

# Rhode Island Christian Bulletin

"For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 3:11, NKJV)

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FREE

## How to be 100 % Sure you are Going to Heaven By James Moriello

Jesus Christ said: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). Do you believe that when the Son of God said this, He was telling the truth? If you truly believe this to be true in your heart, then the Bible says that you have "passed from death into life" (John 5:24). We have in these two verses the way that you can be 100% sure you are going to heaven. First, "whoever" means everyone, including you. Second, "believes in Him" means those who approach God through His Son Jesus Christ and not another way--through another religion or through human wisdom. John 10:1-29 and 14:1-6 make this point as well. Third, "should not perish" means that those who sincerely trust Christ with their eternal destiny will not be sentenced to an eternity apart from God in hell. Fourth, since the believer has already "passed from death into life", there is a zero percent chance of the heavenly inheritance being lost. As the Bible says in another place, "If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself" (2 Tim. 2:13). For many, this sounds too easy. The reason it sounds too easy is that God made the gospel simple enough for anyone to understand. Do you think you must do something to earn God's favor? Well, there is something you must do, if you ask that question. Get your pride out of the way, "for by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works lest anyone should boast" (Eph. 2:8-9). Is it possible to make a false profession of faith? Sure it is! Stop looking at the neighbors, and look in the mirror. "Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith" (2 Cor. 13:5). If there is no fruit of godliness in your life, that is a good sign that you still need to make your peace with God. Do it today, and be 100% sure you are going to heaven!

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**Sunday Worship 10 AM**

**Friday Bible Study 7 PM**

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## **Man's Tendency toward Self-Destruction By Gerard Lachance**

Someone recently made the statement to me: "Men will destroy themselves". Allow me to share with you what the truth is from God's Word. We will begin in the beginning book of the Bible; the first book of Moses called Genesis. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Gen. 1:1). "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1). God the Son, Jesus Christ, is eternal. Keep that in mind as you read this article. When God created Adam and Eve, He gave them dominion over the earth. Then Eve was tempted by the devil and disobeyed God's command not to eat of the forbidden fruit. Hence, the fall of mankind from a perfect relationship and communion with God the Father (Gen. 3:6-8). Not long after, we read of the sin of murder. Cain murders his brother Abel (Gen. 4:8). Shortly after, we read of the great flood, which was precipitated by great sin. "Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Gen. 6:5). This is one example of the many 'spiritual pandemics' in the Bible. "And the LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart" (Gen. 6:6). Man had been given free will and had disappointed the Lord by sinning. (*continued on page 5*)

## **Wisdom for Women**

**By Susan Moriello**

*"Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (Matthew 11:28)*

*"There remains therefore a rest for the people of God. For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works as God did from His" (Heb. 4:9-10). "Let everything that has breath praise the LORD. Praise the LORD!" (Ps. 150:6). "Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him and bless His name" (Ps. 100:4).*

Finally, summer is here! The flowers are in bloom, the trees are green again, the grass is growing, the sky looks bluer, the sun is warmer, and the air feels fresher. For many of us, summer is a time for vacations and much needed rest and relaxation. Maybe you are going to the ocean, to the mountains, or on a cruise to an exotic island. Wherever you are going, I wish you a wonderful and exciting time. However, throughout the 168 hours that you have been given each week, remember your Creator! All created things that delight your senses have been created for you; they are a gift from God. Will you take some time each day to meditate on these gifts and thank the Giver of them? Prayer, Bible reading, and a short devotional are all ways in which you can start and end each day in a God-glorifying way. Also, will you give to the Lord who gave His Son Jesus' life for you an hour a week on a Sunday morning to worship Him? In enjoying the physical rest that vacation brings, do not neglect the things that make for spiritual rest. Surely you can find a local Bible-believing church at home, and at your 'home away from home'. Until next time, have a peaceful and safe summer!

