

Fellowship of Christian Cowboys

Spring 2021

In this Issue

Testimony of Dale Young, The President's Report, Hi Folks,
The Report, Me, God, and My Guitar, Chinook Country
Corner, Faith Building, How much Education does a Cowboy
Need, Faith Building, Night Before Christmas



Testimony of Dale Young

"Carrying the Message of Christ to the Cowboy World"

www.canadianchristiancowboys.ca

Fellowship of Christian Cowboys

“Carrying the Message of Christ to the Cowboy World”

Table of Contents

Testimony of Dale Young	1&2
President’s Report	3
The Report	4
The Benefits of Giving	5
Me, God, and My Guitar	6
Chapter Directory	7
How Long Do I have to Stay in School	8
to Be A Cowboy	
Twas The Night Before Christmas	9
Faith Building	10

Salvation Prayer

Will I go to heaven when I die? Can I have peace and blessing in my life? The answer is YES - by asking Jesus to be your Lord and Savior. Pray a prayer like this...“Dear God, I am a sinner, separated from You. I am sorry for my sins and I ask you to forgive me. I accept Jesus as my Savior and the Lord of my life. Thank you, Jesus, for dying for me on the cross so I can have peace in my life and a home in heaven to live forever with You. Help me Holy Spirit to live a life pleasing to God, my Father. In Jesus name, Amen.” If you’ve prayed this prayer, please contact anyone listed on the Directory at the back. We would love to pray with you and send you a free Cowboy Bible and some literature to help you get started on this exciting journey.

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2 Corinthians 4:6 “For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”



TESTIMONY OF DAVE YOUNG

BY DAVE YOUNG

It Should Never Amaze Us How God Works!

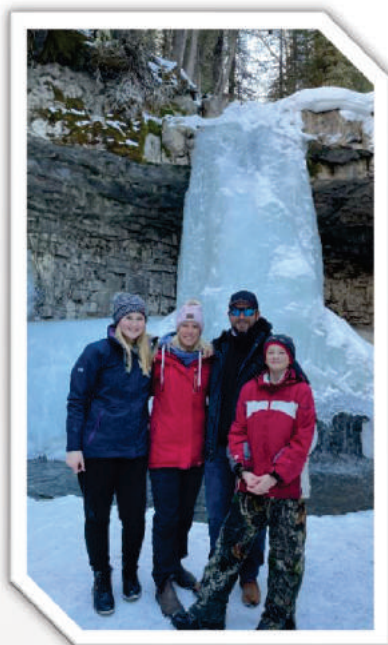
Hello Everyone I'm Dale Young, my wife Lindsay and I, along with our two kids Taya and Daxton currently live on a small ranch in the Eagle Hill community of Alberta where we have a small herd of cattle and raise horses. We also run a small trucking company where we deliver shavings to the dairy and horse industry. Most of our summers consist of traveling the pony chuckwagon circuit throughout Alberta, making stops at small towns throughout the province. God has been good to us and I'd like to share with you my story and how we got to this place in our lives. I was blessed to grow up on a ranch in Weekes Saskatchewan, where we raised cattle, horses and followed the chuckwagon circuit in eastern Saskatchewan and Manitoba. I'm so grateful I was raised in a Christian home where we were taught right from wrong, and faithfully attended church.

At a young age, I remember stealing a small toy from my cousin. This led to a discussion with my mom about sin and our sinful nature, and how we need to accept Jesus and what he did for us as the only way to be forgiven of sin. Growing up in a Christian home and being taught about God, we did all Christian things, going to Church, camp, VBS, youth group. I feel blessed that my parents made it a priority to

surround us with God-centered influences. During the summers growing up, we traveled to Saskatchewan and Manitoba with the pony chuckwagon circuits.



