



OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE CONDITIONAL IMMORTALITY ASSOCIATION

**Issue 7, 1997**

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# <sup>2</sup> *from the President's Desk*

Matthew's account of the death of Jesus is peculiar in that it alone records the opening of the graves at Christ's death and the raising of many sleeping saints along with the Lord at his resurrection (Matthew 27:50-54).

The raising of certain dead ones is given as one of three happenings that follow the death of Jesus on the cross at Calvary. It comes after the tearing of the temple veil and before the Centurion's awe-inspired confession of Jesus as the "Son of God". Inasmuch as these events are narrated immediately following Christ's death, Matthew very likely intends them to be seen as results of his atoning death.



The tearing of the temple curtain which walled off the the Holy of Holies, where God's presence was manifested, signifies that by his death Christ made possible for all direct access into the very presence of God - apart from all the ritual and regulation of Old Testament priesthood and sacrifices.

The opening of the graves at Christ's death reminds us that only by Christ dying on the cross in our place was sin, 'the sting of death', defeated (1 Cor 15:56) The rising of the dead at his resurrection signifies that Christ alone by his resurrection became the 'first fruit fruits of them that sleep' (1 Cor 15:20) in that his resurrection guarantees the eventual resurrection of all.

The Centurion's confession signifies that the Gospel, which sets forth the atoning death of Christ, is the 'power of God for salvation' (Rom 1:16) to all who receive its message in faith, even a rugged old Roman soldier. It therefore speaks to us of our responsibility to carry the good news of life only in Christ, by word and deed, wherever and to whomever we can!

Pastor David Burge  
President

This continues from the last newsletter, copies of the first part are available from the editor.

If God endlessly torments the unsaved this raises many problems: -

1. The tormenting by God is worse than the German holocaust, whose victims' torments had an ending.

2. Many reject Christ because they cannot believe in a God who asks us to be kind, but is himself worse than Hitler.

3. Many in Bible-believing churches tell me they don't believe in the endless tormenting of the unsaved; but many of them solve the problem by believing that the torments will cause the lost to repent, and so they will be saved. Several Baptist ministers have explained to me that the torments purge the souls. They have revived the Roman Catholic universalist purgatory heresy. Helmut Thielicke, a great Evangelical scholar, in a lecture in the Auckland Baptist Tabernacle, on the occasion of Baptist College's fiftieth anniversary, peppered with questions by Baptists asking him to denounce Conditional Immortality, emphatically declared that Universalism is unscriptural, and that Scripture can be interpreted to support only either Everlasting Torments, or Conditional Immortality and Annihilationism. I should think that if Thielicke were still alive he would say that he believed that Conditional Immortality is what the Bible teaches.

4. If the millions of unbelievers of past centuries are alive and not in heaven, where are they ?

5. Is the Bible inconsistent in its use of the word "death", meaning cessation of existence when it refers to animals and trees, but continued existence when it refers to mankind ? The translators who produced the A.V. (KJV) were inconsistent when they translated the Hebrew "*nephesh hayyim*" in Gen.1:20 as "moving creatures", and in Gen.1:21 as "living creature", but in Gen.2:7 as a "living soul". The NIV is little better, with "living creatures" and just "creatures" in Gen.1:20,21; but "a living being", in Gen.2:7. The point is that animals, fishes, and men are all living souls, creatures which live by breathing. When the breathing ceases, the creature is dead.

6. If the punishment of the lost began when they died, why does Rev. 20:11-15 say that it begins at the Great White Throne Judgment ?

7. If the Lake of Fire doesn't annihilate the lost, where will those countless millions or billions be confined in the new Heavens and Earth wherein dwells only righteousness? This suggests that there is no place for the accommodation of immortal sinners.

8. Is the Bible inconsistent in saying that the Jerusalem rubbish dump in the Valley of Hinnom (Hebrew *Gai Hinnom*, Greek *Gehenna*) incinerated the rubbish, but the Lake of Fire doesn't incinerate the unrighteous, nor Satan and all of his rebellious angels? And Gehenna is the word Jesus used in Matt. 5:22,29; 10:28; 18:9; and 23:15,33, for the place to which the wicked will be consigned.

4 9. If the penalty for sin, Gen.2:17, is endless torment, then Jesus didn't pay the penalty, and Atonement hasn't been made for sinners.

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Let us stop spiritualizing these Bible statements; take them literally. Thus death as the penalty for sin is lifelessness, return to dust, Gen.3:19. It is not just spiritual death. The Lake of Fire will incinerate those who reject Christ's atonement. Jesus very fairly and compassionately warned unbelievers of the weeping and gnashing of teeth if they are thrown into the fiery furnace. That is bad enough; don't let us assert that it is never-ending, conscious tormenting.