### **Rhode Island Christian Bulletin**

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## **Perspectives**

**By Gerry Bettencourt**

*"The LORD looks from heaven; He sees all the sons of men. From the place of His dwelling He looks on all the inhabitants of the earth; He fashions their hearts individually; He considers all their works."  
(Psalm 33:13-15)*

As I look out toward the magnificent early morning sunrise, the sky shines brilliantly through the backdrop of trees. Each individual unique shape adds its special portrait to the picturesque scene. Suddenly out of nowhere appears a small but ever-increasing streak of brightness! What kind of performance is this? This skywriter presses ahead to his planned destination, leaving a track of puffy cloud words to dramatically carry his message to his earth-bound audience. Then, without waiting, he disappears. As I watch this spectacular event, I begin to wonder how he might view the event from his perspective. He can see ahead, across, and below. His scope is broad, yet his scope is limited. Whether from our perspective or his, whether broad or narrow, it is still limited.

The ever watching eye of God is all-knowing and all-seeing. As a mother sadly watches the child she loves live in ways God did not plan; as she sees him run into a street in front of an approaching truck and anticipates tragedy; so it is with God. He watches the world of people, all of whom He loves and died for (1 John 2:2). He sees them make choices that will not only hurt them in the short term, but will ultimately lead to their destruction. In His compassion He does not merely feel sorry for them. He lays down His life for them (John 15:13). How amazing that while God sees everywhere, He also sees deep within. Our God is so great! His Word is filled with messages of His care. He can always be trusted. As I spend time in His Word, He will pour light into my soul. "For in Him we live and move and have our being", both physically and spiritually (Acts 17:28). We need to focus on the hope that God gives.

Perspectives vary, as any artist knows. God is infinite; we are finite. We are limited, and often find it impossible to grasp His methods of operation (Isa. 55:8-9). His very nature is infinite, boundless, and without limitation. He cannot be constrained by time and space as we are. "*For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known*" (1 Cor. 13:12). We see and understand only a little of God now, similar to the way in which we might see our reflection in a poor mirror. But someday we will see God in His glory "face to face".