TESTIMONY Con't



As a kid, we competed in the gymkhana events and as soon as I was old enough I started racing the chariots and soon into the chuckwagons. With most of these events on weekends, we got involved with the cowboy church services where Lorne Bonk and a great group of friends and musicians ministered to so many. This group of "Cowboy Christians" made a lasting impression on my life and gave me role models I could look up to as a young teenager.

As life progressed I graduated from high school then went off to Nipawin Bible school for three years. I felt God calling me to be involved in ministry and an opportunity arose for me to be a youth pastor at a country church in Garrington, Alberta. I came out for an interview at the church and could tell right away that this little country church full of ranchers and farmers would be a place I could certainly fit in. But I had this big battle personally to deal with, if I step into youth ministry I would have to give up chuckwagon racing which was a huge part of my life. I struggled with the decision to accept the job or not, but I came to the conclusion that if this is what God wants me to do, then I will give up the racing.

It should never amaze us how God works, it turns out that the Church didn't feel the youth program needed to run over the summer and wondered if I would be ok with that. It was then that Psalms 37:4 has become one of my favorite verses. "Delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your Heart." I was able to work in the Church with the youth and race Chuckwagons in the summer. I had the desires of my heart.

It turns out that back then even I didn't know what my true desires were. Once I moved to Alberta I met my wife Lindsay who is such an amazing woman and has been my partner through all of life's adventures. We have been blessed with two wonderful kids, and a ranch where we have a small

herd of beef cattle and horses. We continue to travel the pony chuckwagon circuit throughout Alberta as a family, where I get to race the chuckwagons and chariots and the kids get to race their miniature chuckwagons. This year our daughter Taya was able to start racing chariots which has made it so fun watching her develop in the sport. God has blessed us as a family beyond anything I could have imagined. When I look at life and see all God has done for us as a family, it amazes me at the things he has put in our lives which have become our "desires". My challenge to everyone is to delight yourself in the Lord, focus on him, and it too will amaze you how full your heart will be with desires you may not even know you had.

Dale Young



Kids racing - CFR Red Deer

May looking back *in memory*
help comfort you tomorrow.

Our sympathy goes out to the family of Dave Shields who died recently in Kelowna BC. Dave rode bareback horses for many years in both amateur and professional rodeos. He is the son of John and Merna Shields who worked for this Fellowship for many years

We just received word that Terry Leslie was found dead in his yard by a neighbor. Terry was a rancher cattle buyer brand inspector and a preacher of the Gospel. He served on the board of directors for Alberta and Canadian Chapters of the FCC for many years. Our condolences go out to family and friends. We will miss him.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Trust in the Lord with all your heart,
and don't lean on your own understanding.

In all your ways acknowledge him,
and he will make your paths straight.

It's been sometime since our last magazine, and there are folks still feeling the effects of a hot, dry summer. This is reflected in the price of hay. The Lord has blessed us with a bountiful hay crop this year and it is my prayer that you can get what you need to sustain your cattle throughout this winter. It would also be easier to manage if the cattle prices were higher but we all know, "The Lord shall supply all my needs according to His riches in heaven" (a little tune that just came to mind). We've been here before, and life will continue to throw things our way, so we just need to be trusting in the Lord!! The rain we had in late fall extended the life of the pastures and will help with the spring growth. There is always hope!

It's really troubling to me that pastors are being thrown in jail...one would think that this wouldn't happen in our country. We as Christians, have been watching the decline of values in this country for years and more and more people are walking away from God and Christian values, but come on throwing pastors in jail?

The heading in my Bible for Luke 21: 12 says "Signs of the Times". These are Jesus' words, "But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons." I looked up the word synagogues, and they were places they held prisoners before their trial....kinda like the remand centers of today. Continuing on, "You will be brought before kings and rulers for my sake".

I have heard both sides of this, some Christians think that Pastors should keep their church doors closed while others fully support keeping them open. The next verse (13) says, "But it will turn out for you, as an occasion for testimony". What's this testimony, you may ask? All these pastors that have kept their churches open even though all the prosecution have seen their numbers grow greatly and have been a beacon of light for those who are struggling mentally, physically, and financially through this COVID.

