

# Independent Evangelist

LE it's happening



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There comes a time when autumn asks, "What have you been doing all summer?" I trust you had a good summer.

Welcome to the October newsletter. If your summer was lacking fun, find an Oktoberfest celebration somewhere or search for that "perfect" pumpkin with your kids or grandkids.



*There is no season when such pleasant and sunny spots may be lighted on, and produce so pleasant an effect on the feelings, as now in October.*  
- Nathaniel Hawthorne

## 120 And Counting!

I had a visit with an insurance salesman and we talked about a great many things but one thing he said hit me like a runaway train. Apparently, insurance companies believe that kids being born today could possibly live to the very ripe age of **120**.

The idea is not so far fetched because medical breakthroughs happen exponentially. While science searches for the fountain of youth, I would be happy with the **fountain of middle age**.

I'm over the half way point and most of my friends from my past are dead so I'm used to death. Death never bothered me anyway. If I live past 100, I would marvel at advances in technology instead. Maybe they could find a way to end physical handicaps so people could enjoy life at that age.

*Cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength faileth.*  
*Psalms 71:9*

Advances in science and technology would be more than I can imagine in that time span. I was born in 1950 and just the way TV has grown in that time is incredible. Who knows? TV sets may be replaced by glasses that project images onto the retina. I'm all for it. It makes life fun.

The only thing that worries me is that Christianity has slid into a distant "back seat" during the same amount of time. The courts have taken prayer away from us in public places. Schools deleted the pledge of allegiance because it said, "**One nation under God**" and someone may be insulted! "Oh dear, little Johnny said God! I may faint".

Many parents with teens or very young children sit at home Sunday mornings. They claim to be agnostics, which only tell me they want to be atheists but are too scared to go all the way. They have a nagging feeling they may be wrong. They just want to look cool to their liberal peers after all.

If you are an adult you have the rights to call yourself anything you wish, but **leave a path open for your children** that allow them to learn about Christianity. The choice should be theirs. Life without God is the true meaning of Hell. I've been to Hell and it's no picnic and you shouldn't force kids into Hell if they expect to live 120 years.

Ever since that insurance salesman started me thinking of 120 years, I've had mixed feelings. If the world survives radical Muslims and liberal indifference and does good things with technology it could be quite a world to witness. But if children aren't introduced to God, then I have no desire to see it.

Old age isn't a new concept. Methuselah lived to 969. The Bible is full of old timers. But to live over 100 years with no **purpose** is just plain silly and a waste of time.

*So teach [us] to number our days, that we may apply [our] hearts unto wisdom.*  
*Psalms 90:12*

If you give your children an opportunity to accept Christ into their lives, then their 120 years would be worth living.

Perhaps God has given your children scientific minds. Your children might give us all something other than old reruns of Lucy to project on our retinas. They might recognize that their talents are God's gifts to them and they might look for cures for diseases or eradicate hunger.

They may just realize that **120 years is nothing compared to eternity with God**.

*As a well-spent day brings happy sleep, so life well used brings happy death.*  
*Leonardo da Vinci*

## Traditional Vs. Contemporary

My wife, Mary and I have been going to Good Shepherd Church along with our good friends, Mark and Pam. It's a much bigger church than we were used to. The size of the church didn't matter much to me. I just wanted a place to worship where I could **feel the spirit of God**. I believe I found that place.

The first thing I noticed was there are more services to attend. When I asked if each one was different, I wasn't prepared for the answer. They have traditional, contemporary, a mix of the two and an ultra contemporary aimed at the youth.

Mark and Pam found their place right away with the contemporary service. The music is based on Christian Rock and Mark plays bass in the band. Pam was in the choir at our last church and will fit in well here. The music matches her energy level and the words are very uplifting.

Mary and I plan on attending all of the services in due time. We have been going mostly to the contemporary service at 11:00, Sunday mornings and will probably make that our favorite service. I've become fixated with the effect the program has on families.

Never before have I seen so many **families with young children enjoying a service together**. For instance, I saw a family with two children I could only guess was maybe 10 and 12. The girl excused herself for a moment and as she was walking back, the band was playing the intro to the next song.

