

Answer

Business Men's Fellowship International



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Dear Reader,

The horrific and tragic events of September 11, 2001 and the continuing threats have thrust fear and uncertainty upon not only Americans but upon free people around the world. We have grieved with and for the families who have lost loved ones. We wonder aloud and in our most private moments of solitude, how could this have happened. In but a few moments time, all of our lives have been forever changed.

Early this year, we received a copy of *Businessmen and Christianity*, a publication of Europartners. It was here that we first read, “A Charge to Keep.” It is the testimony of then Texas Governor and presidential candidate, George W. Bush.

With the tragedies of September 11, we felt it necessary to depart a bit from the regular format of *Answer*. We requested and have been granted permission by Peter J. Briscoe, Europartners President, to reprint this story and do so here, in part. (*A Charge to Keep* by George W. Bush will give you even greater insight into the man and all that has shaped him.)

In the last several weeks, many people have reprioritized their lives. Things once held dear, no longer hold such significance. Family and friends—relationships take on greater and deeper importance. Yet, many live in fear wondering what tomorrow will bring.

Do you know someone who is struggling for peace of mind? Someone who can’t sleep at night? Someone who is afraid to fly or to open their mail?

Jesus said: “*Peace, my peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives, do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful.*” (John 14:27)

As we once again near that season when two thousand years ago, the choirs of heaven sang, “Glory to God in the Highest and on earth, peace among men with whom He is pleased,” may the Prince of Peace rule in our hearts and over our lives.

“*Jesus is the Answer for the world today.*” When you have finished reading, please share this issue with someone you care about.

The Editorial Staff



A Charge to Keep

--a glimpse into the faith of President George W. Bush

The seeds of my decision to become a Christian had been planted by the Reverend Billy Graham.

He visited my family for a summer weekend in Maine. We all had lunch on the patio overlooking the ocean.

One evening, my dad asked Billy to answer questions from a big group of family members gathered for the weekend. He sat by the fire and talked. And, what he said sparked a change in my heart.

I don't remember the exact words. It was more the power of his example. The Lord was so clearly reflected in his gentle and loving demeanor.

The next day we walked and talked at Walker's Point, and I knew I was in the presence of a great man. He was like

a magnet. I felt drawn to seek something different. He didn't lecture or admonish. He shared warmth and concern.

Billy Graham didn't make you feel guilty; he made you feel loved.

Over the course of that weekend, Reverend Graham planted a mustard seed in my soul, a seed that grew over the next year. He led me to the path, and I began walking. And it was the beginning of a change in my life.

I had always been a religious person, had regularly attended church, even taught Sunday school, and served as an altar boy. But that weekend, my faith took on a new meaning. It was the beginning of a new walk where I would recommit my heart to Jesus Christ.

I was humbled to learn that God

sent His Son to die for a sinner like me. I was comforted to know that through the Son, I could find God's amazing grace, a grace that crosses every border, every barrier, and is open to everyone. Through the love of Christ's life, I could understand the life-changing powers of faith.

When I returned to Midland, I began reading the Bible regularly. Don Evans talked me into joining him and another friend, Don Jones, at a men's community Bible study.

The group had first assembled the year before, in the spring of 1984, at the beginning of the downturn in the energy industry. Midland was hurting. A lot of people were looking for comfort, strength, and direction. A couple of men started the Bible study as a support group and it grew. By the time I

began attending in the fall of 1985, almost 120 men would gather. We met in small discussion groups of ten or twelve, then joined the larger group for full meetings.

Don Jones picked me up every week for the meetings. I remember looking forward to them. My interest in reading the Bible grew stronger, and the words became clearer and more meaningful.

Laura and I were active members of the First Methodist Church of Midland, and we participated in many family programs, including James Dobson's "Focus on the Family" series on raising children. As I studied and learned, Scripture took on greater meaning, and I gained confidence and understanding in my faith.

I read the Bible regularly. Don Evans gave me the One-Year Bible. It was divided into 365 daily readings,

each one including a section from the New Testament, the Old Testament, Psalms, and Proverbs. I read through that Bible every other year.

During the years in between, I pick different chapters to study at different times. I have also learned the power of prayer. I pray for guidance. I do not pray for earthly things,

but for heavenly things, for wisdom, patience, and understanding.

My faith gives me focus and perspective. It teaches humility. But, I also recognize that faith can be misinterpreted in the political process.

Faith is an important part of my life. I believe it is important to live my faith, not flaunt it.

Faith changes lives. I know because faith has changed mine. I could not be



governor if I did not believe in a Divine plan that supersedes all human plans.