## Family Page

## What Will Jesus Do? *By Al Hay* (a Coloring Page)

### Food for Thought

*By Tanya Hay*

#### The Fruit of the Spirit

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

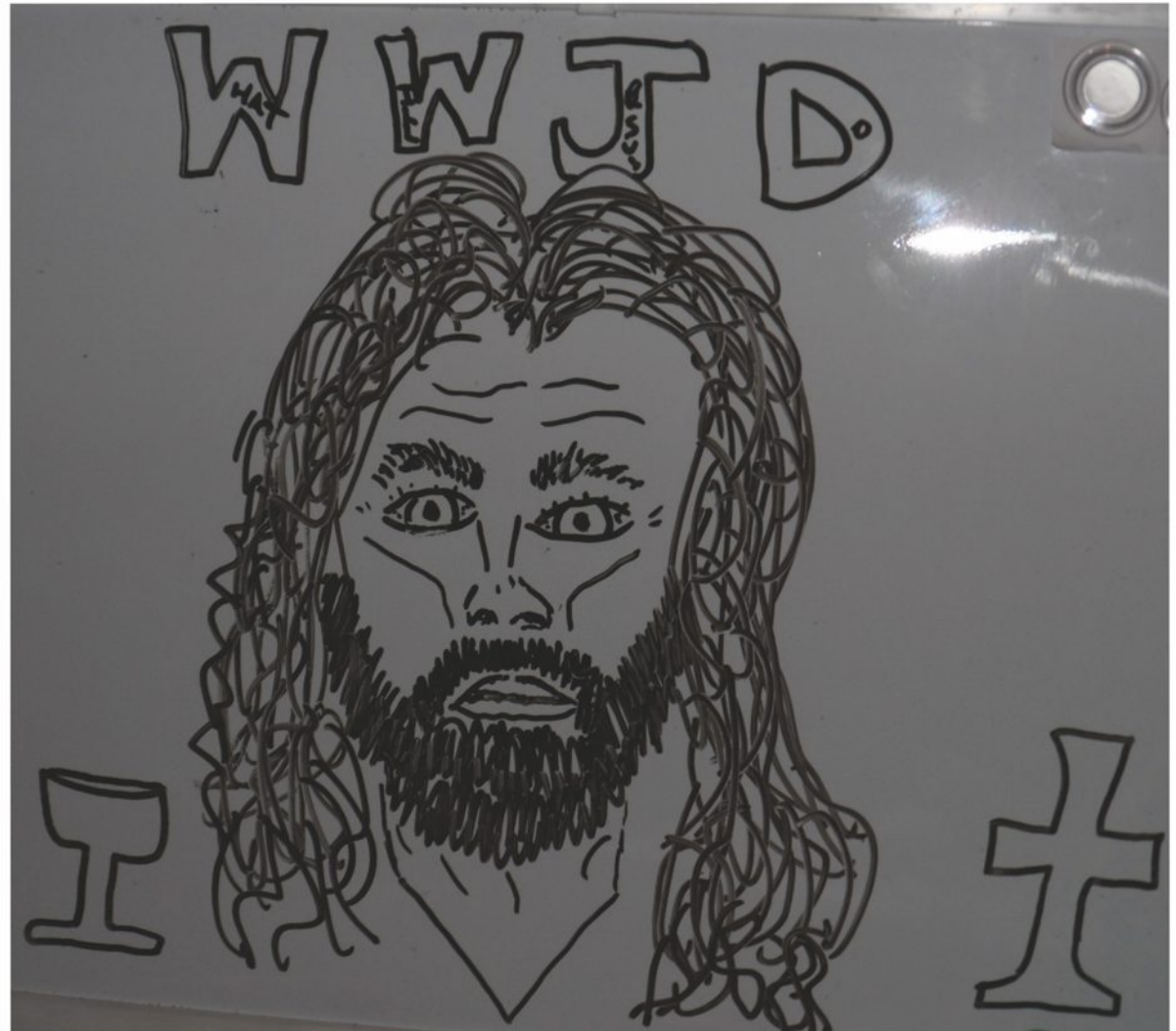
Against such things there is no law."

(Galatians 5:22-23, NIV)

#### Now that's a Good Question

The Old Testament asked a question: How can we be right with God since we've chosen our own way?

The New Testament answered it: Through the grace of God given through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.



#### Books in the Bible

Y GL RGRNKGMRGVBR  
T MBOEUOCAEPKSXO  
A VOHJ QI TEVNUMGM  
OUTNBVTGOECEHRA  
MSHJ OHADYI BJSNN  
EECSERLWTJOBHIS  
NGNWOTEI SUDOXES  
UDYHLJVTSFJM JRI  
MUDNKEELUPZBOHZ  
BJKALPROVERBSJJ  
EYORNHJNITDSALX  
RDMMAIYZMKUMETK  
SHTURMEZZLETKAA  
DLQICEWLP SVSULG  
OOCGPSALMSBTLOB

DANIEL DEUTERONOMY  
ESTHER EXODUS GENESIS  
JAMES JOB JOHN JOSHUA  
JUDGES LEVITICUS LUKE  
MARK MATTHEW NUMBERS  
PROVERBS PSALMS  
REVELATION  
ROMANS RUTH

### **The Description of Love, Submitted by Tanya Hay**

Love is a free gift meant to be given and received... it is the greatest gift of all.  
How does love behave?

"Love is patient, love is kind.  
It does not envy, it does not boast,  
it is not proud. It is not rude,  
it is not self-seeking,  
it is not easily angered,  
it keeps no record of wrongs.  
Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.  
It always protects, always trusts,  
always hopes, always perseveres,  
Love never fails."

1 Corinthians 13:4-8a, NIV

The Bible is made up of 66 different books, but it's really all one story, a master plan for the life that God wants for us. I encourage you to open your heart and read it today. It is relevant to all of us, no matter where we are in our lives!