The words for the song are projected on a screen but the girl had her back to the screen and was clapping in time to the music. She even closed her eyes as if she could feel the music and was singing right in time. As she sang, she held back tears. It struck me hard; **she knew the words and more than that, she understood the meaning**.

In another pew to my right, I saw a couple with slightly younger children. The kids were watching the words projected on the screen and something in the song struck a chord in the daughter's heart. She started to fight back a tear and hugged her parents and I could read her lips as **she said, "I love you" to each of her parents**.

I was overwhelmed. It seemed to be the norm in this church. Everywhere, **families were together**. Kids weren't squirming around or bothering others around them. They were awake and attentive.

I have always preferred a very traditional service. It's what I grew up with and I will still attend those services from time to time. But I think today's contemporary services will be tomorrow's traditional services. After all, when **Bach** wrote music for the church, **it was contemporary** and it still has its place in the church.

When music stirs something in our heart and **focuses our attention to God**, it has done more than the writer bargained for.

I'm at that awkward age where I still have a need for the "old" but I like the "new". Good Shepherd Church gives me both in a wonderful setting. We've attended services at three different times and we will see them all.

Each time I see bad things on the news or hear of kids turning to drugs, I will close my eyes and picture the 12 year old girl **singing words of praise from her heart** or I'll picture the other girl understanding the words in a song and in that very instant **feeling compelled to tell her parents she loved them**. I won't hold back any tears because they've given me hope for today's youth. The longer I live, the more beautiful life becomes.

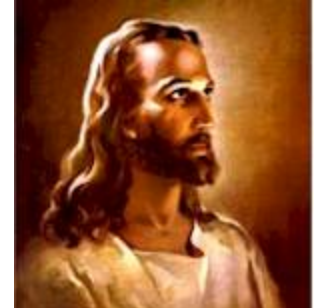
Contemporary is the new traditional. I'm just beginning to understand it, but it works.

.....  
*But [there is] a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.*

*Job 32:8*  
.....

### *Warner Sallman's Head of Christ: An American Icon.*

With the possible exception of Leonardo Da Vinci's Last Supper, no picture of Jesus is etched so deeply into our imaginations than the **Head of Christ, painted in 1940 by Warner Sallman**.



Perhaps this is because Sallman's image of Christ has been reproduced in so many different media; it has been used to illustrate the pages of the Bible, Sunday school literature, calendars, posters, church bulletins, lamps, buttons and even bumper stickers. The Head of Christ has been reproduced over **500 million times, making it one of the most popular art works of all time**.

### *The most popular picture of Jesus of all time*

For many of us this image is part of our childhood, having been hung on the walls of Sunday School classrooms and the halls and offices of the churches where we received our nurture in the faith. Countless Christians have recognized in Sallman's picture the personal savior whose intimacy and tenderness is at the heart of their faith.

*For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.*

*Matthew 18:20*

## *Can You Trust the Media?*

When Kennedy and Nixon had their famous debate, I was 10 but I was glued to the TV watching, as was most of the free world. All during my teen years, I read everything I could get my hands on. I watched politics with a religious fervor. I served in combat in Vietnam when I was only 19.

Now, as a **19 year** old I was standing **far inside Cambodia** reading a Chicago Tribune sent from home. The headline on the news source I had trusted read, **“There Are No Troops in Cambodia!”** We were a 20 minute chopper ride to Phnom Penh but we were not here! We must have been in the Twilight Zone.

Ever since, the media has given me fewer and fewer reasons to trust anything they say. They have made presidential elections a laughing stock world wide. **A presidential candidate has to have perfect hair and teeth** or they will rip him apart. A man with big ears or a funny walk or talk doesn't stand much chance. Face it; if FDR was running, **a man in a wheel chair would not be elected today.**

Today in the Trib, **Judge Judy** may rule on a case. It seems a teen is suing someone over her lost, iPod and it's such a big deal, only she could possibly have the answer. Imagine the gut wrenching agony a child must feel in losing an **iPod!** Do we really we need Judge Judy to make the news on such a trivial lawsuit?