Regarding everlasting tormenting by God being worse than the German holocaust, I never thought that I would hear an evangelist say it, but hereunder I quote from a sermon by John Sweetman of Bracken Ridge Baptist Church on "Making People Our Priority":

*"I want to talk about our responsibility to reach the lost for Jesus so that they may be saved from hell. Jerusalem was a stronghold built on a hill. On the South side was a deep ravine called the Valley of Hinnom. During the reign of some of the evil kings of Judah, human sacrifices to the Ammonite god, Molech, were offered there. So Josiah desecrated the valley and it became the city dump, a perpetually burning garbage tip. It was this valley which came to represent hell. The stench, the filth, the putrefying garbage, the sordid past, the constant fires, all conjured up pictures of the place where those who are not Christians*

*will live forever.*

*"There have been many 'hellish' places on earth. The Nazi extermination camps, the Cambodian killing fields, the streets of Rwanda during the decimation of the Tutsis, and the Serbian prison camps are just a few examples. These are places that put dread in your bones - the pain, the evil, the inhumanity, the torture, the disregard for human dignity, the animalistic behaviour. When I read of such places my spirit cries to God in horror and rage.*

*"But none of these places plunge the depths of hell itself. They are vague imitations of the real thing. Hell is a place completely and utterly deserted by God. Evil rules supreme. And yet our friends and family and neighbours are happily waltzing down the road to hell."*

**"Conditional Immortality... would have made my addresses much more effective and compelling"**

So believers in never-ending torment of the lost make God out to be inhuman and devastatingly cruel, worse than Hitler and Stalin, whose victims' sufferings were relieved by death. Couple that tragic, false view of God with Calvin's double-predestination and denial of freewill, and it seems that God's plan in creating man was to have billions of people living eternally in torments, and one or two billion living in bliss. Those who don't believe the lost will live in torments, but only in conditions much less congenial than the New Heavens and Earth of Revelation 21 and 22, are Universalists, but not Universal Reconciliationists. That is Billy Graham's position, as he says that the lost will live eternally in conditions similar to the present,

for, he says, non-Christians in the present life don't enjoy the blessings of born-again Christians. I have been told by people who reject Christ that they would rather live in hell with friends than in heaven without them. I promptly tell them that they won't be alive in hell, and the choice isn't between heaven and hell, but between Life and annihilation.

When I was in Melbourne in 1955 I met an elderly man who had been an evangelist with the Brethren and then with the Pentecostals. He said, "I wish I had the Conditional Immortality beliefs when I was an evangelist; it would have made my addresses much more effective and compelling. Instead of unwittingly presenting God as a tyrant I would have presented Him as just and all-loving, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. And instead of assuring people that they have eternal existence, albeit in hell, I would have told them that the Second Death meant annihilation, and so decision in the present life is essential. Preaching salvation or else eternal torment put more people against Christ than it brought to him"

The following objections to Conditional Immortality are heard :

1. Annihilation is a clean, comfortable end for those who reject Christ. **But** Annihilationists accept the Biblical statements that there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth - a most uncomfortable end, and far from clean and comfortable.

2. We must preach eternal conscious torments in order to prompt people to

accept Christ but at the same time must assure them of the love of God for them.

**But** my belief in annihilation impelled me into evangelism, first with Open Air Campaigners, and then into the ministry with two main thrusts, namely frequent use of evangelists and a Gospel Crusade each year, and support of missionaries and Mission Societies, to seek the lost. In retirement, I write an annual Gospel tract which I post to scores of unconverted friends and relatives, and rejoice that some respond. I tell them that the love I have for them is only a shadow of God's love for them.

**Some scholars are now admitting that the Bible doesn't teach the immortality of the soul**

3. Some say that they don't like the idea of not going to heaven when they die. **However**, the Bible doesn't say that, nor does it support the idea that there is an intermediate place where Christians can await the Second Coming. In I Thessalonians 4:14, regarding the resurrection of Christians, when Paul says "We believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him", we need to note that :

(a) The Thessalonians' problem wasn't that dead believers had gone to heaven, but that they were grieving just like unbelievers who died without hope in being raised, v13.

(b) Paul says that what happened to Jesus will happen to us, namely "We believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep". As God brought Jesus from the sleep of death, so He will bring us from the sleep of death.

(c) Paul doesn't say that God will bring dead Christians from heaven, or from an in-between place, and this contrasts with what he says about Jesus, namely that He will come down from heaven, v16.

(d) Verses 14-17 say that the sequence of events is that Jesus comes from heaven,

6 the Christian dead are raised, and together with them we who are alive will all go to heaven together. The sequence isn't that Jesus and dead Christians come from heaven, and return there with we who are alive.

Some Evangelical scholars are now admitting that the Bible doesn't teach the immortality of the soul, but they, wanting to retain the everlasting punishment of the unrighteous, say they are kept alive forever in hell. But this is saying that the unrighteous gain everlasting life and put on immortality at the resurrection, whereas the New Testament says that only the righteous do.

The above is a brief history of the Church's

handling of the Bible teaching on Conditional Immortality. We could tell of many more eminent ministers and theologians who taught Conditional Immortality and wrote excellent books on the subject. Were they alive today they would be pleased to see that Conditional Immortality is accepted by very many ministers and theologians as the best interpretation of Scripture.

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David Green is a former pastor and lecturer (at Illawarra Bible College). He is currently 'retired' and living with his wife, Joy, on the North Shore of Auckland.