The early church was under constant persecution and yet they added to their numbers all the time. Luke 21:16 tells of the division of family and friends and we are seeing a lot of this these days. Many don't agree with Pastors keeping their doors open and believe it's being a poor witness in their communities, it makes people hate the church, thinking they don't care about people. In Luke 21:17 Jesus says, "And you will be hated for my name's sake". James 4:4 is a harsh reality, "Whoever, therefore, wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God".

The sad thing is that many of the small rural churches that have been closed, may never open again and the use of the internet through YouTube and Zoom will make it much harder to get everyone back into the pews of all churches. I have also heard many Christians say that we are living in the end times, if so, you better make good use of your time and get out on that street corner and preach the message of Christ, getting as many saved as you can. (Mat 28:20, The Great

Commission) There have been many signs that lead one to believe this.... but we do not know the hour or the day as the Bible tells us. Just about every generation has thought this. We as Christians just need to continue to worship the Lord and be a witness for Him, sharing Christ with whom we can. He will return when He returns, and it will be better if He finds us doing his work!

I have found that many people are searching for answers, and we must make use of these opportunities. I also feel it's important to talk with your local MLA's and MP's, if you don't know what to say, at least let them know, you are praying for them and the decisions they need to make. Don't bother calling if all you want to do is yell at them. I have had some great talks with the politicians around here. If we don't tell them of our values, how are they to know? Family values in political parties seem to be less and less of a priority so we need to speak up. I think of the future of my kids and grandkids and am concerned as to what that may look like. It comes down to this; this is the time that Christians need to unite not divide because a kingdom divided against itself will not stand, as it states in Luke 11:17.

I recently heard that Italy has passed a law stating that no one is allowed to preach from the first book of the Bible; Genesis, because it contradicts with the gender laws previously passed through their parliament. If you're caught. they will throw you in prison. Rome, Italy is where the Vatican is, the Holy place for the Catholics, While Paul was a prisoner in Rome, he wrote many books of the New Testament and now they want to ban God's word. Folks. We need to wake up as these gender laws are being passed all over the world, even in our own country!!

It makes me think of Jesus' words, "forgive them father for they do not know what they do." We need to be praying for our country and its leaders because we have the power to change things. "If my people who are called by My name will humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways. Then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land. Now My eyes will be open and My ears attentive to prayer made in this place," 2 Chronicles 7:14,15. Verse 14 says "if" and verse 15 says "now", so when we do the "if", God will do the "Now"!

Even though there hasn't been much happening in regards to chapter ministry, we are always here to offer a word of encouragement and prayer (list of directors on magazine and website.) Saskatchewan had lightened some of its COVID restrictions and the MHSRA had their Finals there at the end of July in which the All-Around Cowboy and Cowgirl Trophy Bibles in both divisions were presented on our behalf. We, the Canadian board held our AGM on Nov. 18th, through Zoom. We got through the business side of things in a timely manner and then had an awesome time of fellowship and prayer. So much so, that we decided to get together through Zoom every month for prayer over our country and other needs as they arrive.



In closing, I am saddened to say that a friend and former FCC Director; Bill Unger passed away in early September.

Blessed are those who trust in the Lord,
Terry Baker

REPORT

FROM JOHN FITZHERBERT

Hi Folks.

We had the hottest summer that I can remember. We had two rains in High River, one inch in July and about three inches one night in August. The hay was very poor in most fields; a lot of the crops only got a foot high and were cut for feed or silage. South and east of town were the worst while north and west crops were much better. During the first week of December we had terrible winds that blew down trees and did damage to fences and buildings. Along with the wind there was a wild fire in the foothills of the mountains, luckily it was put out quite soon (with that 100 km. wind it had to be the Lord that extinguished that fire!). Roads were closed as it was too dangerous for vehicles to travel. These are very tough times for many people and even worse if you don't have Jesus as Lord and Saviour. He promised to never leave us or forsake us.



