

F A L L 2 0 1 4

the Good News

Learning, Living, and Sharing the Good News!



Our Mission

To so love God that we are willing to follow His will as our first priority, to seek to understand His Word accurately, and to live it fully and faithfully.

To so love one another in word and deed that all will know that we are Christ's disciples.

To so love the world that we are willing to do whatever it takes to bring people to salvation and Christian maturity.

Grace Ministry
INTERNATIONAL

True Abundance

Where I live, the season of autumn is upon us. It is a time of rich beauty and great harvest. It is a time for gathering apples, pumpkins, corn, wheat, and many more items of God's gracious goodness to us as He meets our physical needs. Already my garden is bursting with tomatoes, eggplant, basil, crookneck squash, and zucchini (oh my, the vast amounts of zucchini!).

In the same way, God meets our physical needs, He meets our spiritual needs in a most intimate and abundant way in the gift of His Spirit to us. The heart of the Christian life is the experience of the power of the holy Spirit. The holy Spirit is the empowering presence of God in Christ in us!

In This Issue

True Abundance

Chuck LaMattina explains how Christians experience true abundance through the power of the holy Spirit.

Movie Review

Carl Herkey reviews the movie "Heaven Is for Real." Is the story biblically sound?

Good News

Church leaders in Kenya and Myanmar share the grace of God at work at their recent conferences.

True Abundance, continued

It is the Spirit of God that regenerates us in the new birth (John 3:5-8), the gift proves that we are children of God, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ (Romans 8:14-17), the Spirit empowers us to serve both the church and the world (Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11), the power of the Spirit transforms us more and more into the image of Christ (2 Corinthians 3:17, 18), it is the seal or guarantee of our salvation (2 Corinthians 1:22, 23; Ephesians 1:13, 14) and the Spirit fills our lives with an abundance of fruit!

The Word of God tells us that our world is full of terrible things like adultery, idolatry, lewdness, outburst of wrath, selfish ambitions, envy, murder, and on and on (Galatians 5:19-21). But as a Christian, as a child of God, as one who is full of the Spirit of the Lord, you can bear the fruit of “*love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness,*” and “*self-control*” (Galatians 5:22, 23). All these wonderful things, the fruit of the Spirit, you can experience in your life. And you can bring this fruit of the Spirit into your home, your neighborhood, your nation, and



the world. You can make this world beautiful by your faithful walk with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Through the gift of the Spirit, the empowering presence of God in Christ is in you! Go, and make the world a more beautiful place.

Chuck LaMattina

If you have a story to tell, a question to ask, or would like to submit an article for the next issue, please contact Pam King at pamelabking@gmail.com.

The submission deadline for the winter issue is January 5, 2015.

Pam King

●●●●●●●●●● **MOVIE REVIEW** ●●●●●●●●●●**by Carl Herke**

My wife Cheryl and I recently watched the movie version of the book, "Heaven is for Real." It's about the things that a minister's four-year-old son reported seeing and experiencing while very sick on the operating table in the hospital.

I realize that the title is likely intended for those who are on the fence about the existence of God or who have decided to not believe in an afterlife with God for eternity. However, the thing that struck me most from the movie was the difficulties that the minister father, his mother, and the rest of the church faithful had in coming to terms with what the little boy shared.

I, too, found that I was very troubled with the light in which some of the things were presented. We here at Grace Ministry International strive to

be led in our beliefs based on the written Word of God first, not just on a cursory reading and understanding of the English translations put before us. We dig into the Word using Hebrew- and Greek-to-English dictionary meanings of the original text using tools such as the free eSword bible study software (www.e-sword.net). This commitment is especially put to the test when digesting popular Christian movies or books. We must not fall into the trap of simply accepting what popular Christian media or teachers present to us. We must always refer back to see how a topic fits with the Word of God.

In "Heaven is for Real," as with many other popular Christian media offerings, the subject matter is "translated on the fly" for us, often times in ways that are not consistent

with God's Word. For example, the "place" that this four year old sees or experienced is supposedly "Heaven" as per the title of the work.

In the book/movie, we have a four year old that had an out-of-body experience and reported being transported to a place which he said, when asked, looked a lot like our earth does now. He also reported having met someone who identified himself as Jesus who shared a message of peace and that no one would hurt him there. The young boy also met relatives who had died before he was born. Later he was able to recognize people he had met in photos that his father showed him.

At first glance, this subject matter tends to fly in the face of what we believe the Word

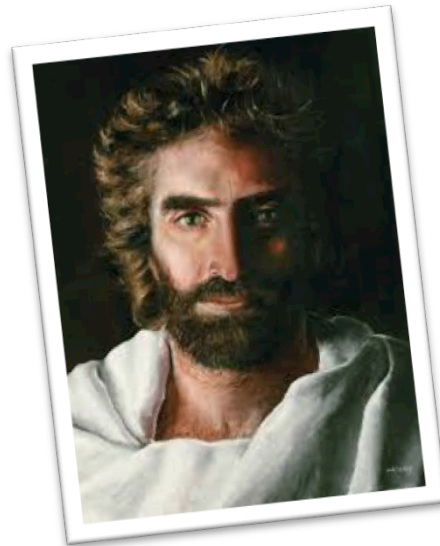
Movie Review, continued

teaches about the dead not being alive now (Ecclesiastes 9:4-6, 10; Psalms 6:5; Psalms 88:4-5, 11-12; Psalms 146:4; Psalms 104:29, 33; Psalms 30:9; Psalms 71:20; 2 Samuel 7:12; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-16; Psalms 143:3; Job 14:10-12). Believers who have died are “sleeping” in the grave until the triumphant return of our Lord Jesus Christ. When the trumpet sounds, the dead in Christ will be resurrected and caught up together with those believers still living to meet our bridegroom in the air. We will then escort him with great honor back to the earth where the Word tells us that he will initiate his 1,000-year reign over the nations of the earth. If one goes immediately to heaven upon his or her death, as popular Christianity teaches, then the question begs to be asked, what reason is there for Jesus to return?

