

## HOW GOD TURNED TRAGEDY INTO BLESSING

Kurt Picker, Grace Chapel Church of Christ, Cummings, GA.

On Saturday, December 25th, 2004 at 7:58 PM (EST), most of us were cleaning up after another wonderful Christmas day celebration. Half way around the world it was already Sunday morning and the time was 6:28 AM in the city of Ongole, India. Near the Bay of Bengal, the Chintapalli family was up and preparing for another day of worship with the church they had faithfully started several years earlier after being taught the Gospel by Brother J.C Bailey. The members of that church and the Grace Chapel Church of Christ in Cumming, Georgia had no idea what had just happened nor the effect it would have on both congregations. Off the West Coast of Northern Sumatra an earthquake had just occurred and a Tsunami of epic proportions was about to devastate the lives of millions of people in that entire area of the world.



By Sunday morning, churches in America were hearing the horror stories of families being washed out to sea and hundreds of thousands of unsuspecting people losing everything and many their very lives. Prayers were being offered by Christians all around the world and the images we began to see of devastation and death were almost unbearable. By the next Sunday many churches were taking up special contributions to send aid and assistance to those who were suffering such great loss. The Grace Chapel church collected over \$30,000 and began trying to find the best way to send support directly to those in need.

## HOW GOD TURNED TRAGEDY INTO BLESSING, P.2

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One of the members at Grace Chapel, shared with the elders her involvement with the Chintapalli family that began several years earlier as her Mother had developed a relationship with the Ongole church through her work with "World Bible School." Communication began with the Chintappali family and found the need in the coastal villages to be overwhelming. Every day children who had lost their parents were being brought to the church in Ongole. Pure religion was a necessity as widows and orphans were coming to the church in desperate need of help. With over 50 children to care for and several widows who had lost their families, it seemed an obvious place to send the money for the most immediate relief.

The church in Georgia certainly felt blessed to be able to help, but the tragic news stories eventually went away and life seemed to go on. But through those tragic events, a bond began to develop between these two congregations. God had a much greater blessing in mind. Separated by 9,000 miles, the love of Christ began to build a bridge that has united these two works for eternity.

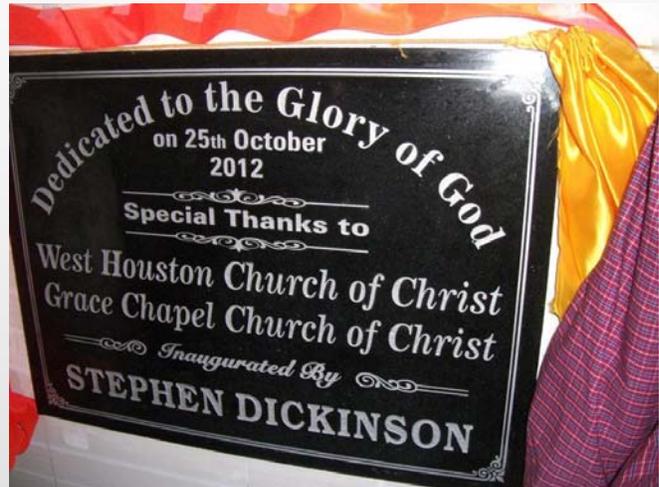
Funds were eventually raised with the generous help of the Whites Ferry Road Church to build an orphanage in Ongole. It is now filled to over capacity with over 100 children; each being supported by \$60 per month from Christians in America.



The Ongole church has become a place of refuge for orphans, widows, the poor and the suffering. With generous contributions from individuals and the West Houston and Grace Chapel churches, funding was provided for the construction of a new 5 story church building and addition to the orphanage that was just completed and dedicated in October 2012.

## HOW GOD TURNED TRAGEDY INTO BLESSING, P.3

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Two leper colonies are now being supported with the basic needs of life...food, clothes and medicine. Several have come to know Christ as they have seen Him in the lives of Christians who they don't even know. Jesus said, "As you have done it unto the least of these, you have done it unto me."



And so the greatest blessing that has come from this tragedy is the spread of the Gospel. The Chintappali family calls it "fishing"...the new kind the disciples had learned from Jesus...becoming fishers of men. Venkata Rao, his wife Loxmi, their sons and their wives, Rama and Udaya, Kalyan and Raga have strategically lived their lives with the single mission of seeking and saving the lost.