In the early eighties we had the same situation, no feed for the cattle and very little grain. I helped do Cowboy Church at Ivan Daines Country Music Picnic, in August of that year where I met a young Christian man who

farmed that area. They had wonderful green crops, so I asked him if he knew where I could bale some straw later in the year, he said I am a custom baler, come and bale for me and you can take all the straw you need.

In September I loaded my tractor and baler and went to his place close to Innisfail. I baled 1000 bales of nice green straw. He found a trucker there who hauled 300 bales to my place for \$10.00 a bale; I had a bin of barley so my cows came thru the winter in good shape. That is just one time when the Lord has met my needs. Ask Him, He will provide.

In 2020 we had one rodeo Cowboy Church that was an, Old Timers Rodeo in Claresholm; I think people missed us because the response to the Word was really good. We have had a few services this year but nothing like it used to be before COVID hit. We are still giving trophy Bibles to Cowboy and some places Cowgirl of the year when they are having a Finals rodeo. We didn't give out any last year because of no Finals.

As I write this the Government has put restrictions on us again, to try and stop the spread of this plague. In Alberta we are wearing masks again and limiting the number of people who can gather in one place, some business places won't let you in unless you are vaccinated.

This is a very hard time for the leaders of our provinces if they shut things down people are angry; if they don't shut things down

people are angry. I don't know what they are supposed to do, they can't make people happy. This is not just in Alberta or Canada, it's all over the world.

Some Senators and leaders in the USA are praying to God for an end to this situation, but I don't hear of any prayer going up from our Canadian leaders. When they don't pray I think it is our responsibility to do it.

1 Timothy 2:1-2 tells us to pray for those in authority over us.

Vaccine passports are all the talk now whether it is a card or something on your phone, I wonder how long till it will be a mark on our forehead or on our right hand as spoken of in Revelations 13:16. Not the mark of the beast, we're not ready for that yet but it could be a forerunner. I will put in a few scriptures concerning the mark, this takes place after the beast has control and after the rapture that takes born again Christians out of this world. Revelations 13:16-18 And he causes all, small and the great and the rich and the poor, and the freemen and slaves, to be given a mark on their right hand, or on their forehead, and he provides that no one should be able to buy and sell, except the one who has the mark, either the name of the beast or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for the number is that of a man and his number is six hundred and sixty-six.

God gives us a warning about this mark in Revelations 14:9-11 And another angel, a third one followed them saying with a loud voice, If anyone worships the beast and his image and receives a mark on his forehead or upon his hand he will also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of his anger, and he will be tormented with Fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the LAMB, And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever; and they have no rest day and night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receives the mark of his name.

God makes it very clear what will happen to anyone who takes that mark, they will end up in Hell. I don't think we will have to make that decision as I wrote before, but if the choice comes we must say no, and God will take care of us. Keep praying for this plague to end and keep looking up. Jesus could come Just Any Day.

God's Blessings on You All

John FitzHerbert

The Benefits of Giving

By John FitzHerbert



COVID-19 seems to continue to thrive in Canada. I thought it would be a good time to look and see what God has promised us about healing.

In Matthew 10:8: He gave the disciples instructions what to do: Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons, freely you have received, freely give. When Jesus was on the earth he healed many people, this is one of the things that drew people to him. He used different ways to do it.

Mark 1:40-42: and a leper came to him beseeching him and falling on his knees before him and saying to him, "if you are willing, you can make me clean. And moved with compassion, he stretched out his hand, and touched and said to him, I am willing; be cleansed. And immediately the leprosy left him and he was cleansed. This time Jesus put his hand on the person that needed a healing.

Mark 2: A paralytic man was let down through the roof because of the crowd, Jesus said to him, I say to you, rise take up your pallet and go home. This time Jesus just spoke to the person that needed healing.