## **My Christian Transformation By Ray Castonguay**

My Christian life started a little better than 2 years ago when a friend of mine invited me to Cold Spring Park. That's when I met Pastor James and a few members of Firm Foundation Christian Church. I've always believed in 'Jesus Christ my Redeemer' all of my life since the age of 12. Pastor James invited me to Bible Study on Friday nights and to church on Sunday mornings. Back in 2012, I challenged myself before God to read the whole Bible. And I did it! And I faithfully read the Bible every day. Believe me when I tell you: I did not know anything about Christianity. It may appear on Friday nights that I don't know much. But I do know this: I'm a true believer in Jesus Christ, a true believer in God, and I believe in the power of prayers. I'm a born again Christian, and I apply the First Commandment to my life every day. I put God, Jesus, above everything in my life. I personally thank God, Jesus, for all the blessing in my life. They (God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit) deserve all the glory, not me. For my sole purpose is to put all my trust and faith in Him. God, Jesus, knows my heart and how faithful I am. I thank my God, Jesus, that I found Firm Foundation Christian Church. The church I have is a blessing. I look at the whole congregation as brothers and sisters in Christ. May God bless us all.

***Editors Note: Ray is one of the most faithful and humble Christians that I have ever had the privilege of knowing. I have also learned much from him, and I thank the Lord for putting him in my path.***

Christian Discipleship according to the Apostle Paul: "*I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God*" (Romans 12:1-2).

### **Fear and Death By Brian Violette and RICB Staff**

The internet can be used for evil, but it can also be used for good. One way in which it can be used for good is in spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ. Ray Comfort, through his ministry Living Waters (livingwaters.com), has been able to reach many young people with the gospel through his open air preaching ministry, and also through his apologetics ministry. Questions about the Bible and its doctrine asked in an honest and reverent way are always welcomed and answered by Ray. This is our teaching philosophy at Firm Foundation as well.

A young lady asked Mr. Comfort on his public Facebook page (4/30/13) why she still fears death even though she is a born again believer in the resurrection. The evangelist's response is interesting and instructive. The first thing he does is present the gospel in a clear way, to be sure she understands the gospel. Then he proceeds to answer the question. The Lord promises: "*the sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ*" (1 Cor. 15:56-57). If we believe this, there will be inner peace about death. If not, we are questioning God's integrity, and are sinning in so doing. "*You may know that you have eternal life*" is God's reassurance (1 John 5:13).

"And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, 'All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.' Amen." (Matthew 28:18-20)

### **Death as a Reminder**

1. Death is a reminder that time is short compared to eternity, James 4:14. We have a short time here on earth to grow spiritually, to glorify God, and reach capacity for life, blessing and God's perfect happiness. And we never know when it is going to occur.
2. Death is a reminder of the futility of cosmic glory and wealth, fame and profit, Mark 8:36-37.
3. Death is a reminder to be prepared for eternity, Heb 9:27.
4. Death is a reminder of the certainty of judgment for the unbeliever, John 3:18, 36. **-PJR**

## **News and Notes: Reporting on News Stories of Concern to Christians**

***Compiled by RICB Staff, with Editorial Comments***

\*Ariel Castro, the man who kidnapped and held three women captive as prisoners in his home in Cleveland, Ohio, may be tried for murder for ending their pregnancies by forcing miscarriages. When doctors do the same thing, they do it under the guise of 'women's rights to choose'. The babies, however, get no say in the matter. (christianpost.com)

\*A Florida man, John Andrew Welden, is being charged with murder for tricking his girlfriend into taking the morning after abortion pill. The charges are being brought in accordance with the seldom used "Protection of Unborn Children Act". This case exposes the hypocrisy of those who feel that it is okay for the mother to murder her unborn baby but are appalled when the father does the same thing. (christianpost.com)