## HOW GOD TURNED TRAGEDY INTO BLESSING, P.4

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Loxmi became a Christian after attending a Gospel meeting led by Brother J. C. Bailey, a missionary from Canada, and then brought her husband Vinkata Rao to the Lord. Arranged marriages are common in their culture. So...they arranged for their sons to marry sisters who are Christians. They also made prayerful plans for Rama, the older son, to preach the Gospel and Kalyan, their younger son, to go to school and eventually move to United States to help provide funds for the spreading of the Gospel in India. Rama attended a preaching school and has become a powerful preacher of the Gospel following in his father's footsteps and Kalyan has become a physical therapist living in Michigan telling anyone who will listen about the great door of opportunity that God has opened in India. Through the efforts of this evangelistic family, over 3,000 have been brought to Christ. That's some great fishing!

### The Chintappali Family



**Loxmi & Vinkata Rao**



**Udaya & Rama**



**Raga & Kalyan**

## HOW GOD TURNED TRAGEDY INTO BLESSING, P.5

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In 2006, members from Grace Chapel began organizing mission trips to go and encourage this family, spend time with the children and preach the gospel. Since this partnership began, 10 groups have gone to India on mission trips and during the last 6 years over 1,600 have been baptized into Christ. The need for a preaching school became obvious as converts from these surrounding villages needed men to develop churches and help to mature new Christians.

In Jan. 2007 the WINGS Bible School began with an extensive 2 year Bible Curriculum and 100+ men have now completed their studies. Proudly receiving their diplomas, these graduates are now preaching the Gospel. The school currently has 50 men who are going through this excellent program that has now been fully accredited by India. There is currently a waiting list of men wanting to enter the program and every year 25 to 30 men graduate and a new class begins. The good news of the WINGS Bible School has spread and a large number of men near the major city of Vijayawada are asking for help in expanding the school to their area.



The fields are truly white for harvest. The good news is there are many laborers willing to go, they just need help in being sent. For just \$125 per month a preacher and his family can be supported in a village allowing him to spend his time in preaching and teaching the Gospel.

## HOW GOD TURNED TRAGEDY INTO BLESSING, P.6

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This is a picture of two children we have sponsored. This provides for their place to stay in the home, their food, clothing, education, and health care.

Below are pictures of the place Chitti lived before his parents died of Tuberculosis. His grandparents still live in this place which is actually nicer than some homes because it is constructed with bricks instead of just mud and thatch.



The poverty of the area is almost unbearable to see and yet the people have found great joy in their new lives in Christ. Great plans are being made to reach the state of Andhra Pradesh, a Province of over 80 million souls. India is the second most populated nation in the world with 1.2 billion people living on a landmass of about 1/3 the size of the US. It is predicted by 2020, that India will surpass China as the most populated nation in the world. Hinduism accounts for 80.5% of the population of India, Islam 13.5% and Christianity 2.3%.

## IMPOSSIBLE FOR EVOLUTION—SMELL

### HOW GOD TURNED TRAGEDY INTO BLESSING, CONT.

God took the tragedy of a Tsunami and turned it into a blessing for the hundreds who are coming to know Christ through the preaching of the Gospel. The door has been opened wide and many are being blessed by taking advantage of this great opportunity.

For more information contact Kurt Picker 678-852-3201 or [kpicker@gmail.com](mailto:kpicker@gmail.com)

### Foster's Home for Children

*"More than a home,  
A sanctuary."*

Placement applications accepted.  
Employment applications welcome.  
Applications and donations available  
online at  
[www.fostershome.org](http://www.fostershome.org)  
Stephenville, Texas

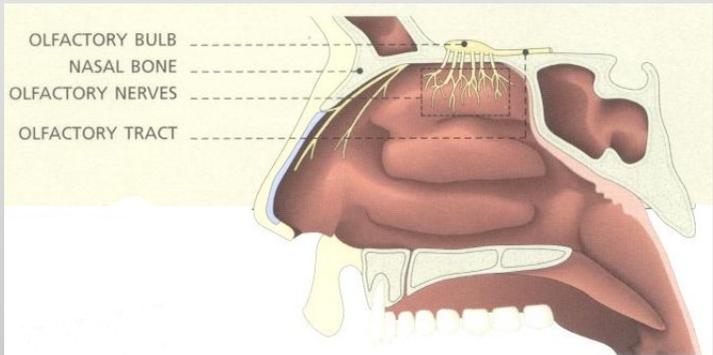
### FAILING A TEST WITH DIGNITY

What happens during puberty to a boy?

*He says goodbye to his childhood  
enters adultery.*

Smell, or olfaction is the detection and identification by sensor organs of airborne chemicals. Humans have a nasal cavity. No invertebrate has a nasal cavity. Many have receptors in various parts of their bodies.