Mark 3: Jesus was in the synagogue where there was a man with a withered hand **Mark 3:3:** and he said to the man with the withered hand, rise and come forward! And he said to them, is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save a life or to kill? But they kept silent. Jesus said to the man stretch out your hand, and he stretched it out and his hand was restored. This time Jesus had the person that needed healing to do something. Another example is found in Mark 6:56. And wherever he entered villages or cities or country side, they were laying the sick in the market places, and entreating him that they might just touch the fringe of his cloak: and as many as touched it were being cured. Again, this time people who needed healing simply had to touch his cloak.

Mark 16:15: Gives us some special instructions that I believe still work today. Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned. And these signs will accompany those who have believed; in my name they will cast out demons, they will speak with new tongues, they will pick up serpents and if they drink any deadly poison, it shall not hurt them: they will lay hands on the sick and they will recover.

Wow there is God's power given to men if they will believe, it makes me want to go to the hospital and lay hands on the sick and watch them recover. In all the scriptures I used we can see that people had the faith to be healed, some people are healed who

THANK GOD FOR THE GIFT OF POWER HE HAS GIVEN US.

have no faith in God (The Unsaved) most times I find it is the people who are saved and looking to the Lord for a healing.

Mark 6: tells us of Jesus going to his home town where the people took offence at him, because they had seen him growing up and did not believe he was the Son of God. Some people today do not believe in the healing power of God even though they are born again they say that gift stopped when the disciples died. A man told me we don't need God to heal us anymore because we have such wonderful doctors, science and drugs. In May of this year my back got terribly sore I went to the chiropractor three times but it just got worse. I went to my Grandson-in-law who is a physiotherapist. He diagnosed me with a bulging disc in my lower back, gave me some needles in my hip and told me I could be healed but it would take a minimum of six months doing exercises and getting needles. I went to see him twice and was getting a lot better. With man it might take six months, but with God it only took two weeks, I was totally and wonderfully healed, Praise the Lord.

We have looked at just a few scriptures on healing this time so how do we put this all together and receive a healing. James gives us some good instruction. **James 5:13:** Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praises. Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer offered in faith will restore the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up, and if he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him.

Therefore, confess your sins to one another, so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much. Some of you will say I don't have a church how can I do that. The answer to that is: I am an officer in The Fellowship of Christian Cowboys, I have been asked many times to pray for people who are sick. If I can touch them I will anoint them with oil, lay hands on them and pray for their healing. If they are not present I just pray in faith believing for their healing. Some people have been miraculously healed. Some not but I have to leave that with the Lord.

One more story; Phil Doan and I were at a Cowboy meeting in B.C. in the Peace country, a couple who had been married some time came and told us they had no children and asked if we would pray. We anointed them with oil and prayed. I went back one year later and they had a beautiful baby, this went on till they had three children, she asked if I would pray for this blessing to stop. I said no but they didn't have any more babies.

So, do what God said, pray for the sick and thank God for GIVING us the gift of healing.

More next time

John FitzHerbert

Just Me, God and My Guitar

I've had choices

Since the day that I was born

There were voices

That told me right from wrong

If I'd have listened

I wouldn't be here today

Living and dying

With the choices, I've made.

I know this isn't what you would call a "gospel" song; it's a song about consequences. We teach our children about God's love and God's forgiveness, but we don't teach them about the consequences of sin. That thing about the sins of the father being visited on the children to the third and fourth generation. (Exo. 20:5 and Exo. 34:7)

In late June of 1974, a little girl was born at the Salvation Army's Grace Hospital. I should have been a father to that little girl but she left that hospital

with parents she had never met.

In the fall of 76, I gave my life to Jesus, and I will never forget my first Thanksgiving. Thankful for something besides an extra day off (an extra day to party). And I'll never forget my first communion. This is my body broke for you.....and it seemed that my name was whispered, this is my blood shed for you.....and again my name was whispered. And I'll never forget my first Christmas. I was sitting in a pew watching the children's Christmas program, and there was this little girl, and she kept hiding behind her billowy skirt, and I suddenly realized that this could be my daughter and I wouldn't even know it, and I began to hurt.