# WANTED

*Assistance to help needy people help themselves.*

*Pastora Edi Naelga, of Pasay City Advent Christian Church (Manila, Philippines) is trying to assist the ladies of the families of their fellowship, by encouraging them to sew children's clothing for sale in the local market. They have a problem- they don't have sewing machines. 17,000 pesos (NZ\$900) would buy the two they need a plain sewing machine and a zigzag one.*

# CAN WE HELP?

*Enquiries & Contributions to:  
Advent Christian Missions NZ  
5 Humber Place, Avondale, Auckland  
Ph/fax 09 6279 460*



# Reclaiming the Gospel 7

by Pastor Warren Prestidge, M.A. (Hons), B.D. (Hons), DipTchg

The text of an address given at the  
Conditional Immortality Conference, June  
21 1997

## Part One: The Human Condition

"Reclaiming the Gospel." I hope you groaned a bit when you saw the title of this address. I hope you felt some resistance to it. There are far too many people these days claiming to have rediscovered the "real" Gospel or the "full" Gospel. Ever since the Reformation, all sorts of people have been saying that somehow, since New Testament times, true Christianity has been lost, and claiming that now they have recovered the reality for these last days. Usually claims like this do more harm than good, sowing discord and spreading confusion and spiritual pride. Sometimes they are downright cultic, as in the case of the Mormons.

Well, I am certainly not claiming today that only Conditional Immortalists have real Christianity and I am certainly not calling upon people to form conditionalist-only churches and label others "apostate". In fact, I have always advocated otherwise. I believe in Christian unity, provided there is a recognisably Christ-centred base. And I believe in setting priorities of faith in Christ and love for one another clearly above other issues. Nor do I believe that conditionalists have access to any higher realm of spirituality than others!

However, I do believe non-conditionalists need to seriously rethink. The doctrines of natural human immortality and eternal

torment have disastrously obscured the Gospel over the centuries and seriously undermined its communication and reception. They still do. Conditional immortality restores clarity and cutting edge to the Gospel, and confidence in it. It restores the Gospel's truth, credibility and power.

First, truth. Conditional immortality clarifies the issues at stake and the Gospel's answer. Second, credibility. Conditional immortality frees the Gospel from alien, baseless and contradictory influences, to stand firmly on its own feet. Third, power. Conditional immortality reveals without compromise the full necessity of the Gospel, as well as the full scope of the salvation it proclaims. Result: we hold the Gospel more firmly, and we proclaim it more clearly and confidently, more urgently and more effectively. That is what I mean by "reclaiming the Gospel". That is what conditional immortality can do for the Church and the cause of Christ today. And that, surely, is what we need.

Maybe all this seems a bit preposterous. After all, conditionalism is precisely one of those doctrines singled out over the centuries as heresies and even as marks of a false cult. The medieval poet Dante, in his great poem on hell (in the traditional sense!), placed all mortalists right down there, in Circle VI! At the Fifth Lateran Council in 1513, Pope Leo X specifically condemned mortalism and insisted that only those who believe in the immortality of the human soul are true Christians! Martin Luther clearly did believe in soul sleep, as

8 we do, but John Calvin wrote so passionately against the whole idea (*Psychopannychia*, 1534) that this aspect of the recovery of the Biblical Gospel during the Reformation was driven underground. As a result, even though there is not a single reference to it in the whole of Scripture, the doctrine of the immortality of the human soul, and also necessarily, therefore, the doctrine of eternal torment, have become part and parcel of most Protestant Christianity, as well as Roman Catholic.

Yet today, among Bible scholars and many other Christians, there is a growing body of conditionalist opinion. Unfortunately, there's a "backlash" too. What are we to do? We are to fellowship and work with all other Christians, as far as they will let us, making faith in Christ and observable love for one another our clear priorities. On the other hand, as we have opportunity, in love, we are to do what we can to help the Church recover the full truth, credibility and power of the Gospel - and that includes conditional immortality!

I want to point to four vital areas of Christian belief, understanding and application where conditionalism makes a huge difference.

**First, the human condition in relation to God.** Who and what are we in relation to God? Who and what is God in relation to us? The Christian Gospel is about reconciliation to God, the recovery and fulfilment of true relationship between God and humanity. But the full relevance of the

Gospel will be seen clearly, only if our fundamental situation is seen clearly. Yet today there is enormous confusion over this very point and, tragically, the Christian Church must carry some of the blame for that. Why? Over the centuries we have taught people that they have immortal souls and, in so doing, we have provided a foothold for the view that humanity itself is somehow, by nature, divine.

What a tragedy! Some twentieth century theologians have recognised this. One is the great American Reinhold Niebuhr. In *Beyond Tragedy*, 1937, he wrote: "Man is mortal. That is his fate. Man pretends not to be mortal. That is his sin." It's immortalism that is the real heresy, says Niebuhr. Not only that, he says, it is the great heresy, the root sin of all!