Politics is a fickle business. Polls change. Today's friend is tomorrow's adversary. People lavish praise and attention. Many times, it is genuine. Sometimes, it is not.

Yet, I build my life on a foundation that will not shift. My faith frees me. Frees me to put the problem of the moment in proper

perspective. Frees me to make decisions that others might not like. Frees me to try to do the right thing, even though it may not "poll" well.

I have a reverence for life. My faith teaches

that life is a gift from our Creator. In a perfect world, life is given by God and only taken by God.

I hope that someday our society will respect life, the full spectrum of life—from the unborn to the elderly. I hope someday unborn children will be protected by law and welcomed in life.

Two weeks after Jeb's inauguration, in the church in downtown Austin, the pastor was

telling me that my reelection as the first Governor to win back-to-back four-year terms in the history of the state of Texas was a beginning, not an end.

The minister talked of visiting Yellowstone with his family. They joined a crowd gathered around Old Faithful, waiting and watching expectantly. He joined as they counted down--five-four-three-two-

one--and was surprised to feel tears welling in his eyes as he joined in the cheers for the erupting geyser. "And then I realized I had just clapped for a geyser," Mark Craig said. "What on earth moves people to applaud with

tears in their eyes for cascading water?" he asked, then answered his own question: "Faithfulness. People are starved for faithfulness.

He talked of the need for honesty in government; he warned that leaders who cheat on their wives will cheat their country, will cheat their colleagues, will cheat themselves. The minister said that America is starved for honest leaders.

"I was humbled to learn that God sent His Son to die for a sinner like me."

He told the story of Moses, asked by God to lead His people to a land of milk and honey. Moses had a lot of reasons to shirk the task. As the pastor told it, Moses' basic reaction was, "Sorry, God, I'm busy. I've got a family. I've got sheep to tend. I've got a life."

"Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the sons of Israel out of Egypt?" Moses asks in the third chapter of Exodus. "The people won't believe me," he protested. "I'm not a very good speaker. Oh, my Lord, send, I pray, some other person," Moses pleaded. But God did not, and ultimately, Moses did His bidding, leading His people through forty years of wilderness and wandering, relying on God for the strength, and direction, and inspiration.

"People are starved for leadership," Pastor Craig said, "starved for leaders who have ethical and moral courage. It is not enough to have an ethical compass, to know right from wrong," he argued. "America needs leaders who have the moral courage to do what is right for the right reason. It's not always easy or convenient for leaders to step forward," he acknowledged; "remember, even Moses had doubts."

"He was talking to you," my mother later said. The pastor was, of course, talking to all of us, challenging each one of us to make the most of our lives, to assume the mantle of leadership and responsibility wherever we find it.

He was calling on us to use whatever power we have in business, in politics, in our communities, and in our families to do good for the right reasons. And the sermon spoke directly to my heart and my life.

There was no magic moment of decision. After talking with my family during the Christmas holidays, then hearing the rousing sermon to make the most of every moment, I gradually felt more comfortable with the prospect of a presidential campaign.

My family would love me. My faith would sustain me. No matter what.



*To gain more insight into the personal and political experiences that have shaped President Bush and the heart of the man, you will want to read *A Charge to Keep*, George W. Bush (William Morrow & Company, Inc.)*

AIR FORCE

**“A Charge to Keep I Have”
by Charles Wesley**

**A charge to keep I have,
A God to glorify,
A never dying soul to save,
And fit it for the sky.
To serve the present age,
My calling to fulfill;
O, may it all my powers engage
To do my Master’s will!**

**"Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful."
1 Corinthians 4:2**

No More Fear

THE ALLAN JONES STORY
Wigan, Lancashire, England



When I woke up lying in a hospital bed with an oxygen mask over my face, *surprised* would be too mild a word to describe my reaction.

“What happened?” I asked. “What am I doing here?”

A research physicist in a glass-making plant, five hours earlier I had been taking temperature and pressure readings on a furnace. Though it seeped poisonous gas, I had no way of detecting the odorless substance.

Fortunately, the night before my employer had changed procedures, adding a second man to the night shift.

Without my partner, my life would have ended on the floor where I passed out. The doctor told me later, “You nearly died.”

Death! The thought of it had tumbled me from a young age. Especially after two

friends had died, one from drowning and the other in a motorcycle accident.

My fear of dying increased after being in hospital.

On the surface I was a fairly happy chap. I grew up in a coal mining village surrounded by farmland. My father worked on the railroad, and we had what could best be called a humble lifestyle.

In grade school I learned to play rugby, a rough game that helped me develop macho pride. Later, I took up drinking, gambling and swearing that were so common around the sport.

