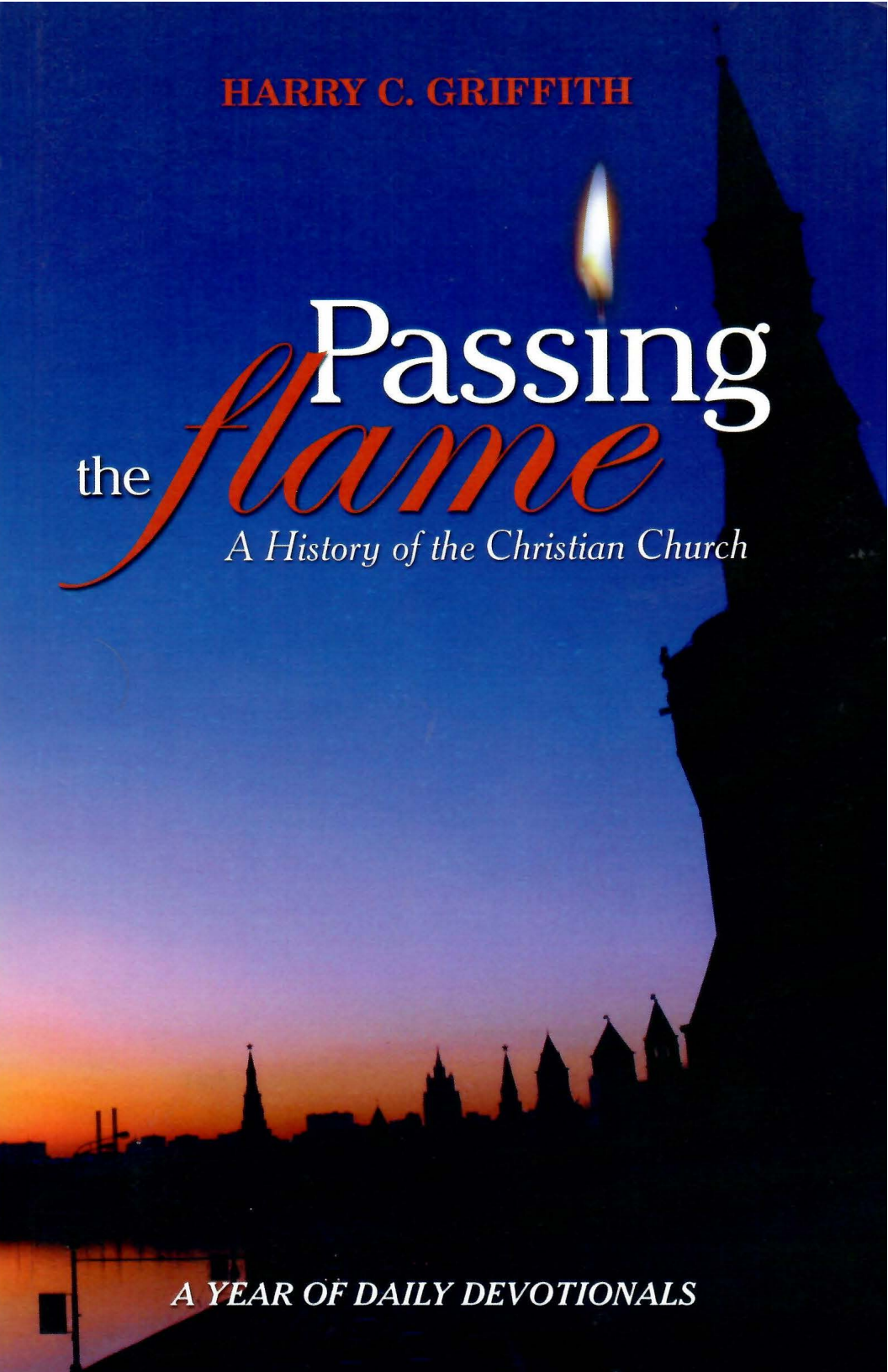


HARRY C. GRIFFITH



the **Passing**
flame
A History of the Christian Church

A YEAR OF DAILY DEVOTIONALS

Passing the Flame

A History of the Christian Church

Harry C. Griffith

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Passing the Flame

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This book is dedicated to my wife Emily
in whom Christ dwells.

Special recognition is due Edward Malles
who wrote the perspective pieces and did the editing.

PASSING THE FLAME

Introduction

We Christians have a “great cloud of witnesses” (Hebrews 12:1) to our faith. It is tremendously encouraging to know that, down through the centuries, faith in Christ has burned brightly in the lives of millions of people the world over, some who have been especially exemplary. These are the “flame bearers” of Christ’s love from Jesus himself to us. The record of their lives reflects the passing of the flame we will be following over the 366 pages of this book.

This is not a book for church historians by a church historian. It is a book for every Christian written by one who simply compiled the stories from various reliable sources. It begins with Jesus and progresses down through the years to our present day. It demonstrates how the flame of Christ’s love has passed from one person to another, and is burning more brightly today than at any time in the last 2,000 years.

You will know the names of many of the people you read about in this book, but many you will not. Each person is a witness to us of Christ’s love. Some were martyred for their faith. Others have given us books, poems or hymns. Still others have simply left us a legacy of faith by their example of dedication and service.

Though not written specifically as a devotional, this book is easily usable for that purpose. By meditating on one person each day, you have a year of daily devotionals before you. If you would like to use it for that purpose, some suggestions in how to do so follow.

One effective method of praying is through the “five facets of prayer”: Adoration, Thanksgiving, Confession, Intercession and Petition (easily remembered by the sentence “As The Christian I Pray”). Adoration is praise, loving God for who he is, and should be our opening prayer; we then thank God for what he does for us; we next ask him to forgive us our sins; and that opens the door for our prayers on behalf of others (intercession) and, finally, for ourselves (petition).

At the end of each reading, begin your devotional time by praising God for who he is as demonstrated by the love he has shown to and through his people down through the centuries. Then thank him for the life of the person you have just read about; a suggestion concerning the thing or things we might be thankful for is provided.

Then it is time for confession. The life of the person you have just read about may have surfaced within yourself a failing you need to confess to God. Or, that person's life may have borne the scars of persecution, and you may sense a need to engage in corporate confession on behalf of those who caused that harm.

Intercession could include praying for someone who comes to your mind as a result of the person about whom you have just read. Petition would include a prayer or prayers for yourself in accepting the challenge this person's life awakens in you.

Not every page in the book is dedicated to the life of a particular person. You will find scattered throughout the book Perspective pieces. They are designed to provide historical perspective concerning significant matters that were affecting the lives of the individual Christians you will be reading about.

Also, remember that no one other than Jesus has ever been perfect. Although the people in this book have been instrumental in passing the flame of God's love from one generation to another, they were not all exemplary in everything they did. Some had blind spots and others did what they thought was right at the time but their actions would come under serious doubt today. Martin Luther, for instance, is a great hero of the faith, but he was blatantly anti-Semitic. Queen Elizabeth I undoubtedly had people tortured during her reign. Many other examples could be given. Try to remember these people for the way in which God used them rather than judging too harshly all that they did.

You will also notice that some people's names are in bold print in the text of the book. They are simply ones who have a page in the book dedicated to them at some other point. By highlighting them, it is easy to see how many Christians have influenced one another down through the years.

God's love for us has a track record running from Jesus Christ to you. It is a record of faith, often faith under fire. The flame of that love has touched many lives with its eternal blessing. Pass it on.

Prologue

From prayer that asks that I may be
Sheltered from winds that beat on Thee,
From fearing when I should aspire,
From faltering when I should climb higher,
From silken self, O Captain, free
Thy soldier who would follow Thee.

From subtle love of softening things,
From easy choices, weakenings,
(Not thus are spirits fortified,
Not this way went the Crucified,)
From all that dims Thy Calvary,
O Lamb of God, deliver me.

Give me the love that leads the way,
The faith that nothing can dismay
The hope no disappointments tire
The passion that will burn like fire,
Let me not sink to be a clod:
Make me Thy fuel, Flame of God.

Amy Carmichael

Jesus of Nazareth: Son of God

It all began with Jesus. Yet, how can one encapsulate the life of Jesus in a few words? All he taught, all he did, "who he was," present us with too much to tell in a few words. Dear readers, if you are Christians you understand this. Indeed, Scripture tells us that there were so many things that Jesus did, "if every one of them were written down, I suppose the world itself could not contain the books that would be written" (John 21:25). Allow me, then, to begin this series with these poignant words penned years ago by someone known only to God:

He was born in an obscure village, the child of a peasant woman. He worked in a carpentry shop until he was thirty, and then for three years he was an itinerant preacher.

When the tide of popular opinion turned against him, his friends ran away. He was turned over to his enemies. He was tried and convicted. He was nailed upon a cross between two thieves. When he was dead, he was laid in a borrowed grave.

He never wrote a book. He never held an office. He never owned a home. He never went to college. He never traveled more than two hundred miles from the place where he was born. He never did one of the things that usually accompany greatness.

Yet all the armies that ever marched, and all the governments that ever sat, and all the kings that ever reigned, have not affected life upon this earth as powerfully as has that One Solitary Life.

Thank God for his gifts to us in Jesus: life, new life and eternal life.

Peter: Everyman

Blustering, impetuous Peter, although not the first disciple called by Jesus, soon became the most prominent one. God, in his infinite wisdom, gave us Peter as the example of “Everyman.” Peter is someone with whom each of us should be able to identify in some way. When we sin and fall short of the glory of God, we can know that Peter, this stalwart ancestor of our faith, did so as well and many times over.

Peter came from Bethsaida on the Sea of Galilee. He was a fisherman, and was led to Jesus by his brother Andrew who also became one of the twelve disciples of Jesus. His real name was Simon, but Jesus gave him the nickname Peter (*Cephas* in Aramaic) meaning “the rock.” Peter was the first disciple to profess the belief that Jesus was the promised Messiah, but immediately tried to correct Jesus when Jesus told the disciples that the religious leaders would kill him. Peter boldly set out to walk on the water as Jesus was doing, then lost faith and began to sink. He tried to refuse letting Jesus wash his feet, then wanted his hands and head washed as well. Peter denied Jesus three times after declaring that he would never do so.

Following Jesus’ resurrection and ascension, and the coming of the Holy Spirit, Peter became a different person. He took the initiative in the selection of Matthias as a successor to Judas Iscariot among the twelve. He was the preacher on the day of Pentecost when 3,000 were added to the church. He was the leader of the church in condemning Ananias and Sapphira for their deception; in healing, preaching and miracles; and in taking special interest in the mission to Samaria. Later, it was his vision that launched the mission to the Gentiles; and, although he later wavered on whether Gentiles could become Christians without first becoming Jews, he finally supported **Paul’s** position that the Christian faith was for Jews and Gentiles alike.

Peter eventually went to Rome where he and Paul helped establish the mother church of Western Europe. Two New Testament epistles bear Peter’s name, and he is believed to have been the primary source of information for the Gospel of Mark. Peter was martyred in Rome in about 64, being crucified upside down because he did not feel worthy to die in the same manner as his Lord.

Thank God for Peter, who so early in the Christian faith gave us a picture of ourselves at our worst and our best.

Joseph of Arimathea: Secret Follower

The Gospel of Luke (23:50-53) tells us that Joseph, a member of the Sanhedrin, was a good and righteous man who had not agreed with the decision and actions of the other religious leaders in condemning Jesus to crucifixion. He was from the town of Arimathea in Judea and had been awaiting the coming of the Kingdom of God. Being a man of wealth, he offered a newly cut tomb to receive the Lord's body. Joseph gained permission from Pontius Pilate to take Jesus' body down from the cross. Then he wrapped the body in a linen cloth and laid it in the tomb.

Joseph was, then, someone who could have been called a secret follower of Jesus at a time when that was very dangerous. As the twelve disciples were forsaking Jesus and protecting their own lives, it was Joseph who boldly came forward to insure that Jesus was given a proper burial.

John's Gospel indicates that Nicodemus, another member of the Sanhedrin who had come to Jesus secretly and apparently had gone away unconvinced of Jesus' divinity (John 3:1-21), helped Joseph prepare the body for burial. Thus, Joseph was an early example of how bold witness through action can lead others on the path to faith.

Legend has it that Joseph came to England and founded Glastonbury Abbey, probably explaining why he has had continued popularity among English Christians.

Thank God for Joseph of Arimathea, who modeled for us the reverencing of our Lord through bold action.

Cornelius the Centurion: God-fearer

Peter led the Roman centurion Cornelius to the Lord. The account is detailed in Acts 10:1-48. Although he was an officer in the occupying army, Cornelius was what was referred to in Scripture as a “God-fearer.” This was someone who believed in God as the Jews did, but had remained a Gentile rather than becoming circumcised and Jewish in other respects.

Cornelius was a devout man who gave generously to charity and prayed regularly to God. While praying in Caesarea he received a vision that he was to find Peter in Joppa and ask him to come and visit him. In the meantime, Peter had a vision in which God symbolically showed him that Gentiles were not “unclean.” Then, Cornelius’ messengers arrived on the scene to ask Peter to come with them. The result was that Peter presented the Gospel to Cornelius and his household, the Holy Spirit fell upon them, and they were baptized.

It was Cornelius’ profession of faith that led Peter to conclude that God had shown him not to call anyone common or unclean, that God does not show partiality, and that anyone who reverences God and does what is right is acceptable to him. Thus, through Peter’s leadership, the door was opened to take the Gospel to the Gentiles, although it was **Paul** who more truly became the Apostle to the Gentiles.

Thank God for Cornelius, our Gentile “father in the faith,” through whom the Gospel was made available to us.

James of Jerusalem: Jesus' Brother

James was the brother of **Jesus** (as distinguished from the disciple James, brother of John and son of Zebedee). He apparently did not believe in Jesus as the Son of God during Jesus' lifetime, but was one to whom Jesus appeared after his resurrection (Acts 1:14). James not only became a believer, but also was the leader of the Jerusalem Church (Acts 15:13) and presided at the Council of Jerusalem (Acts 15:1-35).

The Council arose because it was not clear to the early church how they could accept Gentiles who were turning to Christ. Could Gentiles become Christians without first becoming Jews (being circumcised and following the law of Moses)? **Paul** and Barnabas took the position, based on their own experience in seeing the Holy Spirit come upon Gentile converts, that no intermediary step was needed for Gentiles to become Christians. The Judaizers (former Jewish Pharisees who had become Christians) took the opposite view. **Peter** described his experience with **Cornelius the Centurion** and rose to support Paul and Barnabas. James, having heard the positions, concluded that what was happening was just what the prophets of old had predicted: that the Lord was for all humanity, including the Gentiles. He suggested that a letter be written to the churches showing acceptance of the Gentiles, but cautioning them to abstain from sexual immorality and from eating meat that had been sacrificed to idols.

James also wrote the Epistle of James in about 49 to expose hypocritical practices in the early church and to teach Christians about right behavior. As the Jerusalem Church grew, James became the target of the Jewish religious authorities; and, according to the Jewish historian Josephus, he was eventually stoned and clubbed to death by a mob.

Thank God for James, for his being a guiding light in opening the Christian faith to Gentiles, and for his letter that gives us practical help and guidance in our day.

Paul: Greatest Missionary

Second only to **Jesus**, the Apostle Paul (formerly Saul) is the most notable Christian who ever lived. He was the great missionary of the First Century who served long and well despite persecution and physical abuse. His life is covered in Acts, his letters form a significant part of the New Testament, and he is the primary theologian of Christianity.

Paul was born in Tarsus, a Jew who became a well educated Pharisee and a Roman citizen. As a young man his beliefs led him to persecute Christians. He was present at the stoning of Stephen and was on his way to Damascus to arrest believers when the risen Christ confronted him in a blinding vision. After his sight was restored he became more zealous in promoting the faith than he had been in opposing it. Over the years he apparently received direct revelations of God through Christ in prayer that formed the basis of his theology.

Befriended by Barnabas when other Christians were understandably leery of him, Paul carried the Gospel to Antioch. He then undertook a series of missionary journeys that took him to Cyprus and Asia Minor, Macedonia, Athens, Corinth and Ephesus, and places in between, leading people to Christ and founding churches. Later, after his arrest in Jerusalem, he was taken to Rome for trial. Again, he evangelized along the way. Some of his letters were written from prison in Rome. He was martyred on what is believed to have been a second visit to Rome during Nero's persecution of 64, when **Peter** was crucified.

Paul was described by a Second Century Christian as "a man small in size, with meeting eyebrows and a rather large nose, bald-headed, bow-legged, strongly built and full of grace; for at times he looked like a man, and at times he had the face of an angel." Paul's letters were highly valued during his lifetime and were probably collected soon after his death. They were recognized as Scripture as early as 95 (*1 Clement*).

Thank God for Paul whose theology has guided us in how to live the Christian life for almost 2,000 years.

Timothy: Trouble-shooter

Timothy had learned about the Scriptures from his mother and grandmother, apparently early converts to Christianity. He himself probably became a Christian after **Paul's** first missionary visit to Lystra. By the time of Paul's second missionary visit, Timothy had grown into a respected follower of Jesus and caught Paul's attention. He joined Paul and Silas on their journey, and remained like a son to Paul the rest of the Apostle's life.

Paul used Timothy as a trouble-shooter and to do follow-up work in the ministry, such as sending Timothy as his personal representative to Corinth during a particularly troublesome time there (see 1 Corinthians 4:14-17). Ultimately, Paul left Timothy in charge of the church at Ephesus. Paul's letters to Timothy encourage him and give him practical advice on how to carry out his ministry. Timothy was struggling at Ephesus, timid and fearful as he was being attacked from within and without because of his youth and probably his association with Paul.

Paul never gave up on Timothy, and Timothy remained a faithful and dedicated leader of the early church. Timothy visited Paul in Rome but escaped Nero's persecution that claimed both Peter and Paul. According to the historian **Eusebius**, Timothy spent his last days in Ephesus where he was beaten to death by a mob of pagans whom he had opposed because of the licentious worship of the goddess Diana.

Thank God for Timothy, youthful soldier of the faith, who overcame his timidity and fear to become a model of courage.

Perspective: Roman Persecutions

A devastating fire destroyed much of Rome in 64 during the reign of the emperor Nero. Rumors started that it was Nero himself who had ordered the fires; and, to quell these rumors, Nero publicly blamed the Christians. Up until that time, the Christians had enjoyed the same exemptions from worshipping the emperor gods of Rome that the Jews had been granted. But, as more Gentiles were added to their ranks, the Christians came under increasing criticism for their practices, many of which angered their pagan neighbors.

Known Christians were arrested and tortured. Soon large numbers of Christians were convicted of crimes against the state and executed. Some were crucified, others were burned or beheaded, and many died in the arena as a public spectacle. The historian Tacitus wrote in his *Annals* that “although they were guilty of being Christians and deserved death, people began to feel sorry for them, for they realized that they were massacred not for the public good but to satisfy one man's mania.”

Eusebius, a Fourth Century church historian using sources no longer extant, reported that **Peter** was crucified during this persecution and **Paul** was beheaded. He wrote that there were monuments in Rome to the two martyrs by the late Second Century and the details of their deaths were well known to the Roman church.

The persecutions began a centuries-long series of pogroms against Christians throughout the Roman Empire. The legal bases for these persecutions were often obscure. Christians were condemned because they were different and refused to conform. Martyrs went to their deaths singing and praying. **Tertullian** wrote that “the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the faith”; and, despite the atrocities, the Christian Church grew steadily. A persecuted minority would become a major force in the Empire.

Thank God for the early Christians who were faithful unto death.

Clement of Rome: Consecrated by Peter

Clement is believed to have been the third bishop of Rome and the first of 14 popes of that name. According to **Tertullian**, Clement was consecrated by **Peter** and served as pope from 92 until his death in 101. **Irenaeus** lists him as a contemporary of the apostles and a witness to their preaching. He has also been identified as the Clement mentioned in Philippians 4:3, one who struggled beside Paul in the work of the gospel.

There is thought that Clement was an ex-slave. The approximate date of his birth is assumed to have been near the year 30. He led his people through severe persecution under Domitian. Then, when circumstances improved, he dealt with quarrels that had broken out within the Corinthian church by way of the letter for which he is best known.

1 Clement is an open letter to the church at Corinth from the church at Rome and was probably written in 95. It is likely the oldest surviving Christian writing apart from the New Testament. The epistle is a warning to the Corinthian Christians to be patient with one another, to obey appropriate church authorities and to focus on demonstrating the love of Christ. Clement's words about the nature of Christian love are second only to those of Paul.

“He that has the love that is in Christ, let him keep the commandments of Christ. For who is able to express the obligation of the love of God? What man is sufficient to declare, and is fitting, the excellency of its beauty? The height to which love leads is inexpressible. Love unites us to God; love covers a multitude of sins: love endures all things, is long-suffering in all things. There is nothing base and sordid in love; love lifts not itself up above others; admits no divisions; is not seditious; but does all things in peace and concord” (*1 Clement 21:1-5*).

Thank God for Clement, through whom we have a link with Peter and Paul, and for his letter of grace and beauty.

Ignatius: Living Sacrifice

Paul wrote in Romans 12:1 about presenting our bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God. Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch and an early Father of the Church, literally did just that. What we know about Ignatius is primarily derived from seven letters he wrote as he was being led to his martyrdom in Rome about 110-115. Perhaps a pupil of **John**, and a compatriot of **Polycarp** (to whom one of his seven letters was written), Ignatius was a powerful witness to Christianity during the early Second Century.

Ignatius may have become head of the church in Antioch in 69, and served in that capacity for almost 40 years. Under the Roman emperor Trajan he was condemned as an “atheist and subversive,” and was ordered to Rome for public execution. Under guard of Roman soldiers he was taken in chains by land and sea along a route that followed the footsteps of Paul where he was met and encouraged by Christians, and where he was a witness to them of his wholehearted willingness to die for the cause of Christ.

It was during this journey that Ignatius wrote the letters that spell out his theology during this critical time in the life of the early Church. He believed strongly in the need for unity and sound doctrine in every congregation, and thus had high regard for the office of bishop (which would, today, equate with the pastor of a congregation) and of the Eucharist, or communion, as a means of insuring unity in the body of Christ. He also fought heresy, the current controversy in his lifetime being Docetism: a belief that Jesus was a spirit being (rather than fully human), uncontaminated by the material world.

Ignatius’ courage in facing death may have been his defining image, however. In his letter to the Christians in Rome, he begged them not to try to get him a stay of execution. He not only believed it a privilege to die for his faith, he wanted his body consumed by the wild beasts that he might be a living sacrifice (“pure bread of Christ”) to the glory of God.

Thank God for Ignatius whose life so inspired a young Spanish soldier 1400 years later that he dedicated his life to Christ and changed his name to **Ignatius of Loyola**.

Polycarp: Vital Link

Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, was probably born in 69 because, when he was martyred in 155, he mentions having served Christ “these eighty and six years.” He is regarded as a vital link between the apostles and the rest of church history. The words written by **Irenaeus** to Florinus establish a chain of tradition (John to Polycarp to Irenaeus) unequaled in early church history: “I saw thee when I was still a small boy in Lower Asia in the company of Polycarp...I can even now point out the place where the blessed Polycarp used to sit when he discoursed...how he used to speak of his intercourse with John and the rest of those who had seen the Lord....”

Polycarp was converted early in life and trained for the ministry by the apostle John. He and John remained close friends for some 20 years, with John at Ephesus and Polycarp 20 miles away in Smyrna. When John wrote the Revelation, one of the “seven letters to the churches” (Revelation 2:8-11) was addressed to the church at Smyrna and had no criticism of that body of believers.

Polycarp apparently spent most of his time pastoring his flock in Smyrna and was widely known throughout the region. There exists a letter to him from **Ignatius** and another from Polycarp to the Philippian church. He went to Rome to consult with Bishop Anicetus, and fought heresy throughout the Roman Empire.

There is also a letter from the church at Smyrna telling of Polycarp’s martyrdom. Shortly after Polycarp’s trip to Rome, persecution broke out in Asia. At a festival in Smyrna, the Roman authorities put eleven Christians to death. The blood lust of the crowd was stimulated by their martyrdom, and they shouted for the death of Polycarp. The Roman proconsul urged Polycarp to revile Christ and turn from his faith, so he could be set free. Polycarp’s reply has rung down through the centuries: “Eighty and six years I have served Him and He hath done me no wrong. How then can I speak evil of my King who saved me?” This more greatly incensed the crowd, wood was collected, and Polycarp was placed on a pyre. He faced death as he had faced life, with courage and dignity.

Thank God for Polycarp for being a link between the apostles and the early Church, and for being an example to us of courageous faith.

Cecilia: Patron of Musicians

One of the early martyrs of the Church, Cecilia was born in about 141. She was from a prominent Roman family and had vowed to be a virgin for life. Her parents nonetheless forced her into marriage to Valerianus, also Roman of high birth.

Cecilia revealed to Valerianus her vow of chastity and asked him to respect it. She explained that an angel had appeared to her asking her to remain a virgin. Valerianus said he would believe that if he could also see the angel. Cecilia then told him he would have to be baptized a Christian for that to happen. After his baptism, he also saw the angel. Valerianus then successfully urged his brother, Tibertius, to be baptized too.

When the brothers then began to practice their newfound faith, they were soon in conflict with the Roman authorities. Both were beheaded for their profession of Christ, and Cecilia's life was threatened. She was arrested for having the bodies of the brothers interred on her estate on the Appian Way. She was given the choice of sacrificing to the pagan gods or death and chose the latter. The Roman prefect Almachius ordered her either to be burned or suffocated (there are alternate stories); when torture failed, she was beheaded sometime around 177.

A church in Rome was later dedicated to her and artists have portrayed her as a patron of music. Raphael painted her at an organ. She is represented in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* in "The Second Nun's Tale."

Thank God for these early Christians who honored Christ despite the price that had to be paid for their faith.

Martyrs of Lyons and Scillium: Eternal Witnesses

The original meaning of the Greek word *martyrs* was “witness.” That is the sense in which it has been used in Christianity down through the centuries. Death for their faith rather than denial of it was the most striking witness Christians could bear. Because Christians showed primary allegiance to God rather than to the Roman emperors, the martyrdom of Christian leaders, as we have seen and will see, was not uncommon in the first two centuries.

Even ordinary Christians were sometimes martyred as well. Lyons (in Gaul, now France) was the scene of such a persecution in 177. The governor of the area, hoping to please the Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius, accused Christians of atheism, blasphemy, treason and cannibalism (because Communion involved consuming the body and blood of Jesus Christ). About 50 Christians were put on public trial which lasted several days and which worked the populace into blood frenzy, crying for the deaths of the Christians. Many were tortured and beaten to death. Their remains were thrown to the dogs.

According to **Eusebius**’ account, Alexander (a physician) was publicly roasted. Belinda, a “blessed woman,” endured days of torture, abuse and humiliation while protesting, “I am a Christian woman and nothing wicked happens among us.” She was gored to death by a bull in an arena. Pothinus, the elderly bishop of Lyons, was also martyred at this time.

Three years later, at Scillium on the northern shores of Africa, seven men and five women were arrested for carrying “the sacred books, and the letters of **Paul**.” They were charged with confessing Christianity and refusing to return to “the usage of the Romans,” and sentenced to “suffer the sword.” The Roman proconsul was bewildered by their assertion that Christianity was the only true religion. As a result, the twelve were marched out and beheaded.

Thank God for those who were willing to witness to their faith even when it meant ultimate sacrifice.

Justin Martyr: Seeker of Truth

An apologist is one who tries to make clear the reasons for his beliefs and actions, one who attempts to explain to others what he stands for and why. Justin was the most notable Christian apologist of the Second Century.

Justin was born around the year 100 and brought up as an affluent pagan in Samaria. He became intrigued by the various philosophies espoused in his day, always searching for lasting truth. A philosopher himself by nature, he traveled many roads of thought before being led to Christ by an aged man in Ephesus. Only in Christ could Justin find the truth that satisfied both his mind and heart.

He became a teacher in Ephesus, then moved to Rome and opened a Christian school. Justin wrote several books on the Christian faith, the most significant of which were his *Apology* and his *Dialogue*. In the *Apology* he centers his proof of the truth of Christianity in a demonstration that the prophecies of the Old Testament find their fulfillment in Christianity. Justin also paints a vivid picture of public worship and how the sacraments of Communion and Baptism were celebrated. Thus, Justin is a valuable authority on the life of the Christian Church in the mid-Second Century.

Both parties conducted Justin's *Dialogue* (with a cultured Jew named Trypho) with courtesy and respect. In it, Justin skillfully tries to convince Trypho that Christianity is a sound and reasonable faith. After a debate with the cynic Crescentius, however, Justin was charged with atheism for not believing in the Roman gods. As a result, he and several of his students were condemned, scourged and beheaded in Rome about 165. He has been referred to as Justin Martyr ever since.

Thank God for Justin Martyr whose background, knowledge, and conversion led him to be an outstanding apologist for the Christian faith in the early days of the Church.

Perspective: Fathers of the Church

In Christian writings and sermons, there are sometimes references to the “Early Fathers” or “Fathers of the Church.” Following the period when Jesus walked the earth and Paul made his missionary journeys, other Christian leaders emerged whose writings have been held in reverence down through the centuries. These were the early interpreters of the Christian faith who lived during what is referred to as the patristic period, and their writings have had a profound effect on Christianity ever since. We have already met some of them in this book and will meet others later because the flame of God's love burned brightly in them.

Those referred to as the “Apostolic Fathers” are the Church writers who flourished toward the end of the apostolic age and during the half century that followed it. They are **Clement of Rome, Ignatius** and **Polycarp**. There are priceless records of the early struggles of Christianity during the period prior to the Nicene Creed. These are preserved in documents that reflect the issues being dealt with in the Church, the first essay of Christian philosophy, Christian correspondence, and biblical interpretations. They come to us from the hands of **Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Tertullian** and **Cyprian**.

Following the Council of Nicea, the literary output of the Church increased. Included in this group of writers would be **Athanasius, Eusebius of Caesarea, Cyril, Basil the Great, Gregory of Nazianzus, Gregory of Nyssa, Ambrose, Jerome, John Chrysostom, Augustine of Hippo** and **Leo the Great**. Other important writers at the end of the patristic period but still considered "Fathers of the Church" are **Cassiodorus** and **Gregory the Great** who, second only to Leo, is considered to have been the best of the papal theologians.

The writings of these men constitute the whole literature of the Church during its formative years. They are vital witnesses to the text of the New Testament, to the history of the canon of Scripture and the history of biblical interpretation. They are truly treasures of the Church for all time.

Thank God that these vital records of the early Church have been preserved for our enlightenment and knowledge.

Irenaeus: Church Father

Irenaeus was the first great theologian of the Western Church. As a child he had learned the Christian faith from **Polycarp** in Smyrna. He was probably born in about 130 and died in approximately 202. He writes of having known presbyters who knew the Apostle John, thus giving him a link back to the beginnings of the faith.

Irenaeus lived in Lyons (Gaul, now France) but was on a mission to Rome at the time of the **Martyrs of Lyons**; and, upon his return, he was made Bishop of Lyons in 177, succeeding Pothinus who had been martyred. He was a tireless pastor and an avid student of the Holy Scriptures. He had widespread influence on Christianity during the 25 years of his bishopric and he is regarded as one of the Fathers of the Church.

Irenaeus' major work was *Against Heresies* in which he attacked Gnosticism. Gnostics believed that God is unknowable and impersonal, and that salvation could only come through secret knowledge passed down from the Apostles. Irenaeus countered this heresy by taking the position that the teachers in the churches had preserved public standard beliefs from apostolic times. He also wrote *Proof of the Apostolic Preaching*, regarded as the first Christian Catechism, an instructional book demonstrating that the basic Christian faith fulfills the Old Testament. This book, mentioned by **Eusebius**, shows that Irenaeus could not only defend Christianity as a theologian but also preach it to lay people.

According to Gregory of Tours, Irenaeus was martyred under Septimius Severus.

Thank God for Irenaeus who boldly and intelligently defended the faith passed down to him at a critical time in the life of the early Church.

Tertullian: Writer in Latin

Tertullian was the first Christian author to write in Latin, thus becoming the earliest to use terminology common in later theological discussions. Born in Carthage, capital of the Roman province of Africa, sometime around 150, he became an eminent jurist in Rome according to **Eusebius**. There, at the age of 40, he was converted to Christianity and the remainder of his life was devoted to Christ rather than law. He especially focused on the Holy Scriptures and Christian literature.

Tertullian is best known for his writings. His style was witty and vigorous, and he had a gift for turning a phrase. It was he who used the expression that the blood of the martyrs was the seed of the Church. He was not an original thinker, however. His gift was in drawing upon theologically sound teachings and giving them life. In apologetics his principal source was **Justin** and in theology proper (and especially in his controversy with the Gnostics), **Irenaeus**.

Tertullian's masterwork was his *Apology*, an argument for accepting Christianity in a world that was often hostile to this "new religion." His most detailed work, the five volumes entitled *Against Marcion*, defended the use of the Old Testament by Christians, and the oneness of God as both Creator and Savior. In *Against Praxeas*, he developed the doctrine of the Trinity and in *Exclusion of Heretics* he argued against the Gnostic heresy.

Tertullian was a formidable force in Christian thinking during a great moment of history (190 to 220) in the Christian Church. During that time, Gnosticism was brought to a close, the New Testament established a firm foothold within the congregations and the ecclesiastical priesthood was developed. Tertullian died around the year 222.

Thank God for Tertullian who, recognizing God's call upon his life, left a successful vocation to give the remainder of his productive life in service to the Lord.

Clement of Alexandria: Combined Faith and Reason

It was a time, early in the life of the Christian faith, of intellectual turmoil. Into this time came Titus Flavius Clemens who was born in approximately 150 of pagan parents, probably in Athens. The educated pagans of that day regarded Christians as anti-intellectual upstarts who failed to honor Greek and Roman philosophy. It was Pantaenus, the philosophically minded head of a Christian school in Alexandria, who brought Clement into the Christian faith. As a result, Clement's writings mark an era of early Christian intellectual development.

Unlike some of his contemporaries, Clement was not willing to abandon his philosophical training once he became a Christian and a presbyter. He believed Christianity to be compatible with Greek philosophy, and honored the teachings of Socrates and Plato for preparing men's minds to accept the truth of the Gospel. Clement wrote extensively on everything from the problem of the Gnostic heresy to instructions in Christian living and the right use of wealth.

Because there were a large number of Gnostics in Alexandria in Clement's time, the dividing line between orthodoxy and heresy was in the process of being drawn. Clement's contributions to drawing that line are significant. He contended that Christianity could be reconciled to reason and philosophy; that a blind, anti-intellectual adherence to orthodoxy on the one hand and an intellectual but heretical reinterpretation of the faith on the other were both in error.

Clement lived most of his adult life in Alexandria with its well-known library and university. He served as principal of a Christian school there, but he also traveled to Christian communities in Antioch and Jerusalem and was highly regarded. His death in approximately 215 was under unknown circumstances during the persecution under Roman emperor Septimus Severus.

Thank God for Clement whose mind, as well as his heart, served Christ so well at such a critical period in the life of the Church.

Perpetua: Home Church Martyr

We live in a time when “home churches” are a common experience. Some congregations get started that way, and in other churches home meetings are an extension of their ministry, providing mid-week opportunities for Bible study, prayer and worship. In Perpetua’s day, having a church meeting in your home was extremely dangerous.

Perpetua was born in about 176 in Carthage into a family in which the father was not a Christian, but her mother and brothers were. She had married and borne a son before opening her home to Christian worship. In 202 the Roman emperor Septimus Severus issued an edict against all Christians and Perpetua was placed under house arrest. Her father begged her to recant her allegiance to Christ, but she would not. It is said that she told her father she could no more deny being a Christian than a waterpot could deny being a vessel.

She and several of her companions were then imprisoned and her small child was taken from her. One of her companions, a slave girl named Felicitas, had a child while in prison that was also taken from her (but, fortunately, secretly adopted by a Christian couple). Perpetua and her companions were sentenced to torture and execution. She was denied seeing her child to the very end.

Perpetua and her compatriots were thrown to wild beasts in the arena. Their last act was an exchange of the kiss of peace, and they went to their deaths in triumphant joy. Perpetua wrote, “I saw that I should not fight with beasts but with the devil; I knew the victory to be mine.”

The experiences of the companions in prison, including Perpetua’s dreams and visions, were recorded and remain among the most valuable documents of early Christianity. Perpetua’s story so inspired the early Christians that **Augustine of Hippo** reportedly had to warn against viewing it as equal to Scripture.

Thank God for Perpetua and her companions who loved Christ more than life.

Origen: Prolific Writer

Second Century Alexandria, Egypt, was a great center of learning, had a huge population, and rivaled Rome itself in many ways. It was here that Origen was born into a Christian family in about 185. He would become the greatest scholar and the most prolific writer of the early Church. “Which of us,” asked **Jerome**, “can read all that he has written?”

Asia Minor and the west had developed strict ecclesiastical forms to combat heathenism and heresy, but, in Alexandria, Christian ideas were handled in a more open way with the help of Greek philosophy. The line between orthodoxy and heresy was less clear. It was within this theological atmosphere that Origen did God’s work. He was not only a profound thinker but also a deeply spiritual man who led an ascetic life.

Origen produced the *Hexapla*, the finest piece of biblical scholarship in the early Church. In more than 20 years of labor, he placed the Hebrew text of the Old Testament side by side with various Greek versions and the *Septuagint* (the oldest Greek version of the Old Testament), examined their corresponding relations in detail, and thereby sought to find a more reliable text. His *Hexapla* became the basis for his interpretations of the Old Testament.

Origen traveled widely, sometimes to avoid Roman persecution but always because he was in demand as a speaker, teacher, and mediator of ecclesiastical disputes. Some of his theological positions, and the popularity that led to his being ordained a presbyter outside of his ecclesiastical jurisdiction, resulted in his condemnation by portions of the church, and he moved from Alexandria to Caesarea in about 232. In 250 the Decian persecution broke out, and Origen was arrested and imprisoned. Although later released, his health never fully recovered and he died in Tyre about 254.

Thank God for Origen, the finest biblical scholar of the early Church.

Fabian: Humble Giftedness

Not much is known concerning the early life of Fabian who became the nineteenth pope or Bishop of Rome. In 236 he was a virtually unknown Christian layman when he was elected. He seems to have had no outstanding characteristics of scholarship or leadership. However, he turned out to be an efficient administrator and a competent bishop.

He faithfully and effectively led the church in Rome for fourteen years. He began missionary work in Gaul (France), divided the church in Rome into seven congregations with a deacon in charge of each, directed work on the catacombs in the city (where he was later buried) and corresponded with **Origen, Cyprian** and other Christian leaders of his day. He is said to have baptized the emperor Philip and his son.

Just as everything seemed to be going right for Christ's Church, persecution arose under the emperor Decius in 250. The Roman Empire was weakening, and Decius blamed the situation on the Christians. He decided that the best way to destroy the body was to cut off the head. Thus, Fabian was arrested, tried and became the first to die in the Decian persecution. Decius allegedly said, "I would far rather receive news of a rival to the throne than of another bishop of Rome."

Fabian was a man God brought from obscurity to strengthen and develop the church in Rome. Decius thought he could stamp out Christianity by killing him. Decius died a year later, but Christianity is 2000 years old and growing!

Thank God for the example of Fabian; it encourages us in demonstrating what God can do with a humble person whose primary asset is that he loves the Lord.

Cyprian: Courtly Martyr

Conversion to Christianity is a complete life-changing experience, but that doesn't mean we leave behind those characteristics of personality that hold us in good stead in our new life in Christ. Such was the case with Cyprian. He was probably born in Carthage (the primary city of Roman North Africa) around 200. He was a wealthy middle aged attorney destined for leadership in the government when, in 246, he became a Christian. He wrote that a second birth had created him "a new man by means of the Spirit breathed from heaven." He thereupon devoted himself to chastity, poverty and Scripture.

Two years after his conversion he was made Bishop of Carthage. When persecution broke out under the Roman emperor Decius in 250, Cyprian left the city; and, although he retained the respect of his flock, Cyprian lost face among his fellow bishops. When the persecution had ended, he returned and rebuilt his diocese. In 252 a plague broke out in which Cyprian became deeply involved in caring for those in need and ministering to the sick of the city.

Cyprian was a man of great administrative skills who wrote practical teachings on the Christian life and convened councils of bishops to maintain unity and harmony in the Church. His primary controversy involved disagreement with Pope Stephen over the need for Christians who had been converted and baptized in heretical churches to be re-baptized when they returned to the true Church. Cyprian required re-baptism but the Pope denounced it.

When persecution arose under Roman emperor Valerian, Cyprian stayed with his people. He was arrested, exiled for a time, then tried and executed. At his trial, Cyprian exhibited his legal training and deportment, showing courteous respect before the pro-consul. He displayed no hostility toward the court, and provided a generous gift for the executioner who beheaded him.

Thank God for Cyprian's witness in word and deed.

Sixtus II and Laurence: Unfortunate Timing

Sixtus II was pope and Bishop of Rome from 257 to 258. Laurence was his deacon. Sixtus did not serve long enough to have made much of a record for himself. He is known for restoring relations with African and Asian churches that had been severed by his predecessor Stephen. **Cyprian**, a leader among those churches, had required re-baptism of converts who had been originally baptized in heretical churches and Stephen had opposed that practice.

Sixtus, however, had the misfortune to become pope at precisely the wrong time. The Roman emperor Valerian had originally been tolerant of Christianity. However, a series of disasters began to ravage the Roman Empire: plagues, droughts and other natural disasters. Superstition crept into the picture and Valerian blamed the troubles on the Christians. Edicts were issued that forbade Christians to worship.

Within a year, Valerian realized that his edicts were not working. Thus, he ordered the execution of bishops, presbyters and deacons, the confiscation of church properties, and the denial of civil rights to all believers. Unfortunately, Sixtus became pope just as these orders were being issued. He had created a small chapel in the catacombs where he met secretly with his flock. However, he was discovered, seized, condemned, sent back to the catacomb, and put to death in his episcopal chair.

In the meantime, Sixtus had turned over to his deacon Laurence the entire treasury of the Church of Rome. Laurence took his sacred duties as a deacon seriously, and, believing he was to feed and care for the poor, he took the funds and spent them on charitable work. When he was called before the court and told to turn over the treasury to the emperor, Laurence assembled a mob of sick and impoverished people and presented them saying, "These are the treasures of the church." Valerian was so angered it is said he had Laurence roasted alive, slowly, on a gridiron.

Thank God for his faithful servants Sixtus and Laurence, who forsook earthly treasure for "treasures in heaven."

Agnes: Child Victim

The Roman emperor Diocletian attempted to destroy Christianity in 304. He turned the mighty political and military machine of the Roman Empire against believers, whom he regarded as “troublesome subversives.” A great many children were innocent victims of this ghastly persecution. Among them was Agnes of Rome.

Agnes had been raised in a Christian home and was believed to have been about thirteen years of age when the persecution began. She boldly witnessed to her faith in Jesus. A Roman official was attracted to her and wanted her for his own. He offered her jewelry and other gifts if she would renounce her faith and worship the Roman gods. She refused.

Still enraptured by the girl, the official attempted to seduce her. She refused, and he became outraged. He had her stripped, tortured and publicly abused. Many stories grew around the tragedy of Agnes, including that she was placed in a brothel. But she continued to witness to her faith in Christ and refused to cooperate with the Roman officials until killed by the sword.

The story of how Agnes had been treated even shocked the Roman world of her day. When, in the following generation, Christianity was accepted, a shrine was erected in Agnes’ honor in Rome and the Song of Mary (the *Magnificat*, Luke 1:46-55) was sung.

Thank God for Agnes for whom God certainly “put down the mighty from their seat” and “exalted the humble and meek.”

Vincent: Persistent Faith

Some people, by their talent, personality, and background, are recognized as outstanding. They become examples for us all. For the Christian, being an example carries major responsibility and, in times of persecution, can be hazardous to one's health. Such was the case for Vincent.

Vincent, a deacon in the church at Saragossa, Spain, also became a victim of the Diocletian persecution. He was from a noble family and became educated by, and a friend and assistant to, Bishop Valerius. Because he was such an effective leader and a model Christian, the Spanish governor, Datian, decided he should be made an example of in implementation of Diocletian's policy of persecution. If Vincent's faith could be broken, many other Christians would surely capitulate as well.

The first attempts at getting Vincent to recant his love of Jesus were very similar to the brainwashing techniques we have heard of in our day. He alternately would be submitted to torture and then questioned. When this did not work, he was beaten, stretched on the rack and otherwise tormented.

There is the story that angels visited Vincent in his prison cell, brightening his cell with celestial light and comforting him in his misery. The guards, seeing the light through chinks in the wall became believers. In any event, Vincent did not renounce his Christian faith. The Roman officials decided to release him on the theory that his mutilated body would be adequate evidence to other Christians of what they could expect to happen to them. Vincent died soon afterward; but his faithfulness in the face of all he had suffered served to strengthen his fellow Christians rather than discourage them.

Thank God for Vincent, who became a powerful early witness to the Christian faith in Spain.

Alban: Instant Martyr

Loyalty is certainly one of the most Christian characteristics a person can have. Alban had only just become a Christian when his loyalty was put to the crucial test. He was the first British martyr. Not much of his background is known except that he lived during the Third Century and died around 304. He apparently lived in the town of Verulamium and, according to **Bede**, served in the Roman army.

During the persecution under the Roman emperor Diocletian (although some historians think Decius), Alban provided shelter and refuge in his home for a Christian priest. During the time the priest was with him, Alban converted to Christianity and was baptized.

When Roman soldiers came to search Alban's home, he hid the priest and dressed in the priest's cloak. He was arrested and taken to court where his true identity was revealed. He was charged with harboring "a rebellious and sacrilegious person." Alban then confessed his own personal faith in Jesus Christ; and, despite scourging, would not recant and was sentenced to death. The executioner refused to carry out his duty, and he and the priest became the second and third British martyrs.

The tomb of Alban was venerated, and a monastery was later founded. Around the monastery a town grew which is to this day known as St. Albans (in Herefordshire, just north of London).

Thank God for Alban, whose blood shed for the love of Jesus Christ helped seed the Christian faith in England.

Lucy: A Light of Christ

Once persecution gets started, it is no respecter of age or innocence. Lucy is proof of that. A native of Syracuse in Sicily, Lucy was another martyr during the Diocletian persecution (284-305). She was an innocent young girl who converted to Christianity. She then gave her dowry to feed the poor and took a vow of chastity.

A man who wanted to marry her was so angered by this turn of events that he reported her to the authorities. She was arrested, and the attempt was made to place her in a brothel. She refused and was executed by the sword in approximately 303.

As had been true of **Agnes**, her shocking story was spread widely. She was seen as the epitome of innocence and charity, and her persecutors as representing corruption and death. Her relics ultimately ended up in Venice where the gondoliers sing in praise of “Santa Lucia” even to this day.

Perhaps because her name means “light” in Latin, Lucy’s symbol is a lamp and she became the patroness of people with eye diseases. Although her life was snuffed out at a young age, Lucy has been a “light” to generations of Christians who honor her for her courage and determination to serve the Lord at all costs.

Thank God for Lucy whose brief life was lived in obedience to her Lord who came as a Light into the world.

Perspective: New Testament Established

One of the earliest challenges to the young Church was the heretical teaching of the Gnostics. The term is used to identify a diverse group of systems that united around the belief that **Jesus** was a "spirit being" and was not human in any way. They also taught that the path to enlightenment lay in the secret teachings of Jesus that only they possessed.

Marcion, a Gnostic convert, established a list of "approved" scripture in the middle of the Second Century, rejecting the entire Hebrew Bible and including only his edited versions of Luke's Gospel and the writings of **Paul**. To counter the Gnostics, church leaders such as **Irenaeus**, **Origen** and **Tertullian** formulated the orthodox reply. They had to establish their own Scriptural canon, an approved list of sacred books that would define their beliefs. To do this, they relied on apostolic tradition—an unbroken lineage going back to the Apostle John—for authority to claim the writings that would make up the canon.

Early Christian writings that included documentation of Jesus' teachings and Paul's sermons and letters had been collected, copied, and passed from congregation to congregation, town to town, for decades. All of these writings now came under close scrutiny, and books of uncertain authorship or that were otherwise questionable were eventually rejected. Only those books thought to have been authored by an Apostle were accepted into the canon. To gain authenticity of ancient tradition, they also accepted the Jewish sacred texts, calling them the Old Testament, and gathered the apostolic writings of gospels, histories, letters and revelations into a New Testament.

It is generally agreed that the four Gospels and Paul's letters were accepted as canon by the year 200. A letter of **Athanasius** to celebrate Easter in 367 listed all the books of the present canon. By the end of the Fifth Century, **Jerome** had translated the canon into the Latin Vulgate from the original Hebrew and Greek texts; and the Bible, as we know it today, was firmly established.

Thank God for those who labored diligently that we might have a Holy Bible.

Gregory the Illuminator: Missionary to Armenia

Even in the worst of times, good things can happen. Gregory was God's instrument to bring faith to a nation that did not know Christ at the same time others were being put to death because of their faith. In the midst of the Diocletian persecution, Christianity took a major step forward in Armenia. Gregory had been born a prince of Armenia in 260, but was exiled by political enemies of his family. By the providence of God, he was raised in Cappadocia (now central Turkey) by compassionate Christians and returned as an adult to Armenia.

In approximately 303, Gregory led King Tiridates to Christ and Armenia became a Christian nation. Tiridates was successor to those who had been responsible for Gregory's exile, and, although the various accounts are not clear, Gregory is said to have suffered greatly in the process of leading the king and subsequently the nation to conversion. For this effort, Gregory became known as "the Illuminator."

Gregory was consecrated Bishop of Etchmiadzin and was organizer of the Armenian Church. His church was in communion with the Greek Church and used Greek or Syriac as its ecclesiastical language. The Armenian Church had its own characteristics, however, including hereditary succession to the episcopate. As a result, Gregory's son Aristakes succeeded him as primate, participated in the Council of Nicaea in 325 and brought the Nicene Creed to Armenia.

Gregory is said to have died a hermit in about 330.

Thank God for Gregory, who evangelized the ancient country of Armenia and established the Christian Church there.

Eusebius of Caesarea: Church Historian

As the flame of Christianity spread, people with particular gifts to accomplish God's purposes in the world were called into service. Someone was needed to record the events of the early Church, and his name was Eusebius. He lived from about 260 to about 340. He lived in Caesarea in Palestine where he worked under the biblical scholar Pamphilus in the library at Caesarea. In the Great Persecution under Diocletian in 303, Pamphilus was imprisoned and died as a martyr in 310. Eusebius was also imprisoned but later released.

Eusebius was consecrated Bishop of Caesarea around 314. He was involved in the various controversies rampant in the early Church including the Arian heresy and the wording of the Nicene Creed. He was provisionally excommunicated for his position opposing Arianism. He was a voluminous writer but his brilliance of mind was not matched by either grace of style or effectiveness of communication.

Eusebius was the first person to attempt a history of the Church. Substantial portions of his history still exist. It was compiled from hundreds of eyewitness accounts and is mostly a story of triumphant faith in the face of persecution. His work preserves stories of Christian heroism that would otherwise have been lost. Although he was not the first church historian (Hegesippus and Julius Africanus preceded him, but only fragments of their work survives), Eusebius was the first to attempt so comprehensive an effort.

Eusebius became a close friend of the Emperor **Constantine**, and in 335 delivered an address at the 30th anniversary of the ascension of the emperor. He also wrote speeches for Constantine and it was from Eusebius that Constantine commissioned copies of Scripture for the churches in Constantinople, thus helping to create the Christian Byzantium Empire.

Thank God for Eusebius, who preserved for us a history of the early Church.

Nicholas: “Santa Claus”

Nicholas was Bishop of Myra in what is now Turkey, and he died sometime around 342. Not a great deal is known of him, and yet he is one of the most celebrated saints of our day because he’s the same “St. Nick” we call Santa Claus.

He was a bishop in the time of the Diocletian persecution and was arrested, imprisoned and tortured for his faith. He was released in the reign of **Constantine**. He is said to have been present at the Council of Nicaea although **Athanasius**, who was acquainted with all of the prominent bishops of the time, never mentions him.

The tradition is that Nicholas was a nobleman who gave his fortune to care for poor children (one story being that he gave his money to an impoverished father of three daughters so that he could provide dowries for them to marry rather than being given up “to a life of shame”). It is also believed that he showed special kindness to sailors. As a result, England, a country that honors its children and its navy, has some 400 churches named for him.

The story of the gift for the three daughters is said to have led to the ancient custom of giving presents in secret on the Eve of St. Nicholas, later transferred to Christmas Day. The name “Santa Claus” is said to be an American corruption of the Dutch term “Sinterklaas.”

Thank God for Nicholas who gave us an example of “it’s more blessed to give than receive” and whom we remember every Christmas Day.

Antony: Father of Monasticism

For centuries the Christian faith would be carried forward largely by men and women who were willing to deny themselves the pleasures of the world and devote their lives to Christian service in a great variety of ways. One of these was Antony, the father of Christian monasticism. He was born in middle Egypt in approximately 250, and he began to practice the ascetic life when he was 20 years of age. Fifteen years later he withdrew to a mountain by the Nile River and began a life of solitude.

Early in the Fourth Century Antony left his seclusion to organize the monastic life of hermits who wanted to imitate him. He developed a monastic rule that bears his name and is still used by Armenian monks.