**...even most biblical Christians still hold to an immortal soul. Such is our power to deceive ourselves.**

Is Niebuhr right? Not exactly. Yet his dictum does highlight the seriousness of the issue. The reality, I think, is this: "Man is a creature before God. That is his nature. Man pretends to be God. That is his sin." And part of man's strategy in making himself out to be divine, to deny the reality of death, is the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. The fact is, that death is real and is part of God's strategy for reminding us that we are only human - and sinners at that. The great theologian and preacher Helmut Thielicke, a Lutheran like Niebuhr, has got it exactly right: "Death in the biblical sense, is.. our death as those who want to be divine and thus have to learn that we are only human" (*Living With Death*).

Biblically, Adam and Eve seek to set



themselves up "as gods" (Gen. 3:5; or even, "as God" - the Hebrew is ambiguous). In response, God decrees death: "You are dust and to dust you shall return." God imposes death, to teach us our true nature as creatures before Him, to deny our divinity and self-sufficiency. Gen. 3:21-24 specifically insists that God denied the first pair the power to live for ever, barring the way to the tree of life. And yet today most people still suppose we survive death! And the Christian Church has aided and abetted this belief, providing the foothold for belief in our own divinity, thereby undermining her own Gospel! Man pretends to be God. That is his sin. God has imposed death, to teach man he is not God and is in desperate need of God. Yet even most biblical Christians still hold to an immortal soul. Such is our power to deceive ourselves. So self-centred are we. So fearful of our creatureliness and dependence upon our Creator. So deeply do we resent that God alone is God.

Never more so than today, when heresies and cults abound, openly proclaiming the divinity of the "real" human self! Although "New Age", this is not a new doctrine of course. It is actually an essential plank of the so-called *philosophia perennis*, the "perennial philosophy". It is there in the age-old philosophical Hindu doctrine that the human self, the *atman*, is one with the Absolute *brahma*. It is there in pre-Christian Plato and especially in the later Neoplatonic doctrine that the immortal soul is our share in divinity. It is there in the ancient Stoic doctrine that the human spirit is a seed of the divine *logos* (word). And it is there in the second century A.D. Gnostic doctrine that the human soul

is the divine spark within us all, a heresy which is still often put forward by Christians as if it were orthodox Christianity.

But it is not there in the Bible. In fact, it is directly denied. According to Scripture, a human being is entirely a created being. God is Wholly Other. And it is a specific mark of God's otherness and sovereignty, his transcendence, that God "alone has immortality" (1 Timothy 1:17; 6:15-16) and that we are mortal (Psalm 146:3-4), "children of dust" (Psalm 90:3), whose breath is in our nostrils (Isaiah 2:22).

Yet through the ages Christians have taken even those very passages in Scripture which highlight our creatureliness and read into them the opposite! From early times, for

example, theologians have been standing Gen 2:7 on its head. "God formed man from the dust of the ground," says Scripture, "and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living

soul." No essential difference at all is implied here between humans and the animals (Gen 2:19, 3:19, 7:21-23)! Yet here is the great fourth century theologian, Gregory of Nazianzus (*De Orationes* 45.8,9): "[God] took the body from already existing matter and put in it a breath taken from himself which the Word knows as the intelligent soul and the image of God. This man he set upon the earth as a kind of second world... earthly and heavenly, transient, yet immortal... in process of deification by reason of his natural tendency towards God"

**Many Christians  
still do not grasp  
the difference between  
our "spirit" and God's  
Holy Spirit**

**10** What a tragedy it is that over the centuries the Christian Church has failed to teach clearly both our non-divinity and our mortality. For example, it has been common to read Paul's teaching about walking in the Spirit as though he meant our human spirit, the supposedly higher, immortal, divine principle within human nature. Many Christians still do not grasp the difference between our "spirit" and God's Holy Spirit.

Today, new forms of Gnosticism are permeating society and even invading the Church, in the form of so-called New Age thinking, rooted in the *philosophia perennis*, as re-vamped for example in the teachings of Theosophy, founded early this century by Madame Blavatsky. It is fundamental to Theosophy that we are all "Gods in the Becoming," "spiritually immortal, eternal and indestructible" (*Probing the Mysteries of Existence*, Theosophical Society N.Z., Auckland, 1988, pp.9,8). Popular today, even for many Christians, are books like *A Course in Miracles*, which rests upon the totally un-Christian premise that the only reality is spirit, that the human spirit, being a projection of God (the old Neoplatonic, Gnostic emanationism), is eternal, and that "death is the central dream from which all illusions stem" (Penguin, 1985, Vol.111, p.63). And many Christians cannot even discern the difference between such teaching and Christianity!

On the contrary, according to Scripture it is the serpent who says there is no death: "You shall not surely die" (Gen 3:4). It is God who says, "You shall surely die" (Gen 2:17). And the truth of death must be faced in its full reality, in order that we may know we are not God and so begin to become truly wise. "Show me, O Lord, my life's end and

the number of my days; let me know how fleeting is my life. . - Each man's life is but a breath... But now, Lord. What do I look for? My hope is in you." That, biblically, is true wisdom!

