

# Independent Evangelist

LE it's happening



Follow the Leader

Phil Conybear – Writer

July 2006

Vol. 1 Issue 5 Mary Conybear - Editor

Welcome to the July issue of the Independent Evangelist. The summer months are slow at church. The kids are out of school and we like to schedule a vacation while they are home.

.....

**That beautiful season the Summer!  
Filled was the air with a dreamy and magical light;  
and the landscape  
Lay as if new created in all the freshness of childhood.**  
- Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

.....

After the barbeque is over and the parade is at rest, the last fireworks spent and you are all dried off from the last swim, the church will still be there and God will be pleased that summer was good for us all. Have a safe and joyous summer.

## MY LITTLE DEMONS!!!

Such a strange title for my opening page, I'd say. There's a song by Fleetwood Mac called, "My Little Demons" that got me thinking about things.

The song was written by Lindsey Buckingham at a time he was grappling with the effects of cocaine and breaking up with Stevie Nicks. It's a largely forgettable song except that he sings it with such intense emotion. You can tell by the veins sticking out on his neck by the time he reaches the first chorus that the words are special to him.

Ask yourself, what are your demons? I don't mean the cartoon type of demons you might see in a movie such as Animal House. I mean physical or emotional demons such as excessive anger, hate, jealousy or maybe drugs or alcohol. You know your demons but you have to admit you have them before you can face them.

When I came home from Nam, I had many demons and I fed them with alcohol. I had seen horrors beyond belief during my tour of combat and I thought I could drown them out of my brain. I only got drunk once; for ten years. It didn't work.

It didn't help that during the 70's, Vietnam vets were treated horribly by families, friends and the government. If you read

my third newsletter, you saw that I felt betrayed by the church as well. I became a horrible loner. I remembered the words of Kipling;

**God and the Soldier, we adore,  
In time of danger, not before.  
The danger passed and all things righted,  
God is forgotten and the Soldier slighted.**  
~Rudyard Kipling

**DEMONS** The dictionary and the Bible can define them better than I. Maybe it was really Satan working on me. Maybe I had just given up. Either way, when a person hits rock bottom something has to happen. You see it all the time in the news; beatings, killings suicide and much more.

You can get therapy but group sessions can be very annoying at that stage. There's nothing wrong with that approach but it will never be enough. There will always be a feeling of being lost even in the comfort of your favorite living room chair. Also, therapists will put you on drugs that you don't really need.

Demons are all around. They prey on everyone at some time. They whisper in your ear; "Buy that big screen TV" or "Lie about your neighbor or cheat on your spouse". They say, "Who cares? It's only money!" Greed, lust, envy; you know the rest of them. They prey on the weak minded. They lead you down a dark path.

Somehow, it's easier to follow "Demons" down a dark path than it is to follow God down a bright path. **Why is that?**

Do me a favor. Make a list of the things that keep you awake at night. What makes you so wound up inside.

Money, status, possessions, anger towards your neighbor over something trivial or maybe politics keep you tossing and turning all night. I feel sorry for you if those are your worst problems. They are just demons; nothing more. Close your mind to them and let God in.

If your problems are bigger, such as drugs or alcohol, face them right away. If you need the help of a health care professional, do it now. Tell the world and you'll be surprised at how many people are willing to help.

There is still one professional with a greater power; **God**.

Here's an article I printed before but it needs to be repeated. Even if you never experience "Rock Bottom" those little demons can keep you from understanding God's love. It truly is amazing! When you give yourself to Christ the feeling is more than I can describe. You will laugh, cry and feel like shouting from the rooftop.

Remember that you are human and you will normally feel times of fatigue or unrest but each time you slide back down that dark path, give yourself to Christ. It works. I'm a living example. When Shakespeare wrote, "To be or not to be" he was talking about suicide. I let Christ in and decided "To Be"!

### **Give Ourselves to Christ**

We must **trust** Jesus Christ to forgive our sins and determine to obey Him for the rest of our lives. That way we can know God and find peace again.

**The Bible says:** *So you will be saved, if you honestly say, Jesus is Lord, and if you believe with all your heart that God raised Him from death. God will accept you and save you, if you truly believe this. (Romans 10:9-10)*

Is there any good reason why you cannot turn your life over to Jesus Christ right now?

#### **How to give your life to Christ:**

1. Admit you are a sinner and need forgiveness.
2. Believe that Jesus Christ died for you on the Cross and rose from the grave.
3. Through prayer, confess that Jesus Christ is the only way to God and

Commit to live for Him for the rest of your life.

#### **What to Pray:**

Dear Lord Jesus,

I know that I am a sinner and need your forgiveness. I believe that You died on the cross for my sins and rose from the grave to give me life.