\*The Thomas More Society is alleging that the IRS has unfairly targeted pro-life groups for scrutiny of their tax exempt activities. This type of overreach has already been documented with regard to other groups with conservative values. We hope this is not the case here, but we will wait to see how it plays out. (lifeneews.com)

\*New Englanders rank near the bottom of the state rankings in weekly church attendance. The District of Columbia was recorded as a '51st state' in the rankings. In order they are Connecticut (Tie-41st, 32%), Rhode Island (Tie-41st, 32%), Massachusetts (48th, 29%), Maine (49th, 27%), New Hampshire (50th, 26%), Vermont (51st, 23%). The national average is 41.6%, and Mississippi ranks at the top with 63%. (Gallup Poll, 2012) The number of true Christians is probably far less, given that many of these folks go to liberal churches that deny the exclusivity of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and that some go for reasons other than to worship the true God.

\*The Rhode Island legislature approved 'same-sex marriage' by votes of 56-15 in the House and 26-12 in the Senate. Then the governor signed the bill into law. These people are the ones that the voters put in office, and they reflect their values, or lack thereof. The tide of society is indeed progressive, but it is progressing in the wrong direction--away from the clearly revealed will of God. In doing so, we invite His wrath (Rom. 1:18-32). Nevertheless, Christians must continue to pray for their leaders (1 Tim. 2:1-3).

\*A Washington florist who refused to make floral arrangements for a same-sex marriage ceremony because it would violate her sincerely held religious beliefs was sued by the state Attorney General. Militant homosexuals did not stop with repeal of sodomy laws, they did not stop at civil unions, and they are not stopping at state-sponsored marriage. In the name of open-minded thinking, they are now taking aim at Christian business owners. (christianpost.com)

***('Man's Tendency toward Self-Destruction', continued from page 1)*** When God sees all the sin in our individual lives, in our country, and in our world, He is intensely sorrowful. Sins of homosexuality, sodomy, adultery, fornication, perverting God's institution of one-man, one-woman marriage, and abortion (legalized murder of babies) are just a few examples of behaviors born out of sinful hearts. *"But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD"* (Gen 6:8). God warned Noah in advance about the flood and commanded him to build an ark (Gen. 6:15-16). Then the flood waters came, and Noah and his family were saved. This same grace that Noah found in God's eyes is found in the letter of Paul to Titus in the New Testament. *"For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men"* (Tit. 2:11). There is still hope for this country, and there is still hope for you. There is a friend that demonstrates His love for the sinner, and that friend is also our Savior; Jesus Christ the Son of God (Prov. 17:17, 18:24). *"But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us"* (Rom. 5:8). Salvation from sin is too costly for us to pay for, so Jesus paid for our sins Himself by His death on the cross, and proved His victory over sin and death by His resurrection from the grave! Jesus bought this gift of salvation for us already. All we have to do is accept His salvation with a contrite and humble heart. The Bible says *"that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved"* (Rom. 10:9). Remember the first man Adam in Genesis. *"For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one man's obedience many will be made righteous"* (Rom. 5:19).

"The Bible is meant to be bread for daily use, not cake for special occasions" --Author Unknown

**Spiritual Gifts: Are they all still given today? By James Moriello** (This is an abbreviated version of the complete paper which may be found on the Firm Foundation Christian Church website, [www.firmfoundationri.com](http://www.firmfoundationri.com).)

There are many challenges facing the church in America today. Sadly, many of them are coming from within the church. My intent in writing this article is not to malign individual Christians, but rather to explain bible doctrine with regard to what are known as the 'sign gifts'. They are completely misunderstood and misapplied by many churches and believers today, with the result that little or no real spiritual growth takes place. Churches that emphasize 'prophetic ministry' or 'tongues' should be avoided, especially when they change the gospel by claiming that 'tongues' are required as evidence of salvation. Let them be accursed (Gal. 1:6-9). One wonders what part of John 3:16 they do not understand. As a Christian Pastor, I have witnessed these destructive effects firsthand, and this article is written to warn people about them.