In fact, it is also simply common sense and, what's more, good science! And today, notwithstanding all that I've just said about New Age fashions in the world of ideas, there are also many, many people who are prepared to finally forget Plato, to face what common sense, good science and the Bible have been saying all along, and to let themselves know that death is death. And the Christian Church has nothing to say to such people, because we have been teaching them for centuries that it is intrinsic to our faith to deny that death is real!

Part Two will be in the next issue.



Pastor Warren Prestidge is the Pastor at Remuera Baptist Church in Auckland. He served as Director of Oro Bible College in the Philippines in 1995-1996 and before that was Pastor at Sunnynook Baptist (formerly Church of Christ) for 14 years.

# Advent Christian Missions New Zealand 11

**"6th KIWI WORK TEAM TO GO OVERSEAS"** was the headline in the last issue of this magazine. Since that issue went to press, we have been reminded that God knows best. The 6th Kiwi Work Team is, in fact, not now going overseas this year - its activities have been postponed for a year until December 1998! But our 6th Work Team is still going overseas - God willing - in 1998! We are trusting God that it will be "bigger and brighter" than this year's would have been.

Because of circumstances beyond the control of the Board and faculty of Oro Bible College in the Philippines, the Trust Board of Advent Christian Missions New Zealand (ACMNZ) received advice from the Director of OBO - Steve Hughes - that it would be unwise to send the Work Team in December this year as planned. The circumstances which have led to that advice involve the construction of a new church building for Maranatha Bible Church, which is located on the same property as Oro Bible College - difficulties have arisen with the financing of the project which make the tenure of the land uncertain, and the Maranatha building project itself is such that access to the site for the building the Team members were to work would have been very difficult.

Reluctantly, the Trust Board decided to postpone the Work Team for a year until the matters in contention have been resolved. But **this gives us a further year to prepare - to pray, to recruit personnel and to raise funds !!** Will you join us in those preparations? We (Advent Christian

Missions New Zealand) would like to use the extra twelve months that we now have, to bathe the project and the proposed Team in prayer - please contact any member of the Trust Board (Rob and Patricia Carr, Beryl Ching, Warwick Aldridge, Ernie and Helen Schache) and add your name to the list of those prepared to pray regularly for the Team. We will keep that **Work Team Support Team** informed of specific prayer items, progress with resolving the difficulties and details of planning, etc for the Team as it proceeds. Please do not hesitate - make contact **now!!** Our past experiences with Work Teams have proved that the more prayers, the more answers!

**In the meantime, Oro Bible College reports a record enrolment** for the new academic year which commenced in June - 28 full time students and 16 part time students make up the student body this year. The development and publicity activities of the last two years has brought wonderful results - praise the Lord for His leading of these folk to train for service!

This increased number of students brings practical problems - not the least being that our contributions to the **Blessing Fund** (which assists with the provision of food for the students and assistance for them with the cost of their college fees) have to be shared among more students. What a great problem to work on - to assist more young people train for the Lord's service!! Perhaps you would be prepared to consider this need as you seek God's will for your financial contributions to His work. We would be

12 pleased to hear from you, either directly or through your church's missions programme.

We have also been advised that the Executive Board of the Philippines Advent Christian Conference (PACCI) have approved a **Long Term Development Plan for Oro Bible College**. This exciting document identifies the needs within PACCI and sets out strategies to enable OBC to provide properly trained personnel to meet those needs.

Included in those strategies are plans to develop faculty members professional and personal abilities, establishment of a training programme for Preschool to Graduate Workers, improved methods of attracting students to the College, assistance with placement of graduates, and of course the development of the Campus and its facilities to cater for the planned increase in the number of students and for the extra courses that are proposed.

OBC's strategies are aimed at increasing the number of graduates over a range of courses to 42 in the year 2000 and from that figure to 400 in the year 2020, and to becoming accredited to provide Masters and Doctorate Degrees in Divinity by 2020. These are "*ambitious but do-able plans*" according to Steve Hughes.

There are many ways that we here in New Zealand can help with the overall programme, but the development of the

Campus is the way we have assisted in the past and is perhaps the best way we can assist in the future. The Development Plan includes a number of building projects over the next 13 years and we will shortly be receiving official requests to assist with these as they are planned and constructed. Details of these requests will be sent to members of the **Work Team Support Team** mentioned

above - join the team now - be involved with the development of OBC!

**Advent Christian Missions activities continue in many other countries around the world**, with evidence of God's blessing. There are also matters which need our continued prayers.

1. Pray that the Lord will raise up missionaries for **India**, to take over from Marion Damon and Barbara White.
2. Praise the Lord that the Advent Christian brethren in **Ghana** have found a place to worship in again.
3. Prayer for our fellow Advent Christian brothers and sisters in **Liberia** - Life continues to be very hard for them.
4. Pray for the development of recent contact with Advent Christian believers in **South Africa** - that another national mission activity may result.
5. Continue to pray for healing for BethAnn Lay - daughter of missionaries to **Japan**, Steve and Ann - her health still gives cause for concern.
6. Pray that the brethren in **Croatia** will find a building in which to meet for worship, as they have been forced from the building they have been using.