I got married, and our first child was a little girl, and she began to teach me what my sin had cost me, and as she grows she continues to teach me, and I continue to hurt. Well, kids grow up and our son and daughter-in-law presented us with our first grandchild. You guessed it, a little girl. She was three months, nine days old the first time they entrusted us alone with her while they ran out for a quick anniversary supper. Her mother had fed her before they left, and she was starting to get antsy. She wouldn't take a bottle, and my wife and I were down on the floor trying to distract her because we didn't want her howling when they arrived. I mean how would that look. Can't even look after the wee thing for a couple of hours. Well they came back, and they entered the breezeway laughing and talking loud like young people in love do, and when that little girl heard them she turned her head and let out the biggest beller that you could imagine, and I began to learn what my sin had cost my little girl and I developed another hurt.

I know I'm forgiven, but I still hurt.

"If I'd have listened"

Canadian Fellowship of Christian Cowboys

Chapter Directory 2021



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*“Carrying the
Message of Christ
to the Cowboy World”*

How Long do I Have to Stay in School to be a Cowboy?

My mother tells me that I was still in grade one when I asked her how long I had to stay in school to be a cowboy. I don't know what her answer was but I have arrived at my own; a lifetime!

My earliest memories (sometimes I don't know if these are real memories or implanted ones from stories being repeated) are of horses, cows, goats, pigs, dogs and the rest of the menagerie of livestock that have filled my life.

I am happiest when working with animals, and most often prefer animals to humans, and the older I get the more I have come to appreciate real "stockmen". Those are the men and women who look out for livestock no matter the situation. I transported a friend's longhorn calves to the Dogpound Stampede for their ranch rodeo calf branding and was impressed when a young fellow pulled up because he had high-hocked a calf. The calf was more important than winning.

And I've really come to appreciate those who show up to work, and not those who show up for the glory. You know those people who arrive at the branding pen who have to show off their skills so they spin their horse for a warmup exercise but don't know how to make him plant a foot and when they enter the pen their horse doesn't know if he's a reining horse or a cowpony.

I've heard it said that you only get one good horse in a lifetime, but for me, that's not been true. I've not only had many good horses but some exceptional ones. Ones that when cutting a breakaway animal could turn out from under you, horses that when pulling on the saddle horn would break 3/8 ropes, and ones that when picking up at a rodeo or in the practice pen, would head into any kind of wreck and could pin a horse to the fence so that a rider could be saved.

I remember one night at a practice at Olds College, someone had taken the paving stones out that separated the area fence from the stands so all you had was 2W panels standing on dirt which meant they were movable. They had left about eighteen inches for a walkway. There was this little kid (still in diapers) walking along the pathway and his mother was walking along the top of the bleachers.

Northcotts had brought in a pen of older bull to "warm" them up for rodeo season, and this one big beautiful specimen had done his thing and was doing his victory lap when he saw the kid.

His first charge moved the fence about a foot. I was riding a big red roan Hanoverian cross who had started his career as a bareback horse with the Pengelly Rodeo Company. He nailed that bull at the shoulder and drove him off that kid. We took a hooking but the kid was unhurt. Scared, crying but unhurt. Whenever I think of that moment, my insides start to tremble, my hands start to shake, tears roll from my eyes and I thank God for that horse.

My life as a Christian has been a lot like my life as a cowboy. It's a lifelong education. I grew up in what was called a Christian home, but it was more about do's and don'ts than about doing things out of love, and as I grew up it became more "do what I say, not what I do". Needless to say, when I left home I left "religion". I not only left, I went wild, and by the time I was 24 I was done. I shook so bad I needed two hands to bring a cup to my mouth. I was in no shape to work. I couldn't stand people. I was done.