Along the upper part of the human nasal cavity lie millions of specialized cells that are tipped with hair like olfactory receptors. When certain molecules from the air enter the nose, they hook up with specific receptors, stimulating olfactory nerves to transmit signals to the olfactory bulbs, which in turn forward the information to the brain for interpretation.



Although the olfactory cell's conversion of the airborne chemical into an electric signal, the brain's interpretation of that signal into a recognition of what the airborne chemical is, and then your brain's becoming aware of it are individually impossible for cells to chose to do for themselves; we again want to simply focus on George, one nerve cell.

This time George is an olfactory nerve cell whose job is to communicate an electric signal from one side to the other side faithfully. Not back the opposite direction or sideways. One way only. It is simply impossible for a cell to decide to do this without the instruction of a designer.

That designer is God!

## FILL-IN PREACHERS AND SPECIAL SUBJECTS

The topics presented below are existing programs intended to be available at a moment's notice. All expenses are assumed to be taken care of by the speaker unless specifically otherwise agreed in advance. The speaker's home congregation is identified for your information, but it does not imply in any way that the home congregation is responsible for the content of the lessons.

If you have one or more (max. 5) lessons you would like to present on this basis, send the information to [bbaugh@thearray.org](mailto:bbaugh@thearray.org) and we will post it.

If you are interested in using the services of one of these brothers (or sisters in the appropriate context), contact them directly. If you use one of them, we would appreciate hearing of the results.

KIRK EASON, Memorial Church of Christ,  
Sermons: "Report on the work of Southern Africa Bible College", First Five Chapters of Mark Wisdom Literature, Ephesians, Old Testament Narratives. Kirk is Director of Development for Southern Africa Bible College, cell 512-965-0382.  
[keason@southernafribiblecollege.org](mailto:keason@southernafribiblecollege.org),

BENTON F. BAUGH, Memorial Church of Christ,  
[bbaugh@thearray.org](mailto:bbaugh@thearray.org), 281-599-9914 (Engineer)  
(1) CHRISTIAN EVIDENCES (IMPOSSIBLE FOR EVOLUTION) Presentation of Biblical, scientific, and logic reasons to believe in Jehovah and Jesus. Presentation for worship service, Bible Class or youth group.  
(2) WHAT YOU HAVE TO BELIEVE TO BE AN ATHEIST A discussion of what our children are being taught as truth.

## TRANSFORMING POWER

Have you ever found yourself completely out of power? Feeling incompetent and self conscious? It happens. Even though we have the promise of transforming power from God we sometimes feel spent. Paul knew his readers would need encouragement to stay connected to the power source. Let's consider his message.

"Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit." (2 Cor. 3:17, 18)

God does the transforming into his likeness! That is work we can leave to him. Our job is to submit willingly to his discipline and purpose for our lives. Every tough decision and overwhelming task is part of our proving ground in the Spirit. Give diligence and stewardship to the tasks at hand.

Power is furnished daily. You can't store it up like a battery. Come submitted every day to the Lord and ask for his transforming power in your life. We can't rely on past power or future power – we need power for today.

Have faith that God's power is sufficient for all your needs. Paul prayed that God would give us eyes to see and wisdom to grasp God's incomparable great power. "That power is like the working of his mighty strength, which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can come." (Eph. 1:19f)

Trust that resurrection power to sustain you through the tough times. The times when our feelings don't help, move beyond feelings and trust God. He is ever present and powerful, big enough for all our needs.

Elizabeth Brown

## MISSIONARY WORK IN INDIA

Kirk Picker, minister at the Grace Chapel Church of Christ in Cumming, GA, gave a inspirational presentation on 12/3 on the amazing amount of missionary work which can be done in India for relatively limited funds. This can be a wonderful way for you to participate personally or congregation-ally in "taking the gospel to all the world"!