**What a great problem to work on - to assist more young people to train for the Lord's service!**

7. There is a Ministry Team (from an Advent Christian Church in Miami) in Honduras - pray for their ministry, and for missionaries for Honduras to come forward for service.

**Remember - God cannot answer prayers that are not prayed!**



**Mrs Nellie Gamayon**  
 Dean of Students at Oro Bible College, Cagayan de Oro, Philippines. Mrs Gamayon is being assisted by our contributions to the Faculty Development Scholarship Fund this year, to complete her Master of Divinity degree. Her thesis deals with "the impact the counselling office has on students".

**Mission contact numbers:**

**Advent Christian Missions NZ**

5 Humber Place, Avondale, Auckland.

email: [eschache@acmnz.pl.net](mailto:eschache@acmnz.pl.net)

Phone / fax (09) 627-9460

## What's Happening at Carey Park?



See over

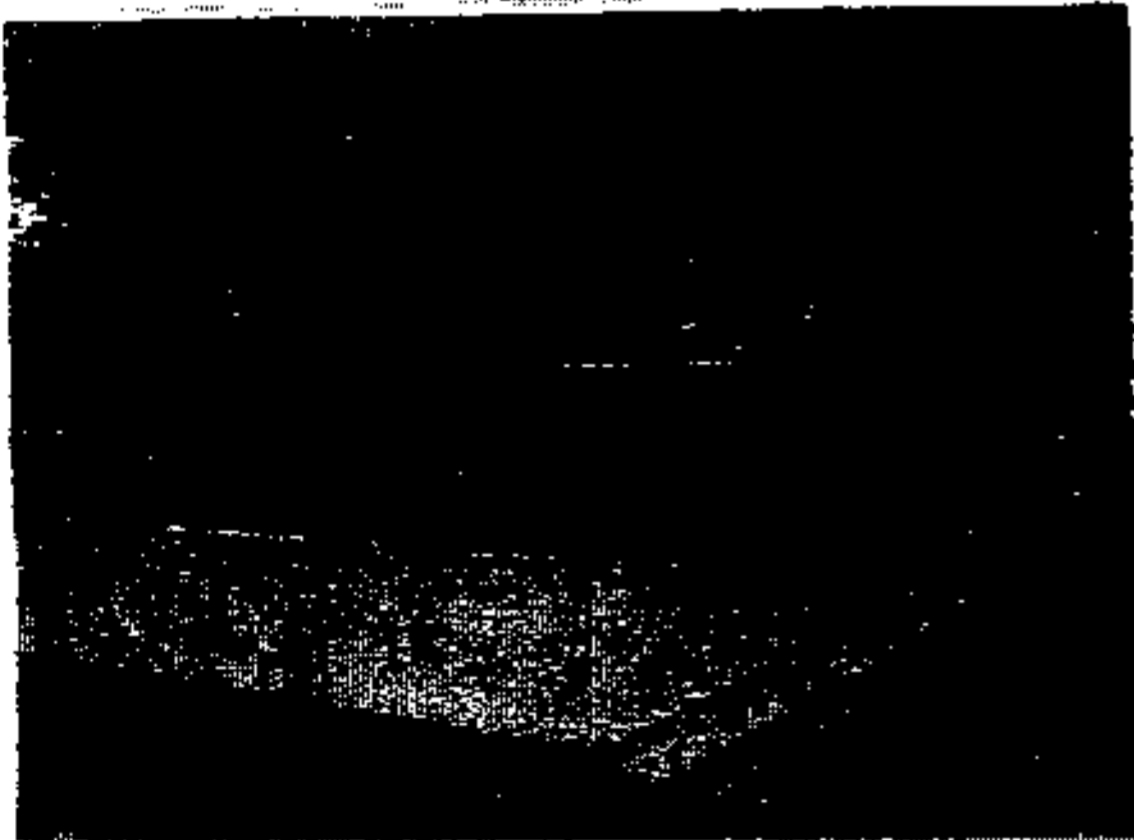


# Carey Park Christian Camp

The late "Dewdrop" property has slipped away from us - at least for the moment?? Someone else has purchased it to use as a chocolate factory, "sweet neighbours". It's fair to say we are a little disappointed, but not downhearted. We have been praying for God's answer and we've got it, so that's great. We can now get on with other things and there is plenty of those.

Our new sewerage plant is in, leaving behind a lot of mud. But it's working and we're pleased to have it done. We are applying to DOC to send our waste water across the river to be dispersed on land belonging to them but not used. **Please pray for a positive response.**

What's this you ask?