When I was 23 years old, I married Norma. When we learned she was expecting twins the year after our wedding, we were overjoyed.

But joy quickly turned to sorrow. The girls were born prematurely and only lived for two days.

At the funeral I looked into their coffin. Familiar fear returned. It felt as if I was in a dark cloud and was literally shaking.

“Why did they only live for two days?” I thought. “What purpose was there for them being born? What will happen when I die and am put in a box and buried?”

Those feelings intensified 16 months later when Norma’s twin brother died in his sleep. Just 24 years old.

Two weeks after this tragedy, our daughter Christina was born.

By this time, I had left my job in industry and was teaching physics, mathematics, and sport at high school.

I considered myself to be a Christian, having attended Church from a young age. I believed in God, but didn’t know Him. I did many wrong things in my life.

One day, Peter, a representative from an electronics firm, came to the school where I taught to sell me some equipment. He witnessed to me about Jesus.

As we chatted that afternoon, Peter asked where we were going on vacation that summer. I replied, “Nowhere, since my wife was expecting a baby. The doctor said it could be twins and we have already lost twins.”

“We’ll be praying for you,” he said.

That caught my attention. “Do you really believe in prayer?”

“Yes,” he replied. “We’ve seen God do many things in answer to prayer.”

Continuing, he talked about Christ and my fate. “You’re a sinner and deserve to go to hell,” he said. “But Jesus came from heaven and died on the Cross to take the punishment for your sins. He arose from the dead and ascended into heaven. He will return for all those who have put their trust in Him. You need to repent of your sins and invite Jesus into your life.”

Two weeks later, Peter sent me a letter. It included the message, “God is doing

wonderful things in our church. Come and see.”

Soon afterwards, Norma and I went to the church. We met people who really loved Jesus. They shared with us what God had done in their lives.

Driving home that night as I approached a bend in the road, a car pulled out from behind a bus. It headed straight for us.

Jamming my foot on the brake, I closed my eyes and waited for the crash. Nothing!

I opened my eyes. The bus and car had gone. As I sat there, shaking, a voice gently asked, “Where will you spend eternity?”

I believe it was the voice of the Lord Jesus Christ and that if I had died then, I would have been lost forever.

As soon as I arrived home, the phone rang. It was Peter. “Someone had a vision

Death...
It had
preoccupied
me
from a
young age.

of headlights heading straight for your car, and we prayed for you,” he said.

After he hung up, I fell to my knees. “Jesus, I’m sorry for the way I’ve lived,” I prayed. “Please forgive me and come into my heart.”

As soon as I stood up, it felt like pure water was flowing through my body. It washed all my sins and fears away.

I knew then that I was a child of God, and for the first time in my life, I felt free.

Not long after that, I was baptised with the Holy Spirit, an experience that equipped me for the work that God had planned for me to do.

Norma also became a Christian. We discovered how much Jesus loved and cared for us and that He was interested in every aspect of our lives.

Over 20 years ago, I received a call from God to leave my teaching job and work full time for Him. God has provided for us and proved His faithfulness.

I have ministered for the Lord in many countries and have seen Him perform many wonderful works.

I have seen blind eyes and deaf ears opened, cancers disappear, among many other wonderful healings.

I have even prayed for women who supposedly couldn’t have children. Later, they sent me pictures of their offspring.

A moving experience was to see a man who had been the town drunk for 45 years, come forward at a meeting to accept Jesus as his Saviour. He said he wanted to

be a new man in Jesus.

I prayed for him. His elbow had been seriously damaged in an accident that also left his fingers paralysed. Not only did Jesus heal his arm, but he was also healed of heart and lung problems. In addition, he was set free from alcoholism, smoking, and compulsive gambling.

Just as he had asked, he became a totally new man in Jesus!

I serve a wonderful, powerful, miracle-working God. Now that I know Him, I no longer fear death.