Let us now turn to the Scripture and identify what the spiritual gifts are, who gives them, who receives them, and for what purposes. No less than nineteen gifts are identified in five different texts in the Scriptures. They are apostle, prophet, miracles, healings, tongues, interpretation of tongues, pastor, teacher, discernment, wisdom, evangelism, encouragement, faith, ministry, administration, leadership, helps, mercy, and giving (Rom. 12:6-8; 1 Cor. 12:8-10; 1 Cor. 12:28-30; Eph. 4:11; 1 Pet. 4:11). This list is by no means exhaustive, but other spiritual gifts identified in other places of Scripture—music, for instance—can be generally categorized under one or more of the aforementioned gifts. The Apostle Paul informs us that "*the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all*" (1 Cor. 12:7). We learn from that text that it is God the Holy Spirit who dispenses spiritual gifts. While all men and women have God-given natural gifts, only believers—those who have the Holy Spirit living in them—can have spiritual gifts (1 Cor. 3:16; Eph 1:13). While the majority of the gifts are still being given today, some are no longer given because they were temporary in nature in that their purpose was to authenticate the Christian message prior to the completion of Scripture (Heb 2:3-4). The temporary gifts, also known as 'sign gifts', are those of apostle, prophecy, miracles, healings, tongues, and interpretation of tongues. We have space here to deal with the two most abused gifts; prophecy and tongues.

The gift of prophecy is listed four times (Rom 12:6; 1 Cor.12:10; 1 Cor. 12:28; Eph 4:11). There are two types of prophecy in the Bible. First, there is foretelling of an event that will happen at some time in the future. A good example of this is Isaiah's prophecy of the virgin birth (Isa. 7:14 fulfilled in Matt. 1:23). Second, there is forth-telling which is the speaking forth of the very words of God by inspiration of the Holy Spirit. A good New Testament example of this is Paul's teaching on the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:23-26). The spiritual gift of prophecy was active in the early church to confirm the Word of God and proclaim it publicly prior to the completion of the Canon of Scripture (the New Testament). Every true prophecy was always in agreement with the Apostolic witness (1 Cor. 14:37). Prophecy, like the gift of apostle, was foundational. Our faith is said to have "*been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone*" (Eph. 2:20). Jude speaks of the "*once for all*" faith; that faith which requires neither repetition nor refinement. Since we now have the completed canon of Scripture, there is no need for any more prophecy. In fact, there are dire consequences for any who presume to add or subtract from God's completed written revelation (Rev. 22:18-19).

We will now look at the spiritual gift of tongues and its counterpart, the spiritual gift of interpretation of tongues (1 Cor. 12:10; 1 Cor. 12:30). These gifts are the last two of the six which we classify as sign gifts which were temporary in nature because their purpose was to confirm the message of the early apostles and prophets (Heb. 2:3-4; Eph. 2:20; Jude 3). The gift of tongues was given to the early church beginning at Pentecost (Acts 2:4). The gift of tongues in the New Testament always refers to known human languages and never idle babbling speech or sounds (Acts 2:5-11). In the context of First Corinthians 14, Paul is correcting the misuse of the gift of tongues in the Corinthian church in 55 AD. Paul gives seven guidelines for its use which are the only specific guidelines for the use of tongues in the assembly that are given. These guidelines are very rarely if ever adhered to in the Charismatic American churches today. First, the use of tongues had to involve known languages (1 Cor. 14:9-11). Second, it had to be for the profit of others, not oneself (1 Cor. 14:16-17). Third, it was not a sign for believers, but a sign for unbelievers to warn them of impending judgment (1 Cor. 14:21-22). Isaiah 28:11-13 is alluded to here which represents a national judgment upon Israel for rejecting her God. **(continued on page 8)**