I know You are the only way to God so now I want to quit disobeying You and start living for You. Please forgive me, change my life and show me how to know You.

In Jesus' name. Amen.



**Christ Died For Our Sins**

### **Movie Corner**

This summer, you might read books while relaxing at a poolside and I usually have a book corner with some mention of a good book or two. However, I have some movies to suggest for those rainy days.

Steve Martin starred in a movie in the 90's called, **A Leap of Faith**. It's a story of a con man running a traveling "revival show". He's a hard cynic on his way to Dallas but when one of his trucks breaks down in a small town on the way, he decides to set up right there. The town is suffering hard times and hardly need him but things happen that even the "preacher" didn't expect.

It's a great movie for the whole family and the surprise ending will jump start your faith. The co-stars, Debra Winger and Liam Neeson make it a "Can't miss" treat for those rainy summer days.

Of course, during the 4th of July weekend, between fireworks and barbeques, you might take in any one of many patriotic favorites. Old ones like **Yankee Doodle Dandy** or **Sergeant York** are also "can't miss" types. **The Patriot**, with Mel Gibson is an amazing account of U.S. roots.

A more recent and poignant movie is, **Ray**, starring Jamie Foxx in his stunning portrayal of Ray Charles. The movie follows his life from humble beginnings in the South through his rise to the top of American music charts.

If you want to know about fighting demons, this is the perfect movie. Ray Charles fought addictions brought on by losses in his life; loss of his brother as well as his eyesight at an early age. He rose to fame at a time in America when racial prejudice was normal.

Ray not only broke racial barriers but he broke all barriers of the music industry as well. The movie shows his progression from Blues to Gospel, Country, Rock and Jazz.

Some of the scenes of drug abuse may be too graphic for family viewing but they are part of his battle with demons. It is a very touching movie and the musical score is amazing; especially when you see on the credits that Jamie Foxx did the singing.

*I know God will not give me anything I can't handle. I just wish that He didn't trust me so much.*

*Mother Teresa*

## U.S. News



### PHILANTHROPIST

#### **World's Second Richest Man to Give Billions to Gates' Foundation**

By John Jessup  
CBN News

CBN.com – WASHINGTON - It is a change of course for the man dubbed the "Oracle of Omaha."

Investment genius Warren Buffett plans to give the bulk of his estimated \$44-billion fortune away to charities-- not after he dies as he planned to, but now.

The biggest share of the money, about 85 percent, will go to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, a leader in public health charitable works.

Starting next month, the 75-year-old chairman and CEO of Berkshire Hathaway will begin channeling more than \$35 billion to the Gates Foundation and four other philanthropies.

Buffett built his fortune by investing in companies over the long haul, and has a record of benevolence.

He has already given millions to support health and education through a foundation named in honor of his late wife, Susan, and three others, run by each of his children.

But Buffett said he has been most impressed by the foundation managed by Bill and Melinda Gates. Buffett will join them as the third trustee of the foundation.

Gates recently announced he's going to step away from his daily duties at Microsoft to focus on his foundation.

Now the foundation has a new challenge: figuring out how to disperse about twice as much money as it had originally planned.

**Blessed is the man who finds out which way God is moving and then gets going in the same direction.**

.....  
**As every man hath received the gift, [even so] minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.**

**1 Peter 4:10**

### CHURCH OF THE MONTH

#### **New Testament Fellowship Church**

CBN.com – New Testament Fellowship Church of Alton, Illinois, is focused on meeting the needs of the next generation. In 2000 they started a Friday night youth meeting called Extreme Café with only 40 teens. Now, two years later, over 400 pay to come hang out. While there, they hear the good news of Jesus Christ. In fact, each Friday they line up just to get in!

The Extreme Café uses a dance club environment with lights, music and a cappuccino bar to attract the teens. Each Friday they are encouraged to bring their skateboards and bikes to ride the ramps outside. Extreme café might use some unexpected ways to get their message across, but they are having exciting results.

For example, Amber accepted Jesus as her Savior by coming to the meetings. She explains, "I was just one of those church kids, and then the first time I came here, I decided to get saved and I walked up the aisle. All the emptiness and all the drainage - everything that the world drained from me - was just completely filled. [I experienced] an intimacy that I had never had. It was just awesome."

Pastors Dan and Debbie Butler have devoted their lives to spreading the message of Christ.

Pastor Dan Butler explains, "We believe that just like John the Baptist, who was radical [in] the way he dressed, the way he spoke, the way he presented himself, [there should be no] compromise and a straightforward message. And this generation is that way."

That message comes through bands, expressive worship, and excellent teaching.