I had an uncle I had always respected and he invited me over for a chat. It turned out to be more of a lecture than a chat, but I guess I was broken enough to listen. He told me a lot of things that day, but the important one was that I had a choice to make. I could keep going the way I was or I could change. Jesus was there to help if I wanted his help. I guess I saw how I had run things and how they turned out, so I said a very simple prayer. Help me Jesus, and he did. My desire to drink and party was gone. I went to my uncle's church, and they welcomed me and shepherded me. I made friends. I came to learn God's guidance. I met my wife I've found that in the Christian world, just like in the cowboy world, there are those who show up for the work and those who show up for the glory. When we do the church service for the Canadian Finals Rodeo, people call to see if they can participate, yet where are they for those church services at rodeos in places like Water Valley, or Gimlet. Places most people have never heard of.

Just like with horses, I've been blessed to work with some of the best of Christians. People who are invested in my walk with our heavenly father. People who have made me a better person, a better Christian, a better musician, and a better preacher. I used to say I sang because that way I could preach without spending four years in seminary, but I love preaching as much as I love music. I love being given the opportunity to share the God who set my life in order.

I have been blessed with a "good" wife, and unfortunately, I can't say that I have always made life easy for her. The consequences of sin last a lifetime, but God is faithful and has helped her to endure.

I would like to end by thanking God. Thank him for loving me when I loved only myself. Thank him for the people he has let me work alongside. Musicians who are world-class when at best I just beat on a guitar. A wife who's not only a wife but about the best harmony singer I've ever heard. She makes anyone sound better. Friends, preachers, and teachers who not only challenge me to be better but have the guts to confront me when I'm off track. Not always an easy task.

But most of all I'd like to thank God for just being who he is.

Marvin Engel



'Twas the Night Before Jesus Came

**'Twas the night before Jesus came and all through the house
Not a creature was praying, not one in the house.
Their Bibles were lain on the shelf without care
In hopes that Jesus would not come there.**

**The children were dressing to crawl into bed,
Not once ever kneeling or bowing a head.
And Mom in her rocker with baby on her lap
Was watching the Late Show while I took a nap.**

**When out of the East there arose such a clatter,
I sprang to my feet to see what was The matter.
Away to the window I flew like a flash
Tore open the shutters and threw up the sash!**

**When whatto my wondering eyes should appear
But angels proclaiming that Jesus was here.
With a light like the sun sending forth a bright ray
I knew in a moment this must be The Day!**

**The light of His face made me cover my head
It was Jesus! Returning just like He had said.
And though I possessed worldly wisdom and wealth
I cried when I saw Him in spite of myself.**

**In the Book of Life which He held in His Hand
Was written the name of every saved man.
He spoke not a word as He searched for my name;
When He said "It's not here" My head hung in shame!**

**The people whose names had been written with love
He gathered to take to His Father above.
With those who were ready He rose without a sound
While all the rest were left standing around.**

**I fell to my knees, but it was too late;
I had waited too long and this sealed my fate.
I stood and I cried as they rose out of sight;
Oh, if only I had been ready tonight.**

**In the words of this poem the meaning is clear;
The coming of Jesus is drawing near.
There's only one life and when comes the last call
We'll find that the Bible was true after ALL!**

Source unknown

Faith Building

What exactly is faith and how important is it in our daily lives?

First let's look at what is often times referred to as the faith chapter. Heb 11:1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Here we see that faith is referred to as a substance. Miriam Webster Dictionary defines it as a physical material from which something is made or which has discreet existence. What do we think of when we think of a substance. Wouldn't we think of it as something we can see or feel something physical. The Greek word used here describes just that, a confidence in a person or something. The verse goes on to tell us that it is also the evidence of things unseen. The Greek word used here is a proof or a conviction. So how do we grow our faith into becoming a substance, something tangible or how do we make it something we can prove?