Many young men of Antony's time were attracted to the idea of escaping from what they saw to be a materialistic and sin-ridden world, and they fled to the desert to preserve their own spiritual health. Their enthusiasm, coupled with their isolation, sometimes led to eccentric behavior. Despite the fact that he had to face his own constant battles against personal passions and temptations, Antony demonstrated a quiet and well ordered life of devotion to the Lord.

Antony helped other Christian hermits organize their lives in meaningful disciplines of prayer, meditation and work. He had to abandon his solitude from time to time because others sought his counsel and he had great concern for the Church. He was a friend of **Athanasius** and contended against the Arian heresy. It has been said of him, "Alone in the desert, Antony stood in the midst of mankind." He died in 355.

Thank God for Antony's devotion and service that became a model for others who have felt called to the contemplative life.

Helena: Preserver of the Holy Land

Most people would think of Helena as the mother of one of the people who had the greatest impact on the Christianity of his day. By the providence of God, however, she became important for a very different reason. Born about 248, Helena served at an inn at Drepanum in Bithynia before marrying Constantius I and becoming the mother of the Roman emperor **Constantine**. Constantius divorced Helena so that he could marry Theodora, stepdaughter of the emperor Maximian. However, when Constantine became emperor he made his mother empress-dowager.

Helena became a Christian and was devoted to her eldest grandson, Crispus. When he was executed in 326 she became grief-stricken and went on pilgrimage to the Holy Land. There she is credited with having churches built on the sites of the Nativity and the Ascension. Coins bearing her image existed until 330, but she is believed to have died in 328.

Although locations in the Holy Land that Helena identified as original sites concerning events in Jesus' life cannot be verified, the Christian Church can be grateful that someone in a position of influence and who was also a devoted Christian memorialized these places only a few hundred years from the events themselves.

Prior to 337 it was claimed that during the building of Constantine's church on Golgotha, Christ's cross was found. Somewhat later Helena was credited with this discovery. Many other stories have grown up around Helena; but, in any event, she had a major hand in seeking to identify the sacred places in the Holy Land.

Thank God for Helena whose foresight has given us a link with the places of Jesus' life and death.

Perspective: The Edict of Milan

Two Roman emperors—**Constantine** ruling the West and Licinius the East—met in the northern Italian city of Milan in 313 to discuss how to order the empire they ruled. The Roman world was enjoying unprecedented peace after years of struggle for political domination. Constantine was eager to bring Christianity into the mainstream as he and Licinius turned their attention to the general welfare of the empire.

In the meantime, the Christian Church was finally recovering some stability following the persecutions under emperors Diocletian and Galerius, begun in 303.

Constantine and Licinius turned their attention first to religious matters. They decided to abandon the policies of persecution of the Christians. To do this, they elevated the Christian religion to equality with all other religions practiced throughout the empire. They granted "complete toleration" to every person, regardless of the deity they worshiped, and decreed "every one of those who have a common wish to follow the religion of the Christian may from this moment freely and unconditionally proceed to observe the same without annoyance or disquiet."

The Edict of Milan ended the age of martyrs. The strong pro-Christian flavor of the edict is evidenced by instructions to restore all seized property to individual Christians and to return all property to churches, regardless of who the present owners might be.

For all Christians, the changes were momentous. Religious freedom became a reality, persecution a thing of the past. Historians have considered the Edict of Milan a mixed blessing for the young Church, however. In making it equal to all other religions, the Edict brought new challenges to a faith that placed itself above all others.

Thank God for the end of the age of persecution of Christians.

Constantine: Endorser of Christianity

This man who lifted Christianity from Roman persecution to full acceptance was born into Roman hierarchy (his father was Constantius I) February 17, year unknown, at Naissus south of the lower Danube. Upon his father's elevation as a Caesar in 293, Constantine became a tribune in the court of the emperor Diocletian.

The Romans eventually became sick of the slaughter of Christians under Diocletian; and, when he abdicated, a power struggle for leadership between Constantine and Maxentius occurred. The crucial battle between their opposing forces took place at Milvian Bridge outside Rome in 312. Maxentius was killed and Constantine became emperor. Years later Constantine told his biographer **Eusebius of Caesarea** that, prior to the crucial victory over Maxentius, he had sought divine aid and saw a cross of light superimposed on the sun and the Greek words "In this sign conquer." This vision was a vital part of his conversion, and his legions marched with the *chi rho* monogram of Christ painted on their shields.

There is no doubt that Constantine sought to aid the Christian movement in a great many ways. He abolished the persecution of Christians, ended crucifixions and clashes with gladiators as forms of punishment. He made Sunday a holiday, built churches, financed Christian ventures and brought bishops together to deal with theological issues. He called the Council of Nicaea in 325 to deal with the Arian heresy (which denied that Jesus was both fully God and fully man). He also granted considerable authority to bishops.

There remain two major questions concerning Constantine: (1) was he deeply and personally committed to Jesus Christ as the Lord and Savior of his life?; (2) did his support of Christianity help or hurt it in the long run? Many believe Constantine used Christianity to his political advantage more than anything else. Many also believe that Christianity was growing more rapidly and vitally during persecution than when it became a popular means of identity for "half-converted pagans."

Thank God for Constantine who, for whatever reason, gave Christianity an acceptance it had not previously experienced.

Athanasius: “Mr. Orthodoxy”

Down through the centuries there have been those who stood out as defenders of the faith in periods of time when others were questioning various aspects of Christianity. We would have an impoverished faith today if there hadn't been people like Athanasius. He lived from 295 until 373 and was one of the giants of early Christendom. He staunchly defended orthodoxy against the Arian heresy during a time when the Arians dominated the Church. Born in Egypt, he accompanied his bishop (Alexander) to the Council of Nicea (at which the Arian heresy was condemned) and himself became the Bishop of Alexandria in 328.

The Arian controversy did not die however, and **Constantine** softened his position concerning Arians, requiring that they be accepted within the Church. Arians contended that Jesus was more than man but less than God. Athanasius argued that such a being would be of no good to either God or man, and could not reconcile God and man. He was a person of such deep conviction that he is said to have traveled to Constantinople, stepped in front of Constantine's horse, grabbed the bridle and demanded that the emperor reverse his decision that Arians be accepted. The result was that he was deposed.

Due to Constantine's involvement in the affairs of the Church, the winds of fortune often blew against Athanasius. He was exiled on five different occasions! “Athanasius against the world” was the phrase used to describe him. Although for 17 of his 45 years of ministry he was separated from his congregation, his people continued to love and support him.

The doctrine Athanasius espoused eventually became the universal teaching of the Church. He died before his position became the fully accepted one at the General Council at Constantinople in 381. And even though it was apparently formulated in the generation following his death, one of the creeds of the Church bears his name. Athanasius' *Easter Letter 39* (367) is the earliest witness to the 27-book New Testament.

Thank God for Athanasius, who “stood against the world” for his faith, resulting in the truth about Christ being preserved for the generations to follow, including us.

Perspective: First Council of Nicea

Just as the canon of Scripture was established out of conflict with the heretic Marcion, the great creed of Christianity was born out of the debate between those supporting orthodoxy and those espousing the Arian heresy.

Arius was the pastor of a church in Alexandria, Egypt. In an attempt to make Christianity more acceptable to pagan converts, Arius taught that Christ was something less than God but something more than man. The Arian Christ was created by God to do his bidding on earth but was not equal in any way to God. Arius put many of his teachings into catchy phrases that were then set to music. Arianism spread and fomented controversy, division, and violent debate throughout the Church. **Constantine**, Roman emperor and recent convert to Christianity, challenged Church leaders to resolve this conflict. It threatened the faith as well as the peace of the realm. They would have to define the true nature of God the Father and God the Son.

As many as 250 bishops out of the 1,800 invited from across the empire actually attended the first general, or ecumenical, council of the Church in 325. They met by royal decree at Nicea, a town close to the geographical center of the empire.

Arius himself defended his teachings and many of the church leaders were willing to compromise over the issue. But **Athanasius**, the secretary to the Bishop of Alexandria, was not. He argued that without a divine Christ, there could be no divine salvation. The issue was debated without agreement until Constantine suggested that the bishops draft a statement of faith, a creed, that they could all embrace and that would include the term *homoousious* ("of the same substance") to clarify the relationship between Father and Son. The resulting statement was accepted by all but two of the attending bishops. The Nicene Creed affirmed the divinity of Christ and equality with God the Father.

Thank God for the Nicene Creed and the Church order it helped produce.

Hilary: Another Defender of the Faith

Hilary became known as “the **Athanasius** of the west.” He lived from 315 until 367, having been born to a powerful pagan family in Gaul (France) in the city of Poitiers. He became a Christian through reading the Scriptures; and, perhaps due to the prestige of his name, was chosen as bishop of that city while still a young, married layman. He became a champion of orthodoxy during the Arian controversy.

Hilary undertook his ecclesiastical endeavors “with fear and trembling” and became an effective shepherd of his flock. Inevitably, however, he had to deal with the Arians who dominated the Church at the time. He opposed them and was exiled by **Constantine** to the Eastern Mediterranean, which was at the time the heartland of the faith. Influenced by those who had crafted the Nicene Creed, he was strengthened in his theology and developed his pastoral skills during this period.

He returned to his episcopacy in 360 and became recognized as a powerful defender of the faith. Not only was he accepted among his own people, his influence spread throughout Western Europe. His writings served as a channel for Greek thought in the west; his style was difficult but he was clear and straightforward in his beliefs.

Hilary wrote, among other things, a commentary on the Psalms, hymns and prayers. One of his prayers begins, “The chief service I owe you, O God, is that every thought and word of mine should speak of you. The power of speech that you have bestowed on me can give me no greater pleasure than to serve you by preaching your gospel.”

Thank God for Hilary, who defended orthodoxy against overwhelming odds at a critical time in the life of the Church.

Ephrem of Edessa: Syrian Writer

By the time Ephrem came along, the flame of Christianity was burning worldwide. His life kept the flame burning in Syria. Ephrem (Ephraem) is the most celebrated writer in the Syrian branch of the Christian Church. He was born about 306 at Nisibis in southeast Turkey. He claims to have been of Christian parentage although some believe his father was a pagan priest. Ephrem became a deacon but not a priest. He may have accompanied his bishop (James of Nisibis) to the Council of Nicaea in 325.

The emperor Jovian ceded Nisibis to Persia in 363 and Ephrem settled in Edessa and devoted his life to teaching and writing. He died in 373. His biography was written soon after his death and contains accounts of miracles and other stories that cannot be confirmed. Among these is an account of eight years spent in Egypt refuting Arianism and a visit to Caesarea in Cappadocia whose bishop **Basil** he is said to have met and eulogized at his death.

Ephrem was head of a successful Christian school in Edessa. He championed the Nicene Creed. He became known for his sanctity of life as well as his teaching. His prolific writing includes Bible commentaries, essays on dogma, history, and biography. He also wrote hymns. His *Christmas Hymn* is famous because it was written so soon after the Church had begun to celebrate that festival. It ends with these lines:

“In the frost when earth is barren,
You bring new hope to our souls.
In December when seeds are hidden in the soil,
The staff of life springs forth from the virgin womb.”

Thank God for Ephrem, who taught and nurtured the faith in Syria where Christ will yet win the victory for human souls.

Cyril: Misunderstood

The pilgrimage that is uppermost in the hearts of many Christians is to visit the Holy Land one day. That is the special place wherein faith in one God was nurtured in the lives of the Hebrew people. It is the place of Scripture, the land on which Jesus walked. The most important site in the Holy Land is the Holy City, Jerusalem. Cyril was born there around 315. He became Bishop of Jerusalem and was responsible for developing the Holy City as a pilgrimage center for people throughout Christendom. Although he seems to have been gifted as a teacher and preacher, his ministry was racked with controversy.

He was not a forerunner in the theological controversies of his day, but ended up being a victim of them. Because he resisted Arianism he was exiled three times by the Arian leadership of the Church. Yet, when he was restored it was by the infamous emperor Julian the Apostate, which thus made him suspect among the orthodox bishops of his time.

On one occasion, because of famine in the Jerusalem area, Cyril sold some of the church's most prized possessions in order to care for the poor and purchase food for the starving. Following the famine, influential church leaders charged that he was an "irresponsible thief" in illegally disposing of church property and had him condemned at a public meeting. The result was that he was temporarily driven out of the city.

He was evidently not a prolific writer, but what has survived is noteworthy: a collection of 24 lectures delivered to candidates for baptism. The lectures show clarity of expression, the abundant use of Scripture and a strong pastoral concern. The last five shed light on contemporary liturgical practice and sacramental teaching. Cyril died in 386.

Thank God for Cyril, who withstood opposition from all sides to champion the Holy City, to pastor his people, and to show concern for the poor.

Marcella: Affirmation and Encouragement

There are always those among us whose love of Christ is shown most significantly through their affirmation and encouragement of others. They may be gifted Christians in their own right, but excel in passing the flame of Christ's love to others who, in turn, shape the faith of still others. Marcella was such a person.

Born in 325 of Roman nobility, she was widowed after only seven months of marriage. She refused to marry again despite family pressure and became a model of Christian propriety. She fasted regularly, maintained her abstinence, and wore clothing that was plain and outdated so that what wealth she had could be given to the poor. She divided her time between prayer and service on behalf of others. She taught Scripture to other noble women in Rome.

From this background, perhaps it is not surprising that some of the greatest Christian leaders of her day were supported and encouraged by Marcella. **Jerome** stayed in her palace for three years, teaching and translating Hebrew and Greek texts into Latin. Jerome referred to Marcella's palace as *Ecclesia Domestica*, or church of the household. Not only were Bible classes taught there, but it was also a place of meditation, worship and prayer. It was here that **Paula** and her daughter decided to help Jerome in his translation work and where Fabiola was inspired to establish the first hospital in Rome. Many other ministries blossomed and grew from the nurture of Marcella's palace.

Alaric's Goths sacked Rome in 410. Marcella was tortured in an attempt to get her to reveal where her riches were. Ultimately, she was able to convince them that the poor were her riches; but, by the time she was given asylum, her 85 year old body had suffered too greatly and she died a few days afterward.

Thank God for Marcella who, through sacrifice of position and possessions, made it possible for others to know the love of Christ.

Martin: Rural Evangelist

Few people are best known because they ended up being in a famous painting, but that is true of Martin. Martin was born in what is now Hungary sometime around 330. He was required to serve in the Roman army in Gaul (France) as a youth. He was studying to become a Christian when, one day at Amiens, he encountered a naked beggar. In a scene that has been depicted in art, Martin took off his cloak and gave half of it to the beggar. That night he had a dream in which he saw Jesus wearing the half cloak.

The result was that Martin became a Christian. He also became what we today would call a conscientious objector, and asked release from the army. When therefore suspected of cowardice, Martin asked to be put at the front of a battle armed only in the sign of the cross. An immediate surrender by the enemy made this act unnecessary, and he was discharged from the army.

Martin then traveled extensively, ultimately settling in Poitiers and, with **Hilary**, founded a religious community. He later founded another outside of Tours and reluctantly, in 372, became the Bishop of Tours. While bishop, Martin was active in missionary efforts. Christianity had barely reached the countryside, and Martin traveled to outlying districts preaching and encouraging monasticism. He succeeded in establishing churches and monasteries throughout the region.

He was a staunch advocate of justice in a time when political and military power seemed to rule. He was particularly opposed to the mistreatment of heretics and pagans by Christians. He is a patron saint of France and has been called the father of monasticism in Gaul. He died in 397.

Thank God for Martin, who did much to bring Christ to the rural areas of France, who demonstrated Christ's love for the poor, and fought injustice.

Perspective: The Church Becomes Official

By 380, Christians had become the majority in the Roman Empire. Christian bishops wielded power that often challenged secular rulers. The merger of Church and State was close to being complete. With only one exception, every emperor since **Constantine** had passed laws and issued decrees advancing the cause of Christianity and penalizing pagans. However, these laws were not universally enforced, and pagan worship continued openly in temples throughout the empire.

In 383 Emperor Theodosius I put an official end to paganism with his decree that stated, "It is our will that all the peoples we rule shall practice that religion that **Peter** the Apostle transmitted to the Romans. We commend that those persons who follow this rule shall embrace the name Catholic Christians." The emperor went on to proscribe the pagan religions then active, stating that anyone following such beliefs was "demented and insane" and would be "smitten first by divine vengeance and secondly by retribution of Our own initiative."

By making Christianity the state religion, Theodosius became the defender of the faith and made it everyone's civic duty to convert to the accepted religion. Many historians have pointed out that this might have been the worst thing that could have happened to a faith-based religion.

Theodosius called the second ecumenical council of bishops to meet in the imperial capital of Constantinople. The bishops reaffirmed the Nicene Creed and ruled on ritual observances, the ordination of clergy, and other matters of church discipline. Then they ruled that Constantinople, because it was the "New Rome," be raised to special status as the second (after Rome) city of the faith, and that the Bishop of Constantinople be second only to the Bishop of Rome. Predictably, the Bishop of Rome ignored the ruling. This was a major step toward schism in the Church.

Thank God for those who meant well even when their actions created new challenges for Christianity.

Macrina: Faithful Family

It was Joshua, in his famous speech at the conclusion of his ministry, who said, “Now if you are unwilling to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve...but as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord” (Joshua 24:15). God is glorified in a special way when an entire household has devotion to Christ as their top priority.

Macrina was a member of one of the most prominent families Christendom has ever known. Her grandmother was Macrina the elder, her father a distinguished lawyer and teacher, and her mother Emmelia also a godly woman. Macrina’s brothers were **Basil the Great**, **Gregory of Nyssa**, and Peter, who became Bishop of Sebaste. Another brother was a jurist.

Born in Neocaesarea, Cappadocia (now central Turkey) in 327 and raised in Pontus, Macrina became founder of one of the earliest religious communities for women in the East. Her family had traveled to Pontus to escape the persecutions under Galerius and Maximianus, and it was on the family estate that Macrina founded two religious communities, one for men and the other for women. She studied and taught from Scripture, and devoted much of her time to meditation and prayer.

Macrina established religious communities at Tabennisi on the Nile River and a large hospital where healings and miracles were recorded. Basil was high in his praise for his sister’s efforts, especially concerning the communities she founded and administered. Macrina died in 379.

Thank God for Macrina and her household, who so exemplified Joshua’s call to serve God.

Basil the Great: Architect of the Eastern Church

Basil, Bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia (now central Turkey), was, perhaps more than any other person, responsible for shaping Eastern Christendom. Born into a wealthy and prominent family in 330, he received a first class education in Constantinople and Athens. He dreamed of becoming great in public life before being converted to Christianity by his sister **Macrina**. Thereafter, he sought a quiet life of Bible study, prayer and writing.

He was a close friend of **Gregory of Nazianzus** and his brother was **Gregory of Nyssa**. The three became known as the “Cappadocian Fathers.” Although Basil refused to serve as an advisor to emperor Julian the Apostate (an opponent of Christianity), he could not refuse to serve his own bishop, **Eusebius**. He was ordained a presbyter in 364 and succeeded Eusebius as bishop in 370.

Basil was a key figure in refuting the Arian heresy. He compiled an anthology of the works of **Origen** with Gregory of Nyssa, developed a monastic rule that remains in use today, and wrote compelling treatises on the nature of Jesus Christ and the composition of the Trinity. By giving precise meaning to the terms used to describe the Trinity, Basil laid the theological foundation for the Council of Constantinople in 381. He was the first to set the formula of one *substance* and three *persons* of the Trinity.

Despite his wealth, intelligence and position, Basil’s heart was in meeting human need. It is said that he would accept no interpretation of Scripture that did not recognize the need for radical social action. He personally founded what was probably the first Christian hospital to care for lepers. He also built, largely with his own funds, a complex of churches, schools, hospitals and monasteries. He severely scolded wealthy Christians, calling them thieves: “What other name does he deserve who, being able to clothe the naked, yet refuses? The clothes you store away belong to the naked; the shoes that mold in your closet belong to those who have none.” Basil died in 379.

Thank God for Basil who, gifted among all men of his time, gave all for the love of Christ.

Gregory of Nazianzus: Skilled Pastor

In the history of the Christian Church there have been many significant Gregorys and in the early days of the Church that was particularly true. This Gregory was born around 329 at Nazianzus, Cappadocia, where his father, also named Gregory, had been bishop. He was educated in Alexandria and Athens and then began a life of religious seclusion in Pontus at the instigation of his friend **Basil**, who had begun a pioneer monastic community there.

Originally, Gregory had no intention of becoming a priest, but his father insisted that he accept holy orders. He did so only reluctantly, being ordained in about 361. His ecclesiastical career became a distinguished one. He was elected Bishop of Sasina, a small village near Tyana, in about 372 and was one of the most effective preachers against the Arian heresy.

Constantinople, the imperial city, was in the hands of the Arians and was under the rule of the emperor Valens, an ardent Arian. After the emperor died in battle, the city was reopened to orthodox Christians and Gregory was welcomed into the city. He was largely responsible for the ultimate rejection of Arianism by the city and he became the bishop. He was a skillful pastor and led his people through a time of violence and discord. He died in 389.

Up until Gregory's time, prayers had been written primarily for public worship rather than private use, but he wrote prayers that were personal in nature. An example is this one to be prayed before reading Scripture: "Lord, as I read the psalms let me hear you singing. As I read your words, let me hear you speaking. As I reflect on each page, let me see your image. And as I seek to put your precepts into practice, let my heart be filled with joy."

Thank God for Gregory, defender of the faith, who led the way in developing prayers for private use.

Gregory of Nyssa: Eastern Theologian

Central Turkey (Cappadocia) produced a “quartet” of Christians who greatly affected the Eastern Church at virtually the same time. We have met three of them over the last few days, and we see the fourth today: another Gregory. This Gregory, the younger brother of **Basil**, was born around 331. In 371 Basil ordained him Bishop of Nyssa, a small town in Cappadocia. This necessitated separation from his wife Theosebia who became a deacon.

His orthodoxy brought him into conflict with the Arians and he was exiled from his diocese from 376 until 378. At the Council of Constantinople in 381 he was a conspicuous champion of orthodoxy in strongly opposing Arianism. In 382 he was commissioned to set order in the churches in Arabia, in the course of which he visited Jerusalem. He is believed to have died in about 396.

Gregory did not have the administrative skills of his brother Basil nor was he as great an orator as Gregory of Nazianzus, but he was a better theologian than either. Called the “Pillar of Orthodoxy,” he wrote extensively on many subjects affecting the Christian life. He wrote theological treatises (such as defending the Nicene Creed against Arianism), practical teachings, commentary on Scripture, biographies (consisting primarily of funeral orations), and letters.

In our day, the popular culture is one of theological confusion. Scripture is sacrificed on the altar of alleged scientific breakthroughs, truth is considered relative, toleration is carried to the point of abandoning principles, and there is fascination with astrology and “New Age.” Gregory’s theology would have dealt clearly with these errors. His book entitled *Against Fate*, for instance, was one of many that confronted various forms of wrong thinking and living.

Thank God for Gregory, who was a pillar of orthodoxy at a time of great theological confusion in the early days of Christianity.

Ambrose: Great Orator

When scholars think of Ambrose, it is because he was a great orator whose preaching and teaching helped lead **Augustine of Hippo** to the Christian faith. However, he can also be remembered for some “famous firsts.” Although Ambrose was born in Gaul in about 339, his family soon moved to Milan. His family was prominent and he received an excellent education. He became a skilled orator and practiced law in the Roman courts. He was then named governor of the province headquartered in Milan.

A crisis arose in Milan when Arian Bishop Auxentius died in 374. Ambrose, attempting to calm a city divided over who should replace him, assembled the people to plead for unity. The result was an outcry that Ambrose serve as bishop. He had been studying to become a Christian but had not been baptized. So, one “famous first” is that Ambrose became a Christian and the Bishop of Milan on the same day!

Over the next quarter century Ambrose became a great spokesman and organizer of the church. He was perhaps the leading preacher of his day, and his sermons had a significant impact upon Augustine. He was a competent scholar and theologian and a gifted hymn writer.

He may also have been the father of passive resistance to civil authority. When Justina, mother of the Roman emperor Valentinian II, tried to take over one of the churches in Milan for Arian worship, Ambrose staged a sit-in that frustrated her attempt. He was also the first to introduce community hymn singing in the church during the sit-in against Justina. Later he became personal adviser to the emperor Theodosius, and forced the emperor to make a public confession of sin for having sanctioned a massacre of civilians in Thessalonica. Ambrose died in 397.

Thank God for Ambrose, who influenced Augustine and gave us an example of standing up to unjust civil authority in a Christian manner.

Jerome: Bible Translator

We are blessed in our day to have a variety of translations of the Bible. We can all find a Bible that speaks to our mind and heart. That was not always the case, of course; and the translation of Scripture down through the centuries has often been regarded as controversial. We can be grateful for pioneer Bible translators such as Jerome. Born in northeast Italy in 345, Jerome became the leading Bible scholar of his time in the Western Church. He traveled widely and was educated in Rome, Antioch, Jerusalem and Alexandria. He was baptized in Rome where he studied classical disciplines, went to Gaul where he was influenced by ascetical Christianity and then joined a religious community near his home.

Later, in Antioch in 374, he had a vision in which he believed his devotion to Christ was being questioned. He therefore withdrew to an ascetic life in the Syrian desert southeast of Antioch where he began an in depth study of Hebrew and transcribed biblical manuscripts. Following ordination in Antioch, Jerome traveled to Constantinople where he studied with **Gregory of Nazianzus** and then became secretary to Pope Damasus in Rome in 382.

While he was in Rome, Jerome was commissioned by the pope to prepare a revised Latin version of the Bible. In 386 Jerome settled in Jerusalem to undertake that momentous task which became the major work of his life. After 23 years he completed his revision of the Latin Scriptures known as the Vulgate Bible. To do so he went back to the original Hebrew and Greek for his translation. He translated into the common “street language” (or “vulgar”) Latin of his day. Ultimately, his work was regarded as “classic” although it had been very controversial when published.

Jerome is believed to have had a strong faith, a sound mind and a passion for truth and integrity. It has been said of him, “The great hermit of Bethlehem had less genius than **Augustine**, less purity and loftiness of character than **Ambrose**, and less steadfastness than **John Chrysostom**...but in learning and versatile talent, he was superior to them all.”

Thank God for Jerome, who loved Scripture and produced a Bible that became the authorized Latin version of the Western Church.

Paula: Generous Benefactor

Personal tragedy can cause some people to turn against God while others, in their grief, give themselves wholly to the love and comfort of God. Paula is one who chose the latter route.

Born of a wealthy Roman family in 347, she was related through her father to the famous general Paulus Aemilius and through her husband to the family that had produced Julius Caesar. At the age of 32 she lost her husband and shortly thereafter the eldest of their five children. In her bereavement she decided to concentrate her life wholly to serving Christ. She was a close associate of **Marcella**, whose life, in many ways, she emulated. Before her conversion to Christianity, she had lived and dressed royally; but, afterward, she rejected materialism, dressed modestly and gave much of her wealth toward hospitals, churches and monasteries.

In 380 she distributed the remainder of her fortune to her family and, with her daughter Eustochium, departed for the East. At Antioch she found **Jerome**, whom she had known from his days in Rome, and he became her spiritual director. She crossed into Syria with him and stayed for a long time in Palestine. After visiting various holy sites, they settled in Bethlehem and founded three nunneries and a monastery to serve as refuges for the sick, orphans, and needy. They were also places of study, worship, and prayer.

While Paula oversaw the nunneries, Jerome presided over the monastery. There he did the greater part of his work on the Vulgate Bible. Paula aided Jerome in his translations of Scripture and obtained at her own expense rare manuscripts needed in his translation work. Her daughter Eustochium was with her at her death in 404, and six bishops carried her body to the place of her burial.

Thank God for Paula who, despite the tragedies of her life, gave wholly of her talents and treasure in the service of our Lord.

John Chrysostom: “Golden Mouth”

As we know from Scripture, there are many spiritual gifts that God imparts to his people to be used for his work. Some people seem to be especially gifted in one way or another. John Chrysostom was so gifted as a preacher that he was nicknamed “Golden Mouth.” He was born around the year 350 at Antioch. His father died shortly afterward and Anthusa, his devoted mother, raised him. He was educated under the tutorship of the pagan orator Libanius who supposedly said of Anthusa, “God, what women these Christians have!”

Chrysostom practiced law and became well known for his speaking ability. His legal studies led him to examine his Christian faith more thoroughly. His reading of Scripture had such a profound effect upon him that he gave up his legal practice and wanted to enter a monastery. Anthusa dissuaded him from doing this, asking John to remain at home and care for her in her old age. As a result, he turned their home into a personal “monastery,” living very simply and devoting himself to study.

Following his mother’s death Chrysostom continued a monastic-like existence, including two years alone in a mountain cave. When he returned home he was ordained a deacon in 381 and a presbyter in 386. He soon gained a reputation as an effective preacher, his sermons being practical, powerful and sprinkled with humor.

In 398 Chrysostom became Bishop of Constantinople, a position he did not seek, did not want, and was probably unsuited for. Constantinople at the time was a very wealthy and sophisticated city at its apex of international power. Such a community is in for a shock when it chooses a spiritual leader whose values are restraint, self-control and responsible living. The empress Eudoxia was infuriated by Chrysostom’s attacks on sin in high places and, with the help of Theophilus, the patriarch of Antioch, had him banished from Constantinople. The people, however, rioted in support of their bishop and he was temporarily reinstated. His courageous preaching got him into trouble once again, however; and, in 404 he was exiled again and remained so until his death in 407. John Chrysostom may have been the greatest orator Christianity has ever known; such was his giftedness from God.

Thank God for John Chrysostom, whose great gift of speech was used to speak Christian truth in the face of persecution.

Paulinus and Therasia: Caregivers

Personal tragedies are almost always life-changing experiences, sometimes for the good and sometimes not. For Paulinus and Therasia tragedy led them to a ministry of Christian care and love. Paulinus was born in Bordeaux in 353. He was of a noble and wealthy family, had a fine education and a bright future. Marked for a public career, he became a Roman senator, a consul and then governor of Campania. He traveled widely, acquiring homes in Gaul, Italy and Spain.

Paulinus had been brought up in a Christian home and was especially dedicated to Felix whose tomb at Nola was on the family estate. However, it was not until he married Therasia, a Spaniard, that he became a Christian. Their first and only child was born in 392, but he died within a week.

The tragedy of their son's death profoundly affected the couple. They sold their possessions in Gaul and Spain and settled in Nola (southern Italy), taking a life of asceticism and unlimited charity. They purchased a long, two-story building, using the lower floor as a homeless shelter and the top floor as a monastery where they lived and taught. They also built a church and provided funding for the construction of an aqueduct.

Paulinus became a significant poet in his day, disputing in verse his teacher Ausonius who reproached him for the change in his lifestyle. His poems reflect how a Christian could use verse to espouse propositions of faith. He corresponded with **Augustine**, **Jerome** and **Sulpicius Severus**. About 409 he was consecrated Bishop of Nola. Paulinus died in 431.

Thank God for Paulinus and Therasia, who renounced fame and wealth to serve Christ's poor.

Monica: Model Mother

We don't know when Monica was born, and her place in history results from the fact that she was the mother of someone much more famous than herself, **Augustine of Hippo**. Nonetheless, she remains one of the most revered women of the early centuries of the Church, and is considered a paragon of Christian motherhood.

We learn about Monica from her son's writings. She had a lot to contend with. Her pagan husband was unfaithful and had a violent temper. Her son Augustine was wayward and obstinate. She was a Christian and they were not. She prayed, but she took other action as well.

When Augustine, at 18, was running "headlong with blindness" and had, among other things, fathered an illegitimate son, Monica was praying. When he decided, against her will, to leave his North Africa homeland for Rome, she decided to go with him. When he deceived her and departed without her, she sailed after him and caught up with him. When they reached Milan, she persuaded him to listen to the great orator Bishop **Ambrose**. When he seemed not to respond, she shared her concerns with Ambrose who allegedly told her not to worry: "It isn't possible for the son of such prayers to be lost."

When what had entered Augustine's head through the teachings of Ambrose became combined with heart knowledge of the love of God, he was converted and became one of the great theologians of the Christian faith. The one sustaining factor through it all had been the prayers of Monica.

Thank God for Monica, a model for all praying parents.

Augustine of Hippo: Principal Theologian

It has been said, “With the possible exception of Paul of Tarsus, no one has affected the Christian tradition, way of life, and thought, as profoundly as Augustine.” He was born of Roman parents (his mother being **Monica**) in North Africa (now Algeria) in 354. He had an extraordinarily inquisitive mind that led him on a long and tortuous pilgrimage among various religions and philosophies until he came to the Christian faith in 387. He had been sustained throughout the process by the incessant prayers of his mother.

He had an excellent education and lectured in rhetoric at Carthage. In 384 he was appointed imperial rhetorician in Milan where he encountered the teachings and influence of **Ambrose**. In the meantime, he had acquired a common law wife who had given birth to a son. In his *Confessions*, he details the wanton life he had led before coming to Christ. The final turning point in his conversion was hearing the reading of Romans 13:13-14 in a garden in Milan; and what had penetrated Augustine’s great mind finally reached his heart.

On returning to Africa after the death of his mother, Augustine formed a monastic community for study and prayer at Tagaste. However, in 391 he was pressed into service as a priest at Hippo and in 396 became the bishop. During the remainder of his life he was a preacher, pastor, intercessor, friend to the poor and staunch defender of the faith. Most of all, however, he was a prodigious writer.

At a time when the Roman Empire was disintegrating and Christianity was once again being blamed for Rome’s troubles, Augustine wrote his classic *The City of God*. In it, he points out that Rome was being punished, not for her new faith but for her past sins of corruption and immorality. He calls Christians on toward the “new city,” the heavenly Jerusalem spoken of in the Book of Revelation. In 430, as Augustine lay dying, Vandal raiders were besieging Hippo. He lived at the close of the era of Latin Christianity and his thoughts were to dominate the minds of medieval and Reformation church leaders for centuries to come.

Thank God for converting Augustine from a life of wasteful pursuits to the enriching of Christian thought that would profoundly affect the world for good.

Sulpicius Severus: Humble Historian

As the Church grew, someone needed to be recording its history. **Eusebius** had done that a century before, and **Bede** and others would come later, but Severus' work was vital for his time. Severus was a Christian writer born about 363 in Aquitania. Most of what we know of him comes from the pen of his friend **Paulinus**, Bishop of Nola.

Severus was an attorney, and his knowledge of Roman law is reflected in his writings. He married a wealthy woman of a consular family who died young and childless. At this time Severus came under the influence of **Martin**, Bishop of Tours. As a result he was led to give his possessions to the poor and devote his life to prayer and good deeds.

His primary work was a summary of sacred history from the beginning of the world until his present time. He specifically omitted the events recorded in the Gospels and the Book of Acts "lest the form of his brief work should detract from the honor due to those events." This became a textbook used in schools in Europe for a century and a half.

Severus' history was not as important for its recording of past events as it was as a reflection of his own time. He preserves for posterity the major issues of his day including the failures and cruelties of rulers and clergy. In doing so, he shows considerable influence from Martin with whose views he sympathized. Severus died in 425.

Thank God for Severus, who was a model of Christian service in his own life, but who also preserved for others a sacred history of his times.

Ninian: Evangelist to Scotland

As may have become obvious in this series so far, the individual Christians we have met along the way picked up the flame of God's love and shone brightly on the scene of history at a time when there weren't the birth records and other factual data that are so common to life today. As a result, it was hard to know when they were born and sometimes very little about their early lives. Furthermore, some of the more adventurous of them so captured the imagination of the people that, as stories about them were told and re-told over the years, it is, on occasion, difficult to distinguish fact from fiction. Such is the case with Ninian.

Ninian was the Christian son of a British chieftain, but his birth date and much else about him remains unknown. He was educated in Rome and was a friend of **Martin of Tours**. His perceived calling from God was to convert the fierce tribes of southern Scotland. He eventually had some success in doing so.

Ninian established a monastery at Whithorn known as *Candida Casa* ("White House") because, according to **Bede**, it was built of stone. The abbey church was named St. Martin's in honor of his friend. The monastery became a center of missionary and charitable activities throughout the area of southern Scotland commonly called Galloway.

The fact that so little is really known of Ninian is considered due more to his success than anything else. The story of his life has been exaggerated to such an extent that it is impossible to discern truth from fiction. The fact remains that "the beloved apostle of Galloway," as Ninian is known, did great work in spreading the gospel in Scotland and perhaps into Ireland. He died sometime around 430.

Thank God for Ninian who carried Christ's message to Scotland.

Patrick: Missionary to Ireland

Perhaps the most productive people are those who look at the circumstances of life and see challenges instead of problems. One who truly fits that description is Patrick. He was born about 389 of Christian parents in Roman Britain. His father was a deacon and his grandfather a priest. Because Roman protection of Britain had deteriorated, bands of Irish raiders pillaged the coastal areas. At the age of 16, Patrick was captured and carried off to Ireland. After six years as a slave tending sheep, he escaped and miraculously returned home to his parents.

The years in Ireland had at least two lasting effects on Patrick. The first was that he was converted to Christ during lonely days and nights as a shepherd and slave. The second was a burning desire to return to Ireland as a missionary. He went to France for theological training; and, after many hardships and disappointments, he was finally able to return to Ireland as a missionary bishop.

At the time, the Irish were a barbarous and superstitious people. Patrick was not a great scholar but clearly was an effective communicator. He capitalized on the natural affinity of the Irish for the mystical by demonstrating the supernatural power of Christ. The mighty works wrought through Patrick have led to pious legends (such as having driven the snakes out of Ireland; there weren't any there in the first place), but as has been well said, "Patrick found a heathen Ireland but left a Christian one." He died in 461.

Patrick's ministry in Ireland eventually had a profound effect on human, as well as Christian, civilization. Instead of establishing dioceses overseen by bishops (as had become the norm in the Christian Church), the basic unit of the Irish church became a monastery led by an abbot. Later, when the power of Rome collapsed and pagan marauders destroyed the works of antiquity on the Continent, copies of these treasures were preserved in the monasteries of Ireland. Furthermore, Patrick's priority of missionary outreach led to great numbers of Irish monks evangelizing Western Europe in the sixth and seventh centuries.

Thank God for Patrick for being God's instrument in giving us a Christian Ireland.

Simeon Stylites: Unusual Hermit

At this point in the life of Christianity, it was not unusual for a person (normally a monk) to want to get away from everyone and everything to be alone with God, at least for a period of time. Simeon was one who took that practice to new limits. He was certainly one of the most unusual Christians in the history of the Church. Born in 390 in north Syria, he was a shepherd as a child. He was so influenced by the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:1-12) he left home at thirteen to join a monastery. His acts of self-discipline ultimately became too stringent for his fellow monks and he was asked to leave.

Following a period of time in which he engaged in a variety of acts of self-deprivation, he decided to build a pillar in the desert on which to live. His first pillar was six feet tall, but ultimately he built one 60 feet in the air. There he lived for 30 years, never coming down. Exposed to intense heat, driving rain and chilling frost, he remained on his perch. A protective barrier prevented his falling off while asleep and a rope ladder allowed his disciples to care for his necessities.

If part of Simeon's plan was to escape the world (as was true of many of the desert hermits), just the opposite happened to him. He drew crowds of gawkers to whom he preached Christ. He was also instrumental in settling disputes and in counseling others. His own self-sacrifice was a witness to many.

Simeon died in 459 at the age of 69. He set an example for desert hermits who chose pillars to live on over the following thousand years.

Thank God for Simeon, whose actions may seem bizarre to us but which were, in his mind, strict obedience to the Lord.

Leo the Great: Peter's Successor

Rome was the center of the world when Christianity began, and **Peter** is regarded to have been the first Bishop of Rome (pope). Perhaps it was only a matter of time until a pope would begin the process toward asserting spiritual authority over the world. Leo, as one of Peter's successors in office, did so. Leo was born in Tuscany (Italy). By 429 he was a deacon and a man of commanding influence. He was being used as an emissary of the Church to settle theological and political problems. While on one of these missions in 440, Pope Sixtus III died, and Leo was unanimously elected to succeed him.

Leo championed the primacy of the Roman church and was the first Bishop of Rome to make extensive use of the text, "You are Peter" (Matthew 16:19) as referring to the pope himself. He succeeded in getting ecclesiastical and imperial endorsement of the claim that the Bishop of Rome was primate of the Catholic Church in Western Europe, and he is sometimes therefore called the "Founder of the Papacy." He appeared on the scene at a particularly difficult time in history, the Middle Ages of Western Europe, and was considered by many a savior not only of the Church but of law and order, perhaps even of civilization itself.

There are many stories of Leo's courage and of miracles worked through him. His reign paralleled the age of barbarian settlements in Western Europe. In 452, Attila the Hun invaded Italy and began his march on Rome. At the Mincio River, however, he was convinced to turn back by Leo.

Leo was a great administrator, but he also had a leading role in the theological disputes that arose in his time, mostly dealing with the nature of Christ. He fought diligently against positions that focused on the deity of Christ at the expense of his humanity. His *Tome* dealt with this issue, taking the orthodox position that the two natures were united in the one person of Christ. When that was disregarded at the "robber-synod" of Ephesus in 449, Leo urged the emperors to call the Council of Chalcedon in 451 where the issue was settled. Leo died in 461.

Thank God for Leo, who was the right person at the right time.

Perspective: The Council of Chalcedon

Questions left unanswered by the Council of Nicea fomented for the next 120 years. The central issue for theologians revolved around the exact nature of Christ, and a number of clerics attempted to solve the problem with their own interpretations. The bishops at Nicea had pronounced the full deity of Christ, but had not adequately defined the relationship between Christ as God and Christ as man. So many questions were raised and so many theological issues turned on a word or the nuance of a word that the joint emperors Pulcheria and her husband Marcion called a general council to sort things out. It met in Chalcedon, across the Bosphorus from Constantinople, in 451.

The 400 bishops who comprised the Council of Chalcedon clarified four significant points concerning the nature of Christ in answer to the authors of the particular heresies they were addressing: (1) the full deity of Christ was affirmed in answer to Arius; (2) the full humanity of Christ was affirmed in answer to Apollinarius; (3) the deity and the humanity of Christ remain distinct and are not blurred together in answer to Eutyches; and (4) it was affirmed that Christ is one person in answer to Nestorius.

Although well meaning, the Council of Chalcedon simply added more fuel to the fire. The Coptic churches in Egypt and Ethiopia and the churches in Syria dissented from Chalcedon. Persian churches turned to Nestorianism. The Eastern Church was rent with theological argumentation. The popes in Rome equivocated as the emperors in the East struggled with the dilemma of giving up Chalcedon to hold onto maverick Eastern clergy or affirming Chalcedon and losing half of their churches. The split between East and West seemed now to be irreversible.

Thank God for the continuing attempts to clarify Christian doctrine despite the divisions they caused.

Remigius: Right Man, Right Place, Right Time

Remigius (Remi) lived in an age of relative obscurity, so not much is known of him. Yet, what is known marks him as Christ's man at a crucial point in the history of the faith.

The first, rather startling, fact about him is that he became Bishop of Rheims at the age of 22! Although some might think this reflects the sorry state of the Church at the time, Remigius seems to have been chosen because he was so highly regarded.

The second important fact about his life is that he is the one who converted Clovis, the pagan king of northern Gaul, to Christianity. Clovis' wife **Clotilda** (daughter of the Christian king of Burgundy) had influenced him toward faith in Christ, but the death of their first child after it had been baptized led Clovis in the opposite direction. However, when faced with defeat at the hands of the Alamanni, he promised he would become a Christian if Clotilda's God would grant him victory. When this happened, Clotilda sent for Remigius who instructed and baptized Clovis on Christmas Day 506. Later, his sisters and 3,000 of his soldiers were baptized as well.

Clovis became the first Christian king of France and that was clearly the crowning glory of Remigius' ministry. But Remigius is also remembered as a great preacher, and he is alleged to have performed a number of miracles. He died about 530.

Thank God for Remigius, who was instrumental in keeping faith in Christ alive in France.

Clotilda: Christian Influence

None of us will know, until we are with the Lord, the extent of our Christian influence on others. Hopefully we are ones through whom the flame of Christ's love has passed and will pass to succeeding generations. Clotilda was certainly such a person.

Born about 475, she was the daughter of Chilperic, a king of Burgundy. Following the death of her father, due to political intrigue within the family, her mother fled with Clotilda and her sister to Geneva. There, in 493, Clotilda married Clovis, the pagan Frankish king, by proxy. She had received Christian teaching while young and, as a part of their marriage agreement, she was to be allowed to continue her Christian faith.

Clotilda greatly influenced Clovis toward Christianity but, as previously noted when we looked at the life of **Remigius**, when their first child died shortly after birth, Clovis became embittered against God. Their second child seemed only to have been spared because of Clotilda's prayers, and Clovis became more open to Christianity once again. Ultimately, Remigius led Clovis to Christ, and the conversion of the Franks contributed to the downfall of Arianism in the West.

Clotilda had continuing Christian influence upon her warrior husband and was generous to her subjects, particularly Genevieve, for whom she built a church. However, she was a widow for 34 years and they were not happy times. Five of her children survived, and one was taken from her to marry the Arian king of Spain. The political intrigue that had plagued her early life continued; her sons committed horrible crimes because of it. But, it was her granddaughter Bertha, wife of King Ethelbert of Kent, who introduced Christianity into England. Clotilda remained faithful to the Lord, retiring to Tours, near **Martin's** tomb where she spent the remainder of her life in prayer and in the building of churches. At her death, she was taken to Paris and buried in the Basilica of St. Genevieve beside her husband.

Thank God for Clotilda, who was instrumental in bringing Christianity to France.

Brigit: “Mary of the Gael”

What **Patrick** did for Ireland in converting the people, establishing monasteries, and challenging these newly formed Christian communities to serve God in a multitude of ways, Brigit did in subsequent years. She was born out of wedlock of a noble father and slave mother in what is the present County Lough in Ireland. She and her mother were sold as slaves to a druid who converted to Christianity. Once set free she returned to her father who attempted to marry her to the king of Ulster. The latter, upon noting her piety, removed her from parental control and allowed her to form a Christian community.

Brigit founded a convent of virgins at Kildare that ultimately became a double abbey, formed of monks and nuns under an abbess who ranked above an abbot. Tradition has it that she was consecrated a bishop in order to serve in this capacity. Apparently, such consecrations were not unheard of among Celtic Christians of the British Isles.

Brigit seems to have been active in founding other religious communities as well. She was known for her virtue, piety and charity. She became so loved among the Gaelic people that she was called “Mary of the Gael.”

As was true with **Ninian**, so many stories have grown up around the life of Brigit that it is impossible to separate fact from fiction. In any event, Brigit was a great force for Christ in the early days of the conversion of Ireland. She died sometime around 535.

Thank God for Brigit who gave Ireland a model of chastity, purity and charity.

Sabas: Organizer of Hermits

A man who was unwanted by his parents and sought peace and quiet became much in demand as a Christian leader. Sabas' father was an army officer who traveled widely, taking his wife with him. As a result Sabas, who was born in about 439, was placed with an uncle who mistreated him. At ten he sought peace in a monastery and discovered one who cared very much about him: Jesus Christ.

At 20, Sabas traveled to Jerusalem fascinated by stories of the monks and hermits who lived in the Palestinian deserts. Euthymius, an ascetic, became his mentor and refused Sabas' desire for total solitude. Ten years later, Euthymius consented to allowing him five days a week in seclusion. Sabas lived in a cave praying and weaving baskets from palm leaves. Each week he would return from his cave with the 50 baskets he had woven.

After Euthymius died, Sabas moved into a cave where he lived for years without human contact. Eventually, however, people began to disturb him, coming for prayers, counseling and wanting to be his disciples. Sabas conceded and formed a community. Before long some 100 hermits were cloistered together; and Sabas, at 53, was ordained a priest. From this beginning, hospitals and inns were constructed and ministries to the poor provided. In 493, Sabas was made head of all hermits in Palestine by the patriarch of Jerusalem.

A staunch defender of orthodoxy, Sabas found himself in demand not only by his own monks but also by the church at large. He traveled to Constantinople to instruct the emperor on theological matters and later to intervene successfully concerning political repression in Palestine. When he died in 532 he was 94 years of age.

Thank God for Sabas and all who, though they would prefer a contemplative life, are willing to be used as the Lord would use them.

Perspective: The Monastic Rule

When Europe was plunged into the Middle Ages following the fall of Rome to pagan invaders, it was the monasteries that preserved Christianity, maintained libraries of manuscripts and ancient writings in Greek and Latin, and eventually evangelized the pagan world.

The monastic movement began in Egypt in the late Third Century with the founding of a community by **Antony**. Another Egyptian monk, Pachomius, wrote the first monastic rule (the code of regulations observed by a religious order). **Basil the Great** founded a monastery in Cappadocia and wrote his rule as a guide to a different, more mystical, form of monasticism.

In the West, **Martin** of Tours spread Christianity throughout Gaul after founding his monastic community in the second half of the Fourth Century. **Augustine of Hippo** in North Africa and John Cassian in Marseilles both founded monasteries. **Cassiodorus** in Italy founded a community in 540 that stressed the copying of manuscripts and ancient writings along with monastic learning.

Benedict founded the great Benedictine order at Monte Cassino in the early Sixth Century. His rule eventually dominated all other monastic systems. The Benedictine Rule, written in Latin, emphasized prayer and work, was simple and practical, and offered sensible admonitions and advice. The monastic rule kept up spiritual standards throughout the Middle Ages, and Benedictine monasteries also became centers of learning. At the same time, **Columba** was founding monasteries throughout Ireland. Irish scriptoria became the repository of learning for all of Western Europe as wandering Irish monks brought a revival of Christianity to Western Europe and built monasteries everywhere they went.

The importance of the monastic communities cannot be minimized. The stress they placed on work and prayer, a strict obedience to a daily regimen, a healthy ample diet, and, most of all, their emphasis on learning and culture, preserved islands of faith and worship in a mostly secular and often pagan world.

Thank God for those devoted monks who helped preserve the faith during the Middle Ages.

Benedict: Order Builder

Benedict of Nursia is considered the founder of Western monasticism. The breakdown of society and authority in Fifth Century Europe left many people despairing of mankind. Benedict helped shape peace and order in this troubled time.

He was born around 480 to a good family in Nursia (in Italy). He was sent to Roman schools but was appalled by the immorality he found there and fled. At Subiaco, 40 miles from Rome, he spent three years alone in a cave in prayer, contemplation and self-sacrifice. Following this time of spiritual formation, he was asked by local monks to be their abbot. However, he found their lives to be too lax and when he attempted to deal with these abuses they apparently tried to poison him!

He returned to his cave, but disciples flocked to him. Over time he formed twelve monasteries in the area, each with twelve monks. Benedict provided overall supervision. When difficulties arose with a neighboring priest (Benedict and his monks remained laymen) he left the communities he had established and, with a handful of disciples, journeyed south to Cassino (halfway between Rome and Naples) where he established the monastery with which his name has thereafter been associated. The formation of the monastery at Cassino in 529 was concurrent with the emperor Justinian closing the schools of Athens. As a result, the monastery became one of the primary centers of religious and cultural life in Western Europe.

Benedict was not well known in his own lifetime. His fame has come down through the centuries as monasteries have been formed under his *Rule* (a firm but reasonable constitution under which Benedictine monasteries function). These monasteries have been islands of hope in which men could pray, study Scripture, work and hold all things in common. In turn, they have operated hospitals, orphanages and schools. Benedict died in about 543.

Thank God for Benedict, who provided a remedy for the hopelessness many otherwise would have experienced in the Middle Ages of Western Europe.

Scholastica: Terrific Twin

We have seen examples in this series of God working in special ways through families that the flame of his love might be passed from one generation to another, and we have undoubtedly seen instances of that in our own time. In one case, God worked through terrific twins: **Benedict of Nursia** and Scholastica.

Scholastica was born in about 480 at Nursia in Umbria (Italy). Her parents were wealthy; but, unfortunately, the mother died in the birth of the twins. The children had great affection for one another and were raised together until, at 14, Benedict left for Rome in order to pursue studies there. Although Benedict did not stay long in Rome, he became a monk and his sister thereafter became a nun.

Scholastica settled in the valley of the Liris at the base of Monte Cassino. She founded the Benedictine Sisters community for women. Benedict, whose monastery was nearby, directed her and the other nuns with her. The purpose for which the Benedictine Sisters was formed was threefold: education, medical or hospital work, and charity.

The twins met once every year. **Gregory the Great** recorded their final time together. After their usual time of several hours together and a meal, Scholastica asked her brother if he could not stay for the night. Benedict replied, somewhat indignantly, that he could not conceive of spending a night outside of his monastery. Scholastic wept and prayed that somehow circumstances would force her brother to stay, and suddenly a tempest racked the nunnery. The two passed the night in pious conversation and parted at dawn. Scholastica died three days later (in 543), and Benedict's own death was shortly thereafter.

Thank God for Scholastica, who shared her brother's vision of communal Christian service, and founded an order for that purpose.

Brendan: Courageous Monk

Just to be an Irish monk in his day was a courageous undertaking. Many got in their little boats and took to the sea trusting God to send them to where he wanted them to be! But, even considering that, Brendan must have been one of the bravest. He was known as Brendan the Navigator and he lived from about 484 to about 578. He was born at Tralee in Kerry, Ireland, and was in the mold of **Patrick**.