Stories of importance rarely make it unless a celebrity jumps on the band wagon. Nobody would know about **Darfur** if **George Clooney** didn't take a stand. **Land mines** left behind in war zones would still be ripping off limbs of unsuspecting children if **Paul McCartney** didn't take a stand. **Hugo Chavez** wouldn't be so welcomed in the U.S. if **Danny Glover** didn't hug the man on stage. These are just a few of many celebrities that make the **“news”**.

**Chavez** helped a biased and poorly written and reviewed book, “Hegemony or Survival” goes to number 4 on Amazon's best seller list; up from 20,664! **What a salesman!** What a **“guy”!** What a dictator!

Celebrities aren't the only news. 96,000 illegal Muslim immigrants came into the U.S. last year, mostly through the Mexican border. Each **week**, the number of illegal Mexican immigrants would fill **Soldier Field**.

This is a serious issue with many facets but the Tribune pays homage to those that died crossing the border illegally instead of those that are legal and contributing members of society. But the U.S. is evil in their eyes and their voice is the only one heard.

When the Pope referenced a 14<sup>th</sup> century leaders' words regarding Islam, Muslims killed a nun and burned churches even after Muslim leaders accepted his explanation and

apology. Nobody apologized for the nuns' death or the burned churches because **the media ignores Christian issues.**

I have very liberal friends who say they “hate” my politics. In truth, I am a moderate. I really do not like any political extremism; left or right. They believe I am extreme conservative because I question liberals and ask for answers. I question conservatives as well. Almost all of the media though is very liberal and **they are the only voice we are allowed to hear.**

I'm a patriot as well as an evangelist. Many of the liberals that say they disagree with my politics never served the very country that protects their rights to disagree. Disagree in Venezuela and you will die. Try to be a Christian in Darfur or Iran and you will die. That doesn't sell papers though.

I may sound outspoken or may be accused of forcing my opinions on others. I'm holding back. I'm just pointing out that the media believes they run the country. They believe, and **expect you to believe that what they say is gospel.**

**If you want the Gospel, read a Bible.** If you want slanted, twisted news with a dash of cheap ads, read the newspaper. **But never let them say they are Gospel.**

They sensationalize stories of parents that sue schools to ban the pledge of allegiance because they are atheist and want their children to be raised as such.

They give front page coverage to the **removal of the Ten Commandments** from public places and the **removal of Nativity scenes at Christmas.** Why, last Christmas I remember reading that we shouldn't be able to have a nativity scene unless we displayed a Star of David and the Star and Crescent with it.

We are losing our minds and selling our souls when we quit believing in Christ because it will insult someone else.

The media has become so twisted that even the comics aren't funny anymore. They aren't even politically correct; they are racist and angry. Even the writers of the comics have sold their souls.

All I ask is that people have an open mind and listen to both sides. If you read a story in the paper, **all you can be sure of is that something happened somewhere.** Check out both sides before you take their word as Gospel! **The only Gospel is in the Bible!**

If I have any friends among you after saying all that, I thank you.

.....

***He shall not be afraid of evil tidings:  
his heart is fixed, trusting in the  
Lord.  
Psalms 112:7***

**Here are stories the media won't show. They are just another point of view.**

## Politics

Interview: **Should The U.S. Stay in the U.N.?**  
CBN News



Today Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez repeated his **"Bush is the Devil"** mantra to a crowd at **the Mount Olives Baptist Church in Harlem**, just a day after he repeatedly called President Bush "the Devil" while speaking to the General Assembly.

Shortly after **embracing actor Danny Glover**, Chavez pledged to once again offer discounted heating oil to New York residents. And he did so in a speech with heavy Christian overtones.

Meanwhile, Chavez is experiencing some fallout from his remarks at the U.N. General Assembly. New York Democrat Charles Rangel blasted Chavez for insulting president Bush on U.S. soil. And Representative Nancy Pelosi called him a "thug."

All this makes a lot of people wonder if the United States should even be part of the U.N.