*To love another person is to help them love God.*

*Suren Kierkegaard*



## Iraq



### Special Section

Rebuilding Iraq  
STATEMENT

#### Iraq Official: 'This is Beginning of the End for Al-Qaeda in Iraq'

By John Jessup  
CBN News

CBN.com – WASHINGTON - It was an awfully bold prediction from Iraq's national security adviser.

"We believe that this is the beginning of the end for al-Qaeda in Iraq," Mouwafak al-Rubaie said.

That strong statement is based on documents uncovered in the wake of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi's death in a U.S. air strike last week.

Those records, including a flash drive found in Zarqawi's pocket, included information about his terror organization, al-Qaeda in Iraq, the names of its leaders, their hideout locations, along with their movements, plans and strategy.

According to al-Rubaie, all of this information gives the government the upper hand in dismantling the terror network, and possibly sets the stage for the withdrawal of foreign troops.

Pressing to further quell the Sunni-Arab insurgency, Prime Minister Nouri al Maliki opened the door for dialogue with insurgents as part of his national reconciliation plan -- a plan that could include pardoning insurgents who killed American troops.

In Baghdad, 75,000 Iraqi soldiers and police continue day two of Operation Forward Together, an effort to curb the violence in Iraq's capital city.

The U.S. is working with Iraq to increasingly shift security to Iraq's security forces. With the progress made from the captured information, and the new offensives against the terrorists, al-Rubaie said U.S. and coalition forces will begin returning home this year -- with the last soldier perhaps leaving by the middle of 2008.

**Above all, we must realize that no arsenal, or no weapon in the arsenals of the world, is so formidable as the will and moral courage of free men and women. It is a weapon our adversaries in today's world do not have.**

[Ronald Reagan](#)

*40th president of US (1911 - 2004)*

## World



NORTH KOREA

#### U.S. Tries to Dissuade N. Korea from Missile Launch

By John Jessup  
CBN News

CBN.com – WASHINGTON - The United States and other nations are stepping up the pressure on North Korea to force the country to give up its plans to test fire a long-range missile.

Recent intelligence reports show North Korea is in the final stage of a possible launch, which has set off a firestorm of international protest.

China, one of North Korea's last major allies, issued its strongest public statement concerning the small Communist regime, saying it is "very concerned about the situation."

Some believe North Korea's threat to test launch a long-range missile is an attempt to grab the attention of Western leaders.

But at his summit meeting in Europe, the President warned that such methods won't work.

"It should make people nervous when non-transparent regimes that have announced that they've got nuclear warheads, fire missiles," Bush said. "This is not the way you conduct business in the world."

The reports are a cause for concern because it is believed the type of missile North Korea has fueled is capable of reaching the West Coast, traveling some 9,300 miles. That's roughly three-and-a-half times the distance between New York and Los Angeles.

As for now, the United States and its allies are watching North Korea closely. Japan has deployed a fleet of ships and patrol planes to monitor any activity.

The U.S. military has also activated its missile defense system to track and possibly intercept a missile if one were launched.

North Korea is pressing for direct talks with Washington to resolve the issue, but the United States is ruling that out, saying that the country should return to the six-nation talks that have been stalled for months.

*Our scientific power has outrun our spiritual power. We have guided missiles and misguided men.*  
*Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929-1968)*

## Strange Weather

Summer is here and the news is full of weather stories. Out West, around Sedona, Arizona, wildfires have taken a horrible toll. Though it hardly made the news in this area, it was a huge fire marking the beginning of the season for fires out West.

Hurricane season has started in the South. The cleanup from Katrina is still going on. It will be years to get the area back to where it was if there are no major storms this season.

The tornado season is upon us here in the Midwest. I was caught up in a tornado once and luckily it was a small one. Still, it made me realize that the warnings should be taken very seriously.

A tremendous amount of flooding has hit the eastern U.S. The major networks haven't reported much, but Fox News and CNN have covered it extensively. For example, Boston had 22 inches of rain during the last weekend. It's not over yet, either.

I'm not trying to be an alarmist, but I'm mentioning it only because of the effects weather has on us. Last year, the tsunami and the hurricanes brought the world together. Operation Blessing and The Red Cross were in the thick of it and we should remember them again this year and offer our support when they ask for it.

Weather predictions are very difficult to make and this year is no exception. I've read reports that another El Nino is building up. If that is true we may have a mild hurricane season but it could cause draughts elsewhere but don't count on it. World weather is a nightmare to predict.

Just be practical and keep an eye on neighbors that can't help themselves in a storm. Don't take stupid chances while traveling; like trying to cross a flooded highway for example. Lost time is not important when lives are at stake. Most of all, pray for those that have lost everything already this season.