What we know about Brendan is that he founded his chief monastery at Clonfert in County Galway about 20 years before his death. It is reasonably certain that he made a voyage to the Scottish isles and probably to Wales. The Irish monks apparently thought nothing of heading out to sea in coracles. The coracle is a small relatively round boat made of wicker or interwoven laths covered with a waterproof layer of animal skin. The Celtic culture from which they came was highly mystical, so the Irish monks had no trouble in looking for the supernatural in their newfound faith in Christ. They believed that wherever God wanted them to go he would protect them.

Brendan undoubtedly was in the forefront of the attempts to evangelize beyond the confines of the island on which the Irish lived. However, he is best known for a story that is thought to have developed some 200 years after his death. He is the hero of a sea adventure (*The Voyage of St. Brendan*) in which he reaches North America in his coracle years before the Scandinavians settled on Iceland. In their enthusiasm for their heroes of the faith, the Irish were particularly susceptible to “embellishing the facts” a little bit.

Nonetheless, we can be grateful for these devoted followers of Christ who had a heart for sharing their faith regardless of the obstacles.

Thank God for Brendan, who led the way in demonstrating that travel from Ireland to neighboring lands was possible, even in a small boat, if there was the courage and the conviction to do so.

Cassiodorus: Preserver of the Classics

What the Irish monks did for the Christian faith and for civilization by recording the writings of antiquity, Cassiodorus did in Italy. He was born about 490 and lived until 585. A Roman aristocrat, his life provided a link between classical and early Christian civilization and the Middle Ages.

Cassiodorus was a statesman, historian and monk. He held a variety of important civil positions. Retiring from public service in 540, he foresaw the disintegration of the old order and the destruction of classical education. A few years earlier he had proposed to Pope Agapetus the formation of a Christian university in Rome, but the Gothic wars made that impossible.

In view of the situation, Cassiodorus established a monastery on his estate at Vivarium (a name meaning “fish pond” because of the landscaped gardens on the property). There he sought to perpetuate the culture of Rome. Cassiodorus was neither a great writer nor a great scholar but he was vitally important to the history of culture. He assembled manuscripts and encouraged his monks to copy pagan as well as Christian writers. The result was the preservation of many great works, and his monastery set an example that was followed elsewhere for centuries.

Thank God for Cassiodorus, whose foresight helped preserve Christian thought and classical masterpieces during troubled times.

Radegonde: Pious Perseverance

We all face trials and tribulations in life. Becoming a Christian does not free us from these; in fact, God gets us more involved in the lives of others, and that can lead to additional pain as well as joy. Radegonde (also spelled Rade Gundie) had more than her share of pain in life, yet persevered in an exemplary way.

Radegonde was born in 518 of the royal family of Thuringia. As a child she was taken captive by the invading Franks under Clotaire, a pagan son of **Clotilda**. It was said of Clotaire that he was cruel and debauched and that there was nothing Christian about him except, in his better moments, a fear of hell. In 540 he decided he wanted Radegonde as his wife. In desperation, considering Clotaire to have been the murderer of her father, she fled. However, she was captured and forced into the marriage. Thereupon, Radegonde became an exemplary wife for 15 years.

For some unknown reason, Clotaire had Radegonde's brother assassinated, and that was the ultimate treachery as far as Radegonde was concerned. It is also recorded that Clotaire had presented his wife with a beautiful palace that she had turned into a refuge for the poor and sick, including some with leprosy. In any event, Radegonde, with her husband's permission, became a deaconess and founded a monastery.

Venantius Fortunatus, inspired by the life of Radegonde, in 569 wrote the hymn of the early church *Vexilla Regis Prodeunt* that was translated into English by John Mason Peale in 1851. Clotaire eventually sought Radegonde's forgiveness for killing members of her family, destroying Thuringia, and his treatment of her, but she did not return to him. The remaining years of her life were spent in prayer, the study of Scripture and mission work. She died in 587.

Thank God for Radegonde who, some historians say, was the most perfect woman of her time.

Columba: Founder of Iona

God can use all kinds of people as we can see from the life of Columba. His grandfather had been baptized by **Patrick**, and due to the fact that his parents were both of Christian and noble stock, he was a force to be reckoned with. Possessed of strong features and an authoritative voice, Columba was willful and combative.

Columba was born in 521 in Donegal, Ireland. He became a home missionary to his fellow Irish, establishing churches and monasteries at Derry and Durrow. Then, in 563, came the turning point in his life. He had been involved in a dispute over a manuscript of the Psalms he had copied without permission, and then fell into disfavor for his part in causing a civil war between his clan and King Diarmid in which 3,000 men lost their lives. Whether banished by his ecclesiastical superior or by his own self-condemnation, Columba sailed from Ireland with 12 companions pledging never to return until he had converted more pagans than the number of people who had died in the battle.

The first land reached by these missionaries out of sight of Ireland was Iona, a bleak island three miles long and a mile and a half wide just off the Scottish coast. Columba built a monastery there that soon became a training center for a mission to the Scots and Picts. By the force of his personality and the courage of his convictions, he was good to his pledge. Among others, Brude, king of the Picts, was converted. Columba preached against the Druid opponents of Christianity, founded churches, and greatly influenced the Christianization of western Scotland.

Bede records that Columba led many to Christ by his “preaching and example.” He was admired for his physical and spiritual prowess. Although an ascetic, he remained in good health and was very active until his death in 597 at the age of 76.

Thank God for Columba who, by the grace of God, tamed his willfulness and was used to “tame” the Picts.

David: Leader of the Welsh

As the history of Christianity unfolds for us through the lives of people who passed the flame of Christ's love from generation to generation, we see God calling special people to special situations...just as he does in our own day. David was certainly one such person. He is the patron saint of Wales. He was a monk of noble birth, the son of Sant, a prince in the line of Cunedda, a leader from north Britain whose sons became provincial kings. David (Dewi or Dawi) was well educated and became a famous preacher and teacher.

During David's time (mid-Sixth Century), the Roman legions that had protected Britain had been withdrawn and the country had fallen into the hands of pagan Angles, Saxons and Jutes. It seemed that Christianity would disappear from the Islands altogether. However, some Celtic Christians withdrew into Wales, and David was their leader.

We know little about David. He founded several monastic communities in Wales and played prominent roles in church synods of the time. The monastic communities provided places of refuge for the homeless and served as centers of learning. They were bastions of order in a chaotic environment.

David became abbot-bishop of Menevia (now St. David's) in Wales. He and other devoted monks kept the flame of Christ's love burning in Wales during a dark and troubled time. David died about 600.

Thank God for David, who served the Lord and preserved the faith in Wales.

Gregory the Great: Influential Pope

It has been said that of the approximately 180 bishops of Rome from Constantine to the Reformation, none was more influential than Gregory. In fact, the medieval papacy clearly makes its appearance with the arrival of this imminently able churchman on the stage of world history

Gregory was born in 540 in Rome of a patrician family that had long been involved in matters of church and state. Gregory was the equivalent of mayor of Rome at 33. However, after his father's death, he gave his wealth to the church and the poor, turned his estate into a monastery and became a monk.

In 590 he became the pope, Bishop of Rome. He was the first monk to have held that office. He coined the title "Servant of the Servants of God" for his office and claimed universal jurisdiction over Christendom. He appointed wise and competent men to leadership positions, upheld biblical morality, and prepared a training manual for clergy. A liturgist and musician, he developed the Gregorian chant.

It was Gregory who sent **Augustine of Canterbury** to England, and within 50 years England was calling itself a Christian country. With little help from the imperial government, he brought lasting peace to war-torn Italy and organized the Western Church to withstand the Germanic and Viking invasions. He proved to be one of the most talented and effective bishops in history. He confirmed the authority of the Roman church as he proclaimed the "Christian Commonwealth" in which the pope and the clergy were to be responsible for ordering society.

Thank God for Gregory and the stability he brought to the Church and the world in early Middle Ages.

Augustine of Canterbury: Missionary to England

Augustine, a reluctant hero, was a monk of the monastery of St. Andrew in Rome when, in 597, Pope **Gregory** sent him to lead a missionary effort in England. Gregory had supposedly wanted to undertake the mission himself, but had been elected pope instead. Three centuries earlier, Christianity had been introduced in England during Roman occupation. Then pagan Anglo-Saxons invaded the British Isles, massacred the Christians, and drove them to the north and west.

Augustine and his band of 30 or 40 monks began their trek. However, Augustine had apparently accepted the assignment with little enthusiasm. He did not speak the language of the Anglo-Saxons and regarded them as pagan savages. The group lost heart before sailing for England and sent Augustine back to Rome where the pope encouraged him and sent him forth once more.

The missionaries landed near the mouth of the Thames in the spring of 597. To their great surprise, they found that Queen Bertha of Kent was a Christian from France and her husband King Ethelbert was willing to hear the gospel. Ethelbert and most of his subjects were converted. Augustine was consecrated bishop at Arles in autumn and established his cathedral at Canterbury.

Augustine was not successful in uniting the British (Celtic) churches of north Wales with the churches he was founding, and he sowed some discord because of his positions on the dating of Easter and methods of baptism. However, he had re-established the Christian presence in England, and his bishopric was to become the most important in England and the mother diocese of the Anglican Communion.

Thank God for Augustine for his work in Christianizing England.

Columbanus: Missionary to the Continent

As has been detailed in the life of **Patrick**, Patrick had, in the founding of monasteries in Ireland, instilled a missionary zeal in the Irish monks. At the same time, these monks had been preserving the antiquities of civilization by their enthusiasm for copying manuscripts while pagan marauders were plundering Western Europe. Columbanus came along at a time when Irish monks were ready to share their educational treasures and their faith with the European continent.

Columbanus (Columban) was born in 543 in Leinster and was educated at the monastery of Bangor, County Down, Ireland. He was a missionary, abbot and writer.

About 585 Columbanus left Ireland with 12 other monks and established himself in eastern France where he built an abbey, drew a congregation and formed a rule for them to live by. He eventually got into trouble on two counts. The first was with the French bishops for keeping Easter according to the Celtic usage, and the second was for boldly rebuking the king.

Upon being forcibly removed from his monastery in 610, he withdrew with other monks to Switzerland where he preached to the Alamanni. When compelled to leave there, he went to Italy and founded a monastery at Bobbio where he died in 615. Surviving him was a book of private prayers, an example of which is: "I beg you, most loving Savior, to reveal yourself to us, that knowing you we may desire you, that desiring you we may love you, that loving you we may ever hold you in our thoughts."

Thank God for Columbanus and other determined Irish monks who carried Christianity and culture back to the European continent from which it had come to them.

Isidore of Seville: Spanish Teacher

While spreading and defending the faith, many of the early Christian leaders also made major contributions to the academic world. Such was Isidore who, born about 560 to a Christian family probably from Cartagena, became the greatest teacher in Spain. His considerably older brother Leander, a friend of **Gregory the Great**, took it upon himself to educate the boy. Through harsh discipline he helped form in Isidore a brilliant mind and a tender heart.

In about 600 Isidore succeeded Leander as Bishop of Seville. He established schools for the young and seminaries in every Spanish diocese for training priests. He converted false teachers to orthodoxy and evangelized Jews.

Isidore's great work, however, was his encyclopedia, the *Etymologiae*. It remained for many centuries a most important reference book. It contained entries on medicine, arithmetic, grammar, history and theology. In this way, Isidore handed down to posterity much that he had extracted from the work of his predecessors. The efforts of **Cassiodorus**, for instance, were critical to the accomplishment of this task.

Isidore also developed a dictionary, a summary of world history, a compilation of the biographies of famous men, books about Bible characters and many sermons and theological studies. In addition to his writing, he also presided at the great Spanish church council of Toledo of 633. There, issues involving methods of baptism, acceptance of the singing of hymns and protection of the Jews from forced conversion were decided. Isidore died in 636 after distributing his possessions to the poor.

Thank God for Isidore, who used his mind as well as his heart to teach and lead the Spanish Christians.

Aidan: Founder of Lindisfarne

During the time we are now considering in the history of Christianity, it is easy to see the flame of God's love passing purposefully. It moved to Ireland via **Patrick**, from Ireland to Scotland with **Columba**, now to northern England through Aidan. Aidan was trained at Iona, the community founded by Columba off the shore of western Scotland. There he knew **Oswald** who was to become the king of Northumbria. As a result of that friendship, Aidan was chosen Bishop of Lindisfarne in 635 and formed a community there.

The Lindisfarne monastery became the focal point for missionary and charitable activities throughout England and Scotland. The monks at Lindisfarne were of the Celtic tradition, but Aidan traveled widely on the European continent, learned the liturgical and administrative practices of the Roman church, and was able to begin preparing his people for the changes that would ultimately come.

It has been said that the best kind of evangelism is that which proceeds from godly and charitable living, and Aidan provided an excellent model of that. He had a reputation as a compassionate and learned monk. He trained a whole generation of Christian leaders for the English church, among them bishops and saints. He died in 651.

Bede wrote that Aidan "taught no otherwise than he and his followers lived; for he neither sought nor loved anything of this world, but delighted in distributing to the poor whatsoever was given him by the kings and rich men of the world."

Thank God for Aidan, an example of holy living who sowed seeds of the Christian faith in those who would lead the church in England for generations to come.

Oswald: King of Northumbria

God worked his wonders in a special way in bringing Christ to the north of England in the Seventh Century. Aefelfrith the Destroyer, the pagan king of Northumbria, sent his children to Iona to be educated and cared for by Celtic Christian monks. There his son Oswald, born in about 605, came under the influence of **Aidan** and was trained and baptized in the Christian faith.

In 633 Oswald defeated the British king Ceadwalla and succeeded to the throne of Northumbria. Thereupon he chose allegiance to the Celtic church and, in 635, sought a bishop to be the spiritual overseer of his kingdom. In answer, God sent Aidan who became Bishop of Lindisfarne (also known as “Holy Island”), an island on the east coast of Northumberland, England.

Oswald, Aidan and their companions began converting the people of the Anglo-Saxon Northumbria kingdom to Christianity. In the process, Oswald gained a reputation for piety, compassion and scholarship. He was particularly generous in ministering to the needs of the poor and suffering.

In 641 Oswald was struck down by pagan Mercian soldiers and died beneath the banner of the cross he had chosen as his ensign. The kingdom of Northumbria was eventually incorporated into the kingdom of England, but the faith Oswald and the Celtic monks brought to the north country of England remains.

Thank God for Oswald, a king who lived and served under the banner of Christ.

Perspective: The Synod at Whitby

Augustine of Canterbury was appointed archbishop in 597. From Canterbury, he directed the evangelistic efforts among the Angles and Saxons, who were constantly fighting for political dominance. The existing Celtic church was also a problem for Augustine. As more monks were sent from Italy to assist him in his work, they found themselves competing with Irish monks already present in the north and west of England.

The Celtic church had been a major factor in England since **Patrick**. Irish monks, many trained in the monasteries founded by **Columba**, had fanned out to proselytize throughout present day Scotland and northern England. They had been driven back by waves of pagan invaders (Angles, Saxons and Jutes) but, as those groups were assimilated into the population, the Celtic church asserted itself once more. Centuries of isolation from continental Christianity and a disdain for foreign invaders made it difficult for the Celtic clergy to accept Augustine as their bishop.

The two sides were divided on a number of points: the calculation of the date of Easter; the adoption of the Roman method of baptism; the practices of fasting, penance and discipline; and the question of which tonsure (how the clergy cut their hair) would prevail. The underlying conflict, however, was over who would decide these issues.

As the two sides continued their mission work among the pagans and met with continuing success, a synod was called at Whitby in 664 to see if some common ground could be found. After weeks of tense debate, a decision was finally made to adopt the Roman practices. This paved the way for the Romanization of British Christianity, uniting all of Western Europe under the pope. It also made possible the uniting of the spiritual and intellectual vitality of Celtic Christianity with the order and discipline of Rome.

Thank God for those who are willing to set aside their own deep-seated preferences that unity might prevail and God's work might go forward in harmony.

Chad: Change Agent for God

An exemplary product of **Aidan's** efforts at Lindisfarne was Chad. The brother of Cedd, whom he succeeded as abbot of Lastingham, Chad had been educated and trained by Aidan at Lindisfarne.

Chad came along at a time of sweeping changes in the administrative and liturgical practices of the church. Having been brought up in the Celtic tradition, Chad opposed changing to the Roman way. At the synod at Whitby he defended the Celtic forms of worship and church order. However, when the decision went against the Celtic way, Chad gracefully accepted it and helped enforce the use of the new liturgy.

In 664, at the request of King Oswy, Chad was consecrated Bishop of York (then the seat of the Northumbrian bishopric). However, in the meantime, Wilfred, a native of Northumbria and a notable priest of the day who had argued the Roman position at the Whitby synod, was consecrated Bishop of York by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Roman pope. When confronted with this fact, Chad resigned in favor of Wilfred.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, grateful for Chad's action and impressed with his humility and devotion to duty, made him Bishop of Lichfield. Chad lived simply and served as a model of holiness and Christian living. He died in 672.

Thank God for Chad, who was willing to sacrifice his preferences and his position in order to promote unity among God's people.

Maximus Confessor: Fought Heresy

There is a story about a great Jewish scholar who undertook a thorough study of the history of the Christian Church and, as a result, converted. When asked what had convinced him, he said, in effect, that if the Church could survive the atrocities it had committed against its own people down through the years, God must be in it. Not only have Christians suffered because of persecution by non-Christians, but disagreements on issues basic to the faith have also led to the extreme persecution of Christians by others who claimed to be Christians themselves.

Such was the case with Maximus. He was born in Constantinople in about 580 to a family that belonged to the old Byzantine aristocracy. He received a good education and became private secretary to the emperor Heraclius in 610. Twenty years later he entered the monastery at Chrysopolis and became abbot.

Known as “the Confessor” because he staunchly held orthodox views, Maximus’ problems began when he took a leading role in combating the Monothelistic heresy. The proponents of this heresy believed that Christ had a divine, but no human, will. The orthodox view, held by Pope Martin I and Maximus, was that Christ had two natures (human and divine) and two wills (not separated or mixed but in harmony). The emperor Constans II was a Monothelistic and had Martin deposed and imprisoned. Maximus faced even crueler treatment.

Now 73 years of age, Maximus was dragged across the empire and placed on trial in Constantinople. After conviction he was banished to a remote location where he suffered cold and hunger. When he continued over the years to refuse to recant his position, he was eventually brought back to Constantinople where he was condemned, scourged and mutilated. He was then banished once more and died in 662 at the age of 82.

Thank God for Maximus, who stood boldly for the truth even in the face of his own church.

Theodore of Tarsus: Greek Gift to England

That the Church in the Seventh Century thought it a worldwide body was proved in the case of Theodore; and, providentially, what could have been a disastrous idea proved to be an excellent one.

Theodore was a Greek born in Tarsus (in Turkey) in 602. In 668 Hadrian of Niridanum (an African monk) recommended to Pope Vitalian that he send Theodore to fill the vacancy as Archbishop of Canterbury. The pope agreed on the condition that Hadrian accompany him (and Hadrian eventually became abbot of St. Peter's in Canterbury).

Theodore arrived in 669 and, according the account by **Bede**, began a tour of Anglo-Saxon England, reforming abuses and giving instructions concerning monastic rule. Bede also says Theodore was the first archbishop to whom all the church submitted; he secured unity of all under the leadership of Canterbury, something the leaders of state had not accomplished for generations! The "foreigner" Theodore turned out to be one of the most brilliant and effective archbishops England ever had.

Especially well educated, Theodore was a man who knew the world of his day as few others could. He called three councils of the English Church, at Hertford in 673, at Hatfield in 680 and at Twyford in 684 at which important actions were taken that would have long-range effects upon the church. Theodore is said to have written much as well, but his scholarly work was apparently not appreciated in primitive England, and none has survived. Theodore died in 690, leaving a legacy of an English Church that was orthodox and unified.

Thank God for Theodore, who accepted the challenge of demonstrating the worldwide reach of Christ's Church in the Seventh Century.

Hilda of Whitby: Ahead of Her Time

Hilda was a leading force for Christianity in Seventh Century England. She was born in 614, the daughter of Hereric, a nephew of King Edwin of Northumbria. When Edwin was converted Hilda was 13 years of age and was baptized with his household. She had a deep and abiding faith, but was also a person of prestige and influence. It was not until she was more than 30 that she decided she was being called to a religious vocation.

About 650, she became the Abbess of Hartlepool where she remained for several years. Then, with the help of **Aidan**, Bishop of Lindisfarne, she founded a monastery at Whitby in 657. This was a mixed monastery, having both men and women, and was a great center of the old British (Celtic) church. According to the **Bede**, Hilda oversaw the careful teaching of the Scriptures “by word and by example, righteousness and mercy and purity, and especially peace and charity.” Included among the Whitby community were five future bishops and the famous Anglo-Saxon poet Caedmon.

As we have previously seen, **Augustine of Canterbury** had tried unsuccessfully to unite the Roman and British churches in England. At Whitby, in 664, King Oswy called a church council to deal with the issue. Hilda was appreciative of both the Roman and Celtic traditions, and therefore acted as a mediator and reconciler at the council. However, her strong preference was to continue under the Celtic, by which her abbey was organized.

Unfortunately for Hilda, the king decided in favor of the Romanization of the British church. This necessitated a substantial change in the worship and discipline of her community, but Hilda is said to have accepted it gracefully. She died in 680.

Thank God for Hilda, who gave us a model of leadership for women.

Cuthbert: Healer and Reconciler

Some Christians who have passed the flame of Christ's love down through the centuries, though of imposing stature and countenance, have primarily reflected the gentle side of Christ's nature. Cuthbert is a good example. He was born in the early 630s into a shepherding family in Northumbria. He entered the monastery at Melrose in 651. Ten years later he was the prior. A man of large stature and unusual physical strength, Cuthbert was much more concerned about his spiritual leadership and strength.

In 664 he was transferred to be the prior at Lindisfarne. In 676, however, he retired to nearby Inner Farne Island to devote himself to prayer.

In 684 he was persuaded by Egrith, king of Northumbria, to be consecrated Bishop of Hexham that led, in turn, to his becoming Bishop of Lindisfarne the following year. Although his time as a bishop was brief, it was extremely active. This was a period of war, plague and schism. The Roman Church in Britain sought to break Celtic Christian traditions (such as the dating of Easter) and brought other liturgical and political changes which were difficult for the Celtic Christians to accept.

During this time, Cuthbert sought to heal the religious difficulties while becoming personally involved in caring for the sick and the wounded. In the midst of war, Cuthbert went courageously among the people, ministering to the wounded and consoling the survivors. In 687 he again retired to Inner Farne Island where he died shortly afterward. The church historian **Bede** said of Cuthbert, "He was aflame with the fire of divine charity; and to give counsel and help to the weak he considered equal to an act of prayer."

Thank God for Cuthbert, who learned to shepherd lambs as a boy and to shepherd people the remainder of his life.

Bede: The Venerable One

Bede's name has been mentioned a number of times thus far because he was the "Father of English History" and recorded the lives of many faithful Christians who passed the flame of Christ's love from generation to generation. Indeed, his *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* is a major source of information about early England.

Bede was born in 673 and was orphaned at the age of seven. He was taken in at a nearby monastery and raised by kindly monks. He spent his entire life in the monasteries of Wearmouth and Jarrow in northern England. There he learned a great deal about the world and about life from his avid reading. He studied the church fathers, the Vulgate Bible and the classics. He learned Greek, Latin and Hebrew, and, at 30, he began to do his own writing.

Bede had a great appreciation for the value of life. He deeply appreciated the care he had received at the hand of the monks who raised him. But, while still a youngster, the plague hit the monastery and only he and the abbot survived. Thus, he learned early the fine line between life and death and his total dependence on God.

This background instilled in Bede the importance not only of recording the lives of the Christians who had gone before him, but to record with meticulous accuracy, noting the authority for his information. His writing stands out as being thoroughly reliable as against the trend of his day to record incredible stories supported by little real evidence. Furthermore, he became universally known as the Venerable Bede because of the holiness of his life. He died in 735.

Thank God for Bede, who cared enough to give us an accurate track of the flame of God's love in the lives of faithful Christians who had gone before him.

Willibrord: Missionary to the Frisians

The passing of the flame of God's love that had led from England to Ireland to Scotland to northern England now takes a turn in the life of Willibrord. Willibrord was born in the Northumbrian area of England in about 657. He became a student of Wilfred, Bishop of Northumbria. Then, at the age of 20, he wanted to improve his education and went to Ireland, which had become the repository for learning in Western Europe. He remained there for twelve years, was ordained and sent out (in the manner of the Irish monks) on mission to the North German tribes.

In 690, with the blessings of the Bishop of Rome, he and twelve companions set out to convert the fierce Frisians who occupied the area that is now Holland. He did a great work of evangelism and was responsible for founding a number of churches. He established an effective center for his work at Utrecht and was named archbishop in 696.

Willibrord was supported in his missionary efforts by Charles Martel ("The Hammer"), ruler of the Frankish kingdom and was assisted for three years by **Boniface**. He died in 738.

Bede and **Alcuin**, who were contemporaries of his, both highly praised Willibrord. Bede credits him with having preached to the Frisians for almost 50 years.

Thank God for Willibrord, who evangelized Holland.

Boniface: Missionary to the Germans

In our day we tend to think of monks as men closeted away in a monastery saying their prayers, working in their fields or some trade within the walls of the monastery to provide for their meager sustenance, and not much else. As we have seen and will continue to see in the lives of people like Boniface, that certainly wasn't true of all monks in the early centuries of Christianity.

Boniface was born in Devonshire, England about 673. His name was actually Wynfrith, but he went by his nickname, which means "good deeds." He became a monk at the age of seven, and distinguished himself as a scholar and preacher. Following the example of other Anglo-Saxon monks, he set out as a missionary to Frisia (Holland) in 716. This effort failed, perhaps because King Radbod of Frisia was at war with Charles Martel.

Boniface then went to Rome where, in 719, Pope Gregory II commissioned him to evangelize Germany. There he served for the next twelve years with occasional sojourns back into Frisia. He had great success in converting pagans in Germany and is considered by some to have been the greatest missionary of the Dark Ages. In one instance, he chopped down the sacred Oak of Thor at Geismar in full view of the local people who thought the tree had supernatural powers. As a result, Germanic confidence in the pagan gods ended.

Boniface was not only an effective evangelist, but also had a keen gift of administration. In 741, he was called back to Rome and given responsibility by Pope Zacharias to reform the entire Frankish church. Using his considerable skills, he soon accomplished that task, and then focused his efforts back on Germany.

Ever the evangelist, Boniface in 754 again sought to evangelize the Frisians. However, he and his companions were slain by a mob of Frisian pagans near Utrecht in June of that year.

Thank God for Boniface and his evangelizing of Germany.

John of Damascus: Theologian of the Eastern Church

A new situation now occurs in the life of Christianity: Christians living in an Islamic world. John of Damascus was one who faced this situation from birth. He was born in the late 600s in Damascus, which had come under the control of Islam. He was a Christian and had been educated by an Italian monk his father had ransomed from slavery. John's father was treasurer of the court of the Muslim caliph, and John succeeded his father in that position. At the time, he regarded Muslims as heretical Christians. Later, however, he left that comfortable life and entered the monastery of St. Sabas between Jerusalem and the Dead Sea where he spent the remainder of his life.

John's forceful personality began to be shaped by the rigors of living as a monk in the stark wilderness of the area. He soon distinguished himself as a scholar and theologian. He wrote *Fountain of Knowledge*, which contained a complete system of theology based on the teaching of the Fathers of the Church and the Church Councils from the Fourth Century to the Seventh. In doing so he systematized Greek theology much as **Thomas Aquinas** would do with Latin doctrine 500 years later.

John, however, is perhaps best known for his contributions to Christian worship. He wrote many hymns, including at least two Easter ones that are still in use.

He was a strong defender of the faith, but that included his approval of the use of sacred pictures ("icons") in worship. As a result, he became involved in the "Iconoclastic Controversy" that caused international political and religious upheaval and reached such violent proportions that it shook the Byzantine world. In the process John only escaped with his life with the help of powerful Muslim friends. He died about 753.

Thank God for John, who left wealth and comfort in the Muslim world to dedicate his life to Christian worship and learning.

Alcuin: Charlemagne's Right Hand

Charlemagne, King of the Franks, brought political stability to Western Europe in the late Eighth and early Ninth Centuries. His friend Alcuin brought religious stability.

Alcuin was born in 732 near York in northern England. The first 50 years of his life were spent in Yorkshire where he was educated at the school of York, the most renowned of its day. In 778 he was made head of the school.

In 781, however, he traveled to Italy for further study and met Charlemagne. They became good friends, and Charlemagne convinced Alcuin to become director of the palace school at Aachen. Alcuin based his curriculum on the seven liberal arts, collected manuscripts for the royal library, and began to educate the clergy and then the people. He was not only the royal tutor but became the king's chief advisor on religious and educational matters.

In 796 Alcuin was made abbot of the monastery at Tours, France, where he founded a famous library and school. There he exercised great influence in clearing up misunderstandings of the Christian faith and in correcting practices that were inconsistent with Christianity, both in morals and forms of worship. He was a pioneer in the development of the university educational model. He was a poet, writer and theologian. At a time when a fresh wind of change was blowing across Western Europe now referred to as the "Age of Charlemagne," Alcuin was the king's right hand in advancing orthodox theology, sound learning, and meaningful worship. He died in 804 at Tours.

Thank God for Alcuin, who built on the power and influence of Charlemagne to bring spiritual and educational refreshment to Western Europe in the Dark Ages.

Theodulf: Alcuin's Spiritual Successor

During the time Charlemagne was the moving political force in Western Europe, Theodulf entered into the picture. He was born in the middle of the Eighth Century, probably in Spain. He was from a noble family of Gothic extraction and served as abbot of two monasteries before becoming Bishop of Orleans, in Spain, in 781.

Theodulf supported Charlemagne's ideas for governmental and educational reform. By age 50 he had gained a reputation as a poet and scholar. He established schools and became a part of the king's inner circle. He traveled widely and took part in the major events of his day.

Like **Alcuin**, Theodulf believed strongly in the education of the clergy. Among his books was *Directions to the Priests of the Diocese* in which he outlined specific rules and regulations to be followed for the good of the clergy involving their practical, moral and spiritual behavior. Theodulf also composed the beautiful hymn *Glory, Laud and Honor*, still regularly sung in our own day.

When Alcuin died Theodulf became Charlemagne's principal theological adviser. After Charlemagne's death, however, Theodulf was accused of treason by the new emperor and was imprisoned. Although he maintained his innocence, he remained in prison until his death in 818.

Thank God for Theodulf, who carried on the tradition of Christian education in Western Europe of Charlemagne's day.

Hrabanus: A Man in Demand

When a person had the gifts exhibited by Hrabanus (Rabanus Maurus), it was hard for him retire. Hrabanus was born of noble parents in Mainz, Germany in about 776. He was educated at Fulda and at Tours under **Alcuin**. It was Alcuin who, recognizing his talents, surnamed him Maurus after St. Maur, a favorite disciple of **Benedict**.

Hrabanus became director of the school at Fulda in 803. Under his leadership an excellent library was developed and the school soon became one of Europe's most famous. Not only scholars but also a score of affiliated institutions were spawned from there. Hrabanus' graduates were in demand throughout Europe.

Hrabanus was ordained to the priesthood in 814, but withdrew from Fulda and made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. He returned to Fulda in 817 and became abbot in 822. After a successful and eventful tenure in office, he retired in 842 at 66 years of age.

However, five years later he was consecrated archbishop of Mainz and continued in that office for eight years. During that time he vigorously preached the Gospel and defended the faith. In theology and philosophy, Hrabanus was one of the most learned men of his time. He was 80 when he died in 856.

Thank God for Hrabanus, who understood that Christians never retire, they are just transferred to other responsibilities.

Anskar: Missionary to Scandinavia

As we enter the Ninth Century, we can look back to see the passing of the flame of God's love beginning with **Patrick** in Ireland and continuing from there to Scotland, northern England and across to the Continent where it is picked up by Anskar in France and propelled the next step along the way.

Anskar (also Ansgar) was born in France in 801. From the age of five he was schooled at the monastery at Corbey. While in Germany helping to establish a monastery at New Corbey, Anskar became concerned about the need to evangelize Scandinavia. The Scandinavians were the last of the Teutonic peoples to accept Christianity. These Vikings from the north raided Britain and Western Europe and wrought havoc with western Christendom.

Anskar first saw an opening when Harald, an exiled Danish king, accepted Christ and sought assistance in spreading the faith in his dominions. Anskar volunteered to go as a missionary to the Danes, knowing the danger involved. He established the first Christian school in Schleswig, but was soon expelled by local pagans. When Swedish envoys later requested missionaries, Anskar once again volunteered. Despite hardships, he reached Sweden and was welcomed by King Bjorn. He established the first Christian church in Sweden in about 832. Nonetheless, his efforts produced few results.

Anskar was then made Archbishop of Hamburg and a strategy for the evangelization of the north was devised. However, political conditions limited the success of the effort. When Denmark united under King Haarik, Anskar was allowed to renew his work in Schleswig and a church was built there. In the meantime the mission to Sweden had failed with the expulsion of Bishop Gautbert in 845. Although his efforts seem to have failed during Anskar's lifetime (he died in 865), the seeds of faith had been planted in the north and, in the Tenth Century, those seeds established a solid foothold. As a result, Anskar is honored in Sweden as the apostle to the north.

Thank God for Anskar for sowing the seeds of faith in Scandinavia.

Edmund: Martyr King

With power comes responsibility, and this is especially true for Christians. Though a position of sovereign authority can provide an avenue to lead one's people to Christ, it is not without its price. That was certainly the case for Edmund. He became king of East Anglia, one of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms, in 833. By this time the Anglo-Saxons had become Christians, and Edmund was considered an exemplary Christian king. He loved the Lord, and devoted himself to improving education, the administration of justice and the needs of the poor.

In 870, however, an army of pagan Danes overran his small kingdom. Edmund was defeated in battle, captured, and offered conditions for sparing his life. Those conditions apparently were along the lines of accepting Danish law and customs and sharing leadership of his kingdom with a pagan Dane. Edmund realized that such a compromise would result in the subjugation of his people, weakening of the church, and the destruction of the good work he had accomplished. He therefore refused.

The Danes stripped Edmund and tied him to a tree. There they used him as target practice, firing their arrows into his limbs and non-vital parts. The cruelty ended when he was finally cut down and beheaded.

The place in England where he was buried is to this day called Bury St. Edmunds. It became one of the primary shrines of medieval England and the location of a great Benedictine monastery.

Thank God for Edmund, a model Christian leader.

Cyril and Methodius: Apostles of the Slavs

Two Greek brothers from Thessalonica, Cyril (born in 827) and Methodius (825) were largely responsible for the conversion of the Slavic people of Eastern Europe in the Ninth Century. Both were educated at the university in Constantinople and both began their careers there. The brothers were outstanding scholars, theologians and linguists. Cyril became a professor of philosophy and Methodius a librarian.

Cyril was the first to serve as a missionary, working among the Tartars in what is now the southern Ukraine. Methodius became the abbot of a Greek monastery. Then, in 860, the two brothers worked together toward the conversion of the Khazars northeast of the Black Sea. In 862, the ruler of the Great Moravian state (now part of Czechoslovakia) sent to Constantinople for Greek support and missionaries. Cyril and Methodius were sent.

The following year they started work among the Slavs, using the native language and liturgy. They translated Holy Scripture into the Slavonic language and invented a Slavic alphabet based on Greek characters that, in its final form, was called Cyrillic.

The evangelization of the Slavs proved no easy task, however. It was made more difficult by complaints from neighboring Christian groups. Roman Catholics opposed the use of any language other than Latin in the liturgy. Pressure also came from Germanic Christians that Arianism be accepted. The brothers held their ground, and the ecclesiastical authorities ultimately accepted their positions. Methodius was made Archbishop of Sirmium in 869, with the blessing of both Rome and Constantinople, and Cyril died that same year.

Thank God for Cyril and Methodius, brothers by blood and brothers in Christ, whose witness inspired the Slavs for generations.

Alfred the Great: Triumphant King

Not all kings in England suffered martyrdom like **Edmund**. Alfred was born in about 848, the fifth son of King Aethelwulf, Anglo-Saxon king of Wessex, England. When he was four or five, his father sent him to Rome where Pope Leo IV was sponsor at his confirmation. He visited Rome again, this time with his father, for a year in 855.

Alfred grew up during the time the Danes were raiding and capturing much of England. He knew the terror of death and destruction, and he lost loved ones. He had lost his father and his four older brothers by the time he became king, and he was the veteran of a great deal of warfare by that time. In the bloody battles of his day he had proved himself courageous, strong and cunning. From the monks of Wessex and the teachers in Rome who educated him, Alfred had learned a gentler, nobler way of life, and he wanted that for his people.

Alfred became the most powerful of the Anglo-Saxon kings. In addition to his triumphs in battle and wise defensive moves, he was fair and even-handed in administering justice and thereby laid the foundation for the English system of law. He established a palace school for the privileged as well as those who were not. In a critical battle with the Danes, Alfred defeated them on the field and then besieged them in their stronghold until their king Guthrum agreed to be baptized.

Alfred the Great was the King of Wessex from 871 to 899. In the Dark Ages when England was still only partially Christianized and remained uncivilized, Alfred gave the West Saxons of southern England a model of holiness and leadership.

Thank God for Alfred, who courageously held and expanded the Christian territory in south England in the Dark Ages.

Dunstan: English Reformer

In the late Tenth Century, England was devastated from centuries of invasion and tribal warfare. Spirituality disintegrated along with domestic life. Fewer men seriously considered the monastic life, and those who were monks became slack in their discipline.

It was during these dark days that Dunstan appeared on the scene. He had been born in 909 near Glastonbury, the son of a West Saxon noble. Irish monks at Glastonbury were his first teachers. His interest in books and music got him into trouble early in this life. Accused of practicing the black arts, he sought refuge with his kinsman the Bishop of Winchester who encouraged him to become a monk. For a while he lived as a hermit, and was then asked to be counselor to the king.

Dunstan was made abbot of Glastonbury around 943. Under his leadership, the abbey became a great center of learning. The Benedictine rule was rigorously enforced and the scriptorium was reopened. As the reputation of Glastonbury spread, so did the fame of Dunstan. As a result, he was drawn into the political arena. He served as Royal Treasurer to the king and then Bishop of Worcester and London, and finally Archbishop of Canterbury.

Dunstan put his resources toward the rebuilding and strengthening of the church in England. By also focusing on education, he inspired the people to better their lives. They were a people who knew only warfare, and he taught them the skills of peace, the joys of learning, and the dignity of work. As schools, shops and farms began to reappear in England, lawlessness and immorality declined. The authority of the church gained respect, and a period of peace and unity came for a time. Dunstan died in 988.

Thank God for Dunstan, who brought hope to England in what otherwise seemed a hopeless time.

Simeon: The New Theologian

Simeon lived during a time when it was generally thought an individual's relationship with God was primarily through the church and the priest. Although it would not have been recognized as such, that was a throwback to the days of the Old Testament Pharisees. But when Jesus died on the cross, the curtain of the Temple was rent in two (Matthew 27:51), opening direct access to God by individual Christians.

Simeon was born in 949 into an aristocratic family and came to Constantinople as a boy. As a young man, he led a dissipated, immoral life, yet he was enthralled by the beauty of God and spent hours in prayer. When he entered a monastery he soon became the abbot, imposing strict discipline.

Simeon taught that any Christian could experience direct, personal communion with God through prayer. Priests or the church were not necessary for this to happen. This view brought him into conflict with church leaders and he was exiled to the Asian shore of the Bosphorus in 1009. There he built a monastery; and, although he was later reconciled with the patriarch, he declined to return to Constantinople.

Simeon was so popular that he was given the name "New Theologian" to distinguish him from the other two great theologians of the Orthodox Church: John the Evangelist and **Gregory of Nazianzus**. As might be expected, Simeon's writings reflect his personal experience of the Lord: "How shall I describe, Lord, the vision of your face? How shall I speak of your beauty? How can the sound of any word contain you whom the world cannot contain? How can anyone express the abundance of your love for mankind?" Simeon died in 1022.

Thank God for Simeon, who helped people see that they could have a personal relationship with God.

Alphege: Transparent Spirituality

The Danish invasions of England not only made martyrs of kings but also bishops. Such was the case of Alphege. He was born in 954. He entered a monastery at Deerhurst as a young man, and later, because of his immense popularity, became abbot at Bath. He was a friend of **Dunstan**, through whose influence he was named Bishop of Winchester in 984. Because he was such a young man, he was reluctant to accept the post; but eventually was persuaded to do so.

In Winchester, he became concerned about the poor and organized programs to provide them with food and other needs. It was later said that no beggars could be found at any place in his diocese. Alphege's ascetic life left him so thin that worshipers claimed they could see through his hands when he lifted them at Mass. It could be said that the flame of Christ's love shone through him.

In 1006 he succeeded Aelfric as Archbishop of Canterbury. During this time he helped in the conversion of King Olaf of Norway. However, Danish Vikings continued to raid England and, in 1011, sacked Canterbury. In the process, Alphege rushed into the center of the carnage and pleaded that the killings cease. As a result, he was captured and thrown into a dungeon.

The Danes decided to hold Alphege for ransom and did so for seven months. When the demand was first made, Alphege refused, saying that the people were too poor to pay a ransom. The Danes repeated their demand after they had taken Alphege to Greenwich, but once again he refused. The enraged Vikings, in a drunken frenzy, stoned him to death in 1012.

Thank God for Alphege and his example to us of caring for the poor, as well as being a model of courage.

Leo IX: Opponent of Simony

By the Eleventh Century simony had become a serious problem in the Roman Church. This practice (named after Simon the Sorcerer who, in Acts 8, tries to buy the power of the Holy Spirit) involved buying church offices and positions. The situation had become so commonplace that Pope Gregory VI had bought the papacy! When Gregory was confronted with his sin by the young German king Henry III at a synod in 1046, he repented, resigned and fled the country.

In 1049, Bruno became Pope Leo IX. Bruno had been born in Alsace in 1002. He was educated at Toul, made a canon in 1017 and a bishop in 1026. When an assembly at Worms proposed Bruno as pope, he said he would only serve if the clergy and people in Rome canonically elected him. He proceeded there in pilgrim's garb and was elected.

Leo IX had an active ministry. He traveled extensively through Italy, Germany and France denouncing simony and laying the groundwork for reforms in the church that would largely occur under Gregory VII.

In 1053, while leading an armed expedition against the Normans, Leo was defeated and taken captive. Returning to Rome the following year he died.

Thank God for Leo, who helped bring integrity back to a church that had fallen into evil practices.

Perspective: The Church Divides

The cultural and political differences between the Eastern and Western halves of the Catholic Church had grown increasingly more pronounced over the centuries since Theodosius I decreed that Catholic Christianity was the official religion of the Holy Roman Empire in 381.

The Eastern Church had developed out of the Hellenistic tradition, both laity and clergy spoke Greek and were relatively well educated, and church hierarchy was fiercely independent. The Western Church, on the other hand, was steeped in Roman tradition, education was reserved largely for the clergy, and all rites were performed in Latin.

While there was much that separated the two halves of the Church, there was also much in doctrine and practice that united them. They both accepted Jesus Christ as the head of their Church, they both held firm to the Bible, to the seven sacraments, the saints' days, the veneration of Mary and the traditional structure of priests and bishops. But arguments over their differences deeply divided them.

At a particular point of crisis, on July 16, 1054, Cardinal Humbert, representing the pope, strode into the Cathedral of Hagai Sophia in Constantinople and slammed a papal bull down on the high altar excommunicating the Patriarch of the Eastern Church. He then returned to Rome, confident that a victory had been gained for the Holy See. A week later, the Patriarch solemnly condemned the Cardinal.

Some have pointed to this dramatic moment as the beginning of the final separation between the Roman Catholic and the Eastern Orthodox (Greek, Russian and others) Church. However, most scholars agree that the process was gradual, a slow and complicated division with political, liturgical, theological, and cultural components.

Thank God that, despite the failings of church leaders, the Church has survived.

Wulfstan: Minister to the Oppressed

The native English (Anglo-Saxons) were sorely oppressed by their Norman conquerors after 1066. Wulfstan ministered to them in their time of great need. He was born in 1012 near Warwick to devoted Christian parents and educated in monastic schools.

Wulfstan became a monk at Worcester and was schoolmaster and prior of the cathedral monastery there. He was chosen Bishop of Worcester in 1062 (having declined his election to that position some 25 years earlier) and accepted reluctantly. When William the Conqueror became king in 1066, Wulfstan submitted to his authority.

Despite his elevated position, Wulfstan chose to live in virtual poverty. He encouraged lay people to exercise their rights and duties in the governing of the church. He stood up to the Norman king and the Norman archbishop (**Anselm's** predecessor, Lanfranc) on matters of conscience, and did so at personal risk. Wulfstan secured some rights for English serfs from their Norman overlords and for English lay people from their Norman bishops. He was joined by Archbishop (of Canterbury) Lanfranc in ending the sale of Englishmen as slaves to Ireland. However, his relations with his ecclesiastical superiors were always strained, and both Lanfranc and the Archbishop of York unsuccessfully sought his removal.

Wulfstan spent the greater part of his ministry serving the oppressed, preaching the Gospel and taking the sacraments to the poor and needy. He died in 1095.

Thank God for Wulfstan who had a heart for the persecuted and the suffering.

Anselm: Norman Theologian

The time of the Norman Conquest was upon England when a Norman scholar became one of the greatest archbishops of Canterbury. Anselm has been called one of the most important thinkers between **Augustine of Hippo** and **Thomas Aquinas**. At a time when ignorance and sheer power were the order of the day, Anselm spent his life bringing enlightenment and peace.

Anselm was born of a noble family in Burgundy in 1033. He received a classical education and was an especially gifted writer. His writings excel in clarity and in precise terminology. He entered the Benedictine monastery at Bec and, following an impressive career as a teacher, became the abbot.

Through William the Conqueror, Bec received lands in Normandy and England. Anselm was a favorite of William, and three times visited the holdings in England. After establishing the priory at Chester, he was named Archbishop of Canterbury in 1093. However, in the meantime, William's son William II (Rufus the Red) had succeeded to the throne and had depleted Canterbury's lands and funds. With reluctance, but with a passion to reform the English church, Anselm accepted the appointment.

There followed years of tension between church and state. William I had interfered with church matters, but his successors sought to dominate it. Twice Anselm was exiled for refusing to obey the king on religious matters. He held his ground, however, and was seen to be a wise and compassionate leader.

His greatest work of theology was *Why God Became Man* in which he states the doctrine of the atonement in terms that could be understood in the thinking of his day: Sin creates a debt to God that mankind can never pay, but Christ's death was of such value that it satisfied God's offended majesty and earned a reward for all who accept Christ as their Lord and Savior. Anselm died in 1109.

Thank God for Anselm who stood up to kings and cared for his people.

Margaret: Beloved Queen

The Norman invasion of England in 1066 forced the Anglo-Saxon royalty to flee the country. Margaret, who had been born in 1045, was the daughter of English prince Edward. With her mother and sister, Margaret fled Northumberland and sought protection from the Scottish King Malcolm. Margaret soon married Malcolm and became Scotland's most beloved queen.

Following the marriage, there were several invasions of Northumberland by King Malcolm, probably in support of the claims of Margaret's brother Edgar. The union of Malcolm and Margaret undoubtedly improved conditions for the English in the area.

Margaret was a committed Christian, having considered a religious vocation in her youth. She showed great interest in the church and deep compassion for the poor. Her strong and loving presence had significant impact upon the king, the church, her children and the people. Her influence renewed religious life in Scotland. And, under the leadership of her sons, the Scottish court practically became Anglicized.

Margaret was responsible for the founding of monasteries, schools, orphanages and hospitals; and she rebuilt the monastery at Iona. The quality of life improved dramatically in the land even though there continued to be clan warfare and blood feuds. As a result of a Scottish invasion of Northumberland in 1093, Malcolm was killed, as was the couple's eldest son, Edward. The grief-stricken Margaret died four days later.

Thank God for Margaret and the Christian influence she had on Scotland.

Peter Abelard: Contentious Scholar

Abelard is still remembered as a great Christian scholar even though he stirred up a considerable amount of trouble while he lived. Born in 1079 in Brittany, he studied under some of the finest theologians of his day and developed a gift for persuasive speaking and teaching that made him extremely popular. Yet, despite his love of the Lord and his desire to help Christians truly understand the faith, his life was one of constant controversy.

His problems began while he was in school when he decided that he knew more than his teachers. He challenged them on a variety of subjects, and ultimately left to begin his own lectures. Large numbers of enthusiastic students turned out to hear this rebellious and talented young man.

In Paris, at the age of 36, he agreed to tutor the teenage niece of a canon of Notre Dame Cathedral. The pair fell in love and a child resulted. Although they were then secretly married, the uncle became so outraged that he hired a band of thugs to attack Abelard and castrate him. Following this humiliation, Abelard became a monk and his wife a nun.

Abelard was the major theologian of his day. He struggled with the issues that would fuel theological debate for centuries. Primarily, he believed in the power of human reason to achieve true knowledge in the natural and supernatural spheres. Reason, philosophy and logic could walk side by side with faith. His teaching and writing, however, remained on the cutting edge of the theology of his day, and he was constantly in trouble with fellow scholars. Even **Bernard of Clairvaux** accused him of heretical ideas, and he was on his way to seek reconciliation with Bernard when he died in 1142. Abelard's desire to bring faith and reason together in the context of Christian theology set the stage for the work of **Thomas Aquinas** in the following century.

Thank God for Peter Abelard, a sinner whom God used to help Christians think logically about their faith.

Perspective: The Crusades

It was during a period of division and conflict between the Orthodox and Roman Catholic branches of the Church that Christendom faced its greatest challenge. The two branches of the Church would unite, in the beginning, against a common foe: the marching ranks of militant Islam.

Founded by Mohammed in the Seventh Century, by the millennium Islam had spread rapidly to include northern Africa, the Holy Land, Egypt, Arabia, Persia and almost all of the Iberian Peninsula. The Islamic community was the most prosperous of the early Middle Ages and became Christianity's greatest opponent, influencing the political and economic development of both East and West.

Europe viewed the inroads of Islam as another barbarian invasion. Charles Martel, king of the Franks, faced Muslim armies twice, at Poitiers in 732 and at Lyons in 739, winning both battles and turning back the Islamic invasion of Europe. But the Moors were in firm control of Spain and, more important, the Holy Land. With Muslims ruling over Jerusalem, pilgrims were prevented from visiting Christianity's sacred sites.

In 1071, the Seljuk Turks massacred the Byzantine Empire's armies at the Battle of Manzikert, and threatened the capital of Constantinople. The Eastern emperor sent out desperate appeals for help and Pope Urban II preached a stirring sermon at Clermont in 1095 that excited the European nobility to act. The cry of *Deus vult* (God wills it) spread throughout Western Europe. Soon, 100,000 people, including 10,000 knights, were on the move in the First Crusade.

Over all, the Crusades did more harm than good. Knights on the Fourth Crusade sacked Constantinople in 1204, forever deepening the gulf between East and West.

Thank God that the failures of individual Christians will not ultimately thwart the purposes of God.

Bernard of Clairvaux: Influential Leader

During the Middle Ages, the monasteries had kept the flame of learning alive in Europe, but, in the process, the monastic movement had lost much of the simplicity outlined in the Rule of **Benedict**. The monks at Citeaux in Burgundy decided, in 1097, to follow a stricter way of life, doing away with servants and personal possessions, eating frugally and lighting a fire only once a year. This Cistercian Rule attracted few new members, however, until Bernard. He had been born of a noble family in southern France about 1090, and became the most influential Christian of his day.

In 1112 Bernard had such an enthusiasm for monastic life that he had soon talked 30 of his friends and relatives into joining him at Citeaux. In 1115, Stephen Harding, the abbot, sent him with a dozen monks to set up a monastery at Clairvaux in Champagne. Bernard was so strict in his personal disciplines that trying to preserve his own spiritual rule while guiding the formation of others created great difficulty for him. However, ultimately he gained patience and understanding so that it was possible for him to live with others and others with him.

Bernard traveled widely and, through his writing and speaking, became involved in many controversies of the day. He contended against the Albigensian heresy, the Moslem invasion of the Christian East, and the Christian mistreatment of Jews. He became drawn into the international conflicts of his time, including papal elections and the Second Crusade. He so influenced Pope Eugene to authorize the disastrous Crusade that, upon its failure, he remarked, "It is better to blame me than God."

Despite the controversy that surrounded him Bernard was a spiritual giant of his day. He founded more than 60 new monasteries and oversaw some 90 others. He taught total submission to Christ and the mission of the church. His popular treatise *On the Love of God* is still widely read. He attacked indolence and luxury among church leaders, writing, "The church is resplendent in her walls, beggarly in her poor. She clothes her stones in gold, and leaves her sons naked." Worn out by his strenuous asceticism, Bernard died in 1153.

Thank God for Bernard and the Christian leadership he provided in the Dark Ages.

Hildegard of Bingen: German Mystic

Hildegard was born near Spanheim in 1098 and educated at the Benedictine cloister at Disibodenberg. She began to have visions even as a child and became a nun at the age of 18.

When she was 43, Hildegard consulted her confessor who, in turn, consulted the abbot and the archbishop of Mainz concerning her visions. He appointed a monk to aid in preparing a written record of Hildegard's visions. As a result, her principal writing, *Scivias*, was taken down in the years 1141-50.

In approximately 1147 she went with 18 nuns to a new convent near Bingen where she continued to exercise her gift of prophecy and to record her visions. She became abbess of her convent and during her long life (she died in 1179) she corresponded with popes, emperors and lay people. She also wrote two treatises on medicine and science that showed an intellectual understanding of scientific knowledge rare for those times.