Thomas Kilgannon has written a book about it called "Diplomatic Divorce - Why America Should End Its Love Affair with the United Nations."

## World

Ministry Helps  
Cambodian Landmine  
Victims  
Lucille Talusan  
CBN Asia  
Correspondent



CBNNews.com - PHNOM PENH, Cambodia – **People with missing limbs begging in the streets is a common sight in Cambodia.** Even in this country's world renowned tourist spot like the Ankor Wat, disabled Khmer people have themselves become part of the attraction: landmine victims who still bear the scars of three decades of war.

De-mining organizations such as **the Mine Action Group** have cleared vast areas in Cambodia of millions of landmines since 1992. But despite their efforts, injuries and casualties continue to rise. Aside from the big volume of landmines, MAG Coordinator Samol Hem points to several causes for this problem.

"It's the stomach need. The people are afraid to go hungry and so they take the risk of occupying the land even without clearance from de-mining groups," Hem said. **"People also get the scrap metal from the landmine which they sell for 20 cents per kilo.**

Hem said that to solve these problems, it is important to educate the people of the dangers of landmines and for experts to quickly respond to the needs of those living in mine-infested areas.

For example, when a deactivated landmine is covered with leaves and twigs, nobody will notice it.

To date, there **are 6 to 7 million landmines scattered in the rice fields and jungles of Cambodia, especially in the Thai border.** Everyday, two to three innocent people are blown up or even killed by these landmines.

Such discrimination sows fear and despair in the hearts of landmine victims like Lee Leng who lost his leg in 1985.

"When I learned I lost my leg, I wanted to end my life," Leng said.

For many years, Leng had no direction in life. But in 2001, he, along with other victims, found shelter in the community called Veil Thom. The 2000 hectare land donated by a disabled ex-Khmer Rouge soldier drew 250 families with physically handicapped members. But, although they had shelter, there was no future in Veil Thom because it was an impoverished rural village in the middle of the jungle.

Hope came in 2003 when **Samaritan's Purse**, a Christian organization, began developing Veil Thom into a livable community. The 1 1/2 hour trek into the village is now a five minute drive through the graded road they constructed. The wells and the different livelihood programs are all disability friendly. A school was also built, giving education to more than 500 children. Darren Tosh is the Country Director of Samaritan's Purse.

**"One of the things we wanted instilled in this community was a sense of trust and love in the name of Christ,"** Tosh said. "We started listening to them, treat them as neighbors and found ways to give some of their needs but at the same time we partner with local churches to come and share the gospel and take time to pray for the people."

**It was through these prayer gatherings that Leng surrendered his life to Christ two years ago.**

“Before, I was a drunkard and a heavy smoker. But Christ helped me stop and now I have joy in my life,” Leng said.

Lee, along with landmine victims in Veil Thom, has stopped being outcasts of society as they now belong to a thriving community with a bright future. While de-mining groups say that it may take 100 more years to make Cambodia landmine free, Christian organizations like Samaritan's Purse are committed to create more communities like Veil Thom, giving support to landmine victims, treating them as neighbors and loving them as Christ commanded.

## Iraq

### Kurds Iraqi Kurds: A Forgotten People

By Paul Strand  
CBN News



CBNNews.com – WASHINGTON - To hear the steady beat of bad news from Iraq, you'd think the whole country is awash in sectarian strife and car bombings.

But one part of Iraq has been remarkably peaceful, especially for American troops.

The Kurds throughout history have been a rugged warrior race, but they have no beef with democracy or America, and no U.S. forces have been killed or kidnapped in Kurdish areas of Iraq.

In fact, **90 percent of the Kurds have a favorable impression of America**, a real anomaly in the Arab and Muslim world.

A major reason for that is because American forces and their allies did so much to protect the Kurds from the killing wrath of **Saddam Hussein**, starting a few months after the end of the first Gulf war.

The long-time dictator definitely had it in for the Kurds, and if he's executed in the days ahead, one of the major reasons will be for the **war crimes he committed against them in the 70s and 80s**. That includes **gassing, bombing, and killing Kurds by the hundreds of thousands**, and chasing hundreds of thousands of others out of their ancient territories.