### God opens doors of opportunity...



### God's people respond with generosity!

#### INDIA WISH LIST

LOCAL CHURCH NEEDS	COST	AMOUNT	TOTAL
Telegu Song Books	\$2	2,000	\$4,000
Telegu Bibles	\$3	1,000	\$3,000
Telegu Sunday School materials for children	\$5	200	\$1,000
Books for WINGS Bible School Library	\$25	200	\$5,000
Telegu Bible Concordance	\$100	25	\$2,500
Communion plates (bread and juice - set of 4; 2 of each)	\$100	20	\$2,000
Widow's support in villages (Food & Cloths - \$20 per month - \$240 annually)	\$240	100	\$24,000
Lepers: Food, cloths, and medical supplies (\$25 per month - \$300 annually)	\$300	200	\$60,000
Student Preacher Support (2 year study - \$30 per month - \$360 annually)	\$360	50	\$18,000
Construction of Baptistery at existing church building	\$400	10	\$4,000
Surgery for poor church members (e.g. eye surgery, broken bones etc.)	\$500	10	\$5,000
Preachers financial support (\$100 per month - \$1,200 annually)	\$1,200	25	\$30,000
Motorcycles for preachers	\$1,500	10	\$15,000
Library for WINGS Bible School Construction	\$2,000	1	\$2,000
Establish 2 <sup>nd</sup> preachers school in W.G. District, Initial set-up costs.	\$3,000	1	\$3,000
Establish 2 <sup>nd</sup> preachers school in W.G. District - Annual Operational costs.	\$9,000	1	\$9,000
Construction of local church building with baptistery	\$20,000	8	\$160,000
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>\$347,500</b>

Make checks payable to:  
Grace Chapel Church of Christ  
6755 Majors Rd.  
Cumming, GA 30040

For more information contact Kurt Picker  
Email: [kpicker@gmail.com](mailto:kpicker@gmail.com)  
Cell: 678-852-3201

## The 69th Annual National Lectureship of Churches of Christ

March 24-28, 2013 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in downtown Houston, Texas.

This lectureship was founded by late brother(s) Marshall Keeble, G. P. Bowser, R. N. Hogan and others back in 1944 and is still going strong. We would be delighted if your congregation or organization would be represented by advertising in the Lectureship's Program Book. Each year nearly 1,000 individuals from across the U.S. and outside of the country attends this great lectureship . For additional information: [www.69thnal.com](http://www.69thnal.com).

Placing an ad in the program book offers a great exposure to your congregation/organization and it also serves as a means of encouraging the lectureship. Contact Wendell Hart as indicted below to place an add in the book.

Wendell Hart, 281.804.9689, [hartw@sbcglobal.net](mailto:hartw@sbcglobal.net)

Sugar Land Church of Christ, 69th Annual National Lectureship, Program Book Coordinator

DO  
YOU  
BELIEVE  
THE  
BIBLE?

The Bible says you are to be immersed by baptism for the remission of sins—Acts 2:38

If your religious group teaches something else, you might like to visit your local Church of Christ.

The Churches of Christ attempt to speak where the Bible Speaks and remain silent where the Bible is silent. (Rev. 22:18-19)

### Quotable Quotes

Your greatest strength is often your greatest weakness also.

### MISSION WEBSITE

This mission website of the Upper Valley church of Christ, Quechee, VT is <https://sites.google.com/site/themountainlight/Home/what-s-new>

## WHAT THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IS NOT

A local group of Christians who believe that the Bible can be updated by contemporary council decisions.

A church which receives the permission from an earthly headquarters to plant a new congregation.

A church which attempts to duplicate a 19th or 20th century pattern for a church.

A church which believes you can pick and choose what part of the Bible you want to believe and follow only those parts.

A church which believes that we should judge that we are all in a community of believers as long as we say we believe in Jesus, irrespective of what we do and preach. A church which should assure all others that they are saved.

A group who makes decisions based on popularity rather than scriptural basis.

A group which simply skips over Acts 2:38.

A group which finds more convenient ways to simulate baptism.

A group which votes on what it suits them to believe and preach or a group which believes that they are still getting direct revelations from God.

A group who believes we are here to entertain ourselves.

For those bound & determined to change the church of Christ to be the Christian Church, wouldn't it be easier to simply join the Christian Church.? Is the problem that your conscience won't allow you to join the Christian Church, but if you can reduce the church of Christ to being the Christian Church you will not offend your conscience?

## WHAT THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IS

The church of Christ is a local group of Christians which try to speak where the Bible speaks and remain silent where the Bible is silent.

The church of Christ tries to reestablish the first century pattern and teaching of the New Testament era at each location.

The church of Christ tries to reestablish the scriptural organization of the church at each location.

The church of Christ has members who believe they are following the scriptural teachings as best they can.

Church of Christ members believe that we should not judge others' eternal reward, but that it is not reasonable to give comfort to others who follow their own preferences rather than teachings of the Bible.

A non-instrumental body as instruments were available in the first century and not used, and not used for several centuries.

A group who teaches Acts 2:38.

A group which teaches baptism by immersion for the remission of sins as that is what is taught in the Bible.

A group which believes all revelation was given in the first century.