One of Hildegard's writings is called *The Love That Gives Love*:

Jesus Christ, the love that gives love,
You are higher than the highest star;
You are deeper than the deepest sea;
You cherish us as your own family;
You embrace us as your own spouse;
You rule over us as your own subjects;
You welcome us as your dearest friend.
Let all the world worship you.

Thank God for Hildegard who thought herself ugly with sin, but reflected the beauty of God's love.

Aelred: The Obedient Life

There come along in the Christian life those who, just by their life of obedience to and love of God, inspire others. Such was Aelred. Born at Hexham in northern England in 1110, Aelred served as steward in the household of the king of Scotland until, at 24, he became a monk.

Aelred chose the austere life of a Cistercian monk at the great monastery of Rievaulx in Yorkshire. There he vigorously pursued hard labor, prayer, meditation and study. He said of his vocation, “This is the yoke which does not crush but liberates the soul; this burden has wings, not weight.”

Aelred’s Christian love and compassion caused him to be revered by his fellow monks. He became abbot of Revesby in Lincolnshire and then of Rievaulx where he was responsible for 300 monks. He was a model of peace and charity. He wrote extensively, including his book *On Spiritual Friendship* that tells of the joy and strength of both human and divine friendships. Aelred died in 1167.

“Just as day declines to evening,” wrote Aelred, “so often after some little pleasure my heart declines into depression. Everything seems dull, every action feels like a burden. If anyone speaks, I scarcely listen. If anyone knocks, I scarcely hear. My heart is hard as flint. Then I go...to meditate, to read the Holy Scriptures, and I write down my deepest thoughts to you [Jesus]. And suddenly your grace, dear Jesus, shatters the darkness with daylight, lifts the burden, and relieves the tension. Soon tears follow sighs, and heavenly joy floods over me with the tears.”

Thank God for Aelred and all those who, down through the centuries, have been models for us of the obedient love of Jesus.

Thomas Becket: Murder in the Cathedral

In Twelfth Century England, the battle between church and state raged. What were the king's prerogatives and what were the church's? It was a controversy that would not be settled easily or quickly, and it made a martyr of Thomas Becket.

Becket was born in 1118. He was from a humble background but received a fine education, though not considered a great scholar. He was ordained a deacon in 1154, but his interests seem to have been toward service of the king. As a result he became Chancellor to King Henry II.

In disputes between state and church, Becket seemed to take his position as Chancellor seriously, and stood on the side of the king. As a result, he and Henry (who was 15 years his junior) became close friends, and Becket lived a privileged and affluent life. It was as a reward for his service as Chancellor that William influenced the election of Becket as Archbishop of Canterbury in 1162. And that was where the trouble began.

Becket had been reluctant to become archbishop, knowing the change in both his lifestyle and his relationship with the king that would result. Once he was wearing the miter as archbishop, Becket was compelled to switch sides in controversies between church and state. He repented himself for his sins, became an ardent student of Scripture, dressed in meager attire and otherwise humbled himself before God. The king felt betrayed; he had counted on Becket's cooperation and now was faced with the opposite. He banished Becket from the country, then let him come back in December of 1170. Immediately the old resentments arose and Henry remarked at court that he wished he were rid of "this turbulent priest." Four of his knights understood this as a message to kill the archbishop, and they murdered him before the high altar of the cathedral on December 29.

Thank God for Thomas Becket who stood up for what he believed in at the loss of security, prestige, and ultimately his life.

Hugh of Lincoln: Ecclesiastical Robin Hood

As the period of conflict of rights and responsibilities between church and state continued, Hugh of Lincoln was modeled after **Thomas Becket**, but, fortunately, did not suffer the same end.

Hugh was born in 1140 into a noble family of Avalon, in Burgundy (France). Following the religious life, he rose to the position of procurator of the Grande Chartreuse monastery. He exhibited both enthusiasm and tact and attracted the attention of King Henry II of England. As a result, Hugh came to Somersetshire to establish the first Carthusian monastery in England.

Hugh's good work led to his being elected, through Henry's influence, Bishop of Lincoln, the largest diocese in England at that time. An avid sportsman, lover of children and animals, Hugh stood up for all worthy causes. He was noted for his kindness to the poor, lepers and Jews. On more than one occasion he alone confronted mobs intent on inflicting harm on Jews.

Hugh also stood up against the King. Referred to as an "ecclesiastical Robin Hood," he supported the peasants in their resistance to the King's stringent forest laws. He refused to allow the powerful and popular King Richard I to finance his crusades from the church treasury. He fearlessly resisted any and all attempts by the monarchy to infringe on the rights of the church. Returning from a visit to his native country he became ill and died in 1200.

Thank God for Hugh who boldly fought for the rights of the underprivileged.

Dominic: Founds Preaching Order

There is a better way to deal with heretics than torturing them. There is Christ's way: teaching them truth. That is what Dominic knew to be right, and he did something about it.

Born Domingo de Guzman in Castile in northern Spain in about 1170, Dominic was an avid student. He especially liked philosophy and theology and gained practical experience as a monk and a spiritual director. In 1203 a Spanish bishop was sent on a royal mission to France and took Dominic with him. It was the turning point in the young man's life.

What Dominic found in France was weak theology, false doctrine and rampant heresy. He felt called to devote his life to combating the situation and organized a team of preachers to go about the countryside converting those who had fallen into error. At some point along the way he came into contact with **Francis of Assisi** whose calling from God had taken a different but equally effective direction.

Dominic learned an important lesson from his initial failures. As long as his preachers went among the people equipped solely with education and authority, they had limited success. It was only when they were personally willing to live under a vow of poverty that their example authenticated their message. Thus, a monastic Order of Preachers known as the Dominicans was formed.

The Dominicans not only had success in their mission in France, but soon spread throughout the European continent and into England. In 1218-19, Dominic made one great tour of 3,380 miles entirely on foot. He died in 1221, leaving behind an order that produced some of the greatest scholars and teachers of the Middle Ages, including **Thomas Aquinas**.

Thank God for Dominic who found the most effective way to combat heresy and, in the process, brought both Christ and sound learning to multitudes during the Middle Ages.

Robert Grossteste: A Prophet Ignored

Ungodly practices within the church would lead to the Reformation. Perhaps that could have been avoided if Grossteste and other prophetic voices had been heard.

Grossteste was born of humble parents in Suffolk, England around 1175. He became one of the greatest statesmen and philosophers of the Middle Ages. He was proficient in law, medicine and the natural sciences when he graduated from Oxford in 1197. He took his divinity degree in 1207 and later became “Master of the Oxford Schools.” In 1229 when the Franciscans established their first school in Oxford, Grossteste was chosen to be the reader in theology. He then became archdeacon of three dioceses; and was chosen Bishop of Lincoln in 1235.

As bishop, Grossteste’s primary concern was for the spiritual and temporal welfare of his people. After visiting the churches in his diocese, he replaced prominent clergy who were not fulfilling their pastoral duties. He strongly opposed the practice of papal appointments of Italian priests as absentee clergy of English churches. He insisted that priests spend their time taking care of their people and leading them in prayer and the study of Scripture.

While visiting Pope Innocent IV in Rome in 1250 he laid before the pope and the cardinals a detailed account of the evils of the church and the corrupting influences of its leadership. It produced no results. Grossteste, in fact, probably would have been censured for his efforts if he had not been so well respected as a statesman and theologian. Grossteste also protested a papal mandate that tithes of the revenue of English clergy be paid to the king for the crusade, and a command that he provide in his own diocese for a papal nephew. In England he remained a hero of the people and spent time pursuing his own inexhaustible search for knowledge that made him one of the most spiritually and mentally well-rounded people of his day. He died in 1253.

Thank God for Robert Grossteste who foresaw the impending troubles of the church and did his best to prevent them.

Francis of Assisi: Marked as Christ's Own

It has been said that probably no one in history has set himself so seriously to imitate the life of Christ and to carry out Christ's work in Christ's own way as did Francis. Born at Assisi (in Italy) in 1181 the son of a cloth merchant, Francis was not a great student. He displayed a general sense of worldliness and was recognized as a leader among the young men of his town. He became a soldier, was a prisoner for almost a year and then became seriously ill.

Following the illness, things began to change in Francis' life. He spent time in solitude and prayer. On one occasion, while he was praying in a ruined chapel he heard the crucifix above the altar tell him to repair the church. He thought this was the Lord telling him to repair that particular chapel (which he later did), but came to see that there was a larger message.

In 1208 while at mass he was struck by the words of Matthew 10 in which Jesus instructed his disciples to go on mission, healing the sick and preaching the kingdom of God, taking nothing with them other than the clothes on their backs. As a result, Francis, later joined by others, began to preach to the townspeople. In 1209, with twelve followers, Francis went to **Innocent III**, the pope, for approval of a simple rule that would lead to the formation of the Franciscans (now the largest religious order in the Roman Catholic Church). The rule was: "To follow the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ and to walk in his footsteps." What **Dominic** was doing during this time by theological persuasion, Francis was doing by example.

Francis continued to live an exemplary life, and his order spread rapidly, within eight years numbering 5,000 men. A strenuous and deprived life began to wear on Francis' health. As recorded by **Bonaventura**, while Francis was praying one morning, a figure came toward him from the heights of heaven leaving him with the wounds of Christ's crucifixion on his own body (an experience called the *Stigmata*). Francis did his best to hide the wounds, but he died in pain and blindness two years later in 1226.

Thank God for Francis who gave us a poignant picture of what literally following Christ can mean.

Clare: Spiritual Sister of Francis

In some ways, the story of Clare is more amazing than **Francis'**. She was born in Assisi of a noble family in 1194. She became so enraptured by Francis' love for the poor and suffering Christ that she turned down suitors for marriage and fled in the night to take vows to be a nun. It was Francis who received those vows in 1212, and the date marks the founding of the Second Order of St. Francis, later to be known as the Poor Clares.

Many joined Clare, including her sister, her widowed mother and another sister. Within a few months, the Poor Clares were housed in the church and convent of St. Damiano, this being the same chapel that Francis had repaired after the vision in which he had been told, "Rebuild my church." Clare remained there as abbess until her death in 1253.

The order is unique in that it forbids the ownership of property even by the community itself, and has a mission to be a spiritually revitalizing force for the church and society at large. The close relationship between Francis and Clare continued, although Francis died 30 years before her. Clare remained confined to a bench for much of her life because of a leg disease, but taught, counseled and prayed while continuing to provide leadership for her growing order.

Two miraculous occurrences highlight Clare's life. In one, as the convent walls were being besieged by Moors, she was taken to the refectory window where she held up the Blessed Sacrament and the marauders immediately fell away. In a miracle during her final illness, she heard and saw the Christmas Mass as it was being celebrated in a church quite some distance away on the far side of Assisi. As a result, in 1956, she was named the patron saint of television!

Thank God for Clare who sacrificed her privileged position to be an example of Christ's love to the underprivileged.

Richard: Unselfish Servant

A man who was shaped for good by his misfortunes rather than being defeated by them was born in about 1197 in Worcestershire, England. Richard came from a prosperous family, but was orphaned at a young age and left penniless by a negligent uncle. When he entered Oxford, he had no money for his gown or wood for his fire.

An excellent student, Richard not only graduated from Oxford but also was able to go on to the University of Paris and Bologna for further study. Afterward he became university chancellor at Oxford. In 1235 he became chancellor of the diocese of Canterbury although his heart seemed to be in pastoral care for his people.

In 1244 Richard was made Bishop of Chichester by the pope, but King Henry III refused him access to his cathedral and to the bishop's palace because the king had favored someone else for the position. Unperturbed, Richard spent the next two years wandering barefoot through his diocese, being a compassionate pastor to his people and relying on their charity for his sustenance.

When the king finally relented and allowed Richard to move into the bishop's palace, he continued to live like a pauper and slept on the floor. He was an effective administrator and a stern disciplinarian when he needed to be. He had a heart for the poor; and, upon his death in 1253, he willed his estate to the poor, to hospitals and to widows and orphans.

Thank God for Richard who knew how to store up for himself treasures in heaven.

Innocent III: What's in a Name?

Whatever might be said about him, “innocent” doesn’t seem to be the best word to describe him. But that is the one Giovanni Lotario de Conti chose when, at the age of 37, he was elected pope. Innocent was born in 1198 near Rome, the son of a count. Educated in Paris, he exhibited a brilliant mind, social grace, a pleasing personality, and a gift for poetry and music.

Upon his return to Rome, he was made a canon of St. Peter’s and later a sub deacon of the Roman Church. Under Pope Celestine III, he fell into disfavor because of rivalries between his family and the pope’s (Innocent’s uncle had been Pope Clement III). But, when Celestine died in 1198, Innocent was unanimously elected pope even though he had not yet been ordained to the priesthood. He was ordained priest one day and consecrated pope the next!

The sharing of rights and responsibilities between church and state remained a major issue at that time. Innocent acted quickly to solve the problem by claiming that, as pope, he had the right to rule not only the church but the world as well. He relied on Jeremiah 1:10: “I have set thee this day over nations and over kingdoms.” Asserting his authority over the whole church, he wrote the patriarch of Constantinople, “The Lord left to Peter the governance not of the church only but the whole world.”

Innocent met strong resistance as he sought to enforce his authority. He was not always successful, but, when he died an exhausted man of 56 in 1216, one historian said of him, “No other mortal has before or since wielded such power.” Innocent influenced secular and ecclesiastical matters throughout Europe, involved himself in the selection of emperors and kings, forced King Philip II to return to his wife, and caused King John of England to yield to him in the appointment of the Archbishop of Canterbury. Other popes before Innocent (notably Gregory VII) had maintained that the “Vicar of Christ” had domain over the secular realm, but Innocent made the claim real.

Thank God for Innocent who was the right person at the right time to assert the importance of the church in the events of the world.

Elizabeth of Hungary: Pauper Princess

Being of royalty was not always a guarantee of security in the Middle Ages. Elizabeth is a classic example. She was born in about 1207, the daughter of the king of Hungary. She was betrothed to a German count and lived happily with him in Thuringia where she was an exemplary wife and mother.

However, in 1227 Elizabeth's husband died on the way to the Sixth Crusade, and she was left with small children. Her husband's brother succeeded to his title and expelled Elizabeth and her children from the family home, Wartburg Castle, in mid-winter.

No longer with position or wealth, Elizabeth sought help from the church at Marburg in central Germany. Konrad, "the Master of Marburg" was the priest there and he had no sympathy for Elizabeth's situation. Her children were taken from her and she was placed in a convent of Franciscan women, the Poor Clares.

Instead of feeling self-pity, Elizabeth became a model of righteousness and Christian charity. She was said to have sewed garments for poor children until her fingers bled and to have gone days without sleep caring for the sick. She was only 24 when she died in 1231, leaving a legacy of selfless love.

Thank God for Elizabeth whose love of Christ overcame life's harshest treatment.

King Louis IX: Warrior King

“Every inch a king and every inch a saint,” is what could be said of Louis IX of France. He was born in 1214, the son of Louis VIII and Blanche of Castile. When his father died in 1226, his mother secured his coronation as king despite the rebellious plans of others. He married Margaret, the daughter of the Count of Provence, in 1234.

A devout Christian, Louis was also a gallant warrior. He led the French army in the Crusades. Despite his ascetic life, he was fearless in battle, courageous when faced with adversity, forceful of temperament, fair in his judgments, energetic and firm. At the same time, he was devout without being intolerant of others and submissive to the church while still keenly interested in doctrinal controversies.

Louis is remembered as a lawgiver and peacemaker. He worked out a number of compromises with the English concerning land claims on the continent. He curbed private feudal warfare that had ravaged France for years, and significantly reformed the legal and taxation systems of the kingdom. He fought the Albigensian heresy in France. He was so respected at home and abroad that the English asked him to arbitrate disputes among themselves.

Furthermore, Louis was a patron of learning and the arts. He helped found the University of Paris (the Sorbonne), and cathedrals at Amiens, Bourges and Chartres were built during his reign and with his patronage. In March of 1268, Louis announced his plans to participate in the Eighth Crusade and began preparation. In July of 1270, he sailed for Tunis. The plague, however, decimated the army and claimed the life of Louis on August 25. He was canonized a saint in 1297.

Thank God for Louis and the example he gave us of how to be a Christian monarch.

Bonaventura: Franciscan Reconciler

The dynamic ministry begun by **Francis of Assisi** would inevitably run into internal difficulties. Many movements began by inspired leaders need others to keep them in good order. Bonaventura was a key person in fulfilling that role to the Franciscans.

He was born in 1221 near Viterbo, Italy. He became a Franciscan around 1243 and studied in Paris under some of the noted scholars of his day. He taught in Paris starting in 1248 and succeeded to the teaching chair reserved for the Franciscans in 1253. In 1258 he became a doctor of theology.

Bonaventura worked diligently to reconcile the two extreme groups within the Franciscan order. He revised and promulgated the Franciscan constitution. He declined the opportunity to be Archbishop of York in 1265 but became a cardinal and Bishop of Albano (from 1273). He died while attending the great Council of Lyons in 1274.

Bonaventura is remembered as leader of the Franciscans after the death of their founder and the one who settled many internal disputes and gave theological order to the teachings of Francis. But he was also a warm and loving follower of Jesus in the model of Francis. This is from his *Gethsemane* prayer: “Lord Jesus, you have given us hope, because you endured all the spiritual and physical handicaps which mortal nature can suffer. In Gethsemane your soul was in torment, and your heart shook at the prospect of the physical pain to come. You showed all the natural weaknesses of the flesh, that we might know that you have truly borne our sorrows.”

Thank God for Bonaventura who helped bring order to the Franciscans and thereby aided that ministry in moving forward in the service of Christ.

Perspective: The Master Theologians

Claude B. Moss' book *The Christian Faith* begins by saying that "theology is the science of God and the things of God, just as ornithology is the science of birds. Every science has something already given on which it works. Ornithology assumes that birds exist.... Theology assumes that there is a God, and that it is possible to know Him." Theologians, then, are those who devote their lives to the study of theology. In the **Perspective: Fathers of the Church**, we considered the importance of the theological writings of the early Church leaders. Down through the ages there have been many important theologians who have shaped the beliefs of the Church. Three of them are perhaps regarded as Master Theologians of the Christian Church.

Augustine of Hippo (354-430) is considered to be the person (next to Paul, who supplied the foundational theology) who did more to shape Christianity than any other human being. He was the greatest thinker of Christian antiquity. Augustine combined the logic of Plato with the religion of the New Testament and the product of this fusion shaped both medieval Roman Catholicism and Renaissance Protestantism.

Thomas Aquinas (1225-74) was the greatest organizer of Roman Catholic thought. He took the theology of Augustine and carried it a step further. Living in an age influenced by Aristotelian philosophy, Aquinas believed that the rational and the scientific could be harmonized with Christian truth. Because God created the universe, there was no basis for thinking that science or reason should be in conflict with Scripture. He expounded the kinship between all parts of reality.

John Calvin (1509-64) was the theologian of the Reformation. Having rejected Catholicism, Calvin drew upon the work of Martin Bucer and **Martin Luther** to construct not only a new, comprehensive theological doctrine but also an entire system of state and ecclesiastical government. His *Institutes*, continually revised during his lifetime, represent the clearest statement of Reformed Theology.

Thank God for those who have devoted their lives to the study of God and have provided us with the theological bases for our faith.

Thomas Aquinas: Master Theologian

The old expression that looks can be deceiving was certainly true in the case of Thomas Aquinas. As a boy he was fat, slow and pious, earning the nickname “Dumb Ox.” Nothing could have been further from the truth for this son of a noble family born in 1225 in Aquino, Italy. He was to become the greatest scholastic theologian of the Middle Ages.

Thomas’ parents envisioned a prominent ecclesiastical career for their son, but he wanted to be a Dominican monk. Following his education at the University of Naples (which he had entered at 14 years of age), he was kidnapped by his family and held prisoner for 15 months while they tried to dissuade him from the religious life. They tempted him with money and sex, even bringing in a prostitute to seduce him. He escaped to Cologne where he studied under Albertus Magnus, one of the great teachers of the day, and in 1252 became a teacher in Paris.

Almost the entirety of Thomas’ life was spent in teaching and writing. He tackled head-on the problem of reason versus faith. The teaching of philosophy placed total emphasis on reason, and theology seemed too focused on faith. Aquinas sought to reconcile the philosophy of Aristotle with Christian doctrine. He believed that all truth is coherent because the Creator of the mind is also the Author of Scripture. Fact and faith should never be in conflict although faith can lead us to understand God more intimately.

Aquinas’ great works were the *Summa Theologiae* (1266-73) and the *Summa Contra Gentiles* (1259-64). They combine to provide an encyclopedic summary of Christian thought, the first founded on revelation and the second designed to support Christian belief with human reason. These monumental works have led to the acceptance of Aquinas as the major theologian of the Middle Ages. Ironically, shortly before his death in 1274 on the way to the Council of Lyon, Thomas had a mystical experience at mass that was of such a profound nature that he said, “Such things have been revealed to me that all I have written seems to me as so much straw.”

Thank God for Thomas Aquinas who resisted the temptations of the world to open for the ages to come a better understanding of the relationship between reason and faith.

Jacopone da Todi: Religious Poet

Sometimes personal tragedy can have a profound effect on the direction of a Christian's life. Such was the case for Jacopone who, upon the death of his wife, experienced sudden conversion and became a wandering troubadour.

Jacopone was born in Todi, Umbria, Italy about 1230, and there he practiced law until he lost his wife in 1268. Then, adopting the style of **Francis of Assisi**, he became a beggar going from place to place singing hymns of his own composition. Ten years later he became a Franciscan monk.

Jacopone believed in following the rule of St. Francis concerning poverty in the utmost strictness. This put him in conflict with Pope Boniface VIII. In 1297 he signed a manifesto calling Boniface's election as pope invalid. Jacopone was an outspoken opponent of papal corruption. The result was that he was excommunicated and imprisoned from 1298 to 1303. He died in Umbria in 1306.

Jacopone wrote some 100 spiritual poems, varying greatly in tone and feeling. Poverty was the basic theme. His words spoke of a passionate devotion to Christ. He believed that the "foolishness" of God's love for people as taught and shown by Jesus reverses all worldly values. The poverty of spirit that grants freedom from materialism was, for Jacopone, the emptying of the human soul that it might be filled with the love of God. He wrote, "You have stripped me of my former self, O Christ, and you have dressed me in your holy self. My soul wears the garment of your eternal glory. My body wears the indelible mark of your blessing."

Thank God for Jacopone who overcame the tragedy of his personal life to share a gift for expressing Jesus' love in words and music.

Raymond Lull: A Man with a Mission

A burning desire to do something important that then fails to catch the imagination of others, or comes along at what appears to be the wrong time, can defeat a person or turn him into an eccentric. Such was the case of Raymond (or Raimon) Lull. He was born in 1235 in Palma, Majorca (Spain), married at an early age and lived a dissipated life. He was apparently guilty of sexual peccadilloes even after he was married and had children.

At the age of 32 he was converted to faith in Jesus Christ. He believed himself led to become a missionary to the heathen, to write an exposure to infidel errors and to promote the teaching of foreign languages in seminaries. At that time, Muslims controlled Majorca, and Lull wanted to reach the Islamic world for Christ. Toward that end he spent nine years learning Arabic.

Lull persuaded the king of Majorca to build a Franciscan monastery at Miramar and there, for ten years, he acted as professor of Arabic and philosophy and composed a number of controversial treatises. As time went by, he repeatedly met with popes and other church leaders trying to convince them to establish similar schools for the training of missionaries. He had little success.

At 55 years of age, he decided to undertake a mission to North Africa on his own. At the moment of his planned departure for Tunis, he lost nerve realizing the likelihood of being martyred. He quickly gathered his courage, however, and left on the next ship. Upon arriving and beginning his missionary efforts, his worst fears were realized; he was in constant danger and eventually imprisoned and expelled. Back in Naples, he again tried to enlist the pope and other Christian leaders in his enterprise, all to no avail. Over the remaining years of his life he continued his campaign against Islam, and, when 80 years of age, went again to North Africa where he was stoned and died in 1315. He was regarded as a fanatic and his writings were theologically controversial, but he had begun the effort toward the conversion of Muslims.

Thank God for Raymond Lull and others who have seemed too zealous in their mission, but have paved the way for others who would carry out Christ's work in succeeding generations.

Sergius: Russian Monk

Sergius has been called the hero of Christian Russia. Many think that title appropriate because of the part he had in armed resistance to the Tartars, but that was only one incident in a long and active life of service to Christ and country.

He was born Varfolomei Kirillovich in about 1315 in the city of Rostov. His was a noble family but became impoverished and moved to a village north of Moscow. It was a depressing time. Tartar oppression and social, economic, and moral decline dominated the day. For a spiritually minded young man like Sergius, the situation was distressing. Thus, after the death of his parents, he withdrew into a wild forest and lived as a hermit in a log cabin.

In 1337, Sergius took monastic vows and became the abbot of a new monastery at Troitse. As he earned fame for his sanctity, he continued to take the lead in sacrificial living and hard work. He refused the metropolitan Alexis' invitation to succeed him. Princes and peasants made pilgrimages to the monastery and it flourished.

In 1380 grand prince Dimitri sought guidance from Sergius. He was facing the crucial battle against the Tartars and wanted Sergius' advice and blessing. Sergius' message inspired the Russian troops to victory. Yet, Sergius was mainly a peacemaker. He was often successful in mediating disputes between political leaders and is credited with averting civil war on four occasions. He was a man of deep faith and strength of character. He was instrumental in keeping the communal spirit alive not only among his monks but among the Christians in Russia. Sergius died in 1392 at 77 years of age.

Thank God for Sergius, a life well spent on behalf of Russian Christians.

John Wycliffe: “Morning Star”

Although **Martin Luther** will forever be regarded as the major figure of the Reformation, many others had spoken out against the sins of the church and had suffered for it before Luther came along. John Wycliffe was a classic example. Wycliffe (or Wyclif) was born in the north of England sometime around 1320. He was educated at Oxford where he became a philosophy professor. He was a prominent English reformer of the late Middle Ages, preceding Luther by 130 years. Wycliffe was called “the Morning Star of the Reformation.”

Wycliffe condemned the arrogance, power and wealth of the Catholic clergy. He rejected the infallibility of the pope. He opposed the selling of indulgences and the doctrine of transubstantiation; he believed the Lord to be spiritually rather than physically present in the Eucharist. **John Foxe** wrote: “What time there seemed to be no spark of pure doctrine remaining, Wycliffe, by God’s providence, sprang up, through whom the Lord would waken the world.”

The result, of course, was continual opposition to Wycliffe by the church. William Courtenay, the Archbishop of Canterbury, challenged him repeatedly, trying to convict him of heresy, but without success. Ultimately, however, Wycliffe was deserted by his friends in high places and was forced from Oxford. The Bishop of London prohibited his preaching, and Wycliffe went to live in Lutterworth in the Midlands. There he prepared the first English translation of the Bible. On the last Sunday in 1384, after celebrating the Lord’s Supper, he was struck with paralysis and died.

Except for a movement known as the Lollards, Wycliffe’s influence waned in England following his death. However, his writings were eagerly sought and widely read in Bohemia, greatly influencing **Jan Hus**.

Thank God for John Wycliffe for laying the groundwork for the Reformation, and for beginning the work on an English Bible.

Dame Julian of Norwich: Christian Visionary

While theological treatises, church histories and encyclopedias were being produced by Christian men, Christian women were experiencing visions and either recording profound devotional works or taking forceful action based on what they believed the Lord was telling them. Julian is an excellent example. She was born in 1342. She claimed to be an unlettered person, but she was well versed in Scripture and could express herself vigorously and effectively in her writings. Although she led a simple and secluded life, many in our day are greatly inspired by her writings.

There is speculation that she became a Benedictine nun; but, in any event, she led a monastic-like life. As a young woman, she prayed for three gifts: to have the mind of Christ's Passion, a bodily illness, and the gift of three wounds: contrition, compassion and a willful longing for God. At the age of 30, this prayer was answered, and she began to have a series of sixteen "showings" or visions that she recorded in her initial version of *Revelations of Divine Love*.

After this experience, she retired, with a personal servant, to a hermit's cell on the grounds of St. Julian's Church, Conisford, Norwich. As she reflected on her visions and began to understand them more fully, she wrote and re-wrote her account of them. Her room was situated so she could witness the celebration of the Eucharist in the church and receive visitors. It is assumed that she died in about 1417 because the last document that mentions her is dated 1416.

Here is what she wrote concerning the meaning of the visions she had received: "From the time when these things were first revealed I had often wanted to know what was our Lord's meaning. It was more than fifteen years after that I was answered in my spirit's understanding. 'You would know our Lord's meaning in this thing? Love was his meaning. Who showed it you? Love. What did he show you? Love. Why did he show it? For love. Hold on to this and you will know and understand love more and more.'"

Thank God for Julian and her piety and writings.

Perspective: The Great Papal Schism

The Council of Constance adjourned on April 22, 1418; and, with the benediction, ended 40 years of administrative confusion, jurisdictional conflict and debilitating spiritual anxiety in the Roman Catholic Church. As Martin V, the newly elected pope, dismissed the council, he became the first pope to be able to command the allegiance of the entire Latin Church since 1378. Constance was the greatest and most memorable general assembly held during medieval times and saved the Church from supreme crisis.

The circumstances leading to the schism began in 1305 with the election to the papacy of Clement V, the archbishop of Bordeaux. He was a friend of the king of France and it was felt he could heal the strained relations between that country and the Holy See. Clement V, a Frenchman, was crowned at Lyons and settled at Avignon in southern France.

Then followed 66 years and six French popes, all of whom remained in Avignon. This period became known as the “Babylonian captivity” of the Church and was deeply resented by the Italians. Finally, Gregory XI was persuaded to return the papacy to Rome in 1377, but he died a year later. His successor, Urban VI, was an abusive, violent and autocratic ruler. The cardinals repudiated his election and chose Clement VII, who ruled from Avignon. There were now two popes and two rival papal governments vying for power.

The schism was a legalistic nightmare that threatened to tear the Church apart. Taxes to the churches were increased, monies gathered for crusades were misappropriated, reforms were ignored, clerical discipline declined, the curia was stacked with friends and relatives of each of the popes, and papal prestige sank so low they could not govern their own bishops and priests. Calls for reform came from **John Wycliffe’s** Lollards and **Jan Hus** in Moravia and Bohemia.

The Council of Constance met for four years. It acted decisively to depose the competing popes—by this time there were three (one each in Avignon, Pisa and Rome)—and to restore the power of the papacy to Rome.

Thank God that, despite corruption in the Church, he will ultimately have his way.

Catherine of Siena: Outspoken Mystic

Just because one has mystical experiences of God does not mean that a quiet, contemplative life will automatically follow. For Catherine, her experiences simply fired her ardor for taking whatever action the Lord was calling her to take.

Catherine was born in Siena, Italy in 1347, the twenty-third child of a dyer of cloth. At the age of seven she had her first vision of Jesus. At 12 she resisted her father's pressure to marry and joined the Sisters of Penitence, a Dominican order for women. She soon gained a reputation for holiness and severe asceticism that spread far and wide.

She became the most outspoken Italian woman of the Middle Ages simply by the force of her personality and her righteous life. She was an advisor to popes, a reconciler of conflicts, a negotiator of peace treaties, and an endless crusader against corruption in the church. She denounced immorality and materialism in the monasteries. She so opposed the death of a young man who had criticized the government that, following his execution, she grabbed his decapitated head and inflamed public protest with it.

Catherine's book the *Dialogue* and other writings (some 400 of her letters exist) reveal exceptional political acuteness as well as deep spirituality. Her actions weren't always of the political kind. She cared for prisoners, and when the Black Death swept Italy, Catherine spent months ministering to the victims. It is not surprising that in 1380, at 32 years of age, her energy spent and her body exhausted, she died with the words, "Dear children, let not my death sadden you; rather rejoice that I am leaving a place of many sufferings to be united with my most sweet and loving Bridegroom." Next to **Francis of Assisi**, Catherine of Siena is Italy's most celebrated saint.

Thank God for Catherine, a woman of many gifts who used them all for the love of Jesus.

Jan Hus: Bohemian Reformer

Dangerous times call for courageous people. Jan Hus (John Huss) was one. He was born in 1369 to a peasant family in Bohemia near the Bavarian border. He was educated at the University of Prague and began to lecture there in 1398. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1401 and spent much of his career teaching at the Charles University in Prague.

During this time he was also preacher at the Bethlehem Chapel close to the university. He was a powerful preacher and a student of the writings of **John Wycliffe**. Wycliffe's philosophical and theological writings influenced him so greatly that he translated them into Czech in 1403.

Hus stressed personal piety and purity of life. He focused on Scripture as authority. He believed that the church could not establish doctrine that was contrary to Scripture, nor should a Christian obey an order that was clearly wrong. He condemned corrupt clergy and the sale of indulgences (a practice that had arisen in the church whereby a dead person's time in purgatory could be reduced as a result of gifts to the church in exchange for prayers for the person's release). He defined the church as the body of Christ with Christ as its only head.

Although some of his contentions may have gone too far and he may not have been correct in all of his views, Hus was speaking a large measure of truth against a corrupt church. His popularity was such that the church decided he had to be silenced. Charges against him were referred to Rome. In 1415 Hus attended the Council of Constance in order to defend his beliefs. Although he had been promised safe conduct, he was tried, sentenced and burned at the stake without having had a fair opportunity to state his positions.

Thank God for Jan Hus who spoke Christian truth and defended Scripture at the cost of his life.

Thomas a Kempis: Devotional Writer

Although the church was in turbulent times leading toward the Reformation, a quiet, gentle man was composing a series of sermons and treatises later gathered together as a devotional book that would become the most famous in Christian history. His name was Thomas Hammerken and he was born of humble parentage in 1379 in Kempen, near Dusseldorf, Germany.

Thomas and his brother John were sent to Holland where Brothers of the Common Life, the order started by Gerhard Groote, educated them. The Brothers emphasized spiritual conversion, personal holiness and meditation on Christ. With this background, Thomas, at 20, went on to the Augustinian convent of Mount St. Agnes near Zwolle, Holland where his brother John had become prior. Thomas professed his vows there in 1407, was ordained to the priesthood in 1413, and remained until his death in 1471 at 92 years of age.

He became known as Thomas a Kempis and was a prolific writer. His most famous work is *The Imitation of Christ*. In it the author states, “Whosoever would fully and feelingly understand the words of Christ, must endeavor to conform his life wholly to the life of Christ.” The manuscript was originally published as a series of four booklets by an anonymous author. Down through the years it has been embraced by Protestants and Catholics alike, and had already reached its 99th printing by the end of the Fifteenth Century. It has been more widely distributed than any book in the history of the church other than the Bible itself.

Thomas was a quiet and retiring person by nature. He spent his entire adult life within the walls of his monastery, teaching novices, copying manuscripts, giving spiritual direction, writing books and preaching. He is an example of how a serene life devoted wholly to God can have a profound effect upon others down through the centuries.

Thank God for Thomas who truly gave us an imitation of Christ.

Joan of Arc: Courageous Maiden

She is one of the heroines of all times and a patron saint of France. She was born in 1412 to a farm family in the village of Domremy in the northeast of France. As a child she worked on the farm, tended the animals and was skilled with the needle and adept at other feminine chores of the time.

Early in her life Joan began to show signs of being especially devout. She often went to church when the other girls were going dancing. She was 13 when, in her father's garden, she first perceived the voice of God speaking to her. She immediately vowed to remain a virgin and lead a holy life.

In the meantime, France and England were in the midst of the Hundred Years' War wherein England sought to conquer France. Joan began to hear more voices, ones she attributed to saints giving her directions from God. She believed she was being commissioned to save France and went to the Dauphin to tell him so. When she secured an audience with him she told him, "The King of Heaven sends words by me that you shall be anointed and crowned in the city of Reims. You are the heir to France, true son of the king."

The Dauphin doubted his own legitimacy because his father was insane and his mother had relations with many men. Thus, he seized upon Joan's message and gave her an army. This may have been a desperate last resort as France was losing the war. Joan led the army to a remarkable victory, liberating the city of Orleans. She then accompanied the Dauphin to Reims where he was crowned King Charles VII. Joan returned to battle but was captured by the English. They not only wanted to kill her but to discredit her as well. She was therefore tried on trumped up charges of heresy, sentenced to death, and burned at the stake in 1431. She was only 19 years old when she died, but her courage inspired the French to recapture Paris and force the English out of France.

Thank God for Joan who was willing to give her life to fulfill the instructions she believed she had received from the Lord.

Perspective: A Bible for Everyone

Today we take our Bibles for granted. Many households have several copies of the Bible. Students of Scripture will have all of the major translations available to them so that comparisons can be made between them. It hasn't always been this way.

Until the Fifteenth Century, the only Bibles were those that had been meticulously hand copied, usually by monks working in a monastery scriptorium. If a church had a copy of the whole Bible, it was a treasured item that might be hundreds of years old. New Testaments and Psalters were more common but still reserved for the clergy, teachers and students. There was really no need for large numbers of Bibles because most people were illiterate.

It was in the 1440s in Strasbourg that Johann Gutenberg began to solve the puzzle of how to mass-produce books. He assembled the requisite parts: a mold in which to accurately cast letters in large quantities; an alloy of tin that was easy to work with and didn't distort as it cooled; an oil-based ink; and, most important of all, a press modified for printing. By the late-1440s, Gutenberg was experiencing severe financial difficulties. He had just begun two projects: a 42 line per page Bible and a Psalter, and he had to borrow heavily to finance them. Five years later, with his books almost finished, his creditor, Johann Fust, foreclosed on Gutenberg's debts, seized all his assets, and completed the projects.

The Gutenberg Bible—specifically, **Jerome's** Latin translation, the Vulgate—was finished by Fust in August of 1456, and is considered one of the most beautiful books ever produced. The printed book sparked an explosion of learning. The Reformers used books to champion their cause. This, in turn, depended on the laity being able to read the Bible in their own language. Literacy spread quickly and, with it, Christian teaching. Books ushered in the Reformation. Faith no longer depended on a priest and didn't stop at the church door.

Thank God for the printing press and access to the Bible for everyone.

Jerome Savonarola: Italian Reformer

The church was in desperate need of reform, and many sacrificed their reputations and their lives before it happened. One such was Jerome (Girolamo) Savonarola. He was born in Ferrara in 1452. At first he seemed destined for the medical profession, but from a young age he came under the influence of the writings of **Thomas Aquinas**, wrote verses and studied music. He was repulsed by political intrigue and was rejected by the young woman he loved. Instead of medicine, he turned to a religious life.

Savonarola entered the monastery of St. Domenico in Bologna in 1474. He spent quiet years in the convent, but poems he wrote at that time display a burning indignation with the corruption of the church. In 1482 he was sent to the convent of St. Mark in Florence. Initially he was not an effective preacher, but his power as an orator began to emerge. By 1490 he had acquired a reputation as a spell binding preacher and crowds flocked to the cathedral hours in advance of worship services just to hear him.

Savonarola became so greatly loved by the people of Florence that he had a major hand in the political activities that led to its becoming a republic. While holding no official post in the commonwealth, he nonetheless served as a sort of benevolent dictator. He initiated tax reforms, helped the poor, and so improved the morals of what had been an easy-going, pleasure-seeking city that it became like a monastery. Savonarola, it seemed, could do no wrong.

However, he next attacked the corruption of Pope Alexander VI and the papal court. That led to his excommunication and threats against his city. The mood of the people changed. Ultimately they turned against him, and he was tried, convicted and executed in 1498. Although he retained a Catholic theology to the end, Savonarola became a hero to the Protestants of the Reformation. He had given them an example to follow.

Thank God for Savonarola who spoke boldly for truth when it was not popular to do so.

Desiderius Erasmus: Intellectual Butterfly

He was called the greatest figure in the northern Renaissance. He was perhaps the most prolific writer of his age, and often found himself in the middle of religious turmoil. There is no doubt that he had a profound influence upon the key figures of his day, and yet—because his positions seemed to change over the years—it is difficult to pin down what he really believed.

Erasmus was born the illegitimate son of a priest around 1466 at Rotterdam. He was orphaned and came under the control of guardians who seem to have had little genuine interest in him. He received an adequate education, and was eventually pressed into an Augustinian monastery. He was ordained priest in 1492. Erasmus apparently resented the turn his early life was taking, really wanting to be able to study in reasonable comfort.

Over the years that followed, Erasmus traveled almost constantly throughout Europe, often serving for brief periods as a tutor to wealthy and influential families. During this time he developed friendships with outstanding scholars such as Sir **Thomas More**. In 1516 he published his most immediately important work, a Greek New Testament that became instrumental in the development of **Martin Luther's** New Testament and **William Tyndale's** English Bible.

Erasmus' lifestyle seemed to be that of an intellectual butterfly, flitting from country to country and from position to position, writing “too much too fast,” letting his imagination get ahead of his facts on occasion, and misplacing dates. Critical of the Catholic Church in his early days (and thereby influencing the Reformation), he later defended the church against attacks from Luther and others. As a result, he had enemies in both camps; yet his contribution to the thinking of his day cannot be minimized.

Thank God for Desiderius Erasmus whose life and writings had a major impact on the theological issues of his day, and especially for his Greek New Testament.

Thomas More: A Man for All Seasons

Because the motion picture about his life won the Academy Award some years ago, many people know something of the life of Thomas More. Amid the political and theological intrigues of the early days of the Reformation, More took the straight and narrow path that ultimately led to his death.

More was born in London in 1478, the son of Sir Thomas More, a distinguished barrister. He studied under some of the finest English scholars of his day, and was an extraordinarily adept student. His father wanted him to study law, but More was very devout and, from 1499 to 1503, followed an ascetic lifestyle, with the physical deprivation of a Carthusian monk. However, although remaining a pious Christian, he came through this period sitting in Parliament (1504) and marrying in 1505. He had acquired a friend in **Desiderius Erasmus** and was an accomplished writer. His celebrated satire on government and society, *Utopia*, was published in Latin in 1516.

More held several public positions over the years, from under-sheriff of London to Speaker of Parliament. His ability soon attracted the attention of King Henry VIII, who eventually made him Lord Chancellor of England and who was, for a period of time, his close confidant and friend. However, when More opposed the king's divorce from Catherine of Aragon and recognition of Henry as supreme head of the English church, his days were numbered.

Convicted on trumped-up charges, More was taken to his execution on July 7, 1535. He asked to be helped up onto the scaffold, pointing out that he could get down himself! He stated that he was the king's good servant, but God's first, and then recited Psalm 51. He embraced his executioner and gave him a piece of gold, cautioning him to be careful of More's short neck. More's head was placed on London Bridge but later rescued by his daughter Meg and buried with her at St. Dunstan's, Canterbury.

Thank God for Thomas More who gave us a classic example of Christian integrity.

Perspective: The Battle over the Bible

We have seen how the invention of the printing press made it possible to put Scripture in the hands of the laity. That made the Bible the key to the Reformation. It was said that the smell of printer's ink was the incense of the Reformation. Yet, translating the Bible into the languages of the day and making it available to the laity became a major battleground in the Church. How could this be?

As we have seen in other Perspective pieces, by the Fifteenth Century, the Roman Catholic Church was in turmoil. It had only recently gone through the period of the **Great Papal Schism** (1378-1418) during which concentration on its internal disputes had wrought havoc with any constructive programs or policies. Despite requiring clergy to remain unmarried, it is estimated that as many as half of the priests had "clergy wives" and illegitimate children, one of them being **Desiderius Erasmus**. Education was still controlled by clergy who could not cope with the growing number of middle class people who needed and expected instruction. Increasingly, lay people were propelled into fields, particularly education, previously dominated by clergy. For Erasmus and others, the Bible was at the center of Christian understanding and therefore an essential part of the education process. Education, and especially knowledge of Scripture, should no longer be the sole domain of the clergy.

In the meantime, the Roman Church was scandalized by indulgences (the buying of remission from sins), special privileges, and the whole matter of gaining salvation by merit artificially acquired, usually by money. These were issues the Reformers saw as contrary to Scripture and part of the reason they believed it essential for the people to know the truth of Scripture. Thus, the Roman Church was at odds with the popularization of Scripture on at least two fronts: (1) the loss of control of the education process; and (2) the exposure of religious practices that were contrary to Scripture.

Thank God for those who gave their lives that the Bible might be available to lay people.

Martin Luther: The Great Reformer

The central figure of the Reformation was undoubtedly Martin Luther. It has been said that more books have been written about him than about any figure in history other than Christ. He was born in Eisleben, Germany in 1483. He was from a peasant family, yet had one of the greatest minds of his day.

Luther studied law at the University of Erfurt and then joined the Augustinian monks there. He was ordained in 1507 and sent to study theology at the University of Wittenberg so he could teach moral theology. In 1512 he became a doctor of theology and professor of biblical studies at Wittenberg. Over the next five years he slowly came to the realization that his salvation was a product of his faith alone, and not dependent on works as taught by the church.

A man of extreme emotions, Luther became incensed by the practice of selling indulgences. In this manner, people could, in effect, purchase salvation for themselves or others (including the dead). Luther nailed 95 Theses to the church door at Wittenberg, protesting this practice and calling for a debate on the subject. He also objected to the rigid clericalism of the time, ignorance of the Bible, the adoration of relics, and the corruption of the papacy. Luther was put on trial at Worms in 1521 and was excommunicated that year. In his bold witness at Worms he said, "Here I stand. I can do no other. God help me!"

Luther accomplished a great deal more than bringing the church's injustices and failings to light. He asserted the main Protestant theological position that people are saved by grace through faith alone and not by anything of their own merit. He taught that Scripture alone is the guide to righteous living, and he translated the New Testament into German so that the Bible might be available for everyone to read. He composed hymns, including *A Mighty Fortress Is Our God*. Luther spent most of his life teaching biblical studies at Wittenberg and died in 1546.

Thank God for Martin Luther whose courage and convictions changed the world.

Perspective: The Reformation

In the early 1500s, **Martin Luther**, an insignificant Augustinian friar and university professor in Germany, was troubled about his own salvation. This was during a time of continuing corruption within the Roman Catholic Church. He turned to the Bible for answers. There, in Scripture, he found his salvation. He discovered that it was not to be had through the agency of the church or by his own merit, but rather as a direct result of his faith in Jesus Christ. He later wrote that he had been “reborn.”

Luther’s discovery was soon heralded throughout Europe when he defied church and pope, declaring himself vassal to no man, beholden only to Christ. His defiant stance sparked a revolution based on his belief that salvation is by grace alone. He held the Bible to be the only true arbiter of God’s intent for man. By doing so, he brushed aside papal infallibility and a thousand years of Roman Catholic rule over the souls of men.

The printing press spread the word to every corner of Europe. Reform became the new religion. **Huldreich Zwingli** in Zurich led a crusade against a corrupt Roman Catholic Church and won over the hearts and minds of the Swiss Cantons. **John Calvin**, an educated Frenchman and brilliant writer, brought discipline to Geneva and codified Protestant doctrine in his *Institutes*. **Thomas Cranmer** walked a political tightrope in bringing Reformation to England and paid for his efforts with his life. **John Knox**, an exiled Scot, studied under Calvin before returning to his native land to defy a Catholic queen and plant Presbyterianism.

In 50 short years, from Luther’s *95 Theses* in 1517, to the legalization of Presbyterianism in Scotland in 1567, the Protestant Reformation had become the defining event in the modern history of the Christian faith. Unfortunately, violent opposition from the Roman Church and theological differences within the burgeoning Protestant movement would result in a new series of martyrdoms.

Thank God that we are saved by grace alone and not by any supposed merit of our own.

Huldreich Zwingli: Life-giving Scripture

Just as the early church had difficulty in shaping its theology (with the result that many were guilty of heresy), so the Reformers ran into the same problem. At the center of several of these issues was Huldreich (Ulrich) Zwingli.

Zwingli was born in 1484 in Switzerland. He was educated in Basel, Berne and Vienna, and became vicar of Glarus until 1516. At Glarus he learned Greek and possibly Hebrew and studied the church fathers. However, there was not much power in his preaching, and he was transferred to Einsiedeln. In 1515, however, he met **Erasmus** and developed evangelical beliefs as he reflected on the abuses of the church.

Working from a copy he had made of Erasmus' newly published Greek New Testament, his preaching took on new life. As a result, in 1518 he was made the people's priest at the Great Minster in Zurich. There, instead of following the prescribed lectionary (Scriptures to be read at worship services), he broke tradition and began to preach from the New Testament, verse by verse, beginning with Matthew. Zurich responded enthusiastically to this life-giving Scripture and the Swiss Reformation began.

Becoming a central figure in the Reformation had its price. On the one hand, Zwingli came at odds with former colleagues over the nature of baptism (they believing in the believer's baptism and Zwingli called for baptism of babies on the eighth day), and his friends were martyred because of it. On the other hand, Zwingli disputed with **Martin Luther** over the nature of the Lord's Supper (Zwingli seeing it as a memorial service and Luther arguing for the presence of the Lord in the bread and wine). This resulted in the Catholic Cantons of Switzerland sending an army against Zurich in 1531. In the ensuing battle Zwingli was fatally wounded.

Thank God for Huldreich Zwingli who discovered how to preach from Scripture in a life-giving way.

William Tyndale: Bible Translator

William Tyndale is considered the father of the English Bible. He was born near the Welsh border in about 1490. He was educated at Oxford and taught at Cambridge. He had a natural gift for languages, was a scholar and priest. He became tutor to the family of Sir John Walsh and saw, first-hand, the biblical ignorance of the local clergy. He is reported to have said to one of them, “If God spare my life, ere many years pass, I will cause a boy that driveth the plough shall know more of the Scriptures than thou dost.” That task became the consuming fire of his life.

Tyndale at first hoped to have the backing of the Bishop of London in undertaking an English translation of the Bible, but met resistance instead. The bishops had opposed the idea of an English Bible since 1408 because of the **Wycliffe** translation being used by the Lollards. The bishops were more concerned about the spread of Reformation ideas than encouraging the study of Scripture.

Wycliffe’s translation had been prepared from the Latin *Vulgate*, was a literal translation that was hard to read, and contained inaccuracies. Tyndale determined to prepare his translation from the Hebrew and Greek texts. He got funding for the effort from several London merchants, but realized that it would not be safe for him to remain in England while he undertook the work.

Tyndale fled to the Continent where he began his work. He smuggled copies of Matthew and Mark back into England, remained in hiding and avoided capture. He narrowly escaped arrest in Cologne. By 1525 the New Testament had been printed in Worms and was being read in secret in England. In 1535, however, Tyndale was betrayed and seized. The following year he was strangled and burned at the stake in Brussels. His dying prayer that the King of England’s eyes would be opened had already been answered: Henry VIII had approved the new English Bible by **Miles Coverdale**, Tyndale’s friend, whose translation was 70% the work of Tyndale.

Thank God for William Tyndale for his courage in preparing an English Bible.

Hugh Latimer: Eternal Flame

Those who opposed the Reformation did not understand that eternal truth couldn't be extinguished by putting to death those who preached the Gospel. Those who were martyred for their faith did more to lead others to their position than any words they might have written or preached.

Hugh Latimer was born in Thurcaston, Leistershire around 1485, the son of a peasant farmer. He was educated at Clare College, Cambridge, taking holy orders before receiving his master's degree in 1514. Protestant influence in England at that time came mainly from **Wycliffe's** translations of the New Testament. After initially being opposed to Reformation ideas, Latimer eventually came under their influence and the rest of his life he was either in or out of trouble depending on the political and religious mood of the time.

Latimer was licensed to preach throughout England and was an exceptional preacher. He was later consecrated Bishop of Worcester. In the meantime, however, he had been excommunicated and imprisoned before being released by King Henry VIII. When, in 1534, Henry repudiated the authority of the pope, Latimer joined **Thomas Cranmer** in advising the king concerning legislative matters necessitated by the repudiation. Later, he was again tried; but, before sentence could be handed down, the king died and Edward VI, on succeeding, procured his release.

When Mary I ascended to the throne, however, it was just a matter of time for Latimer and his Reformation views. On October 16, 1555, Latimer and Nicholas Ridley (also an Anglican bishop and famous preacher of his day) were tied back-to-back to the stake in Oxford and set aflame. Latimer's dying words were: "Be of good comfort, Mr. Ridley. Play the man! We shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England, as I trust shall never be put out."

Thank God for Hugh Latimer whose life and death greatly influenced the English Reformation.

Miles Coverdale: Stepfather of the English Bible

William Tyndale is considered the “Father of the English Bible,” but it was Miles Coverdale’s version that was first accepted in England. Here is how it came about.

Coverdale was born in about 1488 at York. He was ordained priest in about 1514 at Norwich. He became an Augustinian friar at Cambridge and devoted himself to biblical studies. During this time he met William Tyndale and other followers of **Martin Luther** and fell under the influence of the Reformation.

In 1529 Coverdale went to Hamburg at Tyndale’s invitation and spent eight months helping with the translation of the Pentateuch (first five books of the Old Testament). Remaining on the Continent, principally in Antwerp, he continued to translate the Bible. His Bible, with a dedication to King Henry VIII, was published in 1535. The king allowed its use throughout the country. Coverdale had relied heavily on Tyndale’s work, which is why Tyndale is considered the “Father” of the English Bible, and Coverdale’s role is seen as secondary.

Coverdale continued working on the Bible, returning to England in 1539. It was then that reaction to the Bible began to set in. The tide turned against the Reformation in 1539, and Coverdale and his family fled England in 1540. He spent eight more years on the Continent teaching, preaching, and pastoring. During that time his writings were denounced.