# Christian Testimony Page

## Lost and Found By Craig Greenslade

Nobody starts life the same way. Some are born into wealth, while others are born into poverty. When we're born, we all have different chances. Through our parents, we have choices made for us until we can make our own choices. Most of the time, this is where we can pinpoint where our life went astray. As soon as I was able to make my own choices, I went *"astray like a lost sheep"* (Ps. 119:176). Before we are lost, we are presented with two paths. There is the path of life: *"You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy"* (Ps. 16:11). In the next Psalm, David speaks of *"the paths of the destroyer"* (Ps. 17:4). These paths are not straight and narrow like the righteous path of life. The paths of destruction are wide and easy, and they have many turns. With every turn, we grow more curious about what comes next. The adversary tempts us with hopes of better things to come around the corner. With the lack of acceptance I experienced growing up, I was easy prey. I walked, oblivious to the consequences, right down that broad road. Once the devil had me going in the wrong direction, it was easy for him to tempt me into going further. By the time I looked back, I was good and lost. I was tempted in all points just like Jesus; the difference being the results. His temptations never led to sin. *"For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin"* (Heb. 4:15). That was my life for the next thirty-three years. Finally, my sin landed me in jail. The first few times I was incarcerated was just for a few days or a few months. It was never for anything big, but there is no such thing as a little sin before God. *"For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all"* (Jas. 2:10). I know now that the Lord will not just pick you up and place you on the righteous path. He lets you have free will, all the while watching and intervening in small ways just to keep you safe enough so there will be at least some small pieces to put back together later. The Lord watched as I was sentenced to twenty-five years in prison. And as quick as a heartbeat, I thought my life had ended. I prayed that God would take me in my sleep. Yet, He does not ignore us, but instead walks beside us even in our darkest hour. *"For He Himself said, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you'"* (Heb. 13:5).

My heavenly Father stepped in, and everything that used to be me was left behind. The potter threw me down on the wheel and went to work on me. *"For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more"* (Heb. 8:12). Five years later, He threw me in the water, and when I rose out of the water, I was a different person. And I wept. I noticed that not only could I have love for my fellow man, but I had more empathy than I could handle. I had hope. I felt the Spirit in my heart. Not only was I supposed to be a witness and a minister to others, He wanted me to help people. I won't have to do it alone though apart from His power. I just had to open my eyes to see the gifts He gave me. I'm far from perfect; we all are. But my Father loves me. *"And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose"* (Rom. 8:28). I found something I never had. I have purpose and I want to live!

## My Testimony By Diane Sartini

I've asked Jesus into my life through my struggles, my spiritual warfare, and my prayers. There were times when I would question God, but I now know that however hard the struggles are, He is with me.

*"Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's"* (1 Cor. 6:19-20).

First of all, I want to thank God for putting Paul and Peter Brousseau in my life. I believe this was part of God's plan to bring me closer to Him. Pete brought me into his Bible study.

*"I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world"* (John 17:14).

I was baptized in the ocean in Warren, RI on June 22nd, 1997. John baptized me. I prayed for three days before my baptism because I didn't feel worthy and I still didn't.

*"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit"* (Matt. 28:19).

"First, the inner life must be sustained by God. We are absolutely dependent upon God for the preservation of our spiritual lives...Spiritual life must always be the gift of God. It must come from without; it cannot arise from within ourselves." -CH Spurgeon