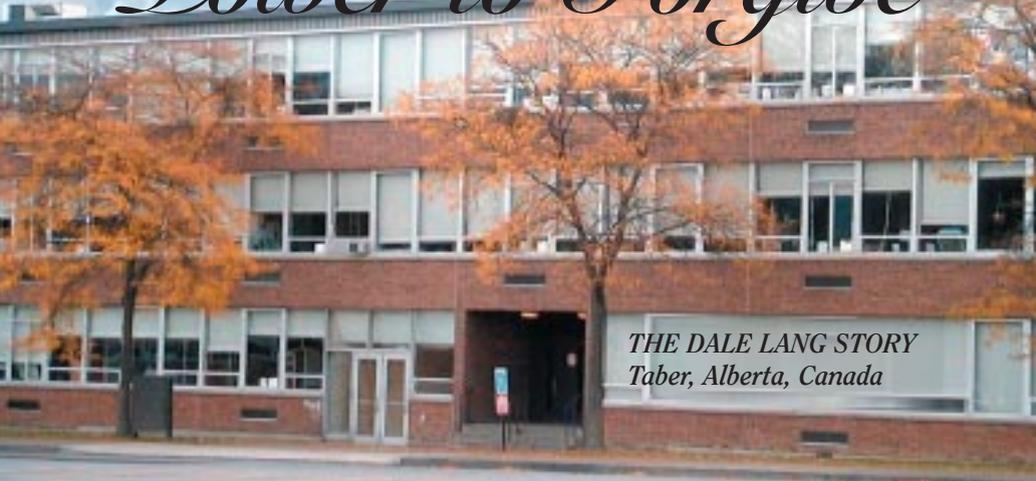
He has given me eternal life, and I know that one day I will be with Him in heaven. *Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.*

In truth,
God
was
pursuing
me.



Allan Jones is National Director for Business Men’s Fellowship in the United Kingdom, European Coordinator, and an honorary Vice President of the Wigan Chapter. He and his wife, Norma, have three children and four grandchildren. They attend Billinge Family Church.

“Power to Forgive”



*THE DALE LANG STORY
Taber, Alberta, Canada*

As the doctor approached in the emergency room, I instinctively knew that I didn’t want to hear what he had to say.

“Jason didn’t make it.”

There’s no way I wanted to accept the truth of my son’s death. I have never experienced a blacker, emptier moment. It was incredibly painful.

In that instant, all meaning in life drained from me. Standing next to me, my wife, Diane, felt just as numb.

Before this day, you never could have convinced me that such a thing could happen in our little town.

Eight days earlier, we watched the horrific events at Columbine High School unfold. But we Canadians reasoned those

multiple murders were an American phenomenon.

I soon discovered we were even closer than the hour that separated our home from the border of western Montana.

Just like in the U.S., Canadians have grown accustomed to an environment that devalues human life. So when the coast-to-coast publicity surrounding Columbine unfolded, it fascinated some teens in our nation.

One was the 14-year-old student who pulled the trigger and ended Jason’s life.

The day it happened, this boy was hanging out at the local high school. He had stopped attending to be home schooled. But he still walked over daily at



*“Jason didn’t
make it.”*

lunch hour to talk with friends.

On April 28, 1999, he told a buddy, “I thought what the guys did at Columbine was really cool. I want to know what it feels like to shoot somebody.”

The other young man laughed it off. Afterwards, this boy went home to get a .22 semi-automatic rifle. Returning, he entered a side door. Seeing a teacher, and later a student, he pointed the gun at them and told them to leave.

Then he turned to go down the hall. Our son and two friends were coming from the other direction, on their way to English class. They didn’t know this young man. They had never had any unpleasant encounters with him.

Still, he randomly fired four shots. Two missed. One struck Jason’s friend, causing spinal damage that took three surgeries to correct. The other hit our son in the chest. He lost consciousness in a few minutes and never regained it.

This senseless act of violence stirred outrage. People across Canada wanted to know how we had arrived at the place where young people felt the need to take such horrible action.

Six months later, a radio talk show host asked me, “Who’s responsible for your son’s death?”

“If you want to talk about responsibility, I will be the first to stand up and take some,” I replied. He immediately raised his eyebrows.

I explained how I had too often remained silent as conditions changed for the worse over the past 30 years. Since then, I have reflected deeply on the events and forces that have damaged our society.

One is violent entertainment. I see it in the television programs and movies millions watch. And the video games our children play for hours on end.

We have become fascinated with bloody, realistic-looking carnage. When it happens in real life, we’re so used to seeing it on a screen we think little of it.

One key theme I’ve noticed behind these stories is the idea of revenge. In so many words, the “hero” says, “Somebody did wrong to me and I’m a pretty good person, so it’s okay for me to do wrong to them to get even.”

Another negative characteristic is the evolution of the instant gratification culture. It’s a step beyond self-centeredness.

People have been told so often by advertisers and others that everything is their “right” that they expect it *right now*, in exactly *their way*.

If people have to wait more than a minute in a fast food line, they get angry. If someone blocks them in traffic, they take it as a license to beat the other driver up – even kill him.

Many other gradual developments have cheapened human life. For example, the widespread availability of pornography. Some call that freedom, but in reality it makes us lower than animals. It leaves the impression that other people exist to be used and abused.