When Henry VIII died, Coverdale returned to England and eventually was consecrated Bishop of Exeter. With Mary I on the throne, however, Coverdale was soon in danger again and would undoubtedly have been executed except for the intervention of the king of Denmark. This resulted in Coverdale’s returning once more to the Continent where he remained until Elizabeth I assumed the throne. Back in England in 1559, Coverdale chose not to resume his position as Bishop of Exeter, and spent his remaining years teaching and preaching. He was 81 when he died in 1569.

Thank God for Miles Coverdale and his work in making the Bible available to all.

Thomas Cranmer: English Reformer

Being loyal to one's faith in dangerous and changing times is never easy. How do we really know how much abuse we could withstand for Christ's sake? The Reformation was such a time, and Thomas Cranmer was right in the middle of it.

Cranmer was born in Nottinghamshire in 1489 and educated at Cambridge University. He was basically a quiet scholar until chosen in 1532 to be King Henry VIII's Archbishop of Canterbury. He remained in that position throughout Henry's turbulent reign and through the reign of King Edward VI. As religious leader of England, he was able to steer the Reformation through the intricate political framework of the nation at that time. But he was able to do much more as well.

Cranmer was a pious man, theologically attuned to **Martin Luther** but because of his position, able to reform the church from within rather than attacking it from the outside as most other Reformers did. Cranmer was an expert liturgist, was well read, and had a magnificent command of the English language. As a result, he was able to craft the *Book of Common Prayer*, the basis of worship among Anglicans throughout the world today. A solid biblical scholar, he was also responsible for the *Great Bible* of 1538.

The problem, of course, was that he was in the wrong place at the wrong time when Mary I, a Roman Catholic, became queen following Edward. Cranmer had opposed her ascension to the throne and he was soon accused of heresy. Initially, after an extended period of torture, he had recanted his beliefs; but, in the end, said he could not sign the lies and was burned at the stake in 1556. As the fire crept up around him, Cranmer thrust his right hand into it saying, "This hand [that had written the recantation] hath offended."

Thank God for Thomas Cranmer who shaped the English Reformation and gave the world the *Book of Common Prayer*.

Guillaume Farel: Flamethrower

There are, in every age, those who rather than carrying the flame of God's love seem to be "flamethrowers." Like the Old Testament prophets, they expose, accuse and cause dissension and reaction. They force us to look at ourselves, our traditions, our lifestyle. Usually, we don't like them; we want them to quit meddling with us and go somewhere else to harass others. Guillaume Farel was probably such a man.

Farel was born of a noble family in France in 1489. He studied in Paris and received appointment as a college professor. In 1521 he began efforts to reform the Roman Catholic Church. He became a fiery preacher and debater, antagonizing his friends as well as his enemies. His oratory was so inflammatory that one friend reportedly told him, "Your mission is to evangelize, not to curse."

In 1523, Farel was forbidden to preach in France. He went to Switzerland where he held appointments that were often short-lived. He sometimes was attacked physically as well as verbally.

The great redeeming work of his life was his relationship with **John Calvin**. Calvin frequently and confidentially consulted the irascible Farel. The two worked together in Geneva and were both banished from the city in 1538, but were allowed to return in 1541. What Christianity owes to Calvin can at least partially have been due to the influence of his older mentor, Guillaume Farel. Farel actually outlived Calvin by one year, dying in 1565.

Thank God for Guillaume Farel and those like him who awaken us by shock, but who nonetheless are seeking to serve Christ and to bring his message to a needful world.

Ignatius Loyola: Jesuit Founder

A close encounter with death can be a life-changing experience. Such was the case with the man who was the primary founder of the Society of Jesus, the Jesuits.

His name was Ignatius of Loyola, born in the Spanish Basque country around 1491, the youngest of a noble family of 12 children. He was apparently a rebellious youth, and received a military education. While defending Pampeluna against the French in 1521, he was severely wounded in the leg (which left him with a permanent limp) and almost died. During his convalescence he asked for novels to read but only Christian books were available.

Reading about the life of Christ, Loyola determined to give his life to the Lord. He vowed chastity, hung his sword before the altar of the Virgin Mary at Montserrat, and began his changed life. He spent 1522 in prayer and meditation. Out of this period came his greatest work, the *Spiritual Exercises*. After a pilgrimage to holy places in 1523, he studied in Spain and Paris until 1534. At the age of 38, still of delicate health, he formed the Society of Jesus with **Francis Xavier** and four others.

Loyola's goal was to reform the Catholic Church from within. With its focus on education, the Jesuits became the primary force for Catholic Reformation. Loyola was an able administrator, and remained the leader of the Jesuits until his death in 1556. He lived to see 1,000 men in his order and some 100 colleges and seminaries begun. His *Spiritual Exercises* are still widely read. Roman Catholic ordinands are required to work through them at least once.

Thank God for Ignatius Loyola who founded an order that has provided education and enlightenment for a vast number of people over the last several hundred years.

Philipp Melancthon: Luther's Balance

Some of those who have influenced the world for good down through the centuries had glaring faults that made them the subject of ridicule by those who opposed them. Such was certainly the case with **Martin Luther**. Despite all the good he accomplished, he was also often depressed, volatile of temperament, and inflexible in the positions he took. By the providence of God, however, Philipp Melancthon became his close associate and provided balance to Luther's temperament as well as his theology.

Melancthon was born at Bretten, Baden, Germany in 1497. He received the best of a humanist education. A brilliant scholar, he earned degrees from Heidelberg, Tübingen and Wittenberg. At Wittenberg he came under the influence of Luther and there was mutual respect from the first. Melancthon helped with Luther's translation of the Bible into German and broke with his humanist background.

Melancthon openly supported Luther at the Leipzig Disputation in 1519; and, when Luther was away from Wittenberg, represented and defended him.

In 1521 he wrote the first book clearly describing the teachings of the Reformation. In 1529, Emperor Charles V called a council at Augsburg to make a final effort to bring unity to the church. Instead of inviting the volatile Luther, Melancthon was the designated speaker for the reform views, in hopes that his more gentle spirit would lessen the heat of the debate. On the night of June 23, 1530, Melancthon worked into the early hours preparing a document that would summarize Protestant doctrines. When read on June 25 it was rejected by the largely Catholic assembly, causing a final break between Catholics and Protestants. Known as the Augsburg Confession, Melancthon's document became the basis of Lutheran theology.

Thank God for Philipp Melancthon who provided a helpful balance to Luther and who gave Christendom the Augsburg Confession.

Katie Luther: The Right Match

It is perhaps a miracle that anyone could have been successfully married to **Martin Luther**. He had spent the first 42 years of his life unmarried, most of the time as a monk. He accomplished more in his life than seems possible for one person. And, to top that, he was one who fought depression and had other personality quirks that one would find very difficult to live with.

Katherine von Bora was apparently the perfect match for Luther. Born in 1499 in Saxony of a devout and noble German family, she entered the Cistercian Cloister in Nimbschen where her aunt was the abbess. She became a nun in 1515; but, despite her cloistered position, began to hear about the Augustinian monk who had challenged the authorities of the church. Soon after Luther had posted his 95 Theses, many monks and nuns began to seek freedom. Apparently with the help of Luther, Katie and some other nuns escaped in a wagon that had brought goods into the convent.

The nuns were taken to Wittenberg where Luther sought to find places (and husbands) for them. All found husbands but the forceful redheaded Katie. Luther had tried to get her to marry a Dr. Glatz, but she was not interested. Reluctantly, Luther married her himself though she was sixteen years his junior.

All biographers agree that the marriage was a successful one. Katie was an industrious homemaker, wife and mother. She raised six children of their own and cared for several of her husband's nieces and nephews. Katie managed to keep the household going despite the fact that her husband was writing treatises, translating Scripture and composing hymns under the same roof. She survived her husband only by six years, dying in an accident in 1552 while fleeing the bubonic plague.

Thank God for Katie Luther who modeled for us how to be a faithful wife and mother in the midst of chaos.

Patrick Hamilton: Courage under Fire

Perhaps we all would like to think that we could withstand whatever tests might be made of our faith in Christ. Patrick Hamilton was one who had to prove it.

Hamilton was born near Glasgow, Scotland in 1504. He was the son of Sir Patrick Hamilton and Catherine Stewart, a relative of James II of Scotland. He graduated in 1520 in Paris where he came under the influence of the Protestant Reformation. He was perhaps attracted by the fame of **Erasmus** and the intense interest in the protest against the Roman Catholic Church made by **Martin Luther** in 1517.

Upon his return to Scotland, he became a member of the University of St. Andrews where he distinguished himself in musical composition. Early in 1527 he came under the scrutiny of James Beaton, Archbishop of St. Andrews. Beaton believed the young priest to be guilty of preaching heresy. Hamilton fled to Germany where he visited Luther and became a student at the University of Marburg.

In 1528 Hamilton returned to Scotland, now firm in his Protestant convictions. Heedless of danger, he preached salvation by grace through faith alone and drew large and enthusiastic crowds. Beaton promptly had him arrested and tried for heresy. He was found guilty and sent to the stake on the same day (February 29, 1528) in order to prevent his being rescued by his friends. The flame did not burn properly, and his death was apparently painfully prolonged for six hours. His courtly bearing in the midst of suffering greatly influenced the spread the Reformation in Scotland. It was said, "the reek of Patrick Hamilton infected all it blew on."

Thank God for Patrick Hamilton who walked directly into danger because of his conviction that everyone needs to know about the saving power of Christ.

Heinrich Bullinger: Keeping the Lines Open

People with a deep faith in Christ can nonetheless have differing views on theological issues. The important thing is for Christians of good will to keep the lines of communication open to better understand one another and the basis of our differing opinions. Heinrich Bullinger is one who seemed to understand this principle and put it into practice.

Bullinger was born in 1504 at Bremgarten, Aargau (northern Switzerland). He was educated at Emmerich and Cologne. He studied the Bible under the influence of the writings of **Martin Luther** and **Philipp Melancthon**. On graduation he taught and pastored at Kappel.

Further study in Zurich brought Bullinger into contact with **Zwingli**, with whom he worked in 1528. He married a former nun and moved to Bremgarten as a Reformed pastor. When Zwingli was killed in the battle of Kappel, Bullinger succeeded him in Zurich.

From his position in Zurich, Bullinger, in addition to his pastoral ministry, had far-ranging influence on the church of his day. Through writings and correspondence, he kept the lines of communication open for theological discussion, and the doors of hospitality open to religious refugees. He also maintained ecumenical connections. Although unable to reach agreement with Luther concerning the Lord's Supper, he added substance to the Zwingli position and displayed a temperate attitude in dealing with disputes. Close relationships with English exiles during the reign of Mary I provided communication once **Elizabeth I** became Queen of England. Bullinger died in Zurich in 1575.

Thank God for Heinrich Bullinger and those who seek to bring understanding to controversial issues of faith.

Francis Xavier: Catholic Missionary

While the Protestant Reformation was growing, and meeting with serious opposition, there were those who sought to reform the Roman Catholic Church from within. One of these was Francis Xavier who had the heart of an evangelist.

Born in 1506, Xavier, at 16 years of age, left northern Spain and traveled to Paris where he ultimately became a professor of philosophy at the University of Paris. There he met **Ignatius Loyola** and, in 1534, they formed the Society of Jesus, the Jesuits. Loyola, Xavier and their companions vowed to undertake a mission to the Holy Land, but war prevented this.

Under orders of the pope, Xavier exercised his ministry in various parts of Italy until, in 1542, he and two colleagues set out for India. His missionary activities lasted for ten years. In India, Xavier walked about the countryside, wearing humble attire, and speaking to anyone who would listen. He concentrated particularly on the young, who had less pre-conceived religious convictions than their elders.

Xavier then went to Japan in 1549 where he debated Buddhist monks. Everywhere he went, Xavier gained converts to Christianity. But, never satisfied that he was succeeding as fully as he should, he set out for China in 1552. His dream of evangelizing that vast country failed, however, as Xavier became ill and died soon after his arrival. Nonetheless, Xavier's missionary efforts had been extraordinary. He is regarded as the father of modern Catholic missions. In his ten years in the Orient, he covered immense distances and is said by some to have converted a million souls.

Thank God for Francis Xavier who brought Christ's message to India and Japan.

John Calvin: Theologian of the Reformation

It was John Calvin who created and systematized the Reformed theology of Protestantism. He was born in Picardy, in France, in 1509. A conscientious student, Calvin studied at Orleans, Bourges and at the University of Paris. Initially a convinced humanist, in his later life he found himself combating humanism.

In Paris, Calvin came under the influence of the teachings of **Martin Luther**. In about 1533 he experienced a sudden conversion to Christianity. He broke with Roman Catholicism, but found France firmly opposed to the Reformation, so he fled to Basel, Switzerland. He began to formulate his theology and published the first edition of *The Institution of the Christian Religion* (which became known as the *Institutes*) in 1536. It was a clear statement of Reformation theology.

In the meantime, **Guillaume Farel** had become the leading Reformation figure in Geneva and sought Calvin's help in consolidating the movement there. When they attempted to force the townspeople to swear loyalty to a Protestant statement of belief in 1537, the opposition expelled both Calvin and Farel. Calvin went to Strasbourg where he was in contact with, and encouraged by, Martin Bucer. He published his commentary on Romans and began projects. His experience leading a congregation of French refugees in Strasbourg prepared him for his return to Geneva in 1541.

When Calvin was invited back to Geneva, the city council seemed ready to accept the idea of citizens being under the moral authority of the church. However, many disputes followed, so Calvin concentrated on attaining his ideal of a mature church by preaching daily. Calvin's influence, even in his day, ranged far and wide. He revised his *Institutes*, which became the classic statement of Reformation theology for centuries. He was a faithful interpreter of Scripture and spent much time settling disputes within Protestantism. Calvin died quietly in his beloved Geneva in 1564.

Thank God for John Calvin who systematized Protestant theology for the generations to come.

George Wishart: Footsteps

We have all known Christians who lived exemplary lives, and would like to be able to walk in their footsteps. In the days of the Protestant Reformation, however, walking in the footsteps of another was a dangerous practice. So it was with George Wishart.

Wishart was born in Scotland in about 1513 and came under the influence of the Reformation. When **Patrick Hamilton** was burned at the stake in 1528, young Wishart was there to hear Hamilton's words, "How long, O God, shall darkness cover this kingdom?" Wishart would follow in Hamilton's footsteps.

By 1538 he was accused of preaching heresy, and fled to England where similar charges were brought against him at Bristol in the following year. In 1539 or 1540 he went to Germany and Switzerland, returning to England as a member of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. He returned to Scotland in 1543 and began to preach in 1544 at several locations. One of his followers was **John Knox**, who volunteered to be his bodyguard.

When Wishart was arrested in 1545, Knox supposedly wanted to remain at his side. However, Wishart said, "One is sufficient for sacrifice at this time." Wishart was handed over to Archbishop Beaton, who had executed Hamilton, and was burned at St. Andrews in 1546.

Scotland was enraged at the senseless killing. Within two months Beaton was assassinated. John Knox, on the other hand, was the next to choose to walk in the footsteps of the Scottish Reformers; and, although he suffered greatly as a result, the Reformation took Scotland.

Thank God for George Wishart whose courage and sacrifice fanned the flames of Reformation in Scotland.

John Knox: Leader of the Scottish Reformation

One of the leading figures of the Protestant Reformation, John Knox is a person about whom it is possible to know so much and yet so little. Even the date of his birth is questioned as being anywhere from 1505 to 1515!

Knox was the son of a prosperous peasant, and was born near Haddington in Scotland. He attended school at Haddington and then went on to college, apparently at St. Andrews University. There is little information about him over the next 20 years, but he then appears in his native area as a priest without a university degree and as a notary of the Diocese of St. Andrews. Although identifying himself as “a minister of the sacred altar” under the Archbishop of St. Andrews in 1543, he was carrying a two-handed sword in defense of **George Wishart** in 1546.

His Reformation ideas kept him in constant trouble. Following the martyrdom of Wishart and the subsequent assassination of Archbishop Beaton, Knox was able for a time to boldly preach his Protestant viewpoints. However, it was soon necessary to move to England where he seems to have found favor with King Edward VI. In the meantime, he had been captured by the French and made to serve as a galley slave for over a year!

Back in Scotland in 1559, Knox clearly became the leader of the Scottish Reformation. Political and religious infighting continued for years, and Knox was right in the middle of it. He crafted a Presbyterian Church structure that, though too idealistic in some of its original goals, eventually took hold in Scotland. Knox was described as a relatively small man with a “well-knit” body, a powerful face, dark blue eyes under overhanging eyebrows and a long beard that eventually turned gray. Strong-willed and forceful in thought and debate, he also had a good sense of humor and tenderness in his personal associations.

Thank God for John Knox who provided strong Protestant leadership and the structural framework for the Presbyterian Church at a critical time in Scotland’s history.

John Craig: The Providence of God

We have all had incidents occur in which, by the grace of God, we were saved from an embarrassing situation or something even more disastrous. If we live with a “providential disposition” (being able to see God’s answers to our prayers even before we ask them), there are perhaps many times in life when we can perceive God coming to our rescue. According to Robert J. Morgan in his book *On This Day*, John Craig’s life was saved by three successive providential happenings!

Craig was born in 1512 in Scotland and became a Dominican. He came under suspicion of heresy, however, and fled to Italy in 1536. While there he read **John Calvin’s** *Institutes* and became a convinced Reformer. This, in turn, led to his arrest in Rome and condemnation to die at the stake.

His escape and return to Scotland happened in this manner. First, he was released from prison when, in 1559, it was learned that the Pope had died. According to custom, the prison doors were opened and the convicts allowed temporary freedom. Second, when tracked down on the outskirts of the city, the officer who apprehended him had been helped by Craig years before when he was a wounded soldier in Bologna. To return the favor, he gave Craig some money and proposed an escape route for him. At length, however, the money was exhausted and so was Craig. Then came the third miracle. A dog came up to Craig with a purse in his mouth, which he insisted on dropping in Craig’s lap. It contained the money he needed to complete his escape!

On his return to Scotland he was, in 1561, made minister of Holyrood and in 1562 became a colleague of **John Knox**. He became a leading Scottish Reformer until his death, at 88, in 1600.

Thank God for John Craig who gives us a classic example of how God can work through people and circumstances to accomplish his will.

Perspective: Christian Mysticism

Some Christians might be apprehensive about those appearing in this book referred to as Christian mystics. Knowing that people involved in eastern religions and new age movements are known as “mystics” can be confusing. In fact, there are three principal elements in religion: the institutional (church organization with its rites and disciplines), the intellectual (theology) and the mystical (prayer and the personal spiritual life of the people). Christian mystics are simply those whose focus is upon prayer and having a personal relationship with Christ.

Several of the monks and nuns we met early in this book would certainly fall into the category of Christian mystics: **Simeon Stylites, Bernard of Clairvaux, Hildegard of Bingen, Catherine of Siena** and **Aelred** would be examples. The Celtic Christians (**Patrick, Brigit** and **Brendan**, for instance) would clearly fall into this category. **Alphege** was most certainly a Christian mystic and **Dame Julian of Norwich** would also qualify.

In the sixteenth century, another set of Christian mystics appears on the scene. Primary among them would be **Teresa of Avila, John of the Cross, Lancelot Andrewes, Francis de Sales** and **John Donne**. **Brother Lawrence** then appears at the start of the seventeenth century and **Teresa of Lisieux** in the early nineteenth century. In more recent times we have **Evelyn Underhill**.

In our day, most of the devotional and spiritual writers are less “mystical” and more practical in their teachings on prayer and personal experiences of God. Nonetheless, there has been preserved for us, in the life of the Christian Church, a wealth of spiritual insights from people we would call Christian mystics.

Thank God for those who, in ages past, have had special spiritual experiences of Christ and have paved the way for us to have such experiences in our own lives.

Teresa of Avila: Spanish Mystic

It is one of those odd things that makes the history of Christianity so fascinating. When a person thinks of Teresa of Avila there usually comes to mind the story that reflects a gutsy honesty between herself and God. According to the story that has passed down through the centuries, Teresa, on one of her many travels, fell off the back of a wagon into the mud. Her response was, "Seeing how you treat your friends, Lord, there is little wonder you have so few of them!" The real Teresa, on the other hand, had such unusual mystical experiences that those closest to her thought she might be possessed by a devil.

She was born in Avila, Spain, in 1515, and at 18 years of age, left home one morning and applied for admission at the Carmelite Convent of the Incarnation. She soon came to be disappointed with the laxity of convent life, and this eventually led to a desire to seek reform of the church from within.

It was in 1545 when she was 40 years of age that she had her real conversion experience and her life took on a new quality and direction. Supported by wealthy friends and relatives, she founded a reformed Carmelite convent in Avila. In the following years, she started 16 more religious houses. She traveled the width and breadth of Spain encouraging and preaching reform. She befriended **John of the Cross** who aided her in reforming the Carmelites.

Teresa wrote several books on the mystical life including *The Interior Castle*, which remains popular in our day. In one of her books she describes a spiritual experience in which a seraphim carrying a spear tipped with fire plunged it through her heart to the innermost part of her being. She was left aflame with the love of God. At a time when the emphasis on reason was failing to bring Catholics to faith, Teresa perceived a hunger on the part of people for a personal experience of God.

Thank God for Teresa of Avila whose love for God was so mystical but whose means of following him were so practical that she brought reform within the Catholic Church.

John Foxe: Book of Martyrs

Few books have a profound effect upon the people who live during the time they are written. *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, picturing the evils of slavery in American, was one exception. John Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* was another.

Foxe was born in 1517 at Boston, Lincolnshire, England. For seven years he held a fellowship at Magdalen College, Oxford. By 1545 he was already being suspected of a Protestant persuasion, necessitating his resigning his fellowship. He served as a family tutor until being ordained a deacon in 1550. He began working for the Reformation, writing tracts, and began compiling a history of the persecutions and martyrdoms that had occurred in England from **John Wycliffe** onward. When Queen Mary I assumed the throne in 1553, however, he was forced to flee England.

Living in Strasburg, Frankfurt, and Basel, Foxe printed his unfinished martyrology in Latin while earning a meager living from proofreading. However, in every spare hour, he continued to update his book of martyrs up to and including **Thomas Cranmer's** death in 1556. He then returned to England and devoted his time to completing his great work. When it was printed in England in 1563 it was under the title *Acts and Monuments of these latter and perilous Days*. Expanded editions were printed in 1570, 1576 and 1583.

Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* (as it was popularly called) became a sensational best seller and fanned anti-Catholic sentiments in England for generations. Foxe was ordained to the priesthood in 1560. He often preached, and vehemently protested the execution of Anabaptists and Jesuits, but the great work of his life was his *Book of Martyrs*. Ultimately, the time and attention devoted to it and its revisions claimed his health, and he died in 1587.

Thank God for John Foxe who, by his graphic descriptions of the martyrdom of Reformers, tried to put an end to religious persecution in his time.

Lady Jane Grey: Caught in a Whirlwind

Following the death of King Henry VIII of England, religious and political turmoil reigned, and Lady Jane Grey was a victim of the whirlwind. Born in 1537, she was the oldest daughter of Henry Grey, third Marquis of Dorset, by his second wife, Frances Brandon. Her mother was the daughter of Charles Brandon and Mary, youngest sister of Henry VIII and widow of Louis XII of France. Under the original will of Henry VIII, Jane was fourth in succession to the English throne.

She was an excellent student, proficient in Latin, Greek, French and Italian. She corresponded with **Heinrich Bullinger** about learning Hebrew. She developed Protestant convictions under the tutorship of Alymer. At the age of 16 she was declared Queen of England in an attempt to prevent her Roman Catholic cousin Mary from ascending to the throne. She had married Guilford who wanted her to declare him king, which she refused. Jane was a reluctant ruler and was deposed by Mary's allies who had her and her family committed to the Tower of London. Jane was queen for a total of nine days!

Even many Protestants were in favor of Mary's ascension because she had been protective of them against Roman Catholic opposition. However, once she was declared queen, Mary's position changed. Although she later released Jane's parents from prison, she had Jane and her husband beheaded. Jane was only 18 when she died in 1555.

To the end, Jane maintained her unshakable faith in Christ. Her outstanding Christian testimony moved many to tears. Shortly before her death she composed a prayer based upon the "whole armor of God" (Ephesians 6:11-17) that reflects the depths of her emotions and great dignity and composure.

Thank God for Jane and other innocent victims of religious and political turmoil who have met death with grace and dignity.

Elizabeth I: Courageous Queen

We do not know the depth of her personal piety, but we can imagine how difficult it would be to be a Christian monarch who makes war and peace, at whose words people are pardoned or executed. But when all circumstances are considered, Queen Elizabeth is worthy of our admiration as one through whom the flame of God's love was at least allowed to pass from one generation to another in very difficult times.

She was born in Greenwich palace in 1533, the daughter of King Henry VIII and his second wife, Ann Boleyn. Her father had her mother beheaded before she was three. She ended up being raised by Catherine Parr, Henry's last wife. She grew up with Edward (who was born in 1537) who would succeed his father as king, and had good relations with her sister Mary (over 17 years her senior), riding at Mary's side to the latter's coronation as queen in 1553 following the abortive attempt to make **Lady Jane Grey** queen. However, Mary's strong Catholic position (which led to the execution of many leaders of the English Reformation) placed Protestant-leaning Elizabeth in frequent danger.

Well educated with private tutors and able to speak French, Latin and Italian, Elizabeth could also read Greek and Cyprian. She succeeded Mary to the throne in 1558 and brought reason and peace to her people while restoring Protestantism and establishing confidence in the monarchy. Her 45-year reign, known as the Elizabethan Era, was one of the greatest in English history.

Her Protestant stand was difficult because she was both head of state and head of the church. She was, however, successful in consolidating the Church of England in 1563, resulting in peace rather than the Catholic-Protestant conflict that plagued France and Germany. Elizabeth never married and died in 1603.

Thank God for Elizabeth I who steered England through a difficult time, allowing the Protestant Reformation to take a firm hold.

John of the Cross: Mystical Writer

When people in our day experience periods in which they feel separated from God, one of the expressions used is that “I’m going through a dark night of the soul.” The reference, whether they know it or not, is to a book by a Spanish monk known as John of the Cross.

John was born in 1542 near Avila, Spain the son of a poor weaver. He had two miraculous experiences in his early life that saved him from drowning. Under sponsorship of a benefactor, he received an excellent education from the Jesuits. He entered the Carmelite Order at their monastery at Medina in 1563, and studied theology at the University of Salamanca.

Following his ordination, **Teresa of Avila** convinced John to join her in reforming the Carmelites. Later he became her confessor as well as her friend. In 1577, Carmelites opposed to reform brought charges against John because of the austerity and simplicity associated with the Carmelite movement he was spearheading. This led to his imprisonment at Toledo in 1578. While in prison he wrote several books, the best known of which in our day is *The Dark Night of the Soul*.

It has been said that John’s writings place him among the best of Spain’s poets and the greatest of Western mystical writers. His books consist of poems with commentaries that help people grow in their relationship with God. John founded 15 Carmelite friaries throughout Spain and his reform movement was ultimately accepted in Rome. An exemplary prayer is: “Who but you, Lord, could bring sweetness in the midst of bitterness, pleasure in the midst of torment? How wonderful are the wounds in my soul, since the deeper the wound, the greater the joy in healing!”

Thank God for John of the Cross who has helped multitudes deal with their own “dark night of the soul.”

Richard Hooker: Anglican Theologian

The ability of God to use humble people in great ways is exemplified in the life of Richard Hooker. Hooker was from an obscure background, was retiring by nature, apparently had an unhappy marriage, pastored several inconsequential churches over his lifetime and died at the age of only 46. Yet, he is called the “Master Theologian of the English Reformation.”

Hooker was born in Heavitree, near Exeter, in 1554. He was a Fellow of Corpus Christi College, Oxford and was, for a short while, deputy professor of Hebrew. For the remainder of his life he served as priest to a series of congregations. During this time, however, he was able to put Reformed Anglican theology into words that combined a Protestant head and a Catholic heart with the result that his influence is compared with Shakespeare’s and Edmund Burke’s.

Hooker argued for a reverent and reasonable interpretation of the Bible, believing Scripture to be (contrary to Roman Catholicism) the foundation against which reason, tradition and experience must be measured. On the other hand, he did not accept the Puritans' more literal and mechanical view of Scripture. His view of the church was as a living body, much like a family, rather than an impersonal institution unable to change or as merely an intellectual association of subscribers.

It has been said that Hooker was the most accomplished advocate Anglicanism has ever had. His doctrine is set forth in his treatise *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* in eight volumes, only five of which were published during his lifetime. He died in 1600.

Thank God for Richard Hooker whom God called from obscurity to shape Anglican theology for the generations to come.

Lancelot Andrewes: Middle Way

He lived in a time when the future of the Church of England could have gone either toward the Roman Catholicism of its past or to the Calvinistic Puritanism that developed out of the Reformation. Standing against both, Lancelot Andrewes helped shape a middle way for Anglicanism.

He was born in London in 1555. Educated at Cambridge, he was a brilliant scholar, the master of 15 languages, and perhaps the finest student of the Hebrew language of his day. He is chiefly responsible for the translation of the Old Testament in the King James Version of the Bible.

Andrewes was also a very devout man. It is said that he spent five hours each day in prayer, even during the busy years of serving as a bishop, and that his worn copy of his private prayers was “watered with penitential tears.” Morning and evening, his prayers included confession, profession of faith, intercession and thanksgiving. He also composed short prayers to be said on the hour throughout the day.

Andrewes was ordained deacon in 1580, later became Bishop of Chichester (1609), then Ely (1609) and finally of Winchester in 1619. He had differences with Elizabeth I but became a close friend of King James I. During Andrewes’ university years there was an attempt to make Cambridge a stronghold of Calvinistic orthodoxy. During the years of his episcopacy there were prolonged debates with the Roman Catholics. Andrewes was not only brilliant of mind, he was a forceful speaker and writer. Disputing with leaders of different theological positions, Andrewes held to positions between the two that contributed to the *via media* ("middle way") distinctive in Anglicanism. He died in 1626.

Thank God for Lancelot Andrewes who was a model of devout living and yet was able to stand effectively for a theological position that has shaped the faith of millions in subsequent years.

Jacobus Arminius: Firestorm

In our day, Calvinists and Arminians walk hand in hand as fellow Christians. But the firestorm created by Jacobus Arminius was a reason for bitter division in his day and for many years following.

Arminius was born in Oudewater, Holland, in 1560. He was educated in Leiden, Utrecht, Basel and Geneva from 1576 to 1586. After some time in Rome, he returned to his native Holland and was ordained in Amsterdam in 1588. In 1603 he became professor of theology at Leiden, a post he held until his death in 1609.

Although a man of gentle spirit, Arminius was not one to be boxed in theologically. The position that he believed was being forced upon him was an interpretation of Calvinism (by way of Theodore Beza, Calvin's successor at Geneva) related to the doctrine of predestination. It held that the divine decree determining who was elect was effected prior to Adam's fall. Under that interpretation, human decision is wholly irrelevant even as a secondary factor in salvation. Arminius contended, instead, that there is a conditional election in which the divine offer of salvation might or might not be accepted by a validly free will.

There were many who supported Arminius' position, and controversy erupted. The Dutch National Assembly, in trying to resolve the issue, asked both sides to present their positions in writing, but Arminius died before he could do so. From the first, the Arminian position was thought to be heretical, and the Synod of Dort in 1618 condemned those who supported the Arminian interpretation of Scripture on the issue. As a result, 200 Arminian pastors were thrown out of office. The firestorm started by Arminius does not generate such heat in our day, but is still an issue of serious debate between faithful Christians.

Thank God for Jacobus Arminius who articulated a vital issue related to our salvation that remains the subject of serious discussion to this day.

Galileo Galilei: Multi-talented Mathematician

He wanted to be a monk but was dissuaded by his father, a renowned musical theorist who wanted him to be a medical doctor. Instead he became the pre-eminent mathematician, astronomer and physicist of his day. As a result, this devout Christian man became the victim of one of Christianity's darkest deeds.

Born in Pisa in 1564, he received an early monastic education and entered the University of Pisa to study medicine. He had an inquisitive mind and began to formulate theories from simple observations. This led to an intense interest in mathematics, which he believed to be at the foundation of the physical observations that so intrigued him. After becoming professor of mathematics at Pisa, he learned, in 1609, of a new optical instrument known as the telescope. As a result, Galileo began building his own improved telescopes and making important discoveries. Most significantly, he discovered the rotation of the earth.

This gifted man (1) proved that the earth rotates around the sun; (2) discovered the principles later embodied in Newton's laws of gravitation and motion; and (3) re-established the mathematical foundation for scientific experimentation. He is considered the father of mechanics and experimental physics.

The problem was that the Bible was being interpreted with rigid fundamentalism in Galileo's day. Although there was ecclesiastical support for his discoveries, Cardinal Bellarmine, who was the chief theologian of the Roman Church, could not appreciate them and made no allowance for them. The result was that Galileo was forced to recant his theories and, by that time quite an aged man, placed under house arrest. He died in 1642.

Thank God for Galileo Galilei whose brilliant discoveries opened the door for scientific experimentation, helping us to understand God's world with even greater appreciation.

Francis de Sales: Devotional Writer

A multitude of deficiencies within the Roman Catholic Church led to the Reformation. In fairness, however, there were many within Roman Catholicism who saw those errors and sought to correct them. One such spiritual leader was Francis de Sales.

Francis was born in 1567 in the castle of Sales in Saxony. He was educated at the Jesuit college of Clermont in Paris and in theological studies at Padua. He acquired a doctorate in law in 1591, practiced law briefly, and then, in 1593, was ordained priest.

Francis' primary concern with regard to the state of the church was the renewal of spiritual discipline among lay people. Toward that end, he wrote *An Introduction to the Devout Life* that is still popular. It includes a series of meditations on the human condition as well as prayers aimed at helping people understand the basic relationship between God and humankind.

Appointed Bishop of Geneva (hotbed of Calvinism) in 1599, Francis undertook diocesan reorganization and reform. He was an extraordinarily able administrator and a gifted missionary. He founded numerous monastic communities and participated widely in church affairs. On behalf of the Roman church, he was able to regain losses to the Calvinists. An effective writer, spiritual director and preacher, he had a profound spiritual impact on the church of his day. An exemplary prayer from Francis: "I live only for your love, Lord Jesus, that I may escape eternal death. I live in your perfect love—you who have freed my soul from sin. I give my all to you. May you live and reign forever." He died in 1622.

Thank God for Francis de Sales who saw desperate needs in the church of his day and did something about it!

John Donne: Poet Priest

A man came along in an age of great change who experienced all sides of it. Of strict Roman Catholic background, he became a leading Reformer. After an undisciplined and irreligious youth, he became a devoted husband. And, after failing to find his place in the political or secular world, he became an outstanding priest. In the midst of it all, he was one of the great poets of his day.

John Donne was born in 1572 in London. His father was a prosperous merchant and his mother was related by marriage to Sir **Thomas More**. Donne was educated at Oxford but could not take his degree because, at that time, Roman Catholics could not take the oath of supremacy (of the Church of England) necessary to graduate. He became a law student and wrote poems. In 1597 he became secretary to the man who later became Lord Chancellor. By this time, he had conformed to the Church of England and seemed headed toward a diplomatic career when he secretly married (in 1601) Ann More. He was imprisoned for marrying a minor, lost his employment, and was penniless and married to a woman without a dowry.

Although the marriage may be considered the great social error of his life, it was the great spiritual triumph. He loved his wife and she bore him 12 children, seven of whom survived, before her untimely death in 1617. However, in the meantime, she had provided the spiritual influence that led Donne to his conversion to Protestantism.

Only six years after his ordination to the Anglican priesthood in 1615 (at 43 years of age), he became Dean of St. Paul's, London, the preeminent pulpit in the Church of England. There he gained a lasting reputation for preaching sermons that changed the lives of many people. Today Donne is known for the poetic phrase "no man is an island." His life is proof that, alone, we wander and are lost; but united with God and the Body of Christ, there is no limit to how far God can reach others through us. Donne died a well-loved and well-respected man in 1631.

Thank God for John Donne who proved, through his life, that no man is an island.

William Laud: Martyr in the Middle

As England turned away from Roman Catholicism and toward Protestantism, internal struggles continued. Those caught in the middle paid the price of martyrdom. William Laud is a classic example.

Born the son of a clothier in Reading in 1573, Laud was educated at St. John's, Oxford. He received several degrees, was ordained in 1601, and received the Doctor of Divinity in 1608. Early in his career he was opposed to the Calvinist party in the Church of England, maintaining that there is no true church without diocesan bishops. Thus he became labeled as having "popish" leanings.

In the following years he became a bishop and served in both Scotland and England. He was always in the midst of controversy. He acknowledged the Roman Church as a true church and a branch of the Catholic body, but attacked its claims as to the pope's infallibility. Solidly Anglican, he believed Scripture to be the foundation of belief and the test of truth. At the same time, he wanted to restore the ritual of medieval worship to the English church. In 1630 he was elected chancellor of Oxford University after a bitter contest, and performed an honorable service to that institution, greatly increasing the number of students. In 1633 he became Archbishop of Canterbury. He tried to bring restoration to the churches that had been neglected since the Reformation and to encourage a decent and uniform order in worship services.

Laud was said to have been sincere, positive, self-less in his devotion to God and duty and fairly tolerant of other viewpoints for his time. However, he was also very tactless, undiplomatic and inept at discerning public opinion. The tide turned against him in 1645 when a Puritan parliament charged him with treason and had him beheaded.

Thank God for William Laud who contended for a middle way against extremists on either side, and died with dignity.

Nicholas Ferrar: Little Gidding

In the midst of religious turmoil in England following the Reformation, there were those who quietly went about doing good works for the Lord. An excellent example of this is Nicholas Ferrar.

Ferrar was born in London in 1592. He was educated at Cambridge, graduating in 1610. From a prominent family, he not only received a fine education but also was well traveled. He became a trustee of the Virginia Company and then a Member of Parliament.

However, at 34 he put his worldly ambitions behind him and settled on his family estate at Little Gidding, Huntingdonshire. There he organized a religious community of married and single people. They lived a strict rule of life but did not take vows of celibacy and did not withdraw from the world. Instead, they focused on providing for the poor and operating a free school and hospital.

Ferrar was ordained a deacon by **William Laud** in 1626 but declined the priesthood, living an austere life of study and good works. He was a close friend of the Christian poet **George Herbert**. Members of the community put together harmonies of the Gospel, printed and bound them, one of which was presented to King Charles I after his visit to what was referred to as the “Arminian Nunnery of Little Gidding.” Although the little community maintained a faultless reputation for charity and godly living, the militant Puritans viewed it as a “popish” throwback to monasteries and violently destroyed it ten years after Ferrar’s death in 1637.

Thank God for Nicholas Ferrar who provided a model for godly community living.

George Herbert: Pastor and Poet

“Nothing is little in God’s service,” said George Herbert, and he proved it in the way he lived. Possessed of an excellent mind and from a prestigious background, he had a bright future ahead of him. Instead, he became a humble parish priest who took pleasure in the little things of life.

Herbert was born at Montgomery castle in 1593, the fifth son of Sir Richard Herbert. His mother was a good friend of **John Donne** and, being of good common sense and a gentle nature, greatly influenced her son. He became a scholar at Trinity College, Cambridge and, in 1619, an orator for the university, spending much of his time at court. He had an impressive group of friends, including **Lancelot Andrewes**, Izaak Walton and Francis Bacon. At one point, Herbert aspired to political advancement, but this did not materialize. For a time he lived in Leighton (Huntingdon) where he was only two miles from Little Gidding and became greatly influenced by **Nicholas Ferrar** and the work there.

In 1630, King Charles I presented him with the opportunity to be the parish priest at Bemerton near Salisbury, and he was ordained. There he remained for the rest of his brief life. He died in 1633 at 40 years of age.

To say he took his position seriously would be a gross understatement, however! Herbert held worship services twice every day, and spent time explaining the meaning of various parts of the *Book of Common Prayer*. The services were well attended. The communicants would “let the plow rest” when they heard the church bell ring. A gifted poet, Herbert was also passionately fond of church music and composed hymns that are sung today. George Herbert always remained a humble servant of God. Asked about his decision to become a priest, he said, “Methought I heard one calling, ‘Child,’ and I replied, ‘My Lord.’”

Thank God for George Herbert who turned his considerable talents to use as a simple vessel of God’s love.

Pocahontas: First Convert

Now we see the passing of the flame of God's love across the ocean to the New World. The story of Pocahontas has been romanticized, memorialized and commercialized to such an extent that it is difficult to separate truth from fiction. But she was a real person and is considered to have been the first Native American convert to Christianity.

Pocahontas was born in 1595, the daughter of Powhatan, a tribal chief. She came to prominence when Capt. John Smith of the Jamestown settlement, in search of food and exploring the area along the Chickahominy River, was taken prisoner. Powhatan ordered his death and Pocahontas came to his rescue. She apparently also came to his aid a year later by revealing a plot against his life by her father.

Pocahontas was baptized and named Rebekah. In 1613 she married John Rolfe in a Christian ceremony in Jamestown. Governor Thomas Dale took a special interest in her and assisted her in learning English. Her story was so intriguing that she was invited to England and presented to King James I. Unfortunately, while in England, she contracted smallpox and died at only 22 years of age in 1617.

A young son, Thomas, was born to Pocahontas and Rolfe, and he remained in England where he was educated before returning to Virginia. Through Thomas, Pocahontas became the ancestor of several leading Americans, including John Randolph, William Henry Harrison and Edith Bolling Wilson.

Thank God for Pocahontas, a brave young woman who played an important role in American history.

Perspective: Colonial America

Following the conversion of **Pocahontas** in the early Seventeenth Century, we begin to see the flame of God's love spreading into the American colonies. Due to religious persecution toward people of a Puritan persuasion in England, **Roger Williams** came to the New World. **Anne Bradstreet** became the first American poet. Missionaries like **Thomas Bray** and **John Wesley** arrived, and then this new country began to produce its own spiritual leaders, like **Jonathan Edwards**.

The colonists were mainly Protestant, either by church affiliation or tradition. Roman Catholics were few, even in Maryland, which was founded in part as a haven for them. In colonial days it was difficult to obtain and hold church membership, and people on the frontier or who lived far from settlements found it hard to attend worship services.

Leading up to the Revolutionary War, Congregational Church membership was dominant and was officially established throughout New England with the exception of Rhode Island. The Anglican Church was established in all of the colonies from Maryland southward and in portions of New York. Presbyterians were numerous in middle and southern colonies, and Baptists were to be found everywhere. The Friends (Quakers) and sects of German origin were significant in Pennsylvania. The Dutch Reformed Church was prominent in New York and New Jersey.

As the new country grew, the more formal denominations began to lose favor. The Anglican Church frowned on "enthusiasm" and was not aggressive in attracting new members. The Puritans in New England appealed to legalism and logic, and lacked emotionalism. The Presbyterians focused on scholarship and similarly lost favor. Among the intellectuals, Deism and Unitarianism were also present. But, it was in the Great Awakening of the 1740s in which Jonathan Edwards was a major figure that evangelism and emotional piety came to the fore, especially along the frontier. Such was the religious climate during the formative years of the new nation.

Thank God for the religious freedom established early in the life of this nation.

Roger Williams: Mr. Tolerance

As Roger Williams came upon the American scene, we see the passing of the flame from Europe. This was a man who came to the New World to avoid the religious persecution that continued in other parts of the world. But, we are getting ahead of ourselves.

Williams was born in London in about 1603, the son of a merchant tailor. He was employed as a shorthand clerk at official proceedings, and this insured his education at Charterhouse from 1621 to 1624. He then attended Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, as a pensioner, graduating in 1627. While at Cambridge, which was a center of Puritan activity, he came under the influence of Calvinism and promoted causes that would end the episcopacy in the Church of England. However, he soon became impatient with intolerance toward those of a Puritan persuasion and sailed for America.

Williams arrived in Boston in 1631 and was offered an Anglican church, which he refused on the ground that the Church of England needed reformation even in the new country. He became a teacher in Salem, but was soon unhappy there as well; then to Plymouth where he became embroiled in controversy because he had become convinced that a just title to land could only occur when that land was bought directly from the Indians. By this time he was becoming unpopular with everyone and in 1636 was banished from Massachusetts Bay.

Williams set out for new territory, arriving by canoe on the west bank of the Seekonk River where he purchased land from the Indians and founded the town of Providence and the colony of Rhode Island. Although Williams continued theologically a Calvinist, he welcomed Quakers and others who were suffering religious persecution. He remained a convinced Christian, but believed that the "narrow road" would only be followed by some and room must be made for others; thus, the need for separation of church and state.

Thank God for Roger Williams who, having suffered his own share of religious intolerance, established a place in the New World for those who were also being persecuted.

Brother Lawrence: Practicing God's Presence

One of the great beauties of Christianity is that it does not require a brilliant mind to be a believer. As a matter of fact, too much of an intellect can get in the way because the person can so easily become convinced that with such a bright mind, there is no need of Jesus Christ. Actually, the majority of the people we have considered so far in this series are ones who had high intelligence and were capable leaders. That is simply because they are the ones, due to their prominent positions, the writers of history knew about. Therefore, we can be doubly grateful for the life of Brother Lawrence.

Lawrence was born in 1611. After serving in the French army for 18 years, he became a lay brother in the Carmelite monastery in Paris. He served there for 30 years as the community's cook until blindness forced his retirement.

Following his death in 1691, letters and notes were found in his cell that were thought to be of spiritual significance. Many of the brothers also remembered things Lawrence had said that were worthy of being known by a wider audience. This material was all compiled and put together in a short book entitled *Practicing the Presence of God*, which is still popular today.

To Brother Lawrence, prayer consisted of finding God in the everyday events of life and learning to trust in his providence. In this manner, a person could become conscious of God's presence all day long. A Brother Lawrence prayer: "My God, you are always close to me. In obedience to you, I must now apply myself to outward things. Yet, as I do so, I pray that you will give me the grace of your presence. And to this end I ask that you will assist my work, receive its fruits as an offering to you, and all the while direct all my affections to you."

Thank God for Brother Lawrence who taught a simple but vital truth: the more conscious we are of God's presence, the closer our relationship with him will become.

Anne Bradstreet: First American Poet

She was born Anne Dudley in England in 1612. In 1628 she married Simon Bradstreet and they came, with her parents, to Massachusetts Bay in 1630. Although she initially disliked her new, harsh environment, she soon adjusted. Her husband was a leader in the colony, and Anne came to enjoy her position in Massachusetts' most cultured society.

The family moved to North Andover in 1644. Despite health problems, Anne gave birth to eight children. Somehow in the midst of her demanding domestic life and personal illnesses, she managed to write significant poetry. She was the first person in the New World to have her poems published. Her volume *The Tenth Muse Lately Sprung Up in America* was actually printed in England in 1650 through the efforts of her brother-in-law, the Rev. John Woodbridge and without her prior knowledge. It was not, however, this first effort that won her recognition. It was her less pretentious poems about daily life published later for which she has gained a place in literary history as the first American poet.

Anne Bradstreet's poems reveal a warm Puritan spirituality. They reflect the joys and the trials of everyday life lived under the guidance and care of a sovereign and loving God. Her ability to deal with religious experiences, the glory of the natural world, and the domestic pleasures of home life may have resulted from the influence that the writings of **John Donne** and other English poets had upon her.

Bradstreet's poetry presents an intimate picture of early Puritan New England society. Her life and writings influenced and encouraged many during the colonial period, especially women.

Thank God for Anne Bradstreet who found time to honor her Lord by the beauty of the written word.

Jeremy Taylor: Standing Tall

In the fluctuating political and religious circumstances of Seventeenth Century England, there was one man who was able to adapt to each situation in which he found himself and yet never lose his focus. His name was Jeremy Taylor, and the experiences he endured equipped him to prepare material that is helpful to many in our day.

Taylor was born in 1613 at Cambridge, the son of a barber. He received a Cambridge education and, upon completion of it, was ordained in 1633. Described as handsome and of great personal charm, he soon drew the attention of **William Laud** and seemed destined for a promising future. Like Laud, he was solidly Anglican, but had a reverence for the ancient liturgy of the church. He also had a close friend who was a well-known Roman Catholic. Thus, he was susceptible to the same charges that had been made against Laud.

A supporter of the king during a time when rebellion against the monarchy was occurring in England, Taylor found himself in and out of trouble. In 1645 he was imprisoned in Wales when royalist forces were captured. The happiest ten years of his life began with his release. He was able to write extensively and produced his masterworks *Holy Living* and *Holy Dying*, which have been combined into one volume. It has been said that the beauty of his language in these works matches the nobility of his themes. Death is pictured as an inevitable good for those who die in Christ. **John Wesley** was deeply affected by Taylor's books.

When the kingdom and the church were restored in 1660, Taylor was made Bishop of Down and Connor in Ireland and vice-chancellor of Dublin University. Once again he was in the middle of religious controversy: confrontations in Ireland between Roman Catholics and Presbyterians. He continued to stand tall in the midst of it all. He died in 1667.

Thank God for Jeremy Taylor who, in the furnace of his own experiences, yielded for Christians the treasure of *Holy Living and Holy Dying*.

Richard Baxter: Puritan Preacher

One of the greatest of the English Puritan preachers, Richard Baxter was born in 1615. Originally ordained to the English priesthood in 1638, two years later he aligned himself as a Puritan. In 1641 he was elected minister of Kidderminster where he remained until 1660.

Baxter's ministry at Kidderminster was a classic in Protestant history. He reformed the town, packed his church at every service, and preached with passion and conviction. His sermons always had two primary objects. The first was conversion of the congregation from sinful living. Secondly, he sought to lead the congregation into a life of disciplined Christian obedience. His preaching was sound doctrinally, but with very practical applications.

Baxter epitomized the Protestant concern for pastoral ministry. He developed a comprehensive system of visiting his congregation for personal counseling and teaching. He and his assistant devoted two days each week in personal ministry with their parishioners. In these sessions they dealt with the individual concerns and questions of their people. Baxter was so successful that people came from great distances to seek his counsel, and other clergy sought his advice in how to pastor.

Baxter's life was not without conflict, however. When Charles II restored the monarchy, Baxter (then 45) and 2,000 other Puritan preachers were ejected from their pulpits. Baxter was arrested and spent time in prison on several occasions. He was not allowed to preach for ten years and he devoted his time to prayer and study. Although he suffered ill health, he wrote some 140 books. He was heard from the pulpit again when his exile ended and he resumed an effective ministry until his death in 1691 at 76.

Thank God for Richard Baxter and his example of how to be a pastor.

John Owen: Cromwell's Advisor

Christians in the Puritan mold all had their ups and downs in Seventeenth Century England, but John Owen seemed to fare better than **Richard Baxter**, even though he was much more involved politically in the happenings of the day.

Owen was born in 1616, the son of a clergyman. He studied at Queen's College, Oxford, receiving his M.A. in 1635. He then studied theology at the university during a time when Arminianism was predominant but found himself led instead toward the Calvinist position. Following ordination, he became a chaplain in private homes before becoming a parish priest at Fordham, Essex, in 1643. At that time, he began to write in opposition to the Arminian viewpoint and cast his lot with Parliament in the battle between Parliament and King.

Owen's next step was to adopt the congregational way as the biblical form of church organization. Thereby he became a Congregational (as opposed to Presbyterian) Puritan. In 1648 he moved to Coggeshall, also in Essex, where he put into practice his idea of a gathered church. From there, however, he was soon called to be a chaplain with the Parliamentary army, in Ireland and then in Scotland. Following the defeat of the royalist cause, he was sent by Oliver Cromwell to bring order to Oxford University. The busiest period in Owen's life began in 1651 when he became advisor to Cromwell in anticipation of implementing reform within the national church as well as at Oxford University.

Plans were cut short when Cromwell died and King Charles II returned to rule England. As a Nonconformist, Owen was banished from the church along with 2,000 other pastors. Somehow Owen managed to serve a Nonconformist congregation in London for the remaining 23 years of his life. During this time he worked for the improvement of the ejected pastors and produced quality theological literature. He died in 1683.

Thank God for John Owen who was able to stand up for his beliefs in difficult time.

Blaise Pascal: Thoughts

He was one of the great thinkers of his day. He excelled as a mathematician, physicist and inventor even though he died at 39. Today Christians remember him as a man of deep spiritual insights whose writings are still in use.

Blaise Pascal was born in Claremont, France in 1623. Educated in Paris, he made significant contributions in geometry and calculus by the age of 16. At 19 he invented the first workable calculating machine. In the area of physics, he stated the principle that makes all modern hydraulic operations possible. He is even credited with creating the first wristwatch and designing Paris' bus system.

In 1654 he had a remarkable spiritual experience of ecstatic joy that lasted for two hours and became the defining moment of his life. From that time on, science was secondary to God in his priorities. He wrote down a description of his experience of God and sewed it into the lining of his coat. Thereafter, when tempted or simply to remind himself of God's presence, with his hand he would press the message against his heart. It was found on his person at his death.

Pascal had become wealthy by his intellect, but now began to live from his heart. He gave money to the poor and began to record a defense of the Christian faith. He wanted to share with the scientific community of his day the reality of Christ in his life. Pascal suffered poor health, however; and, in his later years, sickness was his constant companion. As a result, he was never able to finish this important work. Yet, at his death in 1662, there remained the remarkable notes he had made to this end and they were published as *Pensees (Thoughts)*, a classic work of literature and a legacy by which the flame of God's love has been passed to generations to come.