It's part of a **weather station.**

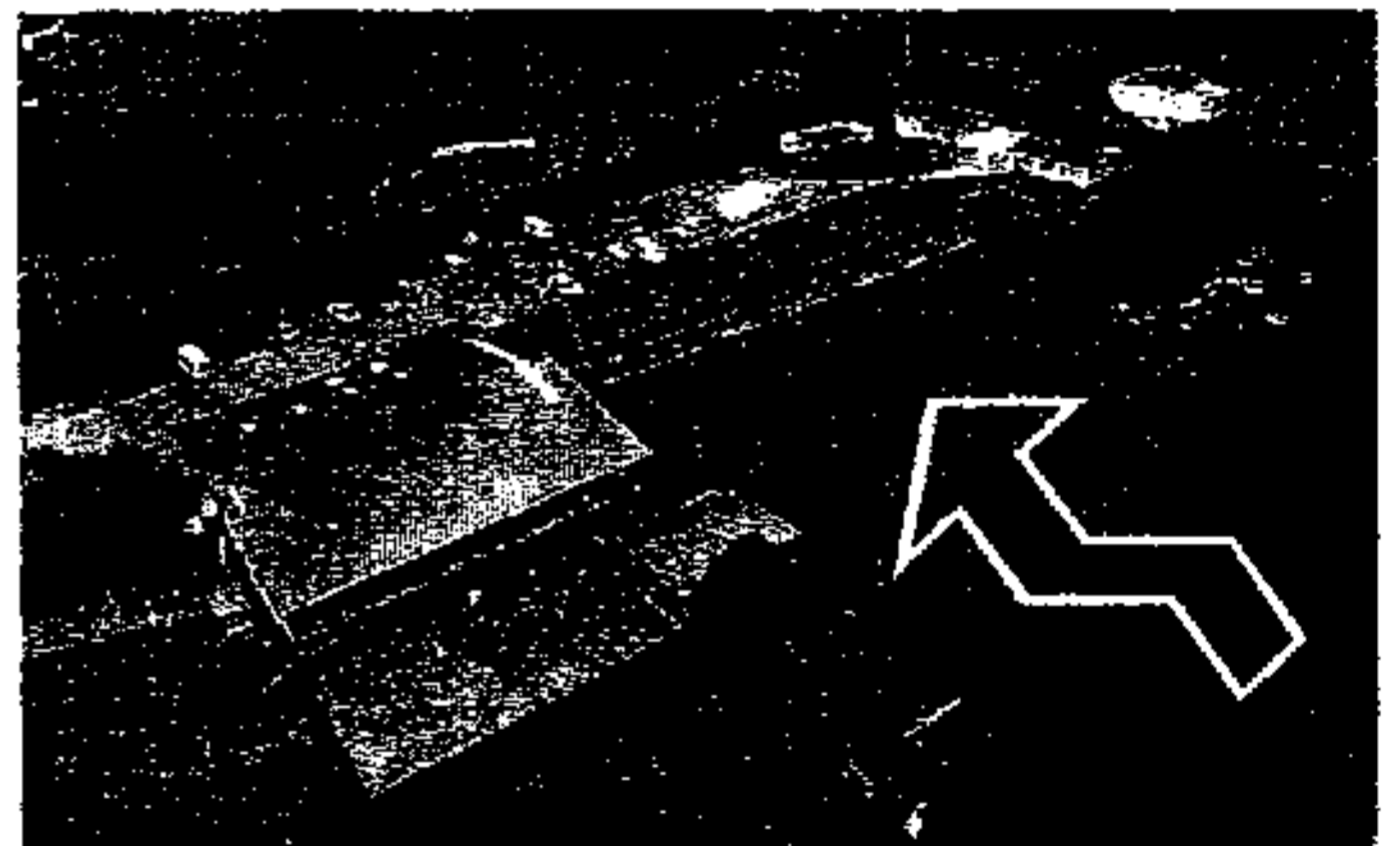
What's that got to do with Carey Park? It's part of one of our Education programmes that Anna, our school teacher on staff, is setting up for schools. It's really great and most exciting. We are working on how to surreptitiously, yet effectively, place a God-awareness part in each of these lessons. **Please pray for this and also that schools will use it.**

**Other developments at Carey Park.**

We are going to enlarge the staff

lunchroom. Our staff are getting larger - not in size but in number. We want to get on to this as soon as we get a permit.

2. We are going ahead with our **Recreation Centre!** The procedure is that we are presently preparing plans and then applying for a resource consent and building permit. If all goes well we could have it under construction before the end of the year. We will be looking for as much help as we can get in order to keep the cost down. That will mean builders, general handypersons, assistance with purchasing (Do you have



any contacts??), etc. This is a big task and one that we see as very necessary, and helpful in our growing work at CP.

The **July camp** was another great success. Kim Beale was the speaker and Bill and Beryl Ching were the Camp Grandparents. Pray for the children who were challenged, encouraged and loved in the name of Christ, that they might go on in their walk with Him.

We've joined the 'Net.

Our Website - [www.careypark.org.nz](http://www.careypark.org.nz)

Our email- [careypark@careypark.org.nz](mailto:careypark@careypark.org.nz)

Kind regards from the Board and staff.