Much of that had to do with oil, because Kurds occupy some of Iraq's most oil-rich regions. The same is true for Kurds in Turkey, Syria and Iran; they're sitting on some of the most valuable oil reserves in those three lands. That is why Iraq, Turkey, Syria, and Iran have all so fiercely opposed the idea of a free Kurdistan, carved out of their four nations.

It's one of the reasons Kurds have been among the most enthusiastic of voters in post-Saddam Iraq. They believe there's a real chance in a truly democratic Iraq that they'll be able to divest themselves of Baghdad's control, and continue to at least maintain their status as a fairly autonomous region. Then maybe some day, they could translate that into true freedom, as a prosperous, independent Kurdistan.

They'll likely have to do it all on their own, though.

**The same world that's so adamant in demanding that 10 million Palestinians be given their own homeland, never raises a similar cry for the 30 million Kurds -- by far, the world's largest ethnic minority without a home to call its own.**

## Book Corner

I kept seeing a book called, **The Glass Castle** by Jeannette Walls at Barnes & Noble. They have the book displayed on a table of various books of required reading for Downers Grove High School students.

By the title and cover, I assumed it was some “girly” type of book and walked away. For some reason, I looked it over during my next trip there. I found out it was far from “girly” and it should be read by every one of all ages.

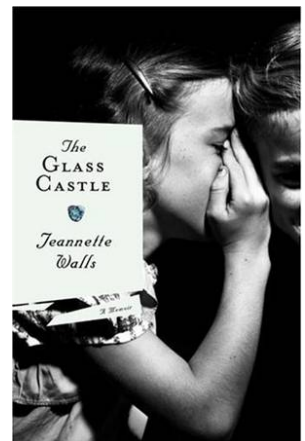
Jeannette Walls grew up with parents whose ideals and stubborn nonconformity were both their curse and their salvation. Rex and Rose Mary Walls had four children. In the beginning, they lived like nomads, moving among Southwest desert towns, camping in the mountains.

Rex was a charismatic, brilliant man who, when sober, captured his children's imagination, teaching them physics, geology, and above all, how to embrace life fearlessly.

Rose Mary, who painted and wrote and couldn't stand the responsibility of providing for her family, called herself an “excitement addict.” Cooking a meal that would be consumed in fifteen minutes had no appeal when she could make a painting that might last forever.

Later, when the money ran out, or the romance of the wandering life faded, the Walls retreated to a dismal West Virginia mining town. He drank and stole the grocery money and disappeared for days at a time.

As the dysfunction of the family escalated, Jeannette and her brother and sisters had to fend for themselves, supporting one



another as they weathered their parents' betrayals and, finally, found the resources and will to leave home.

What is so astonishing about Jeannette Walls is not just that she had the guts and tenacity and intelligence to get out, but that she describes her parents with such deep affection and generosity.

Hers is a story of triumph against all odds, but also a tender, moving tale of unconditional love in a family that despite its profound flaws gave her the fiery determination to carve out a successful life on her own terms.

For two decades, Jeannette Walls hid her roots. Now she tells her own story. She doesn't hold any punches as she describes the bad and the good in her life.

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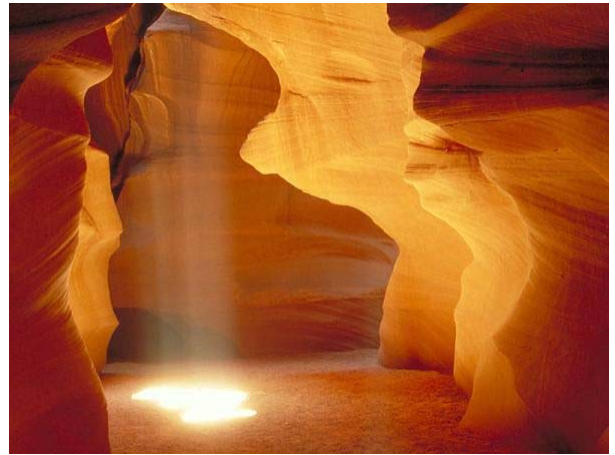
*This poor man cried, and the Lord heard [him], and saved him out of all his troubles.  
Psalms 34:6*

*Train up a child in the way he should go:  
and when he is old, he will not depart from it.*

*Proverbs 22:6*

.....