Thank God for Blaise Pascal who gave the world his mental genius and his heart to God and to us.

George Fox: Quaker

Many people in Seventeenth Century England were fed up with all the existing forms of Christian practice and the warfare going on between the churches. They were seekers who loved Christ but could not find a satisfactory church in which to worship him. Out of this situation came a man who led a Christian awakening that made inroads in England, on the Continent, and in America. His name was George Fox.

Fox was born in Leicestershire in 1624, the son of a weaver. Trained as a shoemaker, he worked in that capacity and then as a partner with a wool and cattle dealer. He had come from a devout family who had originally hoped he would become a clergyman, but he proved himself adept as a businessman. Yet, something was stirring in Fox that caused him to take journeys away from home in search of spiritual guidance.

Fox experienced the presence of God in his life and began a career as an itinerant preacher. He was disgusted with the way Christian churches of his day were representing the faith. He preached that an understanding of the Bible would come through enlightenment by the Holy Spirit. He encouraged seekers to listen to the voice of Christ within, to be honest in their secular dealings, and compassionate toward those in need. He also held pacifist views and refused to serve in Cromwell's army. Although the community of believers who followed Fox chose the name "Friends" they were satirically known as "Quakers" (on the belief that their preaching would make others quake in their boots).

Fox traveled widely in England, on the Continent, and to America. His preaching and his views landed in him jail eight times, some for extended periods, and ultimately broke his health but not his faith. Fox died in 1691.

Thank God for George Fox and others of his time who would not accept the mediocrity of worship and the internal warfare among Christians, yet found a way to serve the Lord.

Elizabeth Hooton: Indomitable Spirit

It was difficult enough for **George Fox** to survive the ill treatment he received because of his Quaker beliefs. Imagine what it must have been like for an elderly woman to cope with the same type of treatment over and over again. It took an indomitable spirit, and that is what Elizabeth Hooton had.

Hooton was born in 1598 but did not come under the influence of Fox until she heard his preaching in 1647. She soon became the Quaker's first woman preacher. At the time she was a well-to-do 49-year-old mother from Nottingham, England. Her preaching led to a series of jail sentences from which she was released at the age of 60.

Undaunted by her frequent imprisonment, Hooton sailed for Boston following the death of her husband. There she was promptly imprisoned for her preaching. She also went to Rhode Island and later to a Quaker settlement in the West Indies. She returned to Boston and was again arrested. At Cambridge she was tied to a whipping post and given ten lashes with a three-pronged whip. She was also whipped at Watertown and Dedham.

But, of course, she continued preaching and working for the relief of Quaker prisoners to the end. Despite the harsh treatment she had suffered, she lived to be 74, dying in 1672. Her indomitable spirit was never broken.

Thank God for Elizabeth Hooton and the legacy of courage she has passed down to those who are willing to stand up for their faith in the midst of persecution and suffering.

John Bunyan: Pilgrim's Progress

Times of distress can either defeat people or instead lead them to see within themselves the seeds of greatness the Lord has planted there for their use and for the benefit of others. It took some time for John Bunyan to discover the gift God had planted within him, but, when he did, he made the most of it for the great benefit of millions of Christians through the years.

Bunyan was born in 1628 at Elstow, Bedfordshire, son of a poor tinker. He served in the Parliamentary army during the English civil war. He married in 1649 and his wife had a major hand in leading him to change his way of life.

In 1651, Bunyan became affiliated with an independent congregation at Bedford, but remained in despair over his spiritual life for several years. When he finally accepted Christ's saving love, he joined the congregation and began preaching for them. With the Restoration in 1660, all non-Anglican churches were closed, and Bunyan was imprisoned for preaching outside of the recognized church. He spent most of the next twelve years in jail.

At first, Bunyan toiled in prison on behalf of his family by making laces. Then he discovered the gift within him: the ability to write. Over his lifetime he wrote 60 books, many of them while imprisoned. His greatest, of course, is *Pilgrim's Progress*, which rivals **Thomas a Kempis' *Imitation of Christ*** as the top bestseller of all time other than the Bible. Bunyan's writing is a healthy mixture of homespun phrases and scriptural truths. His beliefs are based on the Bible, shaped by his Calvinist and Nonconformist leanings. Bunyan spent his final years in a small cottage in Bedford where his library consisted of his Bible and some of his own works. He was 60 when he died in 1688.

Thank God for John Bunyan and *Pilgrim's Progress*, the great work of his life.

Joseph Alleine: The Use of Time

Each of us is given only a certain amount of time on this earth, and none of us knows how much time we have. For those with a burning call to evangelism in their hearts, that time is especially precious. They can only reach for Christ those whom time will permit them to reach. Thus, they must measure the rest of their time that they not be found failing to take Christ's saving grace to someone who did not know him.

Such was the case of Joseph Alleine. He was born at Devizes, Wiltshire, in 1633. He graduated from Oxford and was appointed chaplain of Corpus Christi College in 1653. In 1655 he was ordained and called to a church in the west of England. He was very respected for his considerable learning and loved for his gentle spirit. And he had the heart of an evangelist.

Following the Restoration in 1660 and the Act of Uniformity, Alleine was one of 2,000 pastors who were ejected for nonconformity. Thereafter he became an itinerant preacher, often in hiding or in prison.

Already limited in what he could do because of the political situation, Alleine also correctly perceived that his time on earth was limited. Each day, for him, was another day to do the Lord's work. His health began to decline but not his enthusiasm for reaching the lost. He said, "Let us live well, work hard for souls, lay up much treasure in heaven this day, for we have but a few more." Alleine died in 1668 before he reached his 35th birthday.

Thank God for Joseph Alleine who used well what time he had to reach the unsaved for Christ.

Philip Jacob Spener: Pietism

Although the Reformation was initially aimed at correcting problems within the Roman Church, it led to the formation of new churches (Lutheran, Anglican, and Presbyterian, for instance). In an attempt to correct the wrongs that had existed in Catholicism, the Lutherans especially stood on doctrine. **Philipp Melancthon** had attempted to construct the evangelical faith of the Lutheran Church as a doctrinal system. This was leading to a law-focused faith rather than one centered in personal devotion to Christ. Along came Philip Jacob Spener, a German theologian who is known as “the father of pietism.”

Spener was born in Rappoltswiler in Upper Alsace in 1635. He got his degree from Strasbourg in 1653 and in 1666 was pastor of the Lutheran church in Frankfurt. In his sermons, Spener stressed the importance of a devotional life rather than correct dogma. He began to hold devotional meetings that were well attended and formed the basis for the Pietist movement in the Lutheran church.

In 1675, convinced that there was spiritual decay in the church at large, Spener published a plan to remedy the situation at every level. He thought that the reason for the decay was the lack of a true, living faith on the part of the people. He felt that Bible reading and prayer were the cures.

The conclusions in Spener’s plan were well justified and could not be ignored, and many pastors adopted his suggestions. However, many others, having built their ministries on the essentiality of sound doctrine, were greatly offended. The awkward situation thus created was resolved by promoting Spener upward as the court chaplain at Dresden where he was instrumental in founding the University of Halle and doing other good works. Although Spener died in 1705, the movement he started spread over middle and northern Germany and led to the organization of the Moravian church by **Count von Zinzendorf** in 1727.

Thank God for Philip Jacob Spener who brought the importance of a personal devotional life into the church at a time when it was becoming too focused on doctrine.

Thomas Ken: Doxology

As England continued to experience religious and political turmoil, some outstanding Christians would find themselves on one side, and some on the other. Those, as we have seen, who were on the wrong side were likely to be imprisoned or martyred. Others were able to stay out of the turmoil altogether because they were not in positions of sufficient prominence to put them in jeopardy. Thomas Ken was a prominent Christian who took unpopular stands regardless of who was in power, and survived.

Ken was born in 1637 of humble parentage. He was educated at Winchester College and Hart Hall, Oxford. He was ordained in 1662 and served in pastoral and tutorial roles. He wanted to teach ordinary people how to pray. Toward that end he composed *Directions for Prayers* as a simple method whereby people could send ejaculatory prayers to God at various times in the course of the day.

Ken is best known for hymns he wrote while chaplain at Winchester College. They were to be sung by the students morning, evening and at midnight. Each ended with the Doxology that has become well known throughout the English-speaking world: “Praise God, from whom all blessing flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below; Praise Him above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.”

Although he became Bishop of Bath and Wells, he was always in trouble with those in authority. He defied three kings: James II, whose edicts he refused to read in church; Charles II, whose marital infidelity he condemned; and William of Orange, whose right to the throne he challenged. He spent some time in the Tower of London and his diocese was taken from him. He died in 1711, a man of integrity, conscience, and pure love of God.

Thank God for Thomas Ken who taught us how to praise God by the words he wrote and the life he lived.

Fenelon: Spiritual Director

Many Christians have been misunderstood in their own day; yet have blessed multitudes in the following generations. Such could be said to be the case with Fenelon.

Francois de Salignac de la Mothe Fenelon was born in 1651 at the chateau of Fenelon in France. His father was said to have been a country gentleman of ancient heritage, large family and small estate. Fenelon was provided a good education and for years held positions in the Roman Catholic Church not especially suited to his temperament and abilities. In 1689 he became the royal tutor to the Duke of Burgundy, a potential heir to the French crown. This service ended in 1697 when the boy was 15.

Fenelon had been writing during this time. One piece was a plea for greater simplicity and naturalness in the pulpit. It encouraged preachers to follow a natural, scriptural style as opposed to a cold, analytical one. In a sense, his plea to Roman Catholic priests was similar to that of **Philip Jacob Spener** in the Lutheran church. It was a call for a more spiritual, devotional approach rather than a rigid, rationalistic one. He also published his *Treatise on the Education of Girls* that guided French ideas on the subject through the Eighteenth Century.

After becoming Archbishop of Cambrai in 1695 things began to go downhill for Fenelon. He came under the influence of Madame Guyon, whose mystical ideas created great controversy in her day. As a result, Fenelon developed mystical principles that were found to be in disfavor and he was banished from the court of King Louis XIV and basically exiled to his own diocese. There he spent the remainder of his life serving as bishop to the people and spiritual director to many. He is best known in our day for letters of spiritual direction that have been printed in book form and provide helpful guidance in living the Christian life. He died in 1715.

Thank God for Fenelon whose gift of spiritual direction is helpful to many today.

Thomas Bray: Missionary Organizations

In our day there is a resurgence of interest in both missionary work and prison ministry. One man, who lived three centuries ago, began efforts to meet these needs that are still operative. His name was Thomas Bray.

Bray was born in 1658 in England, but his work greatly affected the New World as well as his home country. He was educated at All Souls College, Oxford, and then was ordained. After several opportunities to serve as a priest, he was chosen by the Bishop of London to be his commissary to Maryland in 1695. Bray immediately saw a need to provide educational materials to clergy in America and founded the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (S.P.C.K.) in 1698 and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (S.P.G.) in 1701. Both missionary organizations still exist and are active in providing educational material throughout the world.

To deal with the deplorable conditions in English prisons, Bray organized Sunday dinners for the prisoners and sought prison reform in Parliament. It was he who suggested to Gen. Oglethorpe the founding of a colony in the New World for honest debtors. He died in 1730 before the colony was founded that later became Georgia.

Bray was concerned about black slaves and Native Americans long before others undertook these causes. He started libraries and schools in England and America and raised money toward encouraging young English priests to seek vocations in America. He also served as a parish priest in London from 1706 until his death.

Thank God for Thomas Bray who was sensitive enough to perceive needs and persistent enough to do something constructive to meet them.

Susanna Wesley: Devout Mother

She is, of course, best known because she was the mother of **John and Charles Wesley**. However, she was an outstanding Christian as well. She coped with hardship all of her life, but was strong-willed enough to overcome all handicaps.

Susanna Wesley was born in 1669 the youngest of 25 children of a Nonconformist pastor. She married Samuel Wesley in 1689, and the couple began their 40-year Church of England ministry at Epworth in eastern England. Susanna birthed 19 children, although only nine survived. Samuel remained a poor pastor all of his life, and was inept at managing what little money they had.

It was said of Susanna that she spent two hours a day in prayer. The story is that she spread a sheet over the dining table and got under it for her devotional time. It was the only secluded space she could make for herself, and her family knew that she was not to be disturbed when she was in her “prayer closet.”

Samuel was away from time to time, including a period in debtor’s prison. He also became disturbed that Susanna’s Bible teaching drew larger attendance than his sermons. Somehow, in the midst of it all, she wrote three textbooks for her children. Although she had only received a limited education herself, she is credited with the education and disciplining of her children while also motivating them to study and read. The results, at least in two instances, were rather spectacular!

Thank God for Susanna Wesley who was able to keep her priorities in order in the midst of what must have been a chaotic life, and gave Christianity two of its greatest evangelists.

Isaac Watts: Music Maker

At the time Isaac Watts came along, only psalms were sung in worship services. Watts thought he could do better than that. Thus he became the father of English hymns.

Watts was born at Southampton in 1674. His father was a very devout clothier who was often in trouble with the authorities because of his Nonconformist theology. He was also impatient with his son's penchant for making rhymes, even though he also wrote poems. At one point he told Isaac to write his own hymns if he thought he could do better than King David.

Watts was educated at the Nonconformist academy, Stoke Newington, in London. After that, he spent the next two years living at home and he began to write hymns. He served as a tutor in 1696 and produced two educational works. At 24 years of age he became assistant pastor of an Independent congregation in London and, two years later, its pastor.

Watts preached only occasionally. Most of his free time was spent in writing hymns, preparing sermons for publication, and composing theological works. Many of his hymns were paraphrases of the psalms and were designed to make the message of the psalms more relevant to lay people. During one point in his life, Watts wrote a new hymn every week. Some examples of his work that we still sing today are *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross*, *Joy to the World, O God Our Help in Ages Past* and *I Sing the Mighty Power of God*. And there are 600 others! Watts was considered a theologian as well as a hymn writer. He died in 1748.

Thank God for Isaac Watts who brings joy to our worship through his many beautiful hymns.

Jean Pierre de Caussade: Jesuit Mystic

In every age it seems that God brings forth people who call on us to see the mystery of his world and works. The Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Trinity, has too often been neglected, as Christians have lived out their lives trying to do God's will but without relying as fully as God would have us upon the Spirit within to guide us. We can be grateful to Jean Pierre de Caussade who reminded people that God is Spirit and can be found in every aspect of life.

Caussade was born in France in 1675. In 1693 he joined the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) in Toulouse and became a monk of that order in 1708. He traveled widely, preaching and teaching. He was in demand throughout France in conducting retreats. From 1729 to 1740 he lived in Lorraine. His later years were spent in Perpignan, then Albi and finally Toulouse where he died in 1751.

Caussade taught that God is present in every event, great and small, and that we are to be conscious of his presence and willing to submit ourselves to his providential will. His talks were preserved, and two centuries after his death were published as *Self-Abandonment to Divine Providence*. It is considered to be one of the world's great spiritual classics.

Here is an example of Caussade's prayers: "Lord, may your kingdom come into my heart to sanctify me, nourish me and purify me. How insignificant is the passing moment to the eye without faith! But how important each moment is to the eye enlightened by faith! How can we deem insignificant anything that has been caused by you? Every moment and every event is guided by you, and so contains your infinite greatness."

Thank God for Jean Pierre de Caussade who reminds us to look for the providence of God in all the happenings of life.

Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg: Pray and Work

We can be grateful for the pioneers of our faith, those people who responded to God's call to lead the way. Some of those who have passed the flame of God's love down through the centuries have started movements, translated the Bible, and shared spiritual insights. Among the most sacrificial of God's pioneers have been the great missionaries. Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg is a classic example.

Ziegenbalg was born in Germany in 1683. His mother died when he was four, leaving her Bible as a treasured legacy. Ziegenbalg accepted Christ as his Savior at 12 and graduated from the University of Halle in 1706.

Ziegenbalg's motto was *Ora et Labora*, pray and work. He immediately accepted Danish King Frederick's appeal for a Christian witness in India and, after an exhausting trip, was imprisoned almost as soon as he arrived. He used his imprisonment as an opportunity to share his faith. When released, he continued his evangelistic efforts and, within a year, had baptized his first converts. It was believed to be the first Protestant baptismal service in India. Later, the first Protestant church for nationals was founded in India.

Driving himself relentlessly, Ziegenbalg translated the New Testament into Tamil by 1711. He founded a seminary and translated catechetical materials, a Danish liturgy, and some German hymns. Burned out by India's climate by 1719, Ziegenbalg died at 36. This missionary pioneer laid the groundwork for Moravian missionaries of the following generation, and **William Carey** who would come 100 years later.

Thank God for Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg who opened the door to the Protestant evangelization of India.

Johann Sebastian Bach: To God Alone, the Glory

Musicians and other artists often fail to be fully appreciated during their lifetime. This was true for Johann Sebastian Bach, one of the greatest composers of all time.

Bach was born in 1685 in Eisenach, Thuringia, Germany, the youngest child in a musical family. His early musical education apparently came from members of his family. He showed an immediate talent for music and also did well in his other schooling. His parents died in 1695, and Bach went to live with an older brother. Early in the Eighteenth Century he decided to become a composer and performer of keyboard and sacred music. Over the years he held a number of positions as organist and choir director.

Bach wrote his music to the glory of God. When he sat down to compose, he scribbled “J.J.” on the page (meaning *Jesu Juva*, “Help me, Jesus”). At the end of each manuscript he wrote “S.D.G.” (*Soli Deo Gloria*, “To God alone, the glory”). In this manner, he composed hundreds of pieces of music.

After his first wife died in 1720, he married again and ended up fathering a total of 20 children. He was a devout orthodox Lutheran, with some leanings toward Pietist emotionalism. However, the revivalist movement did not appreciate his work because they disapproved of elaborate music. Much of Bach’s music was also considered old fashioned. Yet his work laid the foundation for some of the greatest composers who followed him: Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven. Following unsuccessful eye surgeries, Bach became ill and died in 1750. His music was considered virtually worthless, thus leaving his wife badly off financially. She died a pauper ten years later. It was not until the 1800s that Bach’s work was fully appreciated, and God is still glorified through it.

Thank God for Johann Sebastian Bach and the music he produced to the glory of God.

George Frederick Handel: *Messiah*

Handel was born in 1685 in Halle, Germany. His father wanted him to be a lawyer, but he had a gift for music. A friend smuggled a clavichord into the attic so he could play it behind closed doors and not be heard in the rest of the house. Before he was eight, he accompanied his father, a barber-surgeon, on a visit to the residence of a duke who overheard the boy practicing on the organ and realized his talent. As a result, George Frederick Handel's father allowed him to begin studying music.

Although Handel's interest was in music, he obeyed his father's desires and entered the University of Halle in 1702 to study law. But, that same year, he was awarded the post of organist at the cathedral; and, a year later, went to Hamburg. From that point onward music dominated his life and he became one of the greatest composers of music of all time.

In 1710 Handel visited London, and made his home there from 1712, becoming a naturalized citizen in 1727. He was, and remained, a Lutheran; however, he worshiped at St. George's (Church of England), Hanover Square. He is regarded as the originator of the English oratorio, with its prominent role for the chorus. He was a prodigious composer: the edition of his complete works fills 100 volumes, almost equal to the combined works of **Bach** and Beethoven. As with most musicians, he had financial problems and twice found himself in bankruptcy. He went blind in his later years and died in 1759.

Handel's great gift from God to the rest of us was, of course, *Messiah*. In 1741 he was given various biblical texts about Christ, secreted himself in his London home, and, over the next 23 days, composed the masterpiece. It was a profound spiritual experience in which Handel believed God was directly involved in the creation of the piece. *Messiah* was an immediate success, and has thrilled the hearts of Christians every Christmas and Easter since.

Thank God for George Frederick Handel and his masterwork, *Messiah*.

William Law: Serious Call

We have recently considered how God has spoken through mystics and musicians to touch the Spirit within us. We also need to be reminded of the practical ways in which we are to lead the Christian life. William Law has been immensely helpful in doing just that for multitudes of Christians from his own day to the present.

Law was born in Northamptonshire, England in 1686. He entered Emmanuel College, Cambridge in 1705 and became a fellow of the college and ordained in 1711. Upon the accession of George I, however, his conscience kept him from taking the oaths of allegiance to the new government and led to the suspension of his academic degrees. He served as a curate in London and then became tutor in the household of Edward Gibbon at Putney where he remained until 1737. In 1741 he retired to a small property he had inherited from his father in King's Cliffe. He died in 1761.

“If we are to follow Christ, it must be in our common way of spending every day,” wrote Law in his classic *A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life*. This quiet teacher shook the foundations of the Christian world of his day by conveying words of simple truth to a people who had become so caught up in the political and religious controversies of their time that they had become distracted from the basics of the faith.

Law epitomized the devout pastor who practiced what he preached. His life was one of simplicity, charity and devotion. His challenge to take the Christian life seriously deeply affected those who would come after him: the **Wesleys, William Carey, George Whitfield**, and many others. His work and his life laid the foundation for the religious revival of the Eighteenth Century, the Evangelical Movement in England, and the Great Awakening in America.

Thank God for William Law who brought Christians back to the basics of the faith.

Joseph Butler: Contending with Deism

Deism was a theological position that attracted many followers in the Eighteenth Century. Adherents believed that God created the world but then left it for humankind to manage without his intervention. It was a rationalistic approach to religion that left no room for the supernatural. Joseph Butler became a staunch defender of the Christian faith against Deism.

Butler was born in 1692 in Berkshire, of Presbyterian parents. He received a dissenter's education until, at Tewkesbury, he became dissatisfied with Presbyterianism and joined the Church of England. In 1715 he entered Oriel College, Oxford, received his degree three years later, and was ordained. He served in several posts before attracting the attention of Queen Caroline in 1736; and, although she died the following year, he was chosen Bishop of Bristol on her recommendation in 1738. He later became Bishop of Durham (1750) and died in 1752.

The Church of England in Butler's day was besieged by Deists on the one hand and non-conforming Evangelicals on the other. An apathetic clergy was in the middle. Butler opposed them all. Operating within the structures of the accepted church, he appealed to the logic of the Christian faith as **William Law** had appealed to the practice of the faith and **Jean Pierre de Caussade** to the spiritual side of the faith. Butler is credited with breaking the force of Deism in England without compromising the rational justification for Christian believing.

Butler's masterpiece, *Analogy of Religion*, is still considered one of the most well reasoned and convincing statements of the Christian faith in existence. Butler was a superb pastor who ministered to the minds of his people along with their bodies and spirits.

Thank God for Joseph Butler who stood against Deism and for a clear understanding of the Christian faith.

Count Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf: Moravian Founder

The early Moravians didn't do things by half measures. They undertook world evangelism with such enthusiasm that, from a community of 600, 70 went into the mission field. In the meantime, they formed a prayer chain in which at least one person was in prayer in the chapel all the time for over 100 years! And they owed it all to Count Nikolaus von Zinzendorf.

Zinzendorf was born in 1700 in Saxony where his father, a cabinet minister, died when the boy was only six weeks old. His grandmother raised the boy as a Lutheran nobleman. She was a friend of **Philipp Jacob Spener**, a Pietist. Ludwig was educated at Halle where he pledged to love the whole human family and spread the Gospel. Touring Europe in 1719, he was deeply touched by Domenico Feti's painting of Christ wearing a crown of thorns with the inscription: "All this I did for you. What are you doing for me?" At that point the count offered himself for service to Christ rather than to the state of Saxony.

In 1722 Zinzendorf allowed a community of Moravian refugees to make their home on his estate at Berthesdorf. The community called itself Herrnhut ("Lord's Watch"), and the count soon realized that his missionary vision was to be lived out through these Moravian Brethren. He became their leader and was consecrated their bishop in 1727. He traveled extensively in Europe and North America evangelizing and directing Moravian efforts.

Zinzendorf returned to Germany in 1743, just as the Moravians were experiencing some internal difficulties, referred to as their "sifting period." He then lived in England from 1749 to 1755, financially strapped from donating his resources to the Moravian cause. Over the last five years of his life, despite grief over the loss of his wife and only son, he gave pastoral oversight to a Moravian congregation. He died in 1760, having spent his life in service to the Lord, and seeing his dream of world evangelization realized.

Thank God for Count von Zinzendorf who responded with all he had to Christ's question: "What are you doing for me?"

Jonathan Edwards: Early American Theologian

It didn't take long for Jonathan Edwards' brilliance to show. He was fluent in Latin, Greek and Hebrew at 13. He composed astute essays on natural science at 16. He graduated at the top of his class (at the Collegiate School of Connecticut, later known as Yale) at 17. He became America's first great theologian and philosopher.

Edwards was born in 1703, the son and grandson of pastors, at East Windsor, Connecticut. He was the fifth child and only son among 11 children. He grew up in an atmosphere of Puritan piety, affection, and learning. After graduation from college in 1720 he remained at New Haven for two years studying theology. Following his first pastorate (1722-23), he received his M.A. and taught at Yale until 1726.

In 1727, Edwards married Sarah Pierrepont and became his grandfather's colleague at Northampton, Massachusetts. Thus began a successful marriage and a long pastorate (he succeeding his grandfather upon the latter's death in 1729). In 1741 Edwards preached his most famous sermon (perhaps the most famous sermon in American history) *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*. Although Edwards was not in the habit of preaching "hellfire and damnation" sermons and his preaching style was not theatrical, this message sent his congregation into a frenzy of confession and repentance. It came right at the start of the Great Awakening that swept America in the mid-1700s.

In 1747 Edwards had a falling out with his congregation over qualifications for receiving the Lord's Supper. As a result, in 1751 he became pastor of the frontier church at Stockbridge, Massachusetts and missionary to the Native Americans there. During this time he did some of his most profound writing, most notably his *Freedom of the Will* in 1754. In 1758 he became President of the College of New Jersey (later known as Princeton) but died in that year. When a reporter later studied 1,400 of Edwards' descendants, it turned out that there were 80 college presidents, deans and professors; 100 attorneys; 66 physicians; 80 political leaders; three senators; three governors; and innumerable pastors and missionaries.

Thank God for Jonathan Edwards who stood in the forefront of early American theology, and spawned generations of leaders for an emerging nation.

John Wesley: Founder of Methodism

Few Christians have had as much of an impact on the church as John and **Charles Wesley**. John, the older brother, was the organizer and better known of the two, but they worked together as a team and transformed the spiritual climate of England in the Eighteenth Century. Their collaboration started the Methodist movement that led to one of the largest Christian denominations in the world.

John was born in 1703 at Epworth, England, the 15th child of Samuel and **Susanna Wesley**. Early instruction was from his mother; but, when the rectory burned down in 1709, John was a student at Charterhouse for six years. In 1720 he went to Christ Church, Oxford, for his college education and was barely able to survive on the pittance that was allowed him as a Charterhouse scholar.

John Wesley became a priest in the Church of England in 1728. It was Charles who started the “Holy Club” that was the genesis of Methodism, but John soon became its leader. The group numbered about 25 at most and read the Greek New Testament and the classics, fasted on Wednesdays and Fridays, received the Lord’s Supper every week, and gave each other spiritual direction.

On behalf of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (S.P.G.), the Wesleys undertook a mission to the Native Americans in Georgia in 1735. The Moravians on board ship were having a worship service when a storm arose that caused John to fear for his life. But he observed that the Moravians continued with their worship, relying on God for their safety. This got John’s attention! The mission to America produced no results and the Wesleys returned home. Soon thereafter, at a Moravian service in 1738 at Aldersgate, as a passage from **Martin Luther’s** *Preface to Romans* was being read, John experienced Christian conversion when he felt his heart “strangely warmed.” He went on to become a great preacher, though seldom allowed a pulpit, and lay people flocked to hear him in great numbers. Spiritual awakening swept England. John Wesley died in 1791.

Thank God for John Wesley who gave the world Methodism and through whom thousands were brought to Christ.

Charles Wesley: Hymns Galore

Although it might be considered that he lived in the shadow of his better-known older brother, Charles Wesley was outstanding in his own way. He was the one who first organized the “Holy Club” from which Methodism was born. He was, like his brother, a great preacher. But, most of all, he was a prolific hymn writer.

Also born at Epworth in 1707, four years after **John Wesley**, he was the 18th child of Samuel and **Susanna Wesley**. He went to Oxford for his education in 1726. With two others he began religious practices in the spring of 1729 that followed “High Church” Anglicanism. As a result, their classmates ridiculed them and labeled them “Methodists.” John dominated this “Holy Club” when he returned to Oxford in 1729. The group seemed concerned with saving their souls by stringent rule keeping.

Following his ordination to the priesthood, Charles accompanied John on the mission to Georgia. Upon his return to England Charles, like his brother, experienced a deep conversion. He accompanied his brother in an itinerant preaching ministry until 1747 when he married and settled in Bristol and then in London in 1771. He died in 1788.

The Methodist movement stressed a strong personal commitment to Jesus. Because this work was seen as a threat to the Church of England, the Wesleys preached and sang in open fields, on street corners and in the marketplaces. They openly opposed slavery and drunkenness. Hymn singing had an important place in the spiritual revival of which the Wesleys played so important a role. Charles Wesley wrote some 6,500 hymns, and is considered by many to have been the greatest hymn writer of all time. Many of his hymns are still sung today.

Thank God for Charles Wesley, the “Sweet Singer” of the Methodist movement, who has left us a legacy of wonderful music.

William Grimshaw: In Wesley's Footsteps

It seems improbable, but it often happens: a person becomes an ordained clergyman but has not experienced a relationship with Jesus Christ. In the past this happened because families encouraged their sons to become priests regardless of the state of their souls (perhaps in hopes that theological training would lead them to the Lord). In our day, it is more likely that a person with a good heart wanting to do good works thinks that serving as a clergyman is a good way to accomplish that.

William Grimshaw was born in 1708 and educated at Christ's College, Cambridge. Ordained in 1731, he served for some years as chaplain at Todmorden. Given to a worldly lifestyle, he eventually began to worry about his soul. Several more years went by before he had a conversion experience and gave his life to the Lord. At that point everything began to change.

In 1742 Grimshaw became curate at Haworth in west Yorkshire, and there he remained for the rest of his life. This was a rural area where it would not have been possible to attract large crowds, but Grimshaw preached there with great skill and enthusiasm. He invited to his pulpit the leaders of the spiritual awakening such as **John Wesley** and **George Whitfield**. He followed Wesley's practice of itinerant preaching, and had a great effect not only on his own parish but on the surrounding areas. His biographers claim that if he had pastored in a more populated place he would have been recognized as one of the greatest preachers of the Eighteenth Century.

Although he became involved in Wesley's work of supervising the Methodist societies that were emerging, and, as a result, was not welcome in many parishes, his sincerity and conscientious work kept him in good stead with his diocesan, the Archbishop of York.

Thank God for William Grimshaw who shared his considerable gifts with the humble, rural people of Yorkshire.

Perspective: Spiritual Awakenings

During the more recent centuries there have been periods of spiritual revival sometimes referred to as “awakenings.” These have been times when people have suddenly taken their faith more seriously and the result has been constructive Christian action in building schools and hospitals and undertaking a variety of social reforms. These awakenings have been accompanied by emotionalism and sometimes cult-like behaviors. Thus, while they have done much good, they have also been the subjects of criticism.

The period of the First Great Awakening occurred in the 1730s and afterward throughout the British Isles, in America and elsewhere. Itinerant preaching was the keystone of this revival, and **John Wesley** and **George Whitfield** were its central figures in England, with Whitfield also being involved in the awakening in America. **William Grimshaw** in England and **Howell Harris** in Wales were also important to this revival, as was **Jonathan Edwards** in the American colonies. The spiritual renewal that resulted in the colonies is thought to have had much to do with the American Revolution.

The Second Great Awakening covered the period 1790 to the mid 1800s. It apparently began with **Barton Stone** and the Cane Ridge Revival and was concentrated primarily in the rural areas of the United States.

Immediately prior to the Civil War in the United States there was what many have referred to as a Third Great Awakening. It seems to have begun with **Jeremiah Lanphier’s** call to prayer and also primarily affected the United States. In this case, however, the revival started in New York City and spread to American cities as well as rural areas.

Evan Roberts was the catalyst for the Welsh Revival in the late 1800s, which also affected England and other parts of the world. Pentecostalism and the Charismatic Renewal have been experienced around the world in more recent times.

Thank God for breaking into the hearts and minds of people in powerful ways to motivate them to serve others in his cause.

George Whitfield: Great Awakening

George Whitfield was the greatest preacher in an age of great preachers. He did not have the organizational ability of **John Wesley** and his only musical contribution was an alteration to **Charles Wesley's** *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*. But, in preaching he had no equal.

Whitfield was born the son of a poor Gloucestershire innkeeper in 1714 and entered Oxford in 1733. He came under the influence of the Wesleys' "Holy Club" but did not need to search introspectively for personal salvation to the extent the others were doing. Instead, following a near-fatal illness in 1735, he experienced a close personal relationship with Christ, and, at 22, was ordained in the Church of England, zealous to preach. Soon began a tumultuous career that found him preaching all over the British Isles and in America.

In 1738 Whitfield made the first of his seven extensive preaching tours of the American colonies. Specifically, his 1740 preaching in New England is credited with starting the "Great Awakening," a spiritual revival that swept the colonies and spread across the Christian world. Whitfield had a remarkable voice and a compelling presence that enraptured audiences wherever he went. It was he, not Wesley, who first preached in the open fields. Other clergymen were jealous of him, and he was seldom invited to share the pulpit in his native England.

Whitfield's preaching style was dynamic; he spoke with enthusiasm but in a plain, unadorned manner, often using colloquial expressions. His first success had been in reaching tough Bristol coal miners where 200 first heard him and soon 10,000 were showing up. He worked with **Howell Harris** in the Welsh revival, Whitfield preaching in English and Harris in Welsh. His final sermon in Boston drew some 23,000, reputed to be the largest crowd ever gathered in America and more people than the population of Boston at the time. Whitfield died in 1770 during a preaching tour in America.

Thank God for George Whitfield whose gift of preaching inspired the "Great Awakening."

Howell Harris: Welsh Lay Evangelist

As we have seen the flame of God's love passing from person to person down through the centuries, there have been shifts in the kinds of ministries of which the spiritual leaders have been a part. Initially, in the early church, there were itinerant preachers and lay people who were martyred for their faith. Then bishops and presbyters began to appear. Next came the monks and nuns whose lives were given to the Lord's service. The focus was again upon clergymen with the Reformation and that has continued. Now, we begin to see lay people once again surfacing in roles of prominence as servants of the Lord.

Howell Harris was born in Talgarth in 1714, the son of a farmer. He experienced conversion in 1735 and wanted to be a priest in the Church of England, but was four times refused ordination. He had a gift for preaching, however, and did not let the fact that he was a layman stand in the way.

Howell's preaching soon stirred revivals throughout south Wales. In 1739 he moved to Trevecca in north Wales and began a work of evangelism similar to what **George Whitfield** and the **Wesleys** were doing in England. In 1752 he turned his house into a center for revivalist activity.

Howell continued to preach while teaching school to earn a living. Those who opposed his message often threatened and attacked him. Eventually, the opposition forced him out of his teaching job. Although he wanted to work within the Church of England, he was not accepted and had to form "societies" for those who were converted through his efforts. These later became the Welsh Calvinist Methodist Church. Although no theologian, Howell's enthusiasm and magnetic personality led many to Christ. He died in 1773.

Thank God for Howell Harris who led the Welsh revival.

William Romain: London's Preacher

What the **Wesleys** accomplished throughout England, **George Whitfield** in England, Scotland and America and **Howell Harris** in Wales, William Romain did in London. What's more, he did it while remaining solidly within the Church of England.

Romain was born in 1714 and educated at Hart Hall and Christ Church, Oxford. He was ordained in 1736. In his early years of ministry, he aligned himself with the scholarly traditions of the Church of England and made a significant contribution with an edition of a Hebrew Concordance. He was a prominent lecturer in two London churches. Then, in 1755, he came under the influence of the preaching of Whitfield. His sermons took on a new fervor.

Romain's preaching attracted large numbers of poor and uneducated people whose presence in worship services was resented by affluent parishioners. As a result, he lost his lectureships. After serving briefly in several churches, he was appointed priest at St. Anne's, Blackfriars in 1766 where he remained until his death in 1795. He was an outstanding preacher and drew large crowds.

Although some frowned upon his evangelistic style, it met the needs of many others. It is said that when he died his friends planned a private funeral. Instead, thousands showed up. Fifty coaches followed the hearse and a great number of people walked along behind it. Some may have opposed him, but many Londoners loved and missed him.

Thank God for William Romain who brought the Gospel to multitudes in London.

David Brainerd: Youthful Missionary

It is amazing what God can do. In this case, he turned a rascal into an inspired missionary to the Native Americans in the northeast in the early Eighteenth Century.

David Brainerd was born in 1718 at Haddam, Connecticut. Orphaned at 14, he studied under tutors before going to Yale where he was dismissed in his junior year for misbehavior. Among other things, he had shown disrespect for the faculty. Once the Lord took charge of his life, however, he became an entirely different person.

Ordained a Presbyterian minister in 1744, Brainerd undertook a dangerous and exhausting mission to the Delawares, Senecas and others in the Massachusetts wilderness, New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania. He traveled by horseback and preached through an interpreter, Moses Tinda Tautamy. After many failures, his interpreter (allegedly an alcoholic) was converted, and the change in him led to many other conversions.

Brainerd soon contracted tuberculosis, however. He continued bravely about his work until his health so declined that he had to be bedridden. He was nursed for 19 weeks in the home of **Jonathan Edwards**, by his fiancé, Jerusha, Edwards' daughter. He died there in 1747 at 29.

Thank God for David Brainerd, a brave young man who gave his life as a missionary to the American Indians.

Isaac Backus: Early Christian Lobbyist

When Christians think about the issue of separation of church and state in our day, we tend to think the courts have carried the principle too far. On questions related to prayer in school, for instance, many Christians believe the Supreme Court has carried the principle to an extreme. Likewise, we tend to be suspicious of lobbyists who try to influence legislation on behalf of private interests. As a result, it would be easy to question the inclusion in this book of a man who, in the early days of this nation, lobbied for separation of church and state, but that is exactly what Isaac Backus did.

Backus was born into a wealthy family in Norwich, Connecticut in 1724. Influenced by **George Whitfield**, he gave his life to Christ at seventeen, became an itinerant evangelist and then a Baptist minister. Freedom of religion was the motivating cause in his life. He had planted a Baptist church in Middleborough, Massachusetts, and resented the state tax that supported the Congregational Church in New England. He therefore fought for separation of church and state in Massachusetts and at the Continental Congress, lobbying for religion freedom. Working for his cause brought him into conflict with John Adams and in contact with John Hancock and other leading figures in colonial America.

To champion his cause, Backus wrote tracts, drew up petitions and carried on a constant war of words in newspapers, public debates and personal letters. His tract *An Appeal to the Public for Religious Liberty Against the Oppression of the Present Day* was published in 1773 and became the standard for the Eighteenth Century evangelical position on the doctrine of separation of church and state. Backus lived to see the founding of this nation and the adoption of the First Amendment, guaranteeing religious freedom.

It is estimated that Backus traveled some 67,000 miles on horseback and preached as many as 10,000 sermons during the sixty years of his ministry. He died in 1806.

Thank God for Isaac Backus who fought for religious freedom during the formative years of this nation.

Thomas Webb: Early Circuit Rider

Thomas Webb's life was another example of a complete turnaround brought about by God. He had been an English soldier, was badly wounded in North America, and experienced conversion in Bristol when he returned to England.

Webb was born in 1724. He was shot in the head in 1759 at the Battle of Louisburg during the French and Indian War. His comrades thought he was dead, but three months later he was fit again, sporting a patch over his left eye. He was retired from the army on a captain's pay.

About 1764 he was converted under the preaching of **John Wesley** and became a missionary to the American colonies where he was one of the first Methodist circuit-riding preachers. He was renowned for his enthusiastic preaching along the eastern seaboard from 1766 until his death in 1796.

Webb traveled widely during this time, including periodic trips back to England where he would encourage the Wesley to send more missionaries to America. At one point he apparently helped build the John Street Church in New York City. It was the first Methodist chapel in the city and is considered the mother church of Methodism in America.

Thank God for Thomas Webb who became God's "captain" of souls in the American colonies.

John Newton: Amazing Grace

When considering the change that God can make in a person's life, perhaps the classic example is John Newton. He went from a debauched slave trader to a dearly loved priest who wrote magnificent hymns and sought an end to slavery.

Newton was born in 1725, the son of a ship's captain. He received little education and served on his father's ship from 1737 to 1742. He was pressed into the English navy where he made midshipman but later tried to escape. From there he became a mate and then master of a slave ship. There are shocking stories of how degraded a life he lived, but during this time he did educate himself. On one occasion he read a Christian book and began to wonder if the claims of the faith were true. Then his ship was caught in so violent a storm that he did not believe it would survive. When it did, he undertook to read the Bible and was converted.

Newton studied Greek and Hebrew and, in 1755, sought ordination in the Church of England. Although initially denied, he was later ordained (1764) and given a parish in Olney. In 1767, **William Cowper** became a member of his parish; the two became good friends and cooperated in publishing a book of hymns. Newton was not a great preacher, but his people loved him. He held special worship services for children and senior citizens, teaching the Bible and singing hymns of his own composition.

Perhaps Newton's most famous hymn is *Amazing Grace*. It is, in brief, his autobiography. His tombstone (containing words of his choice) also tells his story: "John Newton, clerk, once an infidel and Libertine, a servant of slavers in Africa, was, by the rich mercy of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, preserved, restored, pardoned, and appointed to preach the faith he had so long labored to destroy."

Thank God for John Newton who truly experienced amazing grace and left us the words and music that remind us of our own need for God's amazing grace.

William Cowper: Impaired Poet

We have seen God doing amazing things in the lives of people over the last several readings. God takes what we are willing to give him and does with it what he can. In the case of William Cowper he took someone who was mentally ill and made him into one of the great poets of his time.

Cowper was born in 1731 in Hertfordshire, England. His father was rector of a parish and his mother was related to the family of **John Donne**. His mother died when he was six, and he was sent to a boarding school where he was bullied and suffered a nervous inflammation of the eyes. Several well-meaning people sought to help him, and he was eventually trained in law. However, when an appointment to an administrative post serving the House of Lords was offered him that would require his taking the bar examination, he tried to commit suicide.

Cowper was confined for 18 months in an asylum at St. Albans, and during this time dealt with his religious doubts. In the following years, others sought to help him, but he continued to have fits of depression and other signs of mental illness. Yet, out of his pain came some of his best poetry.

In 1767 he went to live at Olney where **John Newton**, with whom he had become acquainted, was the parish priest. They became close friends and, at Newton's suggestion, put together a collection of poems, the *Olney Hymns*. For a time, when Cowper was going through one of his bouts with mental illness, he lived with Newton. Cowper had found Christ through reading the Bible and discovered that hymn writing was the best therapy for his illness. He continued to fight the problem all of his life and died in 1800. Some of his hymns are still sung today.

Thank God for William Cowper who coped with mental illness as best he could and, as a result, passed on to the rest of us beautiful poems and hymns.

Robert Raikes: Sunday School Instigator

Some of the greatest Christians down through the centuries have been those who saw a pressing need and met it. Robert Raikes, though a wealthy and privileged citizen himself, had sensitivity for the needs of others and did something about it.

Raikes was born in 1736 in Gloucester, England. He was from an affluent family, his father being editor of the *Gloucester Journal*. Raikes succeeded to that position himself in 1757 when he was only 22 years old. The first concern he dealt with had to do with conditions in the local jail. Not only did he use his newspaper to publicize the plight of the prisoners, but he also raised money toward improving their conditions, visited them, and read to them.

His next focus was the children of the poor. In the days before child labor laws, these youngsters worked in factories six days a week and ran wild on Sundays. This led Raikes to experiment with a Sunday school. He hired Christian women to give instruction in reading and church catechism to the children on Sundays. The program was so successful that Raikes publicized the results in his newspaper, and the word spread throughout England.

In 1785 the Sunday School Society was formed, and four years later Sunday schools were started in Wales. Although the original form of Sunday schools changed over the years (as they became a part of the Sunday worship program in parishes), the movement started by Raikes has resulted in better Christian education for millions in the years that have followed. Raikes died in 1811.

Thank God for Robert Raikes who gave birth to the Sunday school movement.

Augustus Toplady: Rock of Ages

Your author had occasion some years ago to visit a friend who is vicar of the parish church in England where Augustus Toplady had been vicar two centuries before. He took my wife and me to the place from which Toplady had gained inspiration for his greatest hymn. The story is that the priest was about his parish calls on horseback when a torrential downpour occurred. To protect himself, he climbed into the cleft of a huge rock until the rain had subsided.

Augustus Montague Toplady was born in 1740 at Farnham, England. He did not have a happy childhood: his father died, his mother spoiled him, he was sickly, and his relatives did not like him. At an early age, however, he became interested in the Christian faith, began writing hymns and was converted at 16. In 1762 he was ordained in the Church of England.

In his time, Toplady was best known for his disputes with **John Wesley**. Toplady was a staunch Calvinist, whereas Wesley was Arminian in his theology. Toplady wrote articles accusing Wesley of all sorts of shoddy thinking and calling him by insulting names. In 1776, however, he wrote a magazine article in which he pointed out that people could never satisfy the eternal justice of God through their own efforts. He concluded the article with the words of his great hymn *Rock of Ages*. Toplady knew that for his sins he “could not atone; Thou must save, and Thou alone.”

Toplady died in 1778, only 38 years old. Two years earlier he had published a hymnal in which *Rock of Ages* and **Charles Wesley's** *Jesus, Lover of My Soul* appear side by side.

Thank God for Augustus Toplady who, although of a feisty temperament, gave Christianity perhaps its most popular hymn.

Francis Asbury: Steadfast as a Wall of Brass

He was small of stature but great of heart. Francis Asbury became the moving force of Methodism in the American colonies.

He was born in 1745 near Birmingham, England, the son of a humble yeoman and a devout Welsh mother. At 14 he experienced conversion and began to attend meetings for Bible reading and prayers. Although his education was limited, he was licensed as a local preacher. He was admitted to the Wesleyan Conference at 21 and served as an itinerant preacher for four years. When **John Wesley** asked for volunteers to go to America, Asbury answered immediately.

Asbury arrived in Philadelphia in 1771 and never returned home. He began preaching wherever people would listen: in inns, taverns, prisons, and in the open fields. With authority from Wesley, he began to supervise the Methodist movement. He was of rock solid character, determined to stand against all opposition “steadfast as a wall of brass.” When the Revolutionary War began and many Englishmen returned home, Asbury decided that independence was only a matter of time and remained. The Methodist Episcopal Church was formed in 1784, and Asbury was elected bishop.

He was not a well-educated man nor was he a great preacher. Yet, over the years until his death in 1816, he made amazing progress. When he arrived in America, there were only three Methodist meeting houses with about 300 communicants. At his death there were 412 Methodist societies with a membership of over 200,000. He ordained more than 4,000 preachers, traveled approximately 240,000 miles (mostly on horseback, and over rough terrain) and preached more than 16,500 sermons.

Thank God for Francis Asbury who spread God’s word in the early days of America.

Hannah More: Social Reformer

Miss More was a noted English playwright and poet. She was born the next to youngest of five daughters of Jacob More in 1745 near Bristol. Her father was a school teacher, and when his elder daughters established a boarding school at Bristol, Hannah, at 12 years of age, became one of their students. She soon displayed literary talent, writing her first play in 1762. She was engaged to be married to a Mr. Turner, but the wedding plans were canceled. However, without her knowledge, Turner had established an annuity in her behalf that resulted in her financial independence.

Hannah More went to London in 1772 or 1773 to begin her literary career. She was a clever poet and engaging conversationalist and quickly gained acceptance among the literary elite of her day, including Samuel Johnson, Horace Walpole and Edmund Burke. She was soon recognized as an accomplished poet and playwright.

A pious evangelical, Miss More's faith was the primary focus of her life. She became a force for popular education and social change at a time when England was suffering from poverty and decadence. Much of her writing was aimed at touching the social conscience of the nation. She was a friend of **William Wilberforce** and wrote a poem on the evils of slavery in 1788.

The plight of the poor children in the mining districts of the Mendip Hills was a great concern of More's, and she was tireless in her philanthropic work on their behalf. This angered the farmers of the area who thought that popular education, even when limited to learning to read, would be fatal to agriculture. The clergy of the area opposed her because she was assuming their responsibilities (which they were neglecting) by her philanthropic efforts. Hannah More is remembered as a woman of great faith, talent, and grace who helped lead the revolution in personal morals that transformed England. She died in 1833.

Thank God for Hannah More, her social conscience and Christian leadership.

Absalom Jones: Against All Odds

He was born in 1746 and raised as a domestic slave on a plantation in Delaware. His natural wit and charm earned him the affection of those who knew him, while his sincerity gained their respect. Using the meager tips he received for his work, he bought himself a primer, a spelling book and a New Testament. Thus began a search for knowledge that would be the hallmark of his life.

At sixteen years of age, he, his mother, five brothers and one sister were sold to a family in Philadelphia. The advantages of being in a city further stimulated his desire to learn and to be able to correspond with his loved ones. He went to night school and studied theology under the Episcopal Bishop **William White** who ordained him as a clergyman. Against all odds, he married, bought a house and land; and, at 37 years of age, gained freedom from slavery.

Jones wanted to minister to a congregation, but Philadelphia's "white" churches were not open to him. As a result, he founded St. Thomas Church for Americans of African descent. The congregation grew to over 500 members in its first year.

Absalom Jones was regarded as an exemplary minister and a capable Bible teacher. An earnest preacher, he denounced slavery and warned against its continued practice. He had, nonetheless, a mild manner and was a dedicated pastor. He was greatly loved by his congregation and by the community he served. He proved that, by the grace of God, a slave who had an indomitable spirit could overcome otherwise insurmountable obstacles and preach the gospel effectively to his people. He died in 1818.

Thank God for Absalom Jones who showed what God could do with a person who, despite his humble birth, is willing to learn and desires to serve him.

Thomas Coke: Wesley's Trusted Companion

We think nothing of Transatlantic crossings in our day. It was a different situation in the 1700s, yet Thomas Coke made nine trips across the Atlantic during the course of his ministry. On one of them, he and Methodist missionaries were headed for Nova Scotia yet ended up on Antigua in the Carribean! Undaunted, they planted a Methodist church there; and, by the time of Coke's death in 1814, there were over 17,000 Methodists in the islands.

Thomas Coke was born in 1747 in Brecon, Wales. He received his Doctor of Laws degree from Oxford before being ordained a priest in the Church of England in 1772. However, because of Methodist sympathies, he lost his parish position and offered his services to **John Wesley** in 1776. Wesley used Coke, because of his legal background, in drafting documents toward the formation of Methodist organizations in England and America. Over the years Coke became Wesley's most trusted companion.

After becoming Superintendent of the London circuit in 1780 and serving in Ireland (he chaired the Irish Conference in 1782), Coke was ordained by Wesley as Superintendent for the first American Methodist Episcopal Church, and it was in America that Coke's ministry had its greatest impact. Coke's first trip to America was in response to an appeal for ordained clergy who could administer the sacraments among the Methodist societies that were rapidly forming. Coke joined with **Francis Asbury** (the only English missionary who remained in America during the Revolution) to establish the Methodist Episcopal Church at the Christmas Conference of 1784.

In subsequent trips to America, Coke dealt with organizational disputes, trying to keep the congregations in line with Wesley's leadership. In later trips (during the period 1796-1803), Coke sensed that the American Church no longer needed English oversight. A dedicated evangelist, Coke planted churches all over the world, sometimes at great personal expense. He died aboard ship on his way to launch a mission in India.

Thank God for Thomas Coke and the vital role he played in establishing the Methodist Church in America.

William White: American Bishop

Anglican clergymen were in a difficult position leading up to, during, and immediately following the Revolutionary War. Many were Englishmen, ordained in England and sent to the colonies. If their loyalty remained with England, they would be unacceptable to those who fought for freedom from England. William White was right in the middle of this dilemma.

White was born in 1748 in Philadelphia, but was ordained in England in 1772. In 1776 he returned to Philadelphia to be rector of Christ Church, where he remained for 60 years. He was very much a patriot and served as chaplain to the Continental Congress. He altered the wording of the Anglican worship service to fit the circumstances of the new nation.

During and after the American Revolution, the Anglican Church was demoralized and in disarray. It could be thought traitorous just to be a member of a church so completely tied to England. White took the lead in reorganizing Anglicanism into the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States. He drafted the first constitution for the new church body and prepared an American version of the *Book of Common Prayer*. In 1786 he was elected Bishop of Pennsylvania and became the first American bishop consecrated in the English line at Canterbury in 1787. He then became the first Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church.

White was a quiet and scholarly man who had a special sensitivity to human need. He was president of the Philadelphia Dispensary that made medical supplies available to the poor; of the Philadelphia Institute for the Deaf and Dumb; and of the Philadelphia Society for Alleviating Miseries in Public Prisons. He died in 1836.

Thank God for William White who helped maintain an Anglican Church presence in the United States and who had a heart for the poor and disadvantaged.

William Wilberforce: Opponent of Slavery

From the age of 14 William Wilberforce is said to have hated the practice of slavery, and it took him all of his life to do something about it. But do something he did!

Born in 1759 in Hull, England of an old Yorkshire family, Wilberforce was educated at St. John's College, Cambridge. He was not an outstanding student but was charming and tactful and had the talents of a good politician. He was left extremely well off financially by a grandfather, and was elected to Parliament in 1780. He was a close friend of William Pitt and became renowned for his parliamentary diplomacy and his ability to influence political leaders.

