were a “God-send”!

Editor Notes: Jane Arsenault is one of our nation's gifted school teachers. She is also a CMF Local Representative who ministers at Fort Hamilton, New York City, New York; to the military families at her home church, and the reserve centers in her area.

Welcome to the Blogosphere—by Bob Flynn

Who would have “thunk” it? Certainly not the Greeks who navigated the “logosphere” (world of words). Yet here we are in the twenty-first century where the world of words has become virtual. We can engage in conversations of all kinds on the blogs (web logs), online forums, e-mail, instant messaging, chat rooms and so on. Toward that end, CMF has entered into this blogosphere with the intent of giving voice to our membership.

If you take the opportunity to browse our new website, you will find both a blog and a forum available to you. Please use these tools to let the membership know what God is doing in your life, in your area, in the uttermost parts of the world.

Local Reps Corner—How to Lead & Still Have a Life

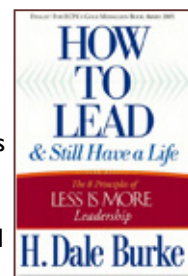
Are you caught in the vicious cycle of busy, buried, and behind?

Every leader knows the feeling. You think that if you just work harder, faster, and longer, you'll eventually get on top of the pile. But no matter how hard you try, you keep falling further behind.

How to Lead & Still Have a Life will transform your leadership and your life, helping you to master...

Spirituality—the Power of Convictions
Humility—the Power of Servant-Leadership
Imagination—the Power of Vision
Mobilization—the Power of Letting Go
Specialization—the Power of Optimum Capabilities
Innovation—the Power of Creativity
Concentration—the Power of Focus
Determination—the Power of Hope

These disciplines transcend the ebb and flow of modern fads. In fact, they were modeled by Jesus Christ. And they'll empower you to both lead effectively and still have a life.



This book is offered free to our **Local Representatives**. Local Reps may order this from the Local Reps Only page of our website or call 1-800-798-7875