**('Spiritual Gifts', continued from page 6)** In the context of the use of tongues in Acts chapter two, the sign gift of tongues is linked to Israel's rejection of her Messiah (Acts 2; Matt 23). The national judgment would come in 70 AD with the sacking of Jerusalem prophesied in Luke 21. These things taken with the past tense of Hebrews 2:3-4 present strong, if not conclusive, evidence that the gift of tongues had already ceased by 70 AD. Fourth, tongues had to be used one at a time (1 Cor. 14:27). Fifth, there must be an interpreter present (1 Cor. 14:28). Sixth, women were forbidden to exercise this gift in worship services (1 Cor. 14:34). Finally, the gift was not to be forbidden to be used, so long as it was done in the prescribed ways (1 Cor. 14:39-40). This commandment not to forbid was made because at the time, the gift was still actively given. The principle behind it is that we not restrict each other of the use of our spiritual gifts in the assembly in general. To put the biblical use of tongues in the early church in practical terms, the scenario would go something like this. An unbeliever who speaks only French walks into an English speaking assembly. The gifted man (remember, women were not permitted to exercise this gift in the assembly) requests the opportunity to exercise his gift by giving a signal to whoever is presiding over the service. This gifted man who does not know a single word of French speaks a 'prophetic word'—if we apply our scenario hypothetically to today; having the completed Canon of Scripture it would have to be a direct quotation of Scripture and nothing else—in French which is clearly understood by the unbeliever and confirmed that it was in fact heard in French by a third party interpreter in the congregation. The question arises as to what the spiritual source is in churches today where tongues are practiced—for instance in a congregation where everyone speaks English. The source in such a case is surely not God but is instead demonic or at least a demonically influenced psychological or hypnotic condition. Beware of entering into such an assembly. *"Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them"* (Eph. 5:11). In addition to the judgment aspect of the sign gift of tongues and past tense use of its confirmatory purpose noted above, there are other evidences that the spiritual gift of tongues is no longer given. We read that *"whether there are tongues, they will cease"* (1 Cor. 13:8). The important word here is "cease" which is *pauo* in the Greek, meaning to cease abruptly with finality and not to be restored. This is the same word used to speak of the storm being calmed by the Lord Jesus in Luke 8:24. *Pauo* is also used in relation to the Old Testament sacrificial system in Hebrews 10:1-2, speaking of the fact that if a once and for all sacrifice is performed—which it finally was by Christ—there is no need to continue the Old Testament sacrificial system and such sacrifices would therefore cease. Likewise, the gift of tongues would no longer be needed after its purposes as a sign to validate the gospel message and point to impending judgment of unbelieving Israel has been fulfilled. It should also be noted that prophecies will fail, or gradually disappear from the scene of human history until they are no longer necessary because Scripture is complete, whereas tongues will quickly and abruptly disappear (1 Cor. 13:8-10; Rev. 22:18-19). Further evidence that tongues have ceased are their conspicuous absence in any other of the later Epistles of Scripture. Neither did any of the early church fathers mention that tongues were still in use; they are always mentioned in the past tense. Even when the gift of tongues did exist, not everyone had it (1 Cor. 12:7-11; 1 Cor. 12:29-31). The passages in Acts that are sometimes misunderstood in which an already saved person received the Holy Spirit were in reference to the last of Old Testament believers, not New Testament believers, and the gift of tongues was given in each case for the purpose of verifying the gospel message (Acts 8:12-17; Acts 10:44-46; Acts 11:14-16; Acts 15:7-9). Salvation and Holy Spirit baptism (or identification) come at the same moment for the New Testament believer. All believers alive today are identified with the Holy Spirit the moment they are saved. The Holy Spirit comes to live in every saved person (John 5:24; Rom. 8:9; Eph. 1:13-14). Scripture says that faith and love are evidence of salvation, not spiritual gifts (2 Thes. 1:3-5; 1 Cor. 13).

## **Firm Foundation Christian Church: About Us**

Rhode Island Christian Bulletin is a publication of Firm Foundation Christian Church, Woonsocket, Rhode Island. We are an independent gospel preaching and teaching church. Our mission is to promote the Gospel of Jesus Christ by any and all means possible, as the Lord allows.

Please come join us Sunday morning at 10 AM for worship service, or Friday evening at 7 PM for Bible Study. We meet at 84 Cumberland Street (St. Ann Arts and Cultural Center) in Woonsocket, Rhode Island.

You can contact us at 401-765-0107 or by emailing us at [firmfoundationri@verizon.net](mailto:firmfoundationri@verizon.net). We also encourage you to visit our website [www.firmfoundationri.com](http://www.firmfoundationri.com) and listen to a sermon or read an article or topic that interests you.