In the meantime, he became a deeply committed Christian layman. At one point he considered studying for the priesthood, but became convinced that he could better serve Christ as a politician. His good friend **John Newton** helped him in that decision. Wilberforce became the leader of the "Clapham Sect," named after a small hamlet outside of London where prominent evangelical Christians met to discuss the issues of the day. Out of this group sprang the Church Missionary Society, the British and Foreign Bible Society, the Society for Bettering the Condition of the Poor, and the Society for the Reformation of Prison Discipline.

But Wilberforce's major effort was in opposing slavery. In 1807, after 20 years of hard work, Parliament outlawed the trading of slaves in the British Empire. Then, in 1823, the Anti-slavery Society was formed with Wilberforce as vice president. It took another ten years before the enactment of the Emancipation Act that gradually phased out slavery in England's colonies. The Act became law a month after Wilberforce's death in 1833.

Thank God for William Wilberforce who gave his life for many worthy causes, but none more important than his opposition to slavery.

Charles Simeon: Cambridge Chaplain

One of the most powerful and effective ministries is that of teaching. A gifted Christian teacher can influence generations of people. That is certainly what Charles Simeon did.

Simeon was born in Reading, England in 1759. He was educated at Eton and King's College, Cambridge. In 1783 he was made rector of Holy Trinity Church at the heart of Cambridge (and, thus, chaplain of the university). There he remained for the rest of his life.

He was one of the foremost evangelicals of his day, having had a deep personal experience of the Lord in his undergraduate days. Yet he remained a dedicated member of the Church of England, devoted to its liturgy and discipline. Simeon had difficulties in his early days as chaplain at Cambridge because of this apparent dilemma. Although his position was reasonable and appropriate, he drew criticism from both "High Church" Catholic Anglicans and Evangelical Anglicans. He was ridiculed and his worship services were noisily interrupted. He was even threatened with physical abuse. He stood his ground and eventually his bright mind, dynamic preaching and compassionate pastoral skills won over both the city and the academic community.

Simeon helped found the Church Missionary Society in 1799, the British and Foreign Bible Society and the Society for Promoting Christianity Among the Jews. He had a heart for missionary work, especially in India, and persuaded his curate, **Henry Martyn**, and others among his best students to undertake the work. Simeon was a great student of Scripture, and led many to discover its relevance in their lives. He was a teacher who left an indelible mark upon Cambridge and influenced many religious and secular leaders of his day. He died in 1836.

Thank God for Charles Simeon who stood for what he believed, and, as a result, was a force for good in the lives of many Christians for many years.

Perspective: Foreign Missions

Kenneth Scott Latourette is perhaps the premier Christian historian on the subject of foreign missions. He concluded that, over the centuries, the efforts of Christians to take the gospel to foreign lands can be seen in a series of advances and recessions. Fortunately, the advances have all set a new high water mark, have ascended more rapidly and lasted longer, and each recession has been shorter in its duration and less severe in its losses.

The first great missionary efforts began prior to 500 (followed by a decline that lasted until about 950). **Paul** was, of course, the greatest missionary and the model of missionary endeavor. He evangelized much of Asia Minor, the primary Greek cities and Rome. His example led to huge gains in Christendom up until and following the time of **Constantine**. **Martin** and **Patrick** are also examples of effective evangelists in the period before 500.

The second wave of missionary advancement occurred roughly during the period 950 to 1350 (followed by a decline from 1350 until 1500). During the latter half of the Middle Ages, the conversion of Europe was completed, progress was made in Russia, and missions were begun to the Islamic nations. **Dominic** formed his Order of Preachers during this time.

The third advance lasted from 1500 until approximately 1750 (with a recession from then until 1815). **Francis Xavier** and his mission to Asia was key during this period of advance.

The fourth advance began in about 1815. Following the Reformation, the Protestant churches had been slow to undertake missions. It was during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries that they became actively involved. **William Carey** led the way, followed by **Henry Martyn**, **Robert Morrison**, **Adoniram Judson**, **Robert** and **Mary Moffat**, **David Livingstone**, **Hudson Taylor**, **Lottie Moon**, **Mary Slessor**, **Amy Carmichael** and **Gladys Aylward**. The Protestant age of missions had dawned!

Thank God for those who have made such great sacrifices to take the gospel to foreign lands.

William Carey: Father of Modern Missions

He was a man of limited education and talent. He was trained as a shoemaker and didn't succeed at that. He apparently had an unhappy marriage and his baby daughter died. Nothing seemed to work out for William Carey, yet his vision and perseverance led him to become known as the Father of Modern Missions.

Carey was born in 1761 at Northamptonshire, England, the son of a parish clerk and schoolmaster. He was converted through the efforts of a fellow apprentice shoemaker in 1779. He dissented from the established (Church of England) church and received a believer's baptism in 1783. He became pastor of a Baptist church in 1789. He was greatly influenced by the theology of **Jonathan Edwards** that placed emphasis on mission.

In Carey's day, the popular theological position was that only the first apostles were called to "preach the Gospel to every creature," but Carey believed the call applied to all Christians. He wrote an 87-page tract on the subject in 1792 that was opposed by many of the clergy but became one of the most important Christian documents since Luther's *95 Theses*. In the same year he preached a sermon in which he urged Christians to "expect great things from God and attempt great things for God."

Accordingly, in 1792, the Baptist Missionary Society was founded and Carey and his family sailed for India the following year. Over the years until his death in 1834, Carey worked tirelessly for Indian converts. He supervised six complete and 24 partial translations of the Bible plus publishing several grammars, dictionaries and other translations of useful books. He started mission schools, promoted agricultural development, and undertook many humanitarian efforts to improve the conditions in India. He opened the door for the major missionary efforts that followed.

Thank God for William Carey who took what he had and made the most of it, opening the way for the conversion of the world to Christ.

Barton Stone: Kentucky Revivalist

Barton Stone had a long and somewhat controversial ministry, but he is best known for what started in his church: the Cain Ridge Revival.

Stone was born in 1773 in Port Tobacco, Maryland. He received a classical education at a private academy run by a Presbyterian minister. Converted to Christ at nineteen, he felt called to ordination in the Presbyterian Church and he was licensed to preach in 1796. Following a short time of preaching in North Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia, he began preaching for the Presbyterian congregations in Cain Ridge and Concord, Kentucky. Over the years, Stone remained uneasy in his relationship with the Presbyterian Church. He had questions about traditional Calvinist doctrines such as predestination.

Following the Revolutionary War, there was a great falling away from the Christian faith in America. There was rampant alcoholism, and Deism and Universalism dominated the religious scene. However, in 1801 Stone participated in a revival in Logan County, Kentucky and was impressed with the happenings that occurred there, believing them to be manifestations of the Holy Spirit. As a result, he prepared for a camp meeting in his church in Cain Ridge in August of that year. There would be three days of preaching and worship in a church that could only hold 500 people. A large tent was set up to accommodate the crowd, but it was inadequate to handle the thousands of people who showed up! After three days, the food supplies were exhausted, but some people remained for several days later and others showed up. There were thousands of conversions, and the Cain Ridge Revival became one of the most famous Christian gatherings in American history. Christianity was once again on the move in the new nation.

Tension grew, however, between revivalists and the Presbyterian Synod of Kentucky. Ultimately, Stone and others became united with the Campbellites to form what became known as the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Barton Stone died in 1844.

Thank God for Barton Stone who had the courage to host the Cain Ridge Revival that helped renew the Church at a time when it was languishing.

John Henry Hobart: Anglican Revivalist

Anglican congregations in the United States were in a tough spot following the Revolutionary War because of their ties to the Church of England. The first two decades after the war have been described as a time of suspended animation for Anglicans. Into this situation came John Henry Hobart.

Hobart was born in Philadelphia in 1775. He graduated from Princeton in 1793. He was a longtime friend of **William White** who ordained him a priest in the Episcopal Church in 1801. Following a time serving churches in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and on Long Island, he became an assistant at Trinity Church in New York City. In 1816 he became rector of Trinity Church and Bishop of New York.

Hobart was a high-energy person who was dedicated to the revival of the languishing Episcopal Church. Within his first four years as bishop, he doubled the number of clergy and quadrupled the number of missionaries. By the time of his death in 1830, he had planted a church in almost every major town in New York State and had begun missionary work among the Oneida Indians. He was one of the founders of General Theological Seminary in New York and helped revive Geneva College, which became Hobart College in his honor.

Ever the educator, Hobart was also a well-loved and loving bishop, very personable, and always available. He was one of the first American churchmen to produce tracts for the laity. Many believe that, upon his visit to Oxford, the personal impression he made on church leaders there led to the Tractarian Movement in England, a major force for revival at the time. He was remembered for his staunch faith, personal integrity, high energy, and missionary zeal.

Thank God for John Henry Hobart, an example of what an ordained church leader should be.

Elizabeth Fry: Concern for Women Prisoners

From my childhood I remember a very large framed etching of a woman reading from a Bible to women prisoners. It hung in my grandparents' dining room and it was captioned: Elizabeth Fry at Newgate Prison.

Fry was born Elizabeth Gurney in 1780, the daughter of a prominent Norwich, England family who were members of the Society of Friends (Quakers). Her mother died when she was 12 and Elizabeth suffered from ill health and self-doubts. When she was 18 she was deeply affected by a sermon delivered by a visiting Quaker from America. From that time on, she gave her life to the Lord and began to serve him in many ways.

In 1800 she married Joseph Fry, a London merchant, and the couple eventually had 11 children. During the early years of the marriage, however, Elizabeth became increasingly involved in Quaker matters. In 1811 she was recognized as a Quaker minister. In 1813 she visited nearby Newgate prison and became appalled at the treatment of women prisoners. Her first work was to visit the unruly, violent and profane women, seeking some way to bring meaning into their lives. She organized a team of 12 women who would enter the prison daily and read the Bible to the prisoners while they were being trained to sew. She then appointed monitors to supervise small classes of fellow-prisoners. As a result, life in the prison was transformed. The women were being trained for a useful occupation as well as hearing the word of God through Scripture readings.

Fry's success placed her in demand throughout the Continent, and she began to travel widely both as a Quaker minister and as a leader in prison reform. She became a model for women in the area of Christian philanthropy. She died in 1845.

Thank God for Elizabeth Fry who became a champion of prison reform and a model for women in ministry.

Thomas Chalmers: Theological Sociology

It is not unusual, of course, for clergymen to be concerned about social problems and the meeting of human needs. They typically are compassionate people or never would have been able to hear the Lord's call to ordained service in the first place. Many, as a result, have been in the forefront of constructive social change. Thomas Chalmers is a good example.

Chalmers was born in Fife, Scotland in 1780. He was ordained a minister in the Church of Scotland in 1803. After a conversion experience in 1811, he developed strong evangelical leanings. He served two churches in Glasgow from 1815 to 1823. He insisted that the parish system could cope with the changes being forced on the city by the industrial revolution. He revived the office of deacon, and found the support of an enthusiastic group of laymen. He sent them out systematically, area by area, establishing schools and Sunday schools. He believed that the parish itself could meet the needs of the poor.

Chalmers was one of the great preachers of his day. When he visited London in 1817, **William Wilberforce** said that the world was wild about Chalmers. In 1823 he became professor of moral theology at St. Andrews University, and in 1828 became professor of divinity at Edinburgh. He was a great supporter of foreign missions and raised large sums of money for starting new churches. Because of his revolutionary ideas concerning social reform, he is considered one of the founders of modern sociology.

Chalmers is also known for the leading part he played in disputes over the independence of the Church. He believed in independence from civil interference for the Church and the right of the local congregation to call the person who would be its ordained minister. This led to the founding of the Free Church of Scotland in 1843, and Chalmers served as its first moderator. He died in 1847.

Thank God for Thomas Chalmers who organized his congregation so as to minister effectively to human need, and who was a prophetic voice for freedom of worship and social change.

Henry Martyn: Missionary to India and Persia

Henry Martyn is an excellent example of a young man who was deeply influenced by the outstanding Christians of his day. He became interested in missionary work initially through the writings of **David Brainerd**. Then he was curate and friend of **Charles Simeon**, whose special missionary focus was India. Soon Martyn became a missionary to India, and when he arrived at Calcutta in 1805 he was met by **William Carey**.

Martyn was born in Cornwall, England in 1781. He was from a well-to-do family, and received his education at St. John's College, Cambridge, where he was an outstanding student. There he became a friend of Simeon's and, after ordination, served as Simeon's curate at Trinity Church. In 1805 he became chaplain for the East India Company and sailed to India. There he served a church in Calcutta.

Martyn accomplished a great deal during the remainder of his short life. He translated the entire New Testament into Hindi and into Persian twice. He translated the Psalms into Persian, the Gospels into Judaeo-Persian, and the Prayer Book into Hindustani. He traveled extensively, preaching, teaching, and helping people in need.

As Martyn's health began to fail, he traveled to Persia in 1811. After an unsuccessful attempt to present his translation of the New Testament to the shah in Tabriz, he became ill and had to seek a change of climate. He set out for Asia Minor and reached Tokat (in modern Turkey) where he died at 31.

Thank God for Henry Martyn who followed the lead of fellow Christians and became an effective missionary in India and Persia.

Robert Morrison: Opening the Door

Dedicated individuals came forward as the age of foreign missions continued. They didn't have the means of modern communications that we have today. In a sense, they had no idea what they were getting into. Yet, if that was what God was calling them to do, these heroes of the faith went forward in confidence. Robert Morrison was one of these.

Morrison was born of Scottish parents at Butler's Green, near Morpeth, in 1782. He was educated at Newcastle and trained as a last maker. However, he had become a Christian at 15, and spent his spare time studying theology. In 1803 he was received into the Independent academy at Hoxton. In 1807 he went to Canton, China under the auspices of the London Missionary Society. He became a translator for the East India Company's factory there in 1809.

Morrison prepared a *Chinese Grammar* and a translation of the New Testament, both published in 1814. In 1818, working with William Milne, he completed a translation of the Old Testament. In 1820 he founded an Anglo-Chinese college for the training of native Chinese evangelists who could carry on Christian work without interference. Later he began a Chinese commentary on the Bible and other Christian literature.

When it came to converting the Chinese to Christianity, however, it is said that Morrison had little success. Nonetheless, in addition to his significant translations, he also opened a medical dispensary and trained a native Chinese in the European methods of treatment. He is regarded as the forerunner of modern medical missions as well as the first Protestant missionary to China who opened the door to those who would follow. He died in 1834.

Thank God for Robert Morrison who was a pioneer Christian missionary to China.

Phoebe Hinsdale Brown: America's First Woman Hymnist

Unfortunately, many Christians find it difficult to give God just a few minutes a day for prayer and Bible study. Quiet time with God should be the most important time of the day, but too few people give it the priority it deserves. Phoebe Brown was even accused of ulterior motives for her “twilight rambles.”

Phoebe Hinsdale Brown was born in New York State in 1783. She was orphaned at an early age and grew up in the home of her married sister. There was much deprivation in her childhood. She was not allowed to attend school and did not learn to read or write until she was an adult. When she married at 22, it was to a house painter who, though a fine man, was poor. Several children were born to the couple.

Phoebe’s days were filled with domestic activities. There seemed to be little time for quiet devotion and prayer. Her one opportunity was to take twilight walks to a beautiful garden on the edge of an estate that was nearby. This was the only time she could steal a few minutes to be alone with God. The mistress of the estate observed her, assumed improper motives, and became openly critical. She was so heartbroken by this attitude she wrote “My Apology for My Twilight Rambles” and sent it to the woman.

Apparently it was on those twilight rambles that she received the inspiration to write hymns. One was “The Hymn of a Wounded Spirit” which was included in *Village Hymns*, published some seven years later. Brown is considered to have been America’s first woman hymn writer. Having spent her life under such limiting circumstances, she prayed that one of her children would be able to become a missionary. That prayer was answered when her son Samuel became the first American missionary to Japan.

Thank God for Phoebe Brown whose quiet time with the Lord produced hymns to the glory of God and a son who served as a missionary.

Adoniram Judson: Missionary to Burma

The New World, which had received missionaries from the Old World, soon became a sending station for world mission. An example is Adoniram Judson, a Massachusetts-born missionary to Burma.

Judson was born in Malden in 1788, the son of a clergyman. He graduated from Brown University in 1807, and then studied theology at the newly opened Andover Theological Seminary, an evangelical center. He dedicated himself to foreign missions and helped establish the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. The Board sent him and others to India as missionaries in 1812. Judson and his wife decided to be Baptists after making a study of baptism and were immersed. They then left the sponsorship of the American Board and traveled to Rangoon, Burma in 1813.

After becoming accustomed to the culture of the Burmese people, Judson began his evangelism efforts in 1819 by public preaching. He mastered the Burmese language and learned Pali, the Buddhist canonical language. Within two years he had baptized 18 converts and established a Burmese church. His Burmese-English Dictionary was first published in 1826, but was revised continually until the end of his life. He completed the Burmese Bible in 1834. He also founded schools and trained preachers.

It was no an easy road, however. In 1824 the British invaded Burma, and Judson was imprisoned as a spy. He was incarcerated for two years, during which time he suffered extreme torture. His heroic wife died a few months after his release. He married two more times in subsequent years, continuing a productive ministry. He died in 1850 at sea on the Indian Ocean. From his missionary efforts arose a Baptist Christian community of some 500,000.

Thank God for Adoniram Judson, early American missionary to Burma.

Jackson Kemper: Missionary Bishop

He was the first Missionary Bishop of the Episcopal Church and one of its greatest. At a time when Episcopal clergy tended to come from wealthy eastern families and were unaccustomed to the pioneer spirit that was leading America westward, Jackson Kemper was an exception. He came from a prominent family, being born in Pleasant Valley, New York in 1789, but he came to be known as the Bishop of the Whole Northwest.

Kemper was educated at Columbia College. He was a pupil of **John Henry Hobart** and, after ordination to the Episcopal priesthood in 1814, served as assistant to Bishop **William White** at Christ Church, Philadelphia. In 1835 the General Convention of the Episcopal Church provided for the appointment of missionary bishops, and Kemper was the first chosen. He was sent into the wilds of Indiana and Missouri where he found but one church in each state. By 1850, through Kemper's efforts, both areas were flourishing with churches.

After Kemper toured the South and Southwest and found the church already prospering, he set his sights on the Northwest and established his base in Wisconsin. Discerning how difficult it was for easterners to deal with harsh frontier life, Kemper realized he would have to train western men for the priesthood. With help from **James Lloyd Breck**, he founded Nashotah Seminary in Wisconsin to provide clergy for the missionary activities he oversaw in Iowa, Illinois and Minnesota.

Kemper was devoted to beauty in ritual and worship. He was a man of great vision and inexhaustible energy. From 1859 until his death in 1870, he served as Bishop of Wisconsin.

Thank God for Jackson Kemper who set aside the comfortable life he could have lived in the East to become Bishop of the Whole Northwest.

Charlotte Elliott: Just As I Am

An excuse some people use for failing to give their life to Jesus Christ is that they are simply too sinful to be forgiven. As they reflect on who they are and what they have done, they find it hard to believe that God could forgive them. Such was the case with Charlotte Elliott.

Elliott was born in Clapham, England in 1789. As a young woman, she had a lot going for her. She was a gifted portrait artist and a writer of humorous verse. But, in 1821, she experienced an illness that left her an invalid and greatly depressed. A well-known evangelist of the time, Dr. Caesar Malan of Switzerland, came to visit her. When he asked her if she were at peace with God, she resented the question and refused to talk about her spiritual condition. Shortly afterwards, she went to Dr. Malan to apologize to him. She indicated that she wanted to clean up her life before becoming a Christian. Malan didn't hesitate; he told her to come "just as you are." She gave her life to the Lord that very day.

In the following years, Charlotte Elliott wrote many hymns. She assisted in the compilation of *The Invalid's Hymn Book* in 1834. The sixth edition of the book, published in 1854, contained 100 of her hymns. Many more of her hymns were printed before she died in 1871.

However, it was the hymn she wrote fourteen years after the day of her conversion for which she is best known. It has saved the souls of many who thought they had wandered too far from the care of the Good Shepherd, and it was based on the words of Dr. Malan to her. It is often the invitational hymn at revivals and crusades in our day: "Just As I Am, Without One Plea."

Thank God for Charlotte Elliott who came to God just as she was and was inspired to share her story in one of the greatest hymns of all time.

Perspective: The Oxford Movement

There was disruption within Protestantism during the first half of the Nineteenth Century. Some believers were moving toward a broader interpretation of Scripture in light of scientific revelations, while others moved in the opposite direction toward fundamentalism. In England, Anglicans were dealing with this divisive issue as well as the drift away from an important part of its catholic heritage: the sacraments and liturgy of the Church. The situation led to the Oxford Movement, also called the Tractarian Movement because much of the rationale for its existence was spelled out in tracts printed by the leaders of the movement.

The key figures in the Oxford Movement were **John Henry Newman**, **John Keble** and **Edward Pusey**. The movement began in the 1820s at Oriel College, Oxford, during a period of intellectual revival. Newman and Keble were fellows of the college and Pusey a professor of Hebrew. They had a problem with the popularization of the Christian faith (they found the Evangelical way of talking about the faith distasteful) and wanted a return to the beauty and mystery of their Christian heritage. They also found it offensive that there was no separation between the Church and the State in England. They especially disliked the fact that the leader of the House of Commons chose the bishops of the Church of England.

Perhaps the major issue to be resolved was how to be intellectually open to changes being experienced in the world for which Scripture seemed to have no immediate answer without straying into either pluralism (multiple truths) or fundamentalism (no room for discussion). This is, of course, the same issue the Church currently faces and probably always will. Newman, unable to deal with the tension on the issue within Anglicanism chose to become a Roman Catholic, while Keble and Pusey remained in the Church of England.

Thank God that, because there is great variety in the spirituality of Christians throughout the world, we can each find the church for us.

John Keble: Oxford Movement

Reformation, revival, and great awakenings have been evident in the Christian Church down through the centuries. When the direction the faith seems to be going is off track, an individual or group feels called by God to put the church back on the right track. Such was the case with John Keble concerning the Church of England in the 1800s.

Keble was born in 1792 in Gloucestershire, England, the son of an Anglican clergyman. He was a brilliant student, obtaining double first class honors at Corpus Christi College, Oxford. It was only the second time it had happened in the history of the school. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1816, desiring to be a country parson but remaining at Oxford in administrative and tutorial positions until 1823.

In 1827 he published anonymously *The Christian Year*, a collection of poems for each Sunday and for saints' days and festivals celebrated by the Church of England. It was reprinted 158 times by 1872. Keble wrote over 700 hymns, some of which are still popular. In 1835, Keble married and became vicar of a parish in Hampshire where he remained for the rest of his life. He died in 1866.

Keble is best known, however, for inspiring the Oxford Movement, also known as the Tractarian Movement. Keble, along with **John Henry Newman** and **Edward Pusey**, believed the Church of England had strayed from its roots and that it would soon no longer be the officially recognized church. His sermon in 1833 entitled "National Apostasy" fired the opening shot in a battle carried out largely through *Tracts for the Times*. Keble and the others called for a return to recognition of the Church as a divine institution with an historic episcopate. They also sought to recapture the beauty of the *Book of Common Prayer*. The movement was successful in returning the "High Church" or sacramental emphasis within the Church of England.

Thank God for John Keble who initiated renewal within the Church of England.

Charles Finney: Making the Case for Christ

Christ calls people from all walks of life to pass the flame of his love to others. Often, people are able to use the skills they have acquired and turn them to effective use in their ministry. Charles Finney was one who did so.

Finney was born in Warren, Connecticut in 1792 and grew up in Oneida County, New York. After teaching school for some years, he studied law and began practice in 1818. He had little exposure to the Christian faith, but references to the Mosaic Law in his legal studies got him interested in reading the Bible. He was so deeply converted to Christianity in 1821 that he abandoned the practice of law to accept a “retainer from the Lord Jesus Christ to plead his cause.”

Finney became an evangelist, licensed by the Presbyterians. He adopted the techniques of frontier preachers and addressed congregations in the same manner he pleaded with juries. He became very effective using this type of preaching in the villages of upper New York. However, when these methods were used in Congregational and Presbyterian churches in larger towns and cities, they were not met with enthusiasm by the more formally educated clergy of his day. To overcome this opposition, Finney developed a more polished style. As a result, his revivals carried into the larger cities with great effectiveness.

In subsequent years, Finney pastored churches and served as president of Oberlin College in Ohio, while continuing to conduct revivals during the summers. In his revivals, he called people to make the decision for Christ (conversion), and judged the success of his efforts on the basis of the number of conversions that had taken place. His methods opened the way to those evangelists who would follow: **D. L. Moody**, **Billy Sunday** and Billy Graham. Finney’s crusades are said to have brought half a million people to Christ.

Thank God for Charles Finney, the first of the great American revival preachers.

Emily Tubman: Philanthropist Plus

Few people are wealthy enough to give away great sums of money, and many who are concentrate their energies instead on simply gaining more wealth. Emily Tubman could be an example to us all not only of unselfish generosity but a willingness to take philanthropy to its highest level.

Tubman was born Emily Thomas in Ashland, Virginia in 1794, at the time George Washington was President. She lived under 22 American presidents, and Henry Clay was her legal guardian after her father died when she was nine. While visiting relatives in Augusta, Georgia in 1818, she met Richard C. Tubman, a British businessman who was an exporter and also owned vast holdings in the southern United States. They married and lived in Augusta. Emily became a devoted Bible student, and a group met regularly in her home for Bible study and worship. That group formed the First Christian Church in Augusta.

Emily Tubman had a strong sense of responsibility to the Lord for her family's wealth. When her husband died in 1836 a provision in his will asked Emily to petition the Georgia legislature to let her free their slaves. She was concerned, however, about where the slaves would go once freed. At the time, the United States Government was working with the country of Liberia in Africa. It occurred to Emily that the slaves might want, with their freedom, to go there. Once the situation was explained to her approximately 140 slaves, half chose to go to Liberia and the other half to stay with her but as free people. For those going to Liberia, she provided a ship to take them, the supplies they would need and a home once they arrived. For those staying in the United States, she provided clothing, land and what they would need to become self-supporting.

Emily Tubman carried out her own Emancipation Proclamation 25 years before it became law. The twenty-second President of Liberia, William V. S. Tubman, was a grandson of two of the couples she had sent there in 1844. Her philanthropy continued until her death in 1885.

Thank God for Emily Tubman who gave us a classic example of real Christian charity.

Robert Moffat: Missionary to South Africa

He started life as a gardener, but God had plans for him to plant the Gospel in Africa.

Robert Moffat was born in London in 1795. He was trained as a gardener and worked for some time for James Smith, owner of Dukinfield Nurseries. Soon Moffat and Smith's daughter Mary fell in love. Mary was a devoted Christian and, contrary to her parents' wishes, believed she was called to be a missionary. Moffat, under Wesleyan influence, also felt called to the mission field. In 1816 he was accepted by the London Missionary Society to be sent to South Africa but Mary's parents stood in the way of their marriage.

Moffat arrived alone at Cape Town in 1817 and proceeded to Namaqualand where he served for over a year. He was successful in converting the Hottentot chief, gaining favor with the British Government as a result. However, he was desperately lonely for his Mary, and she was equally in despair. Just as she was about to abandon hope of ever being able to join Robert, her parents relented and Mary headed for South Africa. The couple was married in 1819 and labored together in the mission field until just before Mary's death in 1870.

Throughout the 53 years of his ministry in South Africa, Moffat opened new territory to the Gospel and translated portions of the Bible into native languages. From 1821 to 1830 he worked among the Bechuanas (Bechuanaland is now Botswana). In 1825 a new mission station was opened at Kuruman and a convert erected a schoolhouse there. Moffat's translation of the Gospel of Luke was printed in Cape Town in 1830. His translation of the Bible and other literature laid the foundation for missionary efforts that followed.

On one trip back to England in 1840, he persuaded his future son-in-law **David Livingstone** to go to Africa as a missionary.

Thank God for Robert Moffat who took the Gospel to South Africa and laid the foundation for future missionary efforts in that vast continent.

Mary Smith Moffat: Missionary Mother

We've looked at the life and ministry of Robert Moffat, but his wife Mary was an equal partner in that great missionary effort.

Mary Smith was born in New Windsor, England in 1795, the same year as her husband. She was educated in a Moravian school, which accounts for her sense of calling to the mission field, and grew up in Dukinfield, England. In 1819 she traveled to Africa and married Robert two days after Christmas of that year. They settled at Kuruman in Bechuanaland (now Botswana) and established a mission station that became one of the largest in the area.

Mary Moffat's life was not an easy one. There were problems with the nationals, difficulty in translating Scripture and other materials into the native language, many times of illness and death in the family. She had ten children, but several died in infancy. She never wavered in her dedication to the Lord and to the calling she and her husband had received.

Amidst these harsh realities, Mary carried out her domestic activities, taught school and took in orphans. She received into her home three native children who otherwise would have been buried with their dead mothers, according to the customs of the tribe.

After a brief return to England (1839-1843) to gain support and workers for the mission, the Moffats continued their work in Africa until 1870, and Mary died shortly after their return to England. She was the mother of another Mary who became the wife of the famous missionary doctor **David Livingstone**.

Thank God for Mary Moffat, the model of a missionary wife and mother.

Sarah Buell Hale: Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving Day remains one of the most popular holidays in the United States. It is a time to gather with family and friends and thank God for the wonderful nation he has given us and the many other ways he has blessed our lives. We might not have that day to celebrate if it had not been for Sarah Hale.

Hale was born in 1795 in New Hampshire. In 1822 she married David Hale, an attorney. After the birth of five children, however, her husband died and she had to seek a new life for herself and her family. She began to write and ultimately became the editor of *The Ladies' Magazine*. In 1837 she was named editor of *Godey's Ladies Book*. She was a devout Christian and also wrote hymns.

In 1846 Hale launched a campaign to make Thanksgiving a holiday. Over the years, national leaders had issued Thanksgiving proclamations, but there had been no consistency in recognizing all that the young nation had to be grateful for. Hale wrote emotional editorials, and the November issue of her magazine carried Thanksgiving poems, stories and recipes. She sent personal letters to politicians. By 1859, thirty governors had agreed upon a common day to celebrate Thanksgiving. Yet, no national holiday occurred.

As the nation seemed headed toward a civil war, Hale attempted to avert it by seeking each state to join in a pledge of loyalty to the Constitution as an act of Thanksgiving. This failed, and war erupted in 1861. In 1863, Hale wrote President Lincoln pleading for an annual national Thanksgiving Day, and Lincoln finally agreed. On October 3, 1863, a Presidential Proclamation decreed that Thanksgiving was to be celebrated on the last Thursday of November, and it has become an American institution.

Thank God for Sarah Hale whose perseverance brought us Thanksgiving Day.

Edward Pusey: Tractarian

When we think of renewal movements in our day, we tend to associate them with emotionalism and with the showing forth of the Holy Spirit in dramatic ways. The Oxford Movement in the Church of England was just the opposite, but was a major renewal movement nonetheless. Although **John Keble** was its initiator and **John Henry Newman** its best-known member, Edward Pusey was the leader.

Pusey was born in 1800. His father was Philip Bouverie, whose ancestor was a Protestant refugee from the Low Countries who had come to England in the 1700s. Philip Bouverie had taken the name Pusey upon succeeding to the estate of that name in Berkshire. Edward was therefore from a family that was financially secure. He was educated at Eton and Christ Church, Oxford, and in 1823 took a fellowship at Oriel College that put him in contact with Keble and Newman.

A brilliant linguist, he studied oriental languages and theology in Germany from 1825 to 1827, and was awarded the Hebrew Chair at Oxford and became canon of Christ Church. From 1833 he was identified with the Oxford Movement which was aimed at bringing back into the Church of England its Catholic (or “High Church”) principles. People had become lax in their spirituality, and the Tractarian Movement (as it was also called) attempted to awaken them to the richness of their spiritual heritage. Pusey argued for the Real Presence of Christ in the bread and wine of Holy Communion and for the importance of private confession to a priest and absolution from sin as a result.

Concerning Pusey’s importance to the Oxford Movement, Newman said that Pusey “at once gave us a position and a name.” Pusey was also very generous, giving away most of his family’s fortune to provide ministries to the poor. He died in 1882, outliving his wife, son and daughter.

Thank God for Edward Pusey who enlightened and awakened a lethargic church.

Perspective: Social Reform

Although Christians have often been criticized for being slow to react to the need for social reform, they have also been the primary instruments through which God has accomplished such reforms. It was Christians who established the colleges and universities, the hospitals, the orphanages and other institutions to meet social needs. Slavery and the Industrial Revolution are two areas of need in which Christians responded in a responsible manner.

It was **William Wilberforce**, as a member of Parliament, who made the breakthrough that ended slavery in England. **John Newton**, who had trafficked in slavery before becoming a Christian, also had a significant role in that effort. The sensitivity of people such as **Emily Tubman** and **Harriet Beecher Stowe**, author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, led to the end of slavery in the United States.

When the Industrial Revolution brought ungodly labor practices into existence in England, it was the Christians who took constructive action. **Lord Shaftesbury** gained adoption of child labor laws to prevent the abusive practice of using children in the workplace. **Frederick Denison Maurice** led the way toward the formation of labor unions in England. **Thomas Guthrie** was a force in the establishment of "Ragged Schools" to provide education for unfortunate children, and **Robert Raikes** started Sunday Schools for the same purpose. **Hannah More's** writings pricked the conscience of people concerning social need. **Elizabeth Fry** taught women prisoners and **George Mueller** started orphanages. **Florence Nightingale** reformed nursing and hospitals. The **Booth** family, through the Salvation Army, met a variety of needs.

In the aftermath of the evils of slavery in the United States, African-American Christians have come to the fore. **Booker T. Washington** and **Mary McLeod Bethune** did this in the field of education and **Martin Luther King, Jr.** in the area of civil rights.

Thank God for Christians of strong social conscience who have been in the forefront of meeting human need.

Lord Shaftesbury: Earl to the Poor

Few men of great influence have been so dedicated to the needs of the downtrodden. Here is a classic example of God having the right person in the right place at the right time. Lord Shaftesbury was England's conscience during the dark days of the Industrial Revolution.

Anthony Ashley Cooper, the seventh Earl of Shaftesbury, was born in London in 1801. Despite his advantages of wealth and position, his parents neglected him during his childhood. Fortunately, he had a Christian housekeeper, Mary Milles, who taught him Scripture and how to pray. Although she died when he was only ten, she remained a significant influence on his later life.

Following his education at Harrow and Oxford, he was elected to Parliament in 1826. Almost immediately, his focus was on the plight of the poor and downtrodden. In the days of the Industrial Revolution in England, the top priority was to keep the factories going at maximum production. This led to horrid practices of child labor, with poor children working in the worst of circumstances as much as fourteen hours a day, six days a week, without education and without hope. Girls pulled coal carts to which they were chained, nearly naked and sometimes sexually abused by the coal miners. These and many other social concerns dominated Shaftesbury's conscience and inspired him to lead one legislative fight after another to get things corrected.

The earl's wife Minny was a great moral support to him, but his real strength came for God. He was a devoted Bible student and always sought the Lord's help and guidance in the battles he faced in life. Despite personal tragedies (including the death of the couple's second son while at Harrow and the moral failures of their oldest son) and more demands upon him than he seemed at times able to bear, Lord Shaftesbury was England's national conscience during the Industrial Revolution. He died in 1885.

Thank God for Anthony Ashley Cooper, earl to the poor and downtrodden.

John Henry Newman: Cardinal

The Oxford Movement tried to show that the Church of England was called to steer a middle course between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism, and John Henry Newman, along with **John Keble** and **Edward Pusey**, was a leader of that movement. Ultimately, however, it led Newman to the Roman Church where he became a cardinal.

Newman was born in 1801, the son of a banker who was an evangelical. He was educated at a private school in Ealing, and had a conversion experience at 16. He then went to Trinity College, Oxford in 1817, and in 1822 was elected a fellow of Oriel, bringing him into relationship with Keble and Pusey. He was ordained in 1824 and, in 1828, made vicar of St. Mary's, Oxford.

Over the next few years, Newman began to look on the Roman Church with admiration although he was still solidly Church of England. In 1832-3, he went on a tour of the Mediterranean. When a lack of wind kept the ship motionless, Newman, ill and wanting to get back to England, was led to write the hymn "Lead, Kindly Light!" which is still popular. His return to England coincided with Keble's sermon "National Apostasy," and the Oxford Movement was launched.

Despite the positive impact that the Oxford Movement had on reform of the Church of England, Newman began to drift toward Roman Catholicism. He wrote 24 tracts for the movement, but his *Tract 90* in 1841 led the Bishop of London to forbid him from writing further tracts. Newman resigned as vicar of St. Mary's in 1843 and was received into the Roman Church two years later. He held posts in the Roman Church over the following years and wrote extensively. A man dearly loved and respected, he was made a cardinal in 1877 and died in 1890.

Thank God John Henry Newman who helped bring reform within one denomination, served faithfully in another, and left a legacy of writings that have inspired multitudes down through the centuries.

Marcus and Narcissa Whitman: Oregon Territory

In the early 1800s a vast, unexplored (by white men) area lay to the west of the new nation. Many would travel to this area out of a sense of adventure or wanderlust, and others as pioneer leaders of an emerging nation. The most sacrificial efforts, however, were by the missionaries. It was into this category that Marcus and Narcissa Whitman fell.

Marcus was born in 1802 in Rushville, New York. He studied medicine and practiced for four years in Canada and western New York. In 1835 he offered his services to the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions and was immediately sent to explore the possibility of establishing missions in Oregon. After reaching western Wyoming, Whitman returned to the east for more recruits. In September of 1836, Marcus and his bride Narcissa accompanied by another couple and two Native American boys arrived in Fort Vancouver, Washington. Whitman decided to begin a mission among the Cayuse.

The work went slowly. The Whitmans taught the people to build houses, till their land and construct mills to grind the corn and wheat. Conversions to Christianity were not occurring along with the other progress; and, in 1842, the American Missionary Board decided to abandon the work in southern Oregon. Disagreeing with this decision, Marcus returned to Boston where he got the Board to reverse its decision and persuaded President Tyler to provide federal aid to the Native Americans.

The Whitmans bravely dealt with discouragement, overwork and the death of their daughter, and continued to labor for the Lord in Oregon. In 1847, however, an epidemic of measles broke out among the Cayuse and they became terror-stricken, blaming the ailment on the white men. They attacked the mission and murdered the Whitmans and twelve others. But the faith had been planted and would bear fruit in due time.

Thank God for Marcus and Narcissa Whitman who gave their lives to bring faith and aid to Native Americans in Oregon.

Thomas Guthrie: Ragged Schools

Thomas Guthrie was brilliant. Born in 1803, he entered the University of Edinburgh at the age of twelve and graduated in physical sciences at sixteen. He became one of the great preachers of Scotland. Yet, he is remembered for the part he played in establishing the Ragged Schools.

Guthrie came from a wealthy merchant family. He faced an unlimited future, but he felt called to theological studies. He was licensed as a preacher in Brechin in 1825, then became pastor of a small congregation of farmers and weavers in Arbirlot in 1830. He formed cottage prayer meetings, started a Sunday school and a church library. His warmth of personality, his zeal for the work of Christ and his powerful preaching were all well received.

Seven years later he moved to Edinburgh where he became one of the ministers at Old Greyfriars. In 1840 he transferred to the newly formed St. John's. He had a heart for the poor but was equally well received by those of the higher classes of society. As a result, he was able to achieve success for the Lord over a wide range of ministries. From 1847 he was a major force in the formation of the Ragged Schools. It was here that poor children were given a sound education along Protestant lines. He was also in the forefront of other Christian social welfare causes.

When he died in 1873, it is said that his funeral procession wound through a crowd of 30,000 that included many children from the Ragged Schools.

Thank God for Thomas Guthrie who, with unlimited opportunities before him, gave his life to the Lord for the benefit of the poor.

George Borrow: Tinker for God

God can use anyone who is willing to make himself available. That truth is certainly illustrated in the life of George Borrow who became a sort of one-man Gideon Society.

Borrow was born in 1803 and educated at Norwich Grammar School in England. He was placed with a firm of solicitors, but wanted to be a writer rather than a lawyer. He had an extremely bright mind and a special gift for learning languages, but he couldn't adapt to the disciplines of a daily work schedule. The result was that he became an itinerant tinker for several years.

One evening as he slept beside his pony and wagon, some thieves set upon him. In the fight that resulted, Borrow was left injured and unconscious beside the road. Two Welsh evangelists found him there, treated his wounds and left him a Bible. Through this act of charity and enlightenment, Borrow found the Lord. Because the Bible had awakened his soul and he had a gift for languages, he became a significant Bible translator.

Over the remaining years of his life, George Borrow was an agent for the British and Foreign Bible Society and traveled widely distributing copies of the Bible. He also wrote books about his travels and made several translations of portions of Scripture into little-known languages. He died in 1881.

Thank God for George Barrow who had a hard time finding himself, but used the gifts God had given him to maximum advantage once the Lord had his attention.

Frederick Denison Maurice: Social Reform

He lived during a time when national governments were collapsing because of social revolutions. In 1848 all of Europe was in chaos. The situation in England was tense. Into this arena came Frederick Denison Maurice to apply Christian principles to bring about social reform.

Maurice was born in Suffolk in 1805, the son of a Unitarian minister. He entered Trinity College, Cambridge in 1823, then to Trinity Hall where he earned his degree in civil law in 1827. He then came to London where he was an editor before being called to ordination in the Church of England. He entered Exeter College, Oxford and was ordained in 1834. He was appointed chaplain at Guy's Hospital and became prominent in the intellectual and social life of London.

Maurice held professorships of English History and Literature, and then of Divinity at King's College until 1853 when he was accused of unorthodoxy. He continued as chaplain of Lincoln's Inn, however, and was vicar of St. Peter's, Vere Street, from 1860 to 1869. Maurice was theologically conservative, opposing higher criticism of Scripture, and, at the same time, what we would call today socially liberal. He saw how practical principles of Christianity could be applied to offset the social problems of the day.

Maurice helped establish Queen's College for the education of women in 1848 and founded the Workingmen's College in London in 1854. He formed the Christian Socialists, an organization that helped start labor unions and promoted reform legislation. He maintained contacts between reforming groups within the church and within the government, and is believed to have laid the groundwork for much of modern English theology. He died in 1872.

Thank God for Frederick Denison Maurice who helped avoid political bloodshed in England by taking part in a revolution of ideas.

George Mueller: God Keeps His Promises

One of the greatest men of prayer the world has ever known was wild and drunken as a youth. He began training for the Lutheran ministry while still undisciplined. However, at the age of twenty, in a students' prayer meeting, he gave his life to the Lord and never turned back.

George Mueller was born in Kroppenstadt, Prussia, in 1805, the son of a tax collector. Following his education at the University of Halle—and his conversion—he set out for London to be a missionary to the Jews. When ill health forced him to rely on the kindness of others, he fell in love with his adopted country and remained an Englishman until his death at 93. He married Mary Groves, who was from a leading Plymouth Brethren family, and they settled in Bristol. Rather than accepting a church salary, the Muellers committed themselves to live by faith alone. This became the dominating principle of their lives.

George Mueller had an unshakable faith in the Bible and believed that if Christians took Scripture seriously there would be no limits to what God could do through them. On this basis, he formed the Scriptural Knowledge Institute (SKI) which had four aims: to organize schools on a Scriptural foundation, provide education for poor children, distribute Scriptures, and support missionaries. The response to SKI was overwhelming; over the years it raised 1,453,153 pounds without Mueller ever making a financial appeal.

It was the fifth aim of SKI, added later, that is best known, however. It was to feed, clothe and educate destitute orphan children. The first orphanage was opened in 1836 for thirty orphaned girls. By 1870 there were 2,000 resident children; and, by the time of Mueller's death, 8,000 children had been cared for. Yet, again, Mueller never asked for financial or other help. He simply prayed, and the results occurred. There are many stories of the arrival of food at the very last minute, but God was never late. From 1875 until 1892, Mueller preached and taught all over the world. His message was always the same: God as revealed in the Bible would answer prayers and keep all his promises.

Thank God for George Mueller whose life was a witness to answered prayer.

Samuel Adjai Crowther: Slave Bishop

What do **Patrick** and Samuel Crowther have in common? Both were taken as slaves while in their teen years only to later be called as missionaries and as bishops of the church. God truly works in mysterious ways his wonders to perform.

Crowther was born about 1806 in Oshogbo in the Yoruba country of West Africa. He was sold into slavery in 1821, but he was rescued when a British warship intercepted the slave ship he was on. Crowther was then taken to Sierra Leone where he was converted to Christianity and baptized. He proved an outstanding student and became a teacher for the Church Missionary Society.

In 1842 he entered the CMS College in London and was ordained the following year. Returning to Africa, he worked among his own Yoruba people where his mother and sister were his first converts. He devoted himself to the preparation of schoolbooks and the translation of the Bible and the *Book of Common Prayer* into Yoruba and other dialects.

Crowther was gifted as an evangelist, translator and negotiator. He impressed many with his faith and abilities, including Queen Victoria. He led a Niger Mission in 1857 and, in 1864, became the first African Anglican Bishop. His all-African staff carried out work over hundreds of miles in the Niger territories. Crowther died in Lagos in 1891.

Thank God for Samuel Adjai Crowther, a slave who became a bishop and carried God's word back to his people.

Jeremiah Lanphier: Lay Evangelist

On the verge of a war that would tear the nation apart in order for it truly to come back together as a union, people were not looking to God. The mood in America was grim during the mid-1850s. There was concern about the economy as well as the conflict which slavery was sure to bring. One man had an answer from God to the crisis that was coming upon the nation.

Jeremiah Lanphier was born Coxackle, New York in 1809. Following a career as a merchant in New York City, he became a lay evangelist for the North Dutch Church in that city in 1857. No one told him how to carry out his ministry; but, being a businessman by experience, he began to use business techniques to reach the lost. He handed out tracts, preached to those who would listen and visited door-to-door. To his great exasperation, nothing seemed to happen.

Then God got a message through to Lanphier: he wanted people to pray. Lanphier responded by calling for a noon prayer meeting at the North Dutch Church on Fulton Street to take place during the noon hour so business people could attend. The first week, almost no one came. The second week, there were 20; the third, 40. The meetings then became daily and hundreds of people showed up. There would be a hymn, a time of prayer and then testimonies (limited to five minutes each). When the crowds could no longer fit into the church on Fulton Street, the meetings spread to other churches in the city.

While this religious fervor was spreading in New York City, economic panic erupted in the heart of the financial district, leading to a brief but severe depression. An increasing number of businessmen turned to God. In both rural and metropolitan areas through both North and South, the revival spread. It was unique in two respects: (1) it was largely lay led and (2) it was men rather than women (it having been thought that prayer was the province of women) who responded. One man's obedience led to what became known as the Fulton Street Revival and, to some, the "Third Great Awakening."

Thank God for Jeremiah Lanphier whom God used to bring a powerful prayer movement to this nation at a critical time in its history.

George Augustus Selwyn: New Zealand

He was born to wealth and prestige, but chose to give his life to missionary work in New Zealand just as it was being colonized. From a life of ease, he was immediately immersed in a life of the greatest trials and hardships; but his legacy was one of love and affection as he carried the flame of Christ's love to the other end of the world.

George Augustus Selwyn was born in 1809 in London, the son of a distinguished legal writer. He was educated at Eton and St. John's College, Cambridge. He graduated in 1831, returned to Eton as a private tutor, and was then ordained in the Church of England in 1833.

In 1841, Selwyn was appointed the first bishop of New Zealand. He studied the Maori language and also navigation. Upon his arrival in the new land, he began two decades of life under extremely trying circumstances, laying the groundwork for a new church in a troubled land. He spent days and sometimes nights in the saddle, swam broad rivers and procured his own sailing vessel. Just as he was gaining confidence among the Maori people, war broke out between them and the colonists.

Returning to England in 1854 for a short furlough, he then went back to New Zealand with a group of capable helpers and began to divide the territory into manageable dioceses. Both sides grew in their respect for him, the colonists seeing his uprightness and the Maoris regarding him as a father figure. After a decade of tragic conflict, Selwyn was able to bring the sides together and to minister Christ to all. He then finished his ministry in England, having been elected Bishop of Lichfield in 1868. He died in 1878, and there was such an outpouring of appreciation for his ministry that Selwyn College, Cambridge was erected in his honor.

Thank God for George Selwyn who took the Gospel to the Maori people of New Zealand.

Harriet Beecher Stowe: *Uncle Tom's Cabin*

“So you’re the little woman who wrote the book that made this big war,” Abraham Lincoln supposedly said when he met Harriet Beecher Stowe in 1862. An argument could be made that *Uncle Tom's Cabin* had more influence on bringing slavery to an end than any other factor. Yet, Mrs. Stowe had not been a staunch abolitionist. The book was apparently inspired by a remark from her brother’s wife: “Hattie, if I could use a pen as you can, I would write something that would make the whole nation feel what an accursed thing slavery is.”

Harriet Beecher was born in Litchfield, Connecticut in 1811, the daughter of a distinguished clergyman, Dr. Lyman Beecher. Her mother died before Harriet was four years old. She attended school in Hartford and then was taught by her sister Catherine who started a female seminary there. Harriet became a Christian in 1824. The family moved to Cincinnati in 1832 when her father became president of Lane Seminary. In 1836 she married a widower, Calvin E. Stowe, a professor of Hebrew at the seminary.

Although she had little personal knowledge of slavery—she had once traveled to a plantation in Kentucky—she was greatly disturbed by the Fugitive Slave Law. Under it, courts and law enforcement officials were required to capture and return to slave owners those slaves who had escaped to Northern states. She wrote *Uncle Tom's Cabin* which first appeared as a serial in a magazine and then was published in book form in 1852. The original publication of 5,000 copies sold in two days. Ultimately, in proportion to the population of this country, it became the bestseller of all time.

Mrs. Stowe later wrote other novels and hymns. Her personal life was a series of tragedies. Of her six children, only three survived her. Two of her brothers committed suicide. Her famous brother, Henry Ward Beecher, was regarded as the most gifted preacher of the post-Civil War era, but became embroiled in a domestic dispute that ruined his reputation. Through it all, Harriet Beecher Stowe remained a staunch Christian.

Thank God for Harriet Beecher Stowe and her powerful book that changed a nation.

Soren Kierkegaard: Father of Existentialism

Existentialism is defined as a philosophical attitude opposed to rationalism, that stresses the individual's unique position as a self-determining agent responsible for the authenticity of his or her choices. It has been said that Soren Kierkegaard is the "Father of Existentialism" but he would reject most of what passes for existentialism today. Here was a complex individual whose writing helped awaken personal commitment to Jesus Christ.

Kierkegaard was born in Copenhagen in 1813 to a devout, strict Lutheran father who had begun as a farmer but later became a wealthy merchant. It is believed that much of Soren's writings were shaped by his troubled relationship with his father and with Regine Olsen to whom he was engaged in 1840 but then broke with in 1841. Kierkegaard apparently thought he was unfit to be a husband and father, but continued to be deeply in love with the girl. This "dying to self" sacrifice helped shape his intensely personal beliefs about his relationship to God.

Living in a time when the Christians around him seemed to be more formal and intellectual in their faith beliefs, Kierkegaard argued for the choice that each person has to make between commitment to Christ or to the world. He took exception to the idea that everyone in Christian Denmark was automatically a Christian or that (as taught by the liberal theologians of his time) a Christian acquires salvation through trying to live a moral life. For Kierkegaard, a person was a Christian only through faith in the Jesus of history.

Kierkegaard wrote extensively, but his works were little known outside of his native Denmark during his lifetime. He died in 1855. It was during the early 1940s that his books were published in English and had an impact upon the United States.

Thank God for Soren Kierkegaard who stood against formalized Christianity and for a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

David Livingstone: Missionary Explorer

There was much more to David Livingstone than his extended disappearance that led the *New York Herald* through its reporter Henry Stanley to locate him near Lake Tanganyika in 1871 and say, “Dr. Livingstone, I presume.” He was one of the greatest explorers of his day, and a missionary at heart even if his missionary efforts produced little immediate fruit.

Livingstone was born to poor but godly members of an independent church in Blantyre, Scotland in 1813. At the age of ten he worked in a cotton mill where he propped books before him so as to get in as much reading time as he could. Although no real student, he was a dedicated Christian and, with the help of night school, he earned his way to study medicine in Glasgow and London hospitals and theology in England. He wanted to be a medical missionary to China, but war there prevented it.

From 1841 to 1856 Livingstone served the London Missionary Society, beginning in South Africa under **Robert Moffat** who became his father-in-law. He soon plunged into uncharted territory. During the period 1851 to 1856, Livingstone walked across Africa from west to east and returned to England a national hero. Although he had established himself as an explorer of great stature he had not proved successful in bringing numbers of Africans to Christianity, however.

Livingstone kept returning to Africa and ultimately died there in 1873. He hated the slave trade, and was always devising ways to bring it to an end. He believed that his explorations would open the door to commerce and/or bring civilization that would replace the slave trafficking. Livingstone thought there could be no missionary reaping without a great deal of sowing of the faith. In this he proved correct. He had been led to open up Africa for God, and the dramatic Christian growth throughout much of Africa today seems to justify his efforts.

Thank God for David Livingstone who laid the foundation for much of the missionary success in Africa.

John Mason Neale: Anglican Hymnologist

In the English Church of the mid-19th Century, he was considered too Catholic (High Church), he had serious health problems, and from the time of his ordination until his death he really held only one post, as warden of Sackville College, East Grinstead. Yet he is considered to have been an outstanding Christian leader of his time.