*Properly, we should read for power. Man reading should be man intensely alive. The book should be a ball of light in one's hand.  
Ezra Pound  
US poet (1885 - 1972)*



*He is the light that leads me from my darkness!*



*God could have kept Daniel out of the lion's den...  
He could have kept Paul and Silas out of jail...  
He could have kept the three Hebrew children out of the fiery furnace...  
But God has never promised to keep us out of hard places...  
What He has promised is to go with us through every hard place, and to bring us through victoriously!*



*Some people complain because God puts thorns on roses, while others praise God for putting roses among thorns.*

*Fall  
Colors*



## *The Lighter Side*

A boy was watching his father, a pastor, write a sermon.  
"How do you know what to say?" he asked.  
"Why, God tells me."  
"Oh, then why do you keep crossing things out?"

A six-year-old was overheard reciting the Lord's Prayer at a church service:  
"And forgive us our trash passes as we forgive those who passed trash against us."

A child came home from Sunday School and told his mother that he had learned a new song about a **cross-eyed bear named Gladly**. It took his mother a while before she realized that the hymn was really "Gladly The Cross I'd Bear."

A Sunday school teacher asked her little children, as they were on the way to church service,  
"And why is it necessary to be quiet in church?"  
One bright little girl replied,  
"Because people are sleeping."

**You might be a Lutheran if...**

**the church is on fire and you rush in to save the coffee pot.**

**you're watching Star Wars on DVD, and when they say, "may the force be with you," you reply, "and also with you."**

**your idea of a mixed marriage is an ELCA bride and an LCMS groom.**

**your LCMS pastor refers to St. Louis as "the Holy City."**

**What kind of motor vehicles are in the Bible?**

Jehovah drove Adam and Eve out of the Garden in a **Fury**.

David's **Triumph** was heard throughout the land.

Also, probably a **Honda**, because the apostles were all in one **Accord**.

**What do they call pastors in Germany?**

**German Shepherds.**

**This Sunday school kid thinks like me when he asked:**

**If you're born again, do you have two bellybuttons?**

**This comes from a Catholic elementary school. Kids were asked questions about the Old and New Testaments. They have not been retouched or corrected (i.e., incorrect spelling has been left in).**

**In the first book of the bible, Guinness, God got tired of creating the world, so he took the Sabbath off.**

**Adam and Eve were created from an apple tree. Noah's wife was called Joan of Ark. Noah built an ark, which the animals come on to in pears.**

**Lot's wife was a pillar of salt by day, but a ball of fire by night.**

**The Jews were a proud people and throughout history they had trouble with the unsympathetic Genitals.**

**Samson was a strongman who let himself be led astray by a Jezebel like Delilah.**

**Moses led the Hebrews to the Red Sea, where they made unleavened bread which is bread without any ingredients.**

**The Egyptians were all drowned in the desert. Afterwards, Moses went up on Mount Cyanide to get the ten ammendments.**

**The seventh commandment is thou shalt not admit adultery.**

**Moses died before he ever reached Canada. Then Joshua led the Hebrews in the battle of Geritol.**

**David was a Hebrew king skilled at playing the liar. He fought with the Finklesteins, a race of people who lived in Biblical times.**

**Solomon, one of David's sons, had 300 wives and 700 porcupines.**

**When Mary heard that she was the mother of Jesus, she sang the Magna Carta.**

**When the three wise guys from the east side arrived, they found Jesus in the manager.**

**Jesus was born because Mary had an immaculate contraption.**

**The people who followed the lord were called the 12 decibels. The epistles were the wives of the apostles.**

**One of the opossums was St. Matthew who was also a taximan.**

**Christians have only one spouse. This is called monotony.**