During this time of restoration at the time of Christ’s return, God’s Word tells us in Revelation 21:1-2 that there will be a new heaven and a new earth coming, “for the first heaven and the first earth will pass away...and a new Jerusalem will come down from God out of Heaven as a bride adorned for her husband.”

In my opinion, most people who watch or read “Heaven is for Real” tend to assume that what the little boy saw was heaven in “real time” existing in a type of parallel spiritual plane. The truth of the matter is, we don’t know if God gave this boy a vision or if it was a satanic manifestation to push the idea that one lives even when they are dead. Satan can use good things to promote error.

But, if we agree that throughout the scriptures, believers have been given “visions” intended to teach, encourage, and reassure them, then perhaps God gave a vision to the little four year old. Perhaps it was a vision of a future time when the earth has been restored and the dead in Christ are spending eternity together in the kingdom of God.



So...as with any form of revelation, the question becomes, “What’s the profit for this four year old experiencing what he did?” Most people understand that this vision was given to the little boy for his benefit, however, if you watch the movie carefully and think about it, the experience regarding deceased relatives were more for the benefit (or to get the attention) of the boy’s father and mother, whose faith, it is portrayed, was in a bit of a tailspin, even as they were attempting to act as spiritual leaders and examples to their congregation.

We cannot understand all of God’s ways, and I cannot say with certainty that I know all that God was working if He was the author of this child’s vision. But whenever we need to know and understand whatever we see in this life, we must remember to filter what we see and hear through the Scriptures.

Friends, our mission in life is twofold: to study to show ourselves approved unto God, a workman that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth (1 Timothy 2:15); and then, finally, to serve one another with the wealth of blessings and understanding that we’ve been given (Galatians 5:13). I am honored and grateful to live that life of service in fellowship with each of you.

Good News From Kenya

Calvary greetings to you all in the mighty name of Jesus Christ. We had a successful and blessed but busy week of door-to-door evangelism, times of prayer, open-air crusades, and conference/meetings and teachings.

We thank the Lord for your prayers and support, which enabled this meeting to be successful. It was a blessing to the community and our county because we had policemen, village administrators, and Chiefs from six locations come to listen to the word of God.

All our pastors were in attendance, and we also had Pastor Moses Obando and his team from Tanzania. We started on Monday evening and we finished with a great open-air crusade on Sunday evening on our Market Center, where we had testimonies of healing. Twenty-eight souls then surrendered to Jesus. We have assigned our Elders and leaders to share with them and help them understand the bible and continue to know the truth. We also had holy communion and God did wonderful things to us; we had three great testimonies, from seven ladies and four men, of healing from different diseases.

Challenges? We had a great number more than any other meeting we have ever had here. Thanks for the teachings you sent. We have shared them with many here in our area. God has really opened many places for us to visit and share the gospel. May God bless each and every one for praying for this conference.

Yours in Christ,

*Pastor Peter and Caroline
Migori-Nyasoko community*



Good News From Myanmar

I praise the Lord for His wonderful guidance and blessings in our last conference, July 2 - 6, 2014. We organized this conference for Christians and non-Christians in order to help lead them to faith in the Lord.

I praise the Lord for all the provision for the conference expenses of \$1000. I congratulate and really appreciate all of our generous givers for the Lord's kingdom as they liberally sow the seed by exercising their faith. Thank God that we could provide food and drinks (breakfast, lunch, and dinner) to 100 participants for the whole five days and five nights.

Our topic or theme title was "The Empowerment of the Holy Spirit." Each day had a full schedule:

7:00 a.m. - 8:00 a.m.	Breakfast
8:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.	Teaching sessions
11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	Lunch
1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.	Teaching sessions
5:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.	Dinner
Evening	Night worship and deliverance ministry (healing prayer).

Mainly, I am the one who taught the people. I taught the subjects of the infilling of Holy Spirit, the manifestation of the Holy Spirit/the gifts of the Holy Spirit. God is so good! Four people were healed. One of them was delivered from demonic attacks. And thanks to our God, two people manifested speaking in tongues. We were filled with the presence of God in our midst. We sang, we clapped, we danced, and we prayed in tongues.

We felt the touch of the Holy Spirit. But we felt that a five-day conference is a very short time. God blessed all our activities for His glory. There is countless joy in our hearts and everyone is filled with the love of God. We want to express our heartfelt thanks to all who prayed with us. Please continue to pray for us as we are ministering in the midst of terrible persecution. To God be the glory. Amen!

*John Mark
Myanmar*

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10:30 a.m. Worship Service
Gorton Community Center
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Grace Ministry
INTERNATIONAL

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