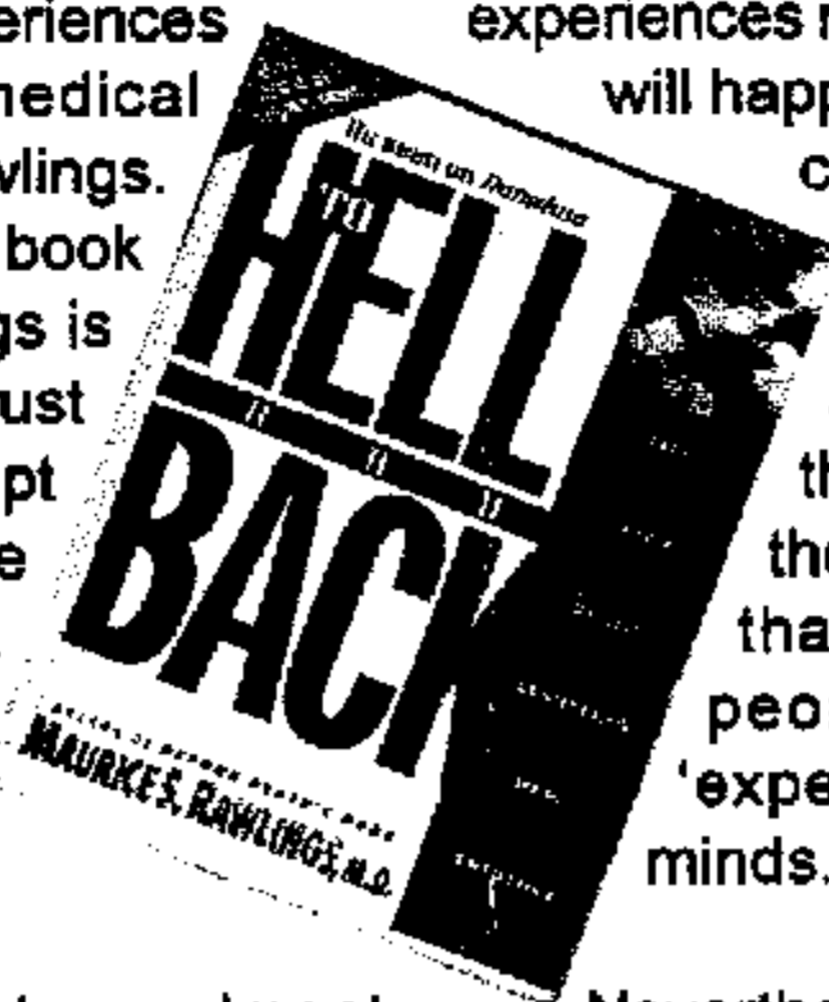
## BOOK REVIEW:

### To Hell and Back: Life After Death - Startling New Evidence.

by Maurice S. Rawlings, M.D.

Atlanta: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1993.

Joining in the current proliferation of books on Near-Death and Out-Of-Body Experiences is this book by an American medical research scientist, Dr Maurice Rawlings. It is actually a sequel to his earlier book *Beyond Death's Door*. Dr Rawlings is a committed Christian and the thrust of this book is not simply to attempt to verify NDE's, in particular the negative experiences (Hell), but also to try and establish a clear distinction between Christian and non-Christian experiences.



The preface asks why it is that we almost exclusively hear about positive experiences, which give the public the clear impression that everyone goes to 'heaven'. The answers the book offers include: our natural avoidance of the negative at times of mourning ("Have you ever heard of a hell-funeral?"); personal ego and embarrassment (people "don't want to discuss a matter that confirms ultimate failure in life"); reluctance by other researchers/ authors on the subject to "go public"; a conspiracy by adherents of the emerging "Omega" philosophy ("a religion of universal salvation where accountability of all

traditional religions will be replaced by the new global faith where god is all"); and satanic deception.

It is the last two that the book highlights. While building a reasonable case for these two factors the book fails to question an even more fundamental problem - Do any of these experiences measure up to what the Bible says will happen at death? The answer from a conditionalist perspective is clearly 'No!' The Bible teaches that humans literally 'die' not 'depart' at death. From our point of view this is obviously a serious flaw in the book. Our conclusion must be that even though many of these people are very sincere their 'experiences' happen only in their minds.

Nevertheless the book does have many good points. For a start it does question the unwitting reception of all NDE's as both positive and real. It also has some interesting discussion on humanist philosophies, and is a very readable book. However it does demonstrate what an 'advantage' conditionalists have - all this confusion, particularly amongst Christians, would be readily clarified if the Biblical teaching on the soul, the intermediate state, and the judgment of God were accepted.

Carl Josephson

## Editorial.

Apologies for ALL the mistakes in the last issue! It really was a 'shocker' as far as proof-reading goes. However the content and format are still improving!?! And in this issue we have another change in format! We are aiming to improve all the time so we are experimenting with a number of different options. Feedback is welcomed! Our aim is to make the newsletter more inviting to read so that you will **hand it on to others who might be interested**. You will have noticed we've gone to full-colour for the cover of this issue. This has been made possible because we have leased a full-colour photocopier for this and other publications.

We continue to invite letters to the editor and articles on conditional immortality (for or against!). we would also bring to your notice once more the video series we have available (see back cover). We highly recommend this series as a clear presentation of conditional immortality for all interested people.

In Christ's and your service,

Carl and Sharon Josephson

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