It's not too soon to contribute to relief funds. Your church, Operation Blessing and The Red Cross are always in need of funds for disasters. More than that though, it's not too soon to pray.

I want to share some weather pictures with you. Keep them in mind when you hear sirens in your neighborhood. Keep an eye on the weather and each other.



Part of Katrina



A parking lot at a Wal-Mart in Pennsylvania



Not a Good day for firemen



On the aluminum cap atop the Washington Monument in Washington DC are two words: **Laus Deo**. No one can see these words. In fact, most visitors to the monument have no idea they are even there and probably couldn't care less! But there they are; 555 feet, 5.125 inches high and perched atop the monument to the father of our nation overlooking the 69 square miles which comprise the District of Columbia, capital of the United States of America.

**Laus Deo!** Two seemingly insignificant, unnoticed words; out of sight and, one might think, out of mind but very meaningfully placed at the highest point over what is the most powerful city in the world.

And what might those two words, comprised of just four syllables and only seven letters, mean?

Very simply; **"Praise be to God!"**

Though construction of this giant obelisk began in 1848 when James Polk was President of the United States, it was not until 1888 that the monument was inaugurated and opened to the public. It took twenty five years to finally cap the memorial with the tribute **Laus Deo! Praise be to God!**

From atop this magnificent granite and marble structure, a visitor can take in the beautiful panoramic view of the city with its division into four major segments. And from that vantage point one can also easily see the original plan of the designer, Pierre Charles l'Enfant, a perfect cross imposed upon the landscape, with the White House to the north, the Jefferson Memorial to the south, the Capitol to the east and the Lincoln Memorial to the west. A cross you say? How interesting! It was no doubt intended to carry a meaning for those who bother to notice.

Within the monument itself are 898 steps and 50 landings. As one climbs the steps and pauses at the landings the memorial stones share a message. On the 12th Landing is a prayer offered by the City of Baltimore; on the 20th is a memorial presented by some Chinese Christians; on the 24th a presentation made by Sunday School children from New York and Philadelphia quoting Proverbs 10:7, Luke 18:16 and Proverbs 22:6.

When the cornerstone of the Washington Monument was laid on July 4th, 1848 deposited within it were many items including the Holy Bible presented by the Bible Society. Such was the discipline, the moral direction, the spiritual mood given by the founder and first President of our unique democracy; **"One nation, under God."**

I am awed by Washington's prayer for America. I've printed it before but in honor of Independence Day, here it is again.

**"Almighty God; We make our earnest prayer that Thou wilt keep the United States in Thy holy protection; that Thou wilt incline the hearts of the citizens to cultivate a spirit of subordination and obedience to government; and**

**entertain a brotherly affection and love for one another and for their fellow citizens of the United states at large. And finally that Thou wilt most graciously be pleased to dispose us all to do justice, to love mercy, and to demean ourselves with that charity, humility, and pacific temper of mind which were the characteristics of the Divine Author of our blessed religion, and without a humble imitation of whose example in these things we can never hope to be a happy nation. Grant our supplication, we beseech Thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."**

**Laus Deo!**

As you might have guessed, I kind of like the idea that our Pledge of Allegiance includes the phrase **"under God."** It is clear when one studies the history of our great nation that Washington's America was one of the few countries in all the world established under the guidance, direction and banner of Almighty God, to whom was given all praise, honor and worship by the great men who formed and fashioned her pivotal foundations. When one stops to observe the inscriptions found in public places all over our nation's capitol, one will easily find the signature of God.

**We are a nation under God!!! Laus Deo!!!**

*"Unless the Lord builds the house, its builders labor in vain. Unless the Lord watches over the city, the watchmen stand guard in vain." (Psalm 127: 1)*



**Vietnam Veterans Memorial and Washington Monument**



**A Field of Flowers in Indiana**

Goodbye until next month. As always, I like to leave the last page for funny or unusual pictures or stories. I want to thank you all for reading the Independent Evangelist and for the kind words from so many of you.

As I said before, one purpose of this newsletter is to reflect on how life's stories relate to Christianity. I may not be a really good evangelist, but I try. I do know this (and you can pass it on) if you find yourself further from God than you were yesterday, you can be sure who has moved.

In case you haven't noticed, I like astronomy. My friends call me Philileo ( like Galileo, only stranger ) because I'm so fascinated by his work.

I think all Christians should enjoy astronomy. When ever you wonder about God's playground, just look up; it's magnificent. I wish Galileo was around to see these pictures. I defy anyone to look at these and say there is no God. Ain't gonna happen'.



Looking back at Earth during a total solar eclipse;



this solar eclipse.

## *It's a Wonderful World*



*When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy finger,  
the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained;*

*Psalms 8:3*