The scriptures themselves answer us as they should. Rom 10:17 So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. Col 2:6 As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, (by faith) so walk ye in him: Col 2:7 Rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving Col 2:8 Be careful not to let anyone rob you of this faith through a shallow and misleading philosophy. Such a person follows human traditions and the world's way of doing things rather than following Christ.

Our faith comes by hearing God's word and the countless stories of faith that are recorded in God's word. Peter writes in his second epistle the importance of reminding each other of the teachings of Christ. That is how we are taught our faith by hearing over and over God's words. We are taught by God's word that it is the same faith that we used to believe in Jesus, his life death and resurrection for our salvation. In the same manner our faith needs to help us become rooted and established in Him as we are taught. It does not grow because we earn it or deserve it or achieve man made goals. No faith is a gift of God. Eph 2:8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Eph 2:9 Not of works, lest any man should boast. Faith and belief work hand in hand together. We read in the scriptures that God is so good to us that he doesn't even mind if we ask for His help in believing. Mar 9:24 And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief. This is a reminder that God looks on our hearts, thankfully not upon our physical responses or reactions. **HE LOVES US THAT MUCH.**

So then could we not state that we grow our faith by the reading of biblical faith building examples. So, with that in mind let us examine just a few of these stories.

Rom 4:18 When there was nothing left to hope for, Abraham still hoped and believed. As a result, he became a father of many nations, as he had been told: "That is how many descendants you will have."

Rom 4:19 Abraham didn't weaken. Through faith he regarded the facts: His body was already as good as dead now that he was about a hundred years old, and Sarah was unable to have children.

Rom 4:20 He didn't doubt God's promise out of a lack of faith. Instead, giving honor to God for the promise, he became strong because of faith.

Rom 4:21 and was absolutely confident that God would do what he promised.

Rom 4:22 That is why his faith was regarded as God's approval of him.

Rom 4:23 But the words "his faith was regarded as God's approval of him" were written not only for him Rom 4:24 but also for us.

Our faith will be regarded as God's approval of us who believe in the one who brought Jesus, our Lord, back to life.

Rom 4:25 Jesus, our Lord, was handed over to death because of our failures and was brought back to life so that we could receive God's approval.

In this bible story we are told that Abraham (the father of faith) believed God against all physical evidence. Whatever his encounter with God was whether in a dream or vision or still small voice, he refused to doubt God's promise to him. He made the choice to believe God even though everything around him pointed at the impossibility of it happening. I am so happy that we serve the God of the impossible. We too must learn to believe God for all the wonderful promises He makes us throughout His word.

Beginning in the 5th chapter of Genesis we read the account of Noah. Noah exhibited his faith in God by being obedient to God and for approximately 100 years building an ark to save his family from impending doom. Although at that time it had not even rained a wee bit, Noah went ahead in faith and built the ark. Noah like Abraham chose to believe God even though there was zero possibility of something like that happening.

We can all learn from these men of faith and learn the hard lesson of trusting God even when things seem impossible. We know for a certainty that the consequences, had Noah not believed God and in obedience built the ark would have been very dire. It behooves us to grow our faith in whatever ways we can so that we too can build the ark of God's safety whatever that may look like for us and our loved ones.

To answer the opening question, faith is the gift God gives us to believe His Word thereby generating tremendous hope in those promises and teaching us to trust Him completely as Abraham and Noah and many others have done throughout biblical history. There are many other faiths building examples that we could look into to help grow our faith. Gideon by faith trusting that God would grant him victory over their enemies even though God showed told him to severely deplete his army. God assured him that HE would provide the victory. David by faith refusing to take Saul's life when presented with the opportunity even though it would have made his life so much easier. He learned as many others have that God's ways, even though they may not seem like it, is far better than ours. Esther shows us that by faith and hope and trust we can face down our fears which are very legitimate and make the right decision.

Growing our faith grows our hope and our ability to trust God, all of which are very important and needed in our everyday walk of obedience.

Brian Naughton