



## ***Good foundations for a new year***

Every new year brings upon us a whole new host of opportunities, challenges, and uncertainties. And this year has been no exception! With the drought, bushfires, and the threat of war, it looks like we have already been dumped with a whole truck-load of uncertainty!

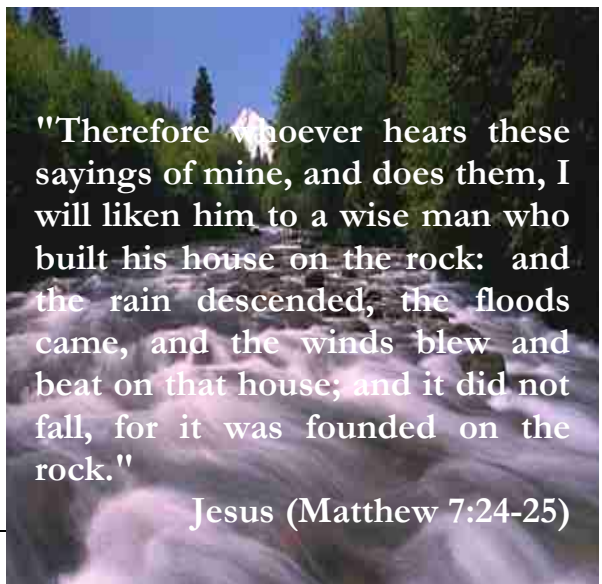
How, then, should we face such challenges? Should we "wish them away"? Should we bury our heads in the sand? Should we worry and get anxious? Should we get angry at God and blame Him?

To help us face the uncertainties which are before us, I'd like us to turn our attention to the words of Jesus Christ. In His "Sermon on the Mount", Jesus addressed these uncertainties, and showed us two keys how to face them. Let's have a look at what He said:

**1. Storms will come.** The first thing we can learn from Jesus is that He never promised life would be a bed of roses! Instead, He assumed that storms and

problems are a part of life as we know it. Jesus never promises that those who believe in God and trust in Him will be shielded from storms! Jesus states very clearly: "In the world you will have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."<sup>1</sup> On another occasion, Jesus said: "But when you hear of wars and commotions, do not be terrified; for these things must come to pass first, but the end will not come immediately."<sup>2</sup> So for Jesus, storms and uncertainties are not something to be avoided, but to be faced. The question is: "How?" And Jesus gives us His answer:

**2. Hear these sayings of mine.** The first key in how to face difficulties and uncertainties in life is to hear and listen to Jesus' teachings. Jesus said: "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life"<sup>3</sup> and



**"Therefore whoever hears these sayings of mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock."**

**Jesus (Matthew 7:24-25)**

(1) John 16:33. (2) Luke 21:9.

"the words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life."<sup>4</sup> If we don't know the truth, or what to do, then we are ignorant, and a person who is ignorant cannot know what to do in any given situation! All they can do is try by trial and error to face their problems. And so often this fails! Consider the recent bushfires. The people who have listened to the advice from the CFA and have cleared their gutters, removed wood fuel from around their house, and so on, are those whose homes have survived! Those who were ignorant and had no idea how to protect their homes, well, their fate was predictable.

And so it is for our lives. If we want to know how to live well, and survive the storms of life, we must listen to the words of Jesus, the Author and Creator of Life. And His words are in the Bible. That's why it is so important to read and study the Bible! The Bible is like our instruction book for living, a "Melways" for life! Unfortunately, though, for so many of us, the Bible is our last resort. It's like when we buy a new TV or VCR - the last thing we want to do is read the manual, and sometimes when we go to try and find the manual, we have already thrown it out!! The manual for our life is the Bible. Don't throw it out, or leave it till last. Read it first. Know it well. This is the first key.

**3. ...and do them.** The second key seems obvious, but is absolutely essential: we need to *do* what Jesus said. Imagine if the people threatened by the bushfires heard all the advice from the CFA, read all the books about how to protect their home, but didn't put it into practice - how foolish!!

And the same it is for our lives. We need to do what Jesus said, and then our lives will "survive the storms" that come our way. For example, Jesus said be humble and not proud<sup>5</sup>; be merciful and not revengeful<sup>6</sup>; don't hate anyone, because that is the same as murder<sup>7</sup>; don't resist an evil person, but turn the other cheek and do good to them<sup>8</sup>; love your enemies and pray for them<sup>9</sup>; don't store up wealth for yourself, but give to the poor<sup>10</sup>.

Imagine if we actually did what Jesus said! The world would be a different place, that's for sure! But more importantly, your life will survive the storms which will come to it. Jesus will give you an inner peace and joy which the world cannot give you<sup>11</sup>.

The Bible says "Do not deceive yourselves by just listening to His word; instead put it into practice."<sup>12</sup>

Are you ready to face this year? Put your trust in Jesus and His words, and seek to put them into practice, and you will have a good foundation to get you through the days ahead.