Turning this around won’t happen overnight. But it has to if we are to survive as a civilized society. It will start one person, one family and one neighborhood at a time.

I started the day after our son died.

After a sleepless night, I read a statement to the news media expressing forgiveness to Jason's killer. But I never expected the intense reaction that followed.

Looking back, I can see that people are used to expressions of anger, hostility and revenge. When I didn't react that way, the public was so surprised that everyone wanted to know more.

However, I don't credit the power to forgive to my own strength. No, that began in 1977. Ironically, it was exactly 22 years before Jason died.

On that day, I received a call about our oldest son's birth. I was standing on the ice in an Arctic bay, where I had gone to fly a hot air balloon for an oil exploration company.

In that moment, I realized there was more to this existence than my own self-seeking, self-pleasing life.

That began an intense spiritual search. I read, studied and talked to many people. After eight months, I concluded that Jesus was who He claimed to be. He was the Son of God and the way to eternal life.

Through faith in Him, I discovered that loving others is what brought the joy and happiness I had sought for so long. I embraced the forgiveness that Christ made possible through His death on the cross.

Because I'm forgiven, I can forgive others. This is a message I have taken across the country. Through speaking to numerous groups, I have become very grateful for how this forgiveness has changed my life.

This became very real at one church where I spoke. Afterwards, a woman came

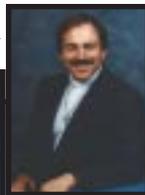
up to me with bitterness in her eyes.

"My daughter was killed 15 years ago by a drunk driver," she said. "I was angry at the time it happened. I've been angry ever since. I expect I'll be angry until the day I die. And I don't understand how you can forgive."

When I looked into her face, I realized how deeply God's grace had touched me. Because of the strength He provides, I had been able to avoid going to a place from which there is little chance of return.

Sure, I hurt over my son's loss. I think about him daily. I will for the rest of my life. But I don't need to be a bitter, angry person who ruins himself and his family with resentment.

I'm so thankful for the miracles and wonders God has done in my life. Best of all, I know one day I will see Jason again in heaven.



After accepting Christ, Dale Lang left the hot-air balloon business and became an Anglican priest. A father of five, he has been the rector at St. Theodore's Church in Taber since 1988. This story was taken from a talk to he gave at the Grand Prairie Chapter of Business Men's Fellowship.

Reflections

"For the mountains may be removed
and the hills may shake,
But My lovingkindness
will not be removed from you,
And My covenant of peace
will not be shaken,"
Says the Lord
Who has compassion on you.
-Isaiah 54:10



Christ is the ANSWER...He makes life worth living.

As you have been reading the stories of the lives of different people in this issue of *Answer Magazine*, you may have been thinking, "Is it possible for me to really know God and have peace in my heart?"

The answer to this question is "YES!" It is experienced by believing in God's Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, and being born-again by His Spirit.

God loves you and He showed that love in sending His Son, Jesus, to die on the Cross to pay the penalty for your sins. He wants to bless your life and make it full and complete.

He not only offers you abundant life here and now, but a life which is eternal. "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 want to be born-again and receive the free gift of eternal life? If you do, then follow these steps:

1. ADMIT to God that you are a sinner and are separated from Him, and that only the Lord Jesus can save you. "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." (Romans 3:23)
2. REPENT by turning away from sin and submitting to God. "I tell you... except you repent, you shall all likewise perish." (Luke 13:5)
3. BELIEVE that the Lord Jesus Christ died on the Cross and shed His blood to pay the price for your sins, that He was buried

and rose again. "If you will confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and shall believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. (Romans 10:9)

4. ASK God to save you. "For whosoever shall call upon the Name of the Lord shall be saved." (Romans 10:13)

If you would like to accept Jesus into your life, and receive the free gift of eternal life, then pray this simple prayer out loud:—

"Dear God, I come to You in the Name of Jesus. I now realize that I have a choice to make about my life. I believe that Jesus died for me, shed His blood to wash away my sins, and that He rose from the dead, making a way for me to have fellowship with You. I turn my back on the life I have lived without You, and I choose to follow Jesus from this moment on. I ask Jesus to be Lord of my life and to live in my heart. I thank You, Almighty God, that You love me, have forgiven me, and have accepted me as Your child, and that right now I am a new creation, born of God. Thank You Heavenly Father."

When you have made this very important decision, please complete the form below and return it to the nearest National Service Center (listed on the back cover).

We will then send you further helpful information.

I wish to inform you of my decision to follow Jesus Christ

(Please print clearly)

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