A group which believes we are responsible to take the Gospel to the world.

## MONEY PAGE

### GUARANTEED CHURCH GROWTH

If your congregation does the following, BCE Publications guarantees that it will grow.

Poll your congregation three times at 6 months intervals with the following results:

- 50% of the members know who their elder is
- 50% of the members will say that a minister is their friend
- 50% of the members will say that they are uplifted by the song services
- 50% of the men will say that their input is considered before physical decisions are made
- 50% of the members will say they are an important part of the work
- 50% of the members will say they are aware of the goals of the congregation
- 50% of the members will say that they know what their part is in achieving your goals

**GUARANTEE:** For the first congregation which does this and does not grow by at least 10%, we will send \$1000 to the church related children's home of your choice in your name.

I have never met a person who said that if they did this their church would not grow. If your congregation is not growing, what have you got to lose? (Offer made since 2001)

### **IMPOSSIBLE FOR EVOLUTION?**

**We will offer \$100 to the first person who can explain how we could have violated the first law of thermodynamics and have come into existence without God.**

**We will offer \$100 to the first person who can explain how we could have violated the second law of thermodynamics and have existed forever without God. (Offer first posted 8/08)**

### **IMPOSSIBLE FOR EVOLUTION!**

This publication continues (since 1991) to make a standing offer of \$100 to the first person who can give any reason (1 or more) as to why atheistic evolution is a better explanation for the universe and/or life than creation by God, The Father of Adam, Abraham, and Jesus; as revealed in the Bible.

We will also give you \$100 if we cannot give you 12 reasons why atheistic evolution is impossible as an explanation for our existence.

We will discuss this any place, any time, and in any forum. (Offer posed since June, 1991)

### **RUN AT THE SPEED OF LIGHT:**

**We will offer \$100 to the first person who can refute the logic that a person can in fact run at the speed of light as presented in a "technical paper" on our website. This strikes at the erroneous belief that of the relativity theory based on the "constant" speed of light.**

### **THE MONEY PAGE:**

**This page may seem odd, even irreverent to offer money for something like this. It is 3 simple statements on church growth, that we cannot be here without God, and evolution is not possible. The steadfastness of putting money on the line for this is to try to be of assistance against those who would discourage church growth, believe in atheism, or promote atheistic evolution. The page is intended to be a continuing reinforcement.**

# THE CHRISTIAN ARRAY

AN E-MAGAZINE DEDICATED TO SUSTAINED SCRIPTURAL CHURCH GROWTH IN OUR GENERATION

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## AREA WIDE ACTIVITIES

**3-24/28** 69th Annual National Lectureship of Churches of Christ  
Hyatt Regency, downtown, Houston, Texas (See P. 5)  
**May 21** Foster's Home For Children Golf Tournament @ Blackhorse

**Aug 2014** Area Wide Campaign for Christ

**2nd Tues.** Preacher's Luncheon at Golden Island Buffet, 901 N. Shepherd,  
confirm with Dale Foster at [dalefost@gmail.com](mailto:dalefost@gmail.com)

**December Annual Sacred Harp Singing**

## YAHOO GROUP

*HoustonCofC is a Yahoo group hosted by Steve Sandifer [[steve.sandifer@sbcglobal.net](mailto:steve.sandifer@sbcglobal.net)] for the purpose of communicating Houston area news among the brethren. It is open to any member of the church at no cost.*

## The Christian Array Newsletter

This newsletter will be sent to members of the church on a monthly basis as an attempt to promote area wide activities and church growth. If you do not want to receive this newsletter, send an e-mail to [info@thearray.org](mailto:info@thearray.org) and it will be stopped.

If you know of anyone who would like to receive this newsletter, send their e-mail addresses to [info@thearray.org](mailto:info@thearray.org). All past copies of the newsletter can be found on the website "thearray.org".

## E-MAIL ADDRESSES

A goal of this newsletter is to develop a mailing list of as many members of the church as possible and to communicate church related information to as many members as possible. In that light, we would appreciate:

1. Your forwarding the church member e-mail addresses which you have.
2. Sending the directory of the congregation you attend or any other directories which you might have.
3. Give us an idea of how to collect church member e-mail addresses.

The Christian Array is dedicated to support the sustained scriptural growth of the churches of Christ. It is published by BCE Publications, a 501(c)(3) organization with Benton F. Baugh, Ph.D., P.E. as editor. BCE is solely responsible for the content. Any announcements, requests for publication, or comments should be e-mailed to [info@thearray.org](mailto:info@thearray.org).