Let us pray:

*"Dear God,  
thank you that you love us so much,  
and that you have given us clear  
guidelines on how to live. Forgive us  
for being ignorant of your words.  
Please help us to read them and put  
them into practice, no matter how  
challenging the situation is that we  
have to face.  
In Jesus' name we pray, Amen."*

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(3) John 14:6. (4) John 6:63. (5) Matthew 5:3. (6) Matthew 5:7. (7) Matthew 5:21-22. (8) Matthew 5:38-42. (9) Matthew 5:43-48. (10) Matthew 6:19-24. (11) John 14:27. (12) James 1:22.

# Your Say

The following is a prayer written by Conrad Linden and Esther Liu (Conrad is one of the many wonderful people who live in our area).

## *Earthfolk's Quest*

*Giver of Grace to people on Earth:  
help us grow pure and whole,  
clear in our thoughts and caring,  
so that your love fills our hearts  
and opens the gates of our minds  
to our all-human responsibilities  
on this stage of Earthfolk's quest.*

*Arm our will with a firm resolve  
to learn and live in your style.  
Always guide our every step,  
so that our work is done aright  
and its seeds of all-Earth peace  
may touch the hearts of people  
and grow to weld us in you.*

If you would like to contribute a small piece of writing (250 words or less) to this column, please contact the chaplain. Any thoughts you may have which can encourage us to live the life God is calling us to live are most welcome!

# My Answer

**Q: "Dear Chaplain, I know that you always talk about God, but hasn't modern science and evolution theory proved that God doesn't exist?"**

**A:** Many scientists today start with the assumption there is no God (without any valid scientific reason), and based on this assumption try to see how far they can go in explaining the universe in terms of purely physical and material causes, without involving the supernatural! These are the current "rules of the game" for science!<sup>1</sup> The resulting story about the origins of the universe and how life came to be is called Evolution.

All scientists have presuppositions (beliefs) which they use in interpreting the evidence around them. If you start with the Bible (instead of Evolution), and begin to investigate the evidence we see around us, the evidence consistently fits much better within a Biblical framework, and not that of Evolution. For example, fossils: If there really was a worldwide flood, we would expect to see billions of dead things buried under rock layers laid down by water all over the earth. And that is exactly what we see today!

In fact, good science actually validates the Bible and shows huge flaws in the story of Evolution<sup>2</sup>. Therefore science and evolution theory do not prove that God does not exist.

(For more information, please visit [www.AnswersInGenesis.com](http://www.AnswersInGenesis.com))

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(1) R.E. Dickerson, *J. Molecular Evolution*, 34:277,1992; *Perspectives on Science and the Christian Faith*, 44:137-138,1992. (2) J. Sarfati, *Refuting Evolution: a response to the National Academy of Sciences' teaching about evolution and the nature of science* (Green Forest, AR: Master Books, 1999).

# News & Events

\* **CRE (Christian Religious Education).** If your child was not part of the CRE program last year at Preston Nth East Primary, and you would like them to be a part of it this year, please contact the Primary School and ask for the application forms.

\* **NEW Youth Group !** (For years 7-9 at High School). If you would like your son/daughter to be involved in a Christian Youth Group on Friday nights, starting on 14<sup>th</sup> February, please contact the Chaplain before the **9<sup>th</sup> February**.

\* **CELEBRATION SUNDAYS!** In the next few months I am planning to start up a public "Church Service" with a difference! Starting at 5pm, with good music, participation by YOU, and food afterwards, it should be really good! Hopefully we will be able to use the school hall of PNE Primary. More details in my next newsletter.

\* **Sunday worship.** Currently every Sunday at 11am I meet with a few people in my home or theirs, and we sing, talk, pray, and have Holy Communion together. If you would like to join with us, your are welcome! Please ring me for more details.

\* **NEW Playgroup!** If any mums are interested in being part of a supportive Christian playgroup, in which their children (0-4 yrs) can also relate together in a healthy Christian environment, please let me know before the **14<sup>th</sup> February!**



\* **Men's Breakfasts.** Starting on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> February at 8.30am in my home, I am starting up a time where us men can get together fortnightly for bacon and eggs(!), encourage each other, and learn from the Bible so that we can each be better men, husbands, and leaders in our community. If you are interested, please ring me. No one is too old or too young!

\* **Women's Bible Study.** If you would like to be a part of a Bible study group which meets weekly, please contact me! Currently there is one group which meets on Wednesday afternoons, and other times can be arranged!

\* **Questions?** If you have any questions you'd like me to address in the "My Answer" column of this newsletter, please ring me, or write to the address below.

\* **Prayer for Healing.** If you would really like some people to pray for you about problems in your life, whether physical, emotional, mental, or spiritual, there are people who are willing to do just that. Please contact me about this.

\* **Other News??** If you have any suitable news or events that you would like to have mentioned here, please let me know !

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A ministry supported by Regent Baptist Church,  
West Evangelical Christian Church, and LinC  
Northern Region