John Mason Neale was born in London in 1818 and educated at Trinity College, Cambridge. He was an eminent scholar of history and language. A patient, modest and devoted priest, he founded the Sisterhood of St. Margaret in 1855 for the education of girls and care of the ill. This was too Catholic for the Protestants of his time and resulted in violent opposition and rioting. Neale weathered the storm, however, and the order became one of the leading religious communities in the Church of England.

Neale's real gift, however, was hymn writing. Because of his interest in history and languages, and in the ancient church, many of his hymns are translations. However, he also wrote many original ones. Among his better known hymns are "All Glory, Laud and Honor," "Come Ye Faithful, Raise the Strain," "Good Christian Men Rejoice" and "Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation."

Neale also wrote children's books, presenting Christian truths in a simple but attractive form. His warmth as a person is reflected in his sermons, which were devotional in nature, often inspired by medieval models. He was a man who gave of himself with all of the abilities he had, despite opposition. Exhausted by his labors, he died at the age of 48, in 1866.

Thank God for John Mason Neale who carried the flame of God's love as best he could, and left us with beautiful reminders of his life through his many hymns.

James Lloyd Breck: A Monk at Heart

As we have seen in the early centuries of Christianity, those who led celibate lives—monks and nuns—played a key role in the education and spirituality of the faith. In a way, James Lloyd Breck was a throwback to those days. A “high church” Anglican, he sought the formation of celibate Christian communities as the nation moved westward.

Breck was born in Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania in 1818. He was educated at the University of Pennsylvania and General Theological Seminary in New York City. It was there that Breck was influenced by the Tractarian Movement and Anglo Catholic worship. He believed himself called toward three primary goals: (1) missionary work in the West, (2) the establishment of a theological seminary in the West, and (3) the revival of a disciplined religious community life.

James Breck and two fellow graduates of General Seminary headed west in 1841 to establish a mission center in the new Wisconsin territory. In 1842 Breck was ordained to the Episcopal priesthood by Bishop **Jackson Kemper** in the midst of Oneida Indians. Making Nashotah their base of operations, Breck and others, with the help of Kemper, formed Nashotah House Seminary on “high church” principles. These included a daily cycle of prayers, manual labor and missionary activity. In 1850 Breck moved to Minnesota and worked among the Chippewa Indians, establishing educational and missionary centers.

Although he continued to believe in the ideal of a celibate religious order, in 1855 Breck married Jane Martin Mills, a co-worker. In 1857 he settled at Faribault and the following year founded Seabury Divinity School. He was referred to as the “apostle to the wilderness” and, in 1866, moved to California where he began St. Augustine’s College, with a grammar school and divinity school attached. He died in 1876.

Thank God for James Lloyd Breck who championed a disciplined Christian life with a strong focus on theological education.

Florence Nightingale: Famous Nurse

Born of socially prominent English parents in Florence, Italy in 1820, Florence Nightingale is generally regarded as the originator and founder of modern nursing. She also had a major hand in improving public health. More sentimentally, she was known as the “Lady of the Lamp” because of her service as a nurse during the Crimean War.

A devoted Anglican, she heard a call to service from the Lord at the age of 17. It took her seven years to perceive the nature of that call: to nurse the sick. This, however, ran directly counter to the intentions of her parents. Nursing was not considered a proper profession for a gentlewoman in the mid-1800s, and her parents adamantly opposed her goal.

Years of misery and frustration followed. It was not until 1851 that Miss Nightingale was allowed to gain her first nursing experience with the deaconesses at Kaiserswerth in Germany. Then, in 1853, she had the opportunity to reorganize a small hospital in Harley Street, London. She succeeded so brilliantly that she was asked by the war department to undertake a mission to the Crimea. She sailed with 38 nurses in 1854 and, upon arrival, found herself caring for some 5,000 men. The conditions were abominable, but by applying her great dedication and skill she brought order out of chaos. In the evenings on the battlefield she would appear with her lamp looking for those in need of help. Reports of her courage led to her gaining a much unwanted celebrity status in England, and to some extent around the world.

Returning from the Crimea, she avoided public adoration. She stayed out of the public view so completely the remainder of her life that people believed she had died a half-century before she did. During these years she opened a school for nursing and wrote extensive manuals on nursing and hospital administration. By her own instructions, when she died in 1910 she was not given a national funeral and burial in Westminster Abbey, but was buried quietly in a country churchyard.

Thank God for Florence Nightingale, her perseverance, courage, humility, dedication and skill, and what she did for the nursing profession and hospital administration.

Perspective: Musicians and Poets

One of the interesting things about looking at the history of Christianity through the lives of those who have carried the flame of God's love is the groups into which these people have fallen over the centuries. In the infancy of the faith, we had the Fathers of the Church and the early martyrs. Then came the monks and nuns. Church leaders of various kinds surfaced next, including the Reformers. Evangelists, preachers, missionaries, social reformers and others then come onto the scene. Within this mix we also have poets and musicians.

Music plays an important part in Christian worship, perhaps even more so in our day than in the past. We cherish our beautiful hymns as well as other music inspired by God. At least two of the classical musicians—**Johann Sebastian Bach** and **George Handel**—were sincere Christians who devoted their work to God. Hymn writers have been much more numerous. They include **Isaac Watts, Phoebe Hinsdale Brown, Charlotte Elliott, Fanny Crosby, Frances Ridley Havergal, Philip Bliss** and **Elisha Hoffman**.

Although poetry is not normally a part of worship, our emotions have certainly been stirred by great Christian poetry, and preachers will sometimes use portions of poems to touch us in ways that their own words could not otherwise accomplish. Music and poetry stir our emotions at a deeper level, and God can reach us there in his special ways.

Some of the Christian poets we meet in this book are **John Donne, George Herbert, Anne Bradstreet, William Cowper, Christina Rossetti** and **G. A. Studdert Kennedy**.

Thank God for touching us at a deeper level of our emotions and our spirit through Christian music and poetry.

Fanny Crosby: Blind Hymnologist

By the grace of God, there are those whom we would consider to be handicapped who never let the disability stand in their way. Frances Jane (Fanny) Crosby is certainly an excellent illustration of that. Blinded at six months, she became one of the most productive hymn writers of all time.

Fanny Crosby was born in 1820 at Southeast, New York. In 1835 she entered the Institution for the Blind in New York City and was a teacher there from 1847 to 1858. In 1858 she married one of her students, a blind musician. Crosby's life made a dramatic turn in 1851 when she gave her heart to Christ. Although she had a gift for poetry from an early age, it was not until 1864, when she was 44 years of age, that her poems became hymns.

Fanny was once told that it was too bad she was blind. She responded, "If I had been given a choice at birth, I would have asked to be blind...for when I get to heaven, the first face I will see will be the one who died for me." Phoebe Palmer Knapp, wife of the founder of Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, brought Crosby a tune she had composed in 1873. Fanny got her to play it several times, and then Knapp asked, "What does the tune say?" Crosby replied, "It says, 'Blessed assurance, Jesus in mine! O what a foretaste of glory divine!'" Thus one of the most famous of her 8,000 hymns was born.

Crosby wrote "To God Be the Glory" in 1872. **Ira Sankey**, who was the song leader for **D. L. Moody's** evangelistic crusades, sang the tune in England. It became very popular in England but did not reach American hymnals until Billy Graham discovered it during his 1952 British crusade. Fanny Crosby was 95 when she died in 1915.

Thank God for Fanny Crosby whose hymns have inspired millions.

George MacDonald: Inspired Lewis

He was a Congregationalist pastor who opted for writing books. His books greatly influenced **C. S. Lewis** (who said he never wrote a book in which he didn't quote MacDonald), G. K. Chesterton and **J. R. R. Tolkien**.

George MacDonald was born in 1824 at Huntly, Aberdeenshire, Scotland. He was the son of a farmer and grew up in a strong Calvinist atmosphere. He graduated from King's College, Aberdeen and then studied at Highbury College in London for the Congregational ministry. Following ordination, he served churches in Arundel and Manchester, with a short term in Algiers. He was forced to resign his pastorate because of espousing several Arminian doctrines. He had to quit his pastoral ministry, but continued to preach.

He eventually settled in London and began a career as a professional writer in order to support his large family. He wrote over 50 books of fiction, poetry, sermons and commentaries. He also wrote essays on many topics. His writings profoundly influenced other writers, including Lewis who called him his master and compiled an anthology of MacDonald's works.

MacDonald's poetic verse is simple and direct, and marked by religious conviction. He wrote some of his stories for young people that were in the nature of fairy tales in which spiritual realities broke through into everyday life. It was such as these that obviously inspired Lewis to do the same by way of his tremendously popular Narnia series. MacDonald died in 1905.

Thank God for George MacDonald who not only inspired the readers of his day, but even better known Christian writers who would follow him.

William Holman Hunt: Light

The flame of God's love has been passed from generation to generation in many ways. One of them is through Christian art, and William Holman Hunt has an important place among Christian artists.

Hunt was born in London in 1827, the son of a city warehouse manager. Originally destined for a business career, he worked as a clerk for a real estate agent. Although he was discouraged about his artistic abilities at first, his heart was really in painting. In 1844 he began studying in the National Gallery and British Museum.

The following year he entered the Royal Academy schools where he met his lifelong friend and fellow artist John Everett Millais. Later, D. G. Rossetti also began working with Hunt. The three men formed the Pre-Raphaelite Fellowship, representing "clear hard color, brilliant lighting and careful delineation of detail" that heralded the new movement in painting. Hunt was the predominant figure of the three, and began to develop a worldwide reputation.

Hunt's most famous painting is *Light of the World*, depicting Christ, with lamp in hand, knocking on the door of the human soul. Originally painted in 1854, a larger version was done by Hunt in 1899, now in St. Paul's Cathedral, London. Hunt made several trips to the Holy Land and painted scenes from the Bible. Most of Hunt's paintings were done very slowly, with great attention to detail. His work has been criticized for problems of composition and coloring, but his paintings reflect Hunt's strong religious feelings. His eyesight began to fail toward the end of the century, and he died in 1910.

Thank God for William Holman Hunt and the legacy he has left for us in his Christian art.

John Coleridge Patteson: Missionary to Melanesia

Danger is always present in missionary work. People who have not been exposed to the Christian faith, or even to civilization as we would understand that term, are rightly suspicious of strangers regardless of the fact that those outsiders have come to do them good. John Patteson, a nephew of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, knew the dangers but gave his life to the work nonetheless.

Patteson was born in 1827 and educated at Eton and Balliol College, Oxford. He came under the influence of **George Selwyn**, was ordained in 1853, and sailed for the South Pacific. He had been persuaded by Selwyn to assist in the work of the Melanesian Mission (a work started by Selwyn to spread the Anglican Church from New Zealand northward). Patteson toured the islands on his ship the *Southern Cross*, learned many of the languages, started a college for the training of Melanesian boys and was highly successful in his pastoral and educational work.

In 1861 he was consecrated the first Bishop of Melanesia. He spoke 23 dialects and translated the New Testament into local languages. He devoted his life to the task of Christianizing and civilizing the native people of Melanesia and Polynesia. He served sacrificially in founding schools, hospitals, and churches. He taught, preached and administered the sacraments to the natives of those lands. He once presented the entire population of Pitcairn Island for confirmation, following reconciliation between the mutineers of the *Bounty* and the British Government.

He was especially concerned about young boys from the islands being captured and made slaves. It was, however, upon his landing alone on the island of Nukapu that his intentions were misunderstood. Some inhabitants had been captured by white men shortly before, and the natives took their revenge on Patteson. He was only 44 years old.

Thank God for John Coleridge Patteson who gave his life to bring the flame of God's love to the people of Melanesia.

Horatio G. Spafford: Dealing with Disaster

There are certainly parallels between the book of Job and the life of Horatio Spafford. Few men have been placed in the position of facing disaster after disaster and not turned away from God. Spafford can be an example for us all.

Spafford, a Chicago lawyer and businessman, was born in 1828. In 1871 the Great Chicago Fire destroyed much of what the Spaffords owned. They were already grieving the death of their only son, which had occurred shortly before the fire. Soon afterward, Spafford decided to take his family to Europe. His friend **Dwight L. Moody** was conducting an evangelistic crusade in England, and there would be an opportunity for the Spaffords' four daughters to attend English schools until Chicago could rebuild.

Sending his wife and daughters ahead of him on the French luxury ship the *SS Ville du Havre*, he planned to follow in several days. The ship, however, collided with an iron sailing vessel in the Atlantic and sank within 12 minutes. All four daughters (along with 222 others) were lost, but his wife survived. Spafford immediately booked passage to England. When the ship he was on reached the point at which the *Ville du Havre* had gone down, the captain pointed out the spot. Going back to his cabin, Spafford, despite the great grief that overwhelmed him, was able to write the poem which became the hymn "It Is Well with My Soul." "When sorrows like sea billows roll, Whatever my lot. . . It is well, it is well with my soul."

In subsequent years Spafford lived in Jerusalem and was very involved in providing for orphans. He died in 1888.

Thank God for Horatio Spafford whose love for the Lord transcended the disasters he faced in life.

Catherine Mumford Booth: Outspoken Evangelist

We will look at the life of Catherine Booth before that of her husband because it was believed that Catherine was the smarter of the two and perhaps the stronger member of the team that started the Salvation Army. It was said of Catherine “it was she who turned an energetic, rather dyspeptic man into one of the greatest religious leaders in the world.”

Catherine Mumford was born in Derbyshire, England in 1829, the daughter of a carriage builder and a deeply religious mother of the Puritan type. Catherine was an invalid in her adolescence and was therefore educated principally at home. Early in life she acquired some competence in theology. When the family moved to London in 1844, she became active in the Wesleyan Methodist Church at Brixton. When this congregation expelled some of its members, she and her future husband left with them.

William Booth married Catherine in 1855. He was hardly much of a catch. He had no job, income or home. Catherine became her husband’s most outspoken critic and his strongest supporter. She gave much of her time to visiting the poor. It was largely through her influence that William put aside the possibility of a career as a Methodist minister and undertook the faith ministry of an itinerant evangelist.

Catherine believed in a woman’s right to preach the gospel. In 1859 she wrote a pamphlet entitled *Female Ministry* that is not outdated today. She conducted a series of successful evangelistic missions in England in 1886 and again the following year. Shortly thereafter her health began to decline. She died of cancer in 1890.

Thank God for Catherine Booth who helped found the Salvation Army, a ministry that has brought many to the Lord and has served the poor and down-and-out for decades.

Channing Moore Williams: Missionary to Japan

Those who have studied missionary movements of the past have realized that a lack of cultural sensitivity has often stymied the work. Missionaries from the West have focused too much on making cultural changes among those they tried to convert rather than learning how to make Christ most relevant to the culture in which they were ministering. Channing Williams apparently realized this error and was guided accordingly. When he died, it was said of him, “During his fifty years in Japan he taught Christ's ways and not his own.”

Channing Moore Williams was born in Richmond, Virginia in 1829, the son of a farmer. His widowed mother raised him under meager circumstances. He graduated from the College of William and Mary and the Virginia Theological Seminary. Believing himself called to the mission field in the Far East, he was ordained an Episcopal priest in 1857. Two years later he was sent to Japan. His reception there was not a friendly one. He was seen as a “foreign devil” and an “evil corrupter” and his only colleague was badly beaten by a mob and had to return to America.

In his quiet, shy way, Williams patiently gained the confidence of the Japanese. He began his work in Nagasaki and was made Bishop of Japan in 1866. This was not an easy time; the American Civil War was not only a source of personal grief to Williams but it virtually dried up his means of support. Yet, his work gradually prospered. In 1874, he established his base at Yedo (now Tokyo) and founded a divinity school that was to become St. Paul’s University and St. Luke’s Hospital.

By 1887, the church had less than a thousand communicants. Williams continued on until 1908, opening new mission stations and translating worship materials into Japanese. He died in 1910, two years after returning home to Richmond.

Thank God for Channing Moore Williams who spent fifty years spreading the Gospel in Japan.

William Booth: Salvation Army

William Booth is another example of what God can do with a person of limited education and social advantages. He was the son of a failed construction contractor. William was, at a young age, apprenticed to a pawnbroker. Yet, by the grace of God (and, as we have seen, an intelligent and dedicated wife), he became not only the founder of the Salvation Army but a great religious leader and an agent of major social change.

Booth was born in Nottingham, England in 1829. His pawnbroker experience stirred in him early in life a passion against the poverty and degradation in which too many people lived in Nineteenth Century England. In 1844 he experienced conversion to Christ, and two years later felt called to preach the gospel. In 1848 he completed his apprenticeship, but could not find a job in Nottingham. He went to London where his work as a pawnbroker did not lessen his desire to serve the Lord. He began to preach at open-air meetings and, in 1855, married **Catherine Mumford**.

Booth conducted evangelistic campaigns in various parts of the country during which he evolved methods that were later used to great effect by the Salvation Army. In 1865, in London, Booth was invited to lead open-air meetings in the Whitechapel district. It was an attempt to reach the churchless masses and, by 1878, there were so many converts that Booth had to found the religious organization of which he became the first general, the Salvation Army.

Toward the end of the century, Booth's religious dedication and social genius came to the fore. Not only did the Salvation Army spread across Britain, into the United States and across the world, but his passion for social justice became recognized as well. Public support for Booth's recommendations for improving the conditions of the poor was so great that major change resulted.

Thank God for William Booth who persevered against all odds to inaugurate one of the most effective Christian ministries of the last two centuries.

Christina Rossetti: Gifted Poet

Her relationship with Christ came first in her life. She was a woman of stunning physical beauty who twice declined serious offers of marriage because, in each instance, the suitor was not a committed Christian. As a result, a biographer described her as being one who “took the veil in every respect except the outward act.”

Christina Rossetti was born in 1830, the daughter of an Italian immigrant to England. She wrote her first poem, a tribute to her mother, when she was twelve. The same year her grandfather privately published a collection of her works. Her brother was the artist Dante Gabriel Rossetti, and, by the age of nineteen, her poems began to appear in a journal published by her brother’s friends. Soon her poetry was widely known and she became one of the most popular poets of her day.

Her work included love poems and children’s poems. However, as a result of her deep and passionate Christian faith, she mainly wrote poetry and prose of a devotional nature. Some of her poems became hymns. She lived with her widowed mother and spent her time doing charitable works. Later in life she contracted the rare Graves’ Disease and became a virtual recluse. She died in 1894. An example of her work is this poem, “To the Holy Spirit.”

As the wind is thy symbol, so forward our goings.
As the dove, so launch us heavenwards.
As water, so purify our spirits.
As a cloud, so abate our temptations.
As dew, so revive our languor.
As fire, so purge out our dross.

Thank God for Christina Rossetti who, by the grace of God, gave us beautiful poetry.

Lucy Webb Hayes: First Lady

This wife of the 19th President of the United States was a woman to be reckoned with. She was the first President's wife to have earned a college education. But she was also the first one to ban the drinking of alcohol in the White House. As a result, she allegedly was nicknamed "Lemonade Lucy."

Lucy Webb was born in 1831 in Chillicothe, Ohio where her father was a physician. She graduated with honors from Wesleyan Female College in Cincinnati in 1852 and was married to Rutherford B. Hayes later that year. She became active in the Methodist Church in Fremont, Ohio where the couple lived before politics became the focus of their careers. In the meantime, Rutherford Hayes fought in the Civil War (he had four horses shot out from under him and was wounded four times) and Lucy assisted in army hospitals and helped former slaves. Rutherford was three times Governor of Ohio before coming to the White House in 1877, winning by one electoral vote in a disputed election.

Her husband may have led the nation, but Lucy maintained the Christian atmosphere in the executive mansion. Her life included daily family devotions, Sunday evening hymn singing and prayer services. She specifically refused for alcoholic beverages to be served. The Secretary of State is alleged to have said of one White House function, "The water flowed like champagne." The portrait of Lucy that hangs in the White House was presented by the Women's Christian Temperance Union.

Lucy Hayes' life was simple, plain, and in many ways served as an example for wholesome family life. She and her husband attended the Foundry Methodist Episcopal Church in Washington, and Lucy was president of the Women's Home Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church for nine years. She died in 1889.

Thank God for Lucy Hayes, a Christian woman who carried the flame of God's love into the White House at a critical time in the life of the nation.

Samuel Isaac Joseph Schereschewsky: Perseverance

What are the odds that a Lithuanian Jew would, as an American bishop, translate the Bible into Chinese? Yet, with God, all things are possible.

Samuel Schereschewsky was born in 1831 of Jewish parents in Tauroggen, Lithuania. He originally studied to become a rabbi. However, during graduate studies in Germany, he became interested in Christianity as a result of the ministry of the London Society for Promoting Christianity Amongst the Jews, and also through his own reading of the book of Hebrews in the New Testament. When, in 1854, he immigrated to the United States, he entered a Presbyterian seminary only to later decide he was being called to the Episcopal priesthood. He graduated from General Theological Seminary in New York City and accepted a call to missionary work in China in 1862.

Schereschewsky was so gifted as a linguist that he learned to write Chinese on the voyage to China. He lived in Peking until 1875, and translated the Bible into Madarin. He was elected Bishop of Shanghai in 1877 and established St. John's University there. He began his translation of the Bible into Wenli, but suffered paralysis and had to resign his position.

Schereschewsky was a very persevering individual, however. Confined to a wheelchair, he continued his work of translation. Due to his paralysis, he could type only with the middle finger of his crippled hand. Yet, he completed over 2,000 pages in this manner. In 1895 he went back to Shanghai where Chinese scribes could help him complete this monumental work. Two years later he moved to Tokyo to be near his close friend and associate **Channing Moore Williams** and died there in 1906.

Thank God for Samuel Isaac Joseph Schereschewsky who overcame great hardships to translate the Bible into Chinese.

Hudson Taylor: China Inland Mission

George Mueller had set the example of not appealing directly for financial support; instead, praying that God would provide. Mueller had done this in establishing orphanages. Hudson Taylor did it in funding one of the great missionary endeavors of the Nineteenth Century, the China Inland Mission.

Taylor was born in Yorkshire, England in 1832. He was converted to Christ at 17 and, after some medical training, went to China as a missionary with the Chinese Evangelization Society in 1853. He soon experienced difficulties with the support system of the society and severed his connection with CES. He continued in independent missionary service until 1860 when sickness forced him to return home.

In 1865 Taylor, having completed his medical training, founded the China Inland Mission, the first truly interdenominational foreign mission. It became a model for faith missions that became predominant in world evangelization during the Nineteenth Century. Taylor wanted to take the gospel to every unevangelized province of the Chinese Empire, now that this possibility was open to westerners. However, he didn't want to dilute funds that were going to other missionary efforts so he resolved never to ask for financial help, simply to pray for it.

Taylor instituted other principles of missionary service that were unique. He was willing to accept missionaries who did not have college training, and he required them to identify with the people by, for example, wearing Chinese dress. He insisted that the work be controlled on the spot rather than having the "home rule" that created the difficulties he had first experienced under the Chinese Evangelization Society. He realized, however, the importance of keeping the Christians back home informed. His writing and preaching had significant impact during his lifetime. When Taylor died in 1905, the China Inland Mission had 800 missionaries.

Thank God for Hudson Taylor who made exceptional progress in evangelizing China by having faith that God would provide.

Hannah Whitall Smith: Happy Secret

Hannah Whitall Smith is remembered because of a book, but she had a long and productive life. The overwhelming response to the book and interdenominational meetings in which its principles were taught led to the formation of the Keswick Convention, a yearly “teach in” on the holiness of life that continues today.

Hannah Whitall was born in Philadelphia in 1832, the daughter of a wealthy Quaker family. Hannah had bouts with depression and doubt that lasted until she came to a personal faith in Christ in 1858. In the meantime, Robert Pearsall Smith was converted through the Presbyterian Church in the same year. The pair soon met and married. They lived in Germantown, Pennsylvania where Robert was involved in his father’s business. Both of them did some writing and teaching.

In 1867 Hannah had a spiritual breakthrough from the promise in Romans “that we should no longer be slaves to sin.” She and Robert organized a series of interdenominational meetings on the higher Christian life, teaching that Christians should experience greater victory over sin. In 1872 the Smiths moved to England because of health problems Robert was having. They continued the meetings in that country with great success. In 1875 Hannah’s classic *The Christian’s Secret of a Happy Life* was published and has been translated into many languages.

Hannah wrote that faith is “simply believing God. . . so the only necessary thing about faith is that you believe the thing as it is. The virtue does not lie in your believing, but in the thing you believe.” She died in 1911.

Thank God for Hannah Whitall Smith who gave us a Christian classic that still reaches people with its simple, practical message.

Charles H. Spurgeon: Prince of Preachers

It is hard to believe that a century and a half ago, long before microphones, a man could preach to 24,000 people, but that is what Charles Spurgeon is believed to have done. In all, it is said that he preached to approximately ten million people during his lifetime.

C. H. Spurgeon was born in Essex, England in 1834. He was converted to Jesus Christ when he was 16. He became a Baptist village preacher in Cambridgeshire and in 1852 (at 18) was pastor of Waterbeach. Before his twentieth birthday, in 1854, he was called to pastor the New Park Street Chapel in London. Almost immediately it was too small to handle the crowds that came to hear the “boy preacher.” Exeter Hall had to be rented and even the Surrey Gardens Music Hall (to the consternation of many; such a thing simply was not done in those days) while his church was being extended to accommodate increasingly larger crowds.

From 1861 to 1891 Spurgeon preached in the Metropolitan Tabernacle, a specially constructed facility that seated 6,000. Spurgeon reached people even more widely with his sermons than those who could attend the services, however. His Sunday sermons, in printed form, were literally sold by the tons. They appealed to the individual’s conscience, and Spurgeon illustrated his points with spontaneous and sometimes unconventional humor. The Tabernacle also spawned a Pastors’ College that trained nearly 900 men during Spurgeon’s lifetime. There was also a society for distributing Christian literature, an orphanage and a monthly magazine.

Spurgeon was regarded as the most popular and effective preacher of his day, referred to as the Prince of Preachers. It is said that the published collection of his sermons is the largest set of books by a single author in the history of the Church.

Thank God for C. H. Spurgeon whose sermons have inspired literally millions of Christians.

Sheldon Jackson: Alaskan Missionary

He is regarded as the foremost apostle of Presbyterianism in America, but his greatest work was in Alaska soon after it became a possession of the United States.

Sheldon Jackson was born at Minaville, New York in 1834. He was educated at Union College in Schenectady and Princeton seminary. He was ordained in the Presbyterian Church upon his graduation in 1858. He had been dedicated to the Lord when he was a small boy, and wanted to be a missionary from an early age.

After a year among the Choctaws, Jackson broke all records as a missionary superintendent by founding over 100 churches between 1859 and 1883 in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Nebraska, Wyoming, Montana, Colorado, Utah, Idaho and Nevada. Additionally, he founded native schools in New Mexico and Arizona. In size he was slightly over five feet in height, which allowed him to sleep anywhere. Although diminutive physically, he was a giant spiritually.

It was in 1883 that his greatest work was begun, however, and the place was Alaska. There he did extensive exploration and, in the process, organized churches and schools, evangelized and provided Bibles to the Eskimos. He became concerned that commercial harvesting of whales and seals was depriving the native people of their natural food sources. He reportedly raised \$2,000 and brought reindeer from Siberia as a substitute. Soon there were great herds of deer providing food and clothing for the people. Jackson became general agent of education in Alaska (1885-1908) and was instrumental in preparing for Alaska's eventual admission into the union. He died in 1909.

Thank God for Sheldon Jackson who planted the Presbyterian Church throughout the West and then was a powerful Christian witness in the development of Alaska.

Arabella Catherine Hankey: Telling the Story

As we have seen in several instances, it is sometimes the tragedies people face in life that bring them to the Lord or inspire them to greater things for God. Such was the case with “Kate” Hankey.

Hankey was born to a prosperous banking family in a suburb of London in 1834. She started a Bible study for girls in her neighborhood. She went to London at 18 to teach a Bible class for girls working in factories. While in her twenties, she began other Bible classes for factory girls.

It was in her early thirties that she became seriously ill. Her doctors prescribed a year of total rest. She was bedridden and forbidden to teach her classes. During this time she composed a poem of 50 stanzas about the life of Jesus. Within this was the portion we know as the hymn “Tell Me the Old, Old Story” which was set to music by William H. Doane. Ten months later she wrote an equally famous hymn, “I Love to Tell the Story.”

When she had recovered, Hankey returned to her Bible classes in London which she continued teaching for many years. She is also known for her missionary interests that were expanded when she accompanied her invalid brother on a trip to South Africa. When she became too old to teach factory girls regularly, she began a prison ministry in London. For the entirety of her life, she found opportunities to “tell the story of Jesus and his love.”

Thank God for Kate Hankey who gave her life to telling the story and left us with two beautiful hymns to remind us to do the same.

Phillips Brooks: Spiritual Giant

A giant of a man physically and spiritually, Phillips Brooks was probably the greatest American preacher of the Nineteenth Century. He was born in Boston in 1835, graduated from Harvard, taught school briefly and then attended the Virginia Seminary on his way to becoming a priest in the Episcopal Church. He served churches in Philadelphia and Boston. In 1891 he was consecrated Bishop of Massachusetts, but died 15 months later. He never married.

In addition to his commanding stature (he was six-foot-six), he had a compelling personality and great eloquence. He was the most attractive and best loved clergyman of his day. He preached to packed churches, copies of his sermons were widely disseminated and read, and his lectures on preaching were standard fare in seminaries for decades. It was said, however, that reading his sermons missed Brooks' personal warmth. James Bryce said, "He spoke to his audience as a man might speak to his friend, pouring forth with swift, yet quiet and seldom impassioned, earnestness the thoughts and feelings of his singularly pure and lofty spirit."

While theologically orthodox and sound of doctrine, he had a deep concern for the social and intellectual issues of his day. He regarded people (rather than the organized church) as the instruments through whom God effects his purposes. "The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord" was one of his most famous sermon topics and adequately expressed his theology.

In our day, Brooks is best known for a hymn he wrote. In 1865 he had visited the Holy Land and had been deeply moved by a Christmas Eve service at the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem. Three years later he needed a Christmas song for a children's service. He loved children, and decided to write the song himself. The result was the Christmas carol "O Little Town of Bethlehem." When Brooks died, it was said that not since Abraham Lincoln had a man been so widely mourned.

Thank God for Phillips Brooks, his example of how to preach effectively and his hymn that touches our lives every Christmas.

Perspective: Women in the Church

How many congregations are there that owe their very existence to women? Some would say, "Most of them!" Because women have a longer life expectancy than men, there are more of them and they tend to take their faith more seriously than men. The result is that women are the sustaining factor in many Christian churches.

In Old Testament times, the patriarchal society that existed left women as sort of second-class citizens. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Moses and David are the main characters. Yet, even in the Old Testament we have shining stars like Esther and Ruth to whom books of the Bible are devoted, and Deborah the judge (Judges 4-5).

With Christ, the liberation of women truly began. Although all the Apostles were men, there were many women followers who provided for them. Mary, his mother, is due special honor. It was women who stood by Jesus as he died on a cross after all the men had run away. It was to women that Jesus first appeared after his crucifixion.

Paul also relied heavily on women for his ministry. Lydia was the key person in the formation of the church in Philippi (Acts 16:11-15). Priscilla (Acts 18) became a partner in ministry with Paul and an instructor of Apollos. Paul wrote, in Galatians 3:28, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

As we have seen in this book, women were among the early martyrs of the Church: **Perpetua, Agnes and Lucy**. Later, more key women emerge: **Helena, Monica, Brigit, Hilda**, and others. Then, as we come into more recent times, we are inspired by the women missionaries, teachers, hymnists and writers through whom the flame of God's love burns brightly for the benefit of all.

Thank God for faithful women who have been the backbone of the Church over all the centuries.

Nettie Fowler McCormick: Not Overshadowed

People married to famous people can easily be overshadowed. Among the most famous Americans of the past is Cyrus McCormick. He invented the mechanical reaper that changed the nature of agriculture forever. He had supposedly gone to Chicago at the age of 38 to open a factory with only \$60 in his pocket. Two years later he was a millionaire. Yet, it is his wife, Nettie Fowler, who is remembered for her Christian charity.

Fowler was born in New York State in 1835 and attended the Genesee Wesleyan Seminary. During a visit to Chicago she met Cyrus McCormick and they were married in 1859. McCormick was 26 years older than Nettie. Both were active Presbyterians. When McCormick died in 1884, he left his vast fortune to Nettie and their several children. Nettie saw the fortune as a trust from God, and she administered it generously for the remainder of her life.

Nettie Fowler McCormick became one of the great Christian philanthropists of her day. She provided more than \$4 million to the McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago to help train people for the ministry. She made funds available for **John R. Mott** and others to found the World's Student Christian Federation. Cyrus had been interested in Tusculum College in rural Tennessee, and Nettie gave generously to it and other such southern mountain schools, Sunday schools and churches.

Nettie became personally involved in world mission. She not only contributed widely to hospitals, schools of theology, language schools and colleges in the Middle East and Asia, but she also provided agricultural equipment to train people in farming methods. Her home in Chicago became a center of international ministry and often was filled with overseas Christians and missionaries while in the States. Nettie died in 1923.

Thank God for Nettie Fowler McCormick whose generosity helped pass the flame of God's love throughout the world.

Frances Ridley Havergal: Consecrated

She was a contemporary of **Fanny Crosby** and was almost equally well known for her hymns; but, although the women corresponded, they never met. In a short period of time, God had graced two women with exceptional talent in writing hymns; and, as a result, Christianity has been blessed for all the decades since.

Frances Ridley Havergal was born in Worcestershire, England in 1836. Her father was an Anglican priest and her middle name was after Nicholas Ridley, a bishop martyred in 1555. She was educated largely at home and in private schools because of frail health, but her father nicknamed her “Little Quicksilver” because of her lively and hungry mind. She attended a school in Worcester and another in Dusseldorf, Germany, and mastered several languages.

Havergal began writing verses at a young age. Her mother had died when she was only eleven, and one of her last statements to Frances was, “Pray God to prepare you for all He is preparing for you.” She committed her life to the Lord at 14 and had an especially disciplined prayer life thereafter. She had an engaging spirit that was obvious to those who were in her presence. She is said to have been like a “burst of sunshine.”

When she was 38 she went on a brief retreat. There were ten others with her, some unconverted and others not rejoicing Christians. Havergal prayed for positive change in them and it happened! It was as though they had suddenly been consecrated to the Lord, and Frances, unable to sleep, began to rejoice in her own consecration. Verses began to form in her mind and out came one of her most popular hymns. It begins, “Take my life and let it be consecrated, Lord, to Thee.” Over the years of her brief life she wrote many hymns that are still sung today. She died at Caswell Bay, South Wales, in 1879 at 43.

Thank God for Frances Ridley Havergal and the legacy she has left us of consecrated music.

John Everett Clough: Missionary to South India

Not many people since the apostle Peter (Acts 2:41) have had the opportunity to baptize thousands of people in one day, but John Clough did it in India.

John Everett Clough was born in Frewsbury, New York in 1836. He began work as a surveyor when he was seventeen. He then went to Burlington College to study law; but, under the influence of a committed Christian roommate, gave his life to the Lord. He sensed a call to the mission field after hearing a talk by a missionary to Burma and transferred to Upper Iowa University from which he graduated in 1864. Shortly afterward, the Foreign Missions Board assigned him to serve in Ongole, India. He established the Ongole Baptist Church in 1867 with eight members.

Clough's work was among the Telugus, a low-caste tribe, and conversions to Christianity were few and far between. Then came the terrible famine of 1876-1878. Clough organized relief work to provide food for the starving. He undertook a contract with the Indian government to dig a four-mile extension to the hundred-mile Buckingham Canal. This involved organizing camps and relief stations for the workers and providing them with food and shelter. Assisted by a staff of thirty preachers, he oversaw the work and provided spiritual guidance and encouragement for thousands of people.

Clough declined to baptize those who asked to join the church during this period. He was looking for people truly converted to Christ and not "rice Christians." When the famine was over, he was ready to receive converts and baptized 2,000 in one day. Nearly 9,000 were baptized over a six-month period. The Ongole Baptist Church had over 21,000 members before it was divided into smaller congregations. On a funding trip to the United States, Clough raised \$50,000 to establish a theological seminary among the Tegulus. When his health failed in 1910, he left India with a legacy of nearly 60,000 church members.

Thank God for John Clough and his faithful work among the poorest in South India.

Teresa of Lisieux: Soul Story

There are several references in Scripture to “treasures in heaven.” To store up for ourselves treasure in heaven means doing sacrificial acts on behalf of others as opposed to storing up earthly treasure. There is a sense in which our loved ones in the Lord also become “treasures in heaven,” however, when they die. Teresa would have perhaps been thinking along such lines when she wrote, “Your love, Jesus, is an ocean with no shore to bound it. And if I plunge into it, I carry with me all the possessions I have. You know, Lord, what these possessions are—the souls you have seen fit to link with mine.”

Teresa was born in Alençon, France in 1873. Her mother died when she was only four, and the family moved to Lisieux in Normandy. She was not well, plagued with tuberculosis, which led to her death when she was only 24. She surrendered her life to Christ when she was 15 and committed herself to becoming a Carmelite nun.

Her outward life was uneventful, but her interior life was intense. She had such a deep, personal life of prayer that her superior asked her to write her autobiography *The Story of a Soul*. It was first published in 1897 and has been an inspiration to many in subsequent years. It is required reading for all Carmelite convents.

A sample from her writings: “Jesus, my beloved, how considerate you are in your treatment of my worthless soul. Storms rage all around me, yet suddenly the sunshine of your grace peeps out.” The child-like holiness reflected in her words has made her one of the most popular saints of all time.

Thank God for the gift of Teresa who encountered the holy in profound ways and preserved her experiences for the benefit of others for years that equal many times the length of her short lifetime.

Dwight L. Moody: Master Evangelist

He had no formal theological training. He was never ordained. He was one of nine children born into a Unitarian family. His father died when he was four. With little schooling, he left home at 17 to work in his uncle's shoe shop. Yet this was the man who became the most noted evangelist of his age.

His name was Dwight Lyman Moody and he was born in East Northfield, Massachusetts in 1837. He was converted to Christ after going to Boston to work for his uncle. Moving to Chicago in 1856, he became successful in the boot and shoe business. In 1860, however, he dedicated his life to Christian work. From then until 1873, he served in many capacities, including as president of the Chicago Y.M.C.A. and founder of the Moody church. He also taught Sunday school and did slum mission work.

It was Moody's evangelistic crusade to Great Britain (1873-75) that launched his career, however. It got off to a doubtful start, but by the time he returned to America he had become a preacher of international fame. He was teamed with **Ira Sankey**, hymn writer and musician, and they were quite a team! Following the tour of England, Moody devoted his life to conducting evangelistic crusades. He wasn't a polished preacher, but the style and organization of his campaigns had a major influence on how to do mass evangelism.

Although he engaged in charitable activities to meet human needs for the better part of his life, Moody insisted that social problems could only be solved by the divine regeneration of individuals. In his later years he established two schools and a regular summer Bible conference in Northfield. In 1886 he founded the Chicago Evangelical Society that is known today as Moody Bible Institute. Moody died in 1899.

Thank God for D. L. Moody who gave of himself in a multitude of ways that the flame of God's love might shine brightly in the dark places of the world.

Amanda Smith: Image in Ebony

She was born a slave but became an internationally known evangelist. Through sheer hard work and determination she overcame vast handicaps to serve the Lord in a remarkable way in the United States and on foreign soil. She was allegedly known as God's image carved in ebony.

Amanda Smith was born to slave parents in Maryland in 1837. She learned hard work from her father who labored night and day to purchase freedom for every member of his family. Amanda was converted to Christ at thirteen years of age while attending services in a Methodist Episcopal church near York, Pennsylvania. She encountered continual difficulties caring for her brother and sisters, suffering the death of her first husband and problems with the second one, but she maintained a vibrant Christian faith through it all. She worked long hours, getting rest only in brief respites.

Smith had little formal schooling but studied the Bible through the guidance of the Holy Spirit. She was used by the Lord to reach others for him, relying on speaking and singing abilities that came natural to her. She was first asked to speak in many places in the United States. Then, in 1876, she was invited to speak at a Keswick Conference in England. Her reputation spread, and soon she was being invited all over the world. As a result, she went to Scotland, Liberia and India.

Amanda Smith organized women's prayer groups in Liberia and temperance and children's groups elsewhere. She had no regular position, so she simply proceeded in faith that God would provide her needs. In her later years she served as administrator for the Amanda Smith Orphans Home near Chicago. She died in 1915.

Thank God for Amanda Smith who persevered for the Lord she loved, and became an inspiration to people across the international scene.

Philip Paul Bliss: Too Soon Silenced

We saw how **Horatio Spafford** overcame a series of great tragedies in his life and went on to write the words for the hymn “It Is Well with My Soul.” The man who wrote the music for that hymn had a life that was much the opposite of Spafford’s.

Philip Paul Bliss was born in a log cabin in northern Pennsylvania in 1838. He left home to work when he was only eleven and gave his heart to Christ a year later. His teenage years were spent working in lumber camps and sawmills. His great desire in life, however, was to sing.

Bliss became a traveling music teacher. He married Lucy Young, a poet and musician, in 1858. She encouraged him to develop his gift for composing music; and, in 1864, he wrote and sold his first song. Bliss went on to become one of the most promising hymn writers at a time when gospel music was in its heyday. He worked for a publisher of hymns in Chicago and was encouraged by **D. L. Moody** to become a singing evangelist, which he did in 1874. He wrote a number of popular hymns including “Wonderful Words of Life” and the music for Spafford’s famous hymn.

While returning to Chicago from a visit with his mother in Pennsylvania in 1876, a tragic train wreck took the life of Bliss and his wife. Nonetheless, his trunk arrived safely in Chicago. In it was Bliss’ final hymn, “I Will Sing of My Redeemer.” James McGranahan, who succeeded Bliss as an evangelistic song leader, wrote the music for the words, and it became another popular Bliss hymn. He had been silenced but his music lived on.

Thank God for Philip Bliss and the music he wrote that carried the flame of God’s love into the hearts of many in his day, and continues to do so today.

Elisha A. Hoffman: Everlasting Arms

Philip Bliss tragically died when he was only 38 years old. A man was born the year after Bliss' birth who wrote hymns as a pastime. He lived to be 90 and wrote some 1,000 hymns. His name was Elisha A. Hoffman, and tragedy struck his life as well.

Hoffman was born in 1839 in Orwigsburg, Pennsylvania. His father was an ordained minister, and Elisha gave his life to the Lord at an early age. He attended Philadelphia public schools and then Union Seminary of the Evangelical Association. Following graduation he worked for the association's publishing house in Cleveland, Ohio for a number of years. Then his young wife died and he returned to Pennsylvania to pastor the Benton Harbor Presbyterian Church for 33 years.

Writing hymns became Hoffman's pastime. He would find ways to put into sacred music the pastoral situations he faced in his ministry. Among his many hymns are "Down at the Cross," "Are You Washed in the Blood?", and "What a Wonderful Savior."

Hoffman's best-known hymn was written in collaboration with music teacher A. J. Showalter in 1887. Showalter had received two letters in the mail from former students who had lost their wives on the same day. Wanting to find a way to console them, he went to the Bible and found, in Deuteronomy, the assurance of God's "everlasting arms." This led to his writing Elisha Hoffman, who had also lost a young wife, suggesting a hymn on the theme of the everlasting arms of God. Showalter even suggested the words for the chorus. Hoffman responded by writing the three stanzas that comprise the body of the hymn, and Showalter prepared the accompanying music. The result was the age-old favorite, "Leaning on the Everlasting Arms." Hoffman died in 1929.

Thank God for Elisha Hoffman who found time in a productive pastorate to write hymns that have continued to encourage Christians down through the years.

Ira David Sankey: Moody's Music

His father, a bank president, was concerned that he would “amount to nothing” because of his love of singing. He became his generation’s most beloved gospel singer.

Ira David Sankey was born in 1840 in Edinburgh, Pennsylvania. He was converted to Christ at the age of sixteen at revival services near his home. Following high school he served in the Union Army during the Civil War. He worked with his father and was an internal revenue collector. In his spare time he sang at many events and served as president of the local YMCA. It was at a national convention of the YMCA that he met famed evangelist **Dwight L. Moody**. Moody convinced him to leave his position and become the song leader of Moody’s crusades.

Moody and Sankey became quite a team. Sankey had the ability to blend his music to fit the themes on which Moody preached. Thus, his solos became evangelistic in themselves. He usually accompanied his own rich baritone voice with a small reed organ. He composed few hymns himself, but used songs that had simple but moving lyrics, and the dramatic effect deeply moved his audiences. During Moody’s first great English tour (1873-1875), Sankey contributed substantially to Moody’s success.

The two men continued to work together until Moody’s death in 1899. Sankey edited collections of hymns and they were enormously successful, yet he contributed his royalties to Moody’s Northfield Schools. Before his death in 1908 Ira Sankey had established the model and standard for the many revivalist singers who would follow him.

Thank God for Ira Sankey who established the role of the gospel hymn in evangelism.

Lottie Moon: Dynamic Missionary

The old saying that “dynamite comes in small packages” was certainly demonstrated in the life of Lottie Moon. She was only four feet three inches tall, but she cast a huge reflection across the landscape of China.

Born to the southern aristocracy in Albemarle County, Virginia in 1840, Charlotte Diggs Moon received a classical education. She was first tutored at home, then graduated from Virginia Female Academy and Albemarle Female Institute, designed to be an academic equivalent to the University of Virginia which was only open to men. Although initially an agnostic, she experienced conversion to Christ following a revival she attended more out of curiosity than faith.

Lottie Moon displayed a devotion to Christ that confounded her friends. They feared her zeal would take her to the mission field, which it did. To those who thought that her life would be wasted by becoming a missionary to China, she said, “If I had a thousand lives to give, I would give them all for the women of China.” Following a time of teaching in Virginia, Kentucky and Georgia, she had her opportunity to go to China under the auspices of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board in 1873.

Lottie learned Chinese quickly, taught, and carried on evangelistic work, giving herself totally to the ministry. She was a prodigious letter writer, imploring denominational executives to supply more missionaries and to meet the growing missionary needs in China. She survived the Boxer Rebellion, being evacuated to Japan for only a short time. Returning to China, she renewed her pleas for support, especially for food to relieve the famine conditions. She spent her own savings and did all else she could until her health began to fail. A doctor concluded that she was starving to death. Accompanied by a nurse, she began a trip home but never made it, dying in Japan in 1912. She had spent her life for Christ in China, and her ongoing legacy was the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering established in Southern Baptist churches in 1888 to support missionary efforts.

Thank God for Lottie Moon, God’s “small package” who became a huge gift to China.

Mary Artemisia Lathbury: Chautauqua

In the mid-Nineteenth Century there was, of course, no air conditioning. Thus, city-dwelling families who could afford it would have places in the mountains, on a lake or at least in the country where they could, to some extent, get away from the summer heat. This situation gave rise to the Chautauqua movement wherein families during this vacation time would be treated to Christian teaching and worship. The movement was named for the lake in western New York where it began.

Mary Lathbury was born in 1841. She was a devout Christian who often vacationed at Lake Chautauqua and she became one of the founders of the Chautauqua movement. Because of the logic of mixing Christian worship, education and culture with vacation time, the concept rapidly spread across the country. Due to her involvement, Lathbury was asked to write hymns for the Chautauqua worship services. She responded with “Break Thou the Bread of Life” which was intended to prepare people for Bible study but was most often sung during Communion; and “Day Is Dying in the West” for Vespers (evening worship).

God seemed to be saying to Lathbury, “Remember, my child, that you have a gift for weaving fancies into verse and a gift with the pencil of producing visions that come to your heart; consecrate these to Me as thoroughly as you do your inmost spirit.” As a consequence, she became a commercial artist and a poet. Her illustrations were often found in the popular magazines of the Nineteenth Century.

Mary Lathbury, an artist by education and training and a teacher of art by profession, not only became a significant figure in the Chautauqua movement but was eventually general editor of Methodist Sunday school materials. She died in 1913.

Thank God for Mary Lathbury whose multi-talented gifts were used to glorify God in art, music, and the Chautauqua movement that still exists today.

James Hannington: Missionary Martyr

Today Christianity is strong in Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi. Faith was planted in the area at a price, however. James Hannington became the focal figure in the sacrifice of lives that brought Christianity to the area in the late 1800s.

Hannington was born in Sussex, England in 1847, educated at St. Mary's Hall, Oxford, and ordained into the Anglican priesthood. He felt called to missionary work in Africa after learning of the murder of two missionaries. Under the auspices of the Church Missionary Society, he landed in Zanzibar in 1882 and served as priest in charge of six missionaries. However, severe illness required him to return to England the following year.

Upon regaining his health, Hannington was consecrated Bishop of Eastern Equatorial Africa in 1884 and returned to Africa in 1885. He trudged along the east coast of Africa to the shores of Lake Buganda to plant churches. King Mwanga had recently succeeded to rule in the area and was suspicious of the Christian influence that had begun to take root. He had Hannington and his missionaries captured and imprisoned in appalling conditions. After eight days, Hannington's companions were murdered. Hannington was then speared to death, but only after he had uttered his final words: "Go tell your king I die for the people of Buganda, and that I have purchased the road to Uganda with my life."

Mwanga followed this act of treachery with the murder of a number of Christian converts, including young Christian boys who would not cater to his perverse sexual desires. In 1886 at least 32 were martyred, most of them on a great pyre at Namugongo.

Thank God for James Hannington and the martyrs of Uganda who gave their lives that the flame of Christ's love might spread in eastern Africa.

F. B. Meyer: Practical Spirituality

Frederick Brotherton Meyer was a man of many talents. A renowned preacher and writer, his great appeal was the practicality of his spirituality. He wrote some 70 books, many of which are popular today.

F. B. Meyer was born the son of an English merchant in 1847. He experienced conversion to Christ at the tender age of five. His life was one of friendship with Christ, his constant companion with whom he fellowshipped day by day. Meyer graduated from London University in 1859 and became a Baptist pastor. In the following years he held pastorates from Liverpool to London. He was instrumental in sponsoring the evangelistic crusade to England of **D. L. Moody** and **Ira Sankey** in 1873.

Meyer had a special appeal to students. He enjoyed working with them throughout his long life. Students flocked to hear his sermons because they presented practical guidelines for Christian living. As an evangelist, he worked tirelessly to lead people from all walks of life into the relationship with Jesus Christ that meant so much to him. While still a young man, he received from D. L. Moody a piece of advice that served him well the remainder of his years: “Always be yourself and never copy another.”

Meyer was a popular speaker at religious gatherings. He was a prolific writer of tracts, booklets, and books. His primary contribution to literature is the series of studies he did of characters in Scripture. These “Heroes of the Bible” had a marked influence on Meyer’s personal life and teaching. His worldwide travel on behalf of Christ ended in 1929 when he went to be with his special companion for eternity.

Thank God for F. B. Meyer whose writings inspire us and teach us practical Christian living.

Mary Slessor: Following Livingstone

Scotland's **David Livingstone** had propped books up while he worked at his loom in a mill as a boy trying to survive. It was the best he could do at the time to get himself some education. Years later, Scotland's Mary Slessor did the same thing for the same reason. Livingstone became one of the great African missionaries of his day. Inspired by him, Mary Slessor became one of the great African missionaries of her day.

Slessor was born in Aberdeen in 1848 and grew up in Dundee. Her father was an alcoholic who died when Mary was young, necessitating her working 12 hours shifts at the mill when she was only eleven years old. She had to continue working long, hard hours for 14 years. Although her education was limited to personal reading and study, she was fascinated with the work of Livingstone in Africa. A devoted Christian from her teens, she sensed a call to the Calabar Mission in Nigeria.

It was not until 1876, when she was 28, that she was appointed a missionary and sailed for West Africa. Her first three years at Okoyong proved extremely difficult, so she returned to Scotland for much needed rest. In 1880 she went back to Nigeria, refreshed of body, mind and spirit and began a wonderfully productive ministry. She became skillful in languages and was able to communicate effectively with the Africans in her area. She led the women in Bible study and taught them many other things as well. She was even able to communicate with the tribal chieftains about matters of commerce and trade. They respected her and she was able to reach them with the Gospel.

Ultimately, the British Government became so impressed with Slessor that she was made the first woman vice consul when British rule came to Okoyong. She founded a home for girls and trained others to carry her work forward when she was no longer able to do so. She died in 1915.

Thank God for Mary Slessor who, following the lead of David Livingstone, carried the flame of God's love to the people of West Africa.

Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield: Princeton Professor

In our journey together to see the flame of God's love as it has passed from person to person, generation to generation, from the time of Christ, we have considered Christians in many walks of life. B. B. Warfield is an example of a loving Christian man who was a famous seminary professor.

Warfield was born near Lexington, Kentucky in 1851. His father was a farmer and his mother was the daughter of a well-known preacher and educator, Robert J. Breckinridge. Warfield received private tutoring in Lexington and then went to the College of New Jersey (later Princeton University) in 1868, graduating in 1871 with highest honors. During further studies in Europe he felt led to be trained for the Christian ministry. He entered Princeton Theological Seminary in 1873 and graduated in 1876.

In 1876 he married, and he and his wife departed for a honeymoon in Germany. Unfortunately, during the trip his wife was struck by lightning and permanently paralyzed. Warfield was an example of Christian love in the affection and attention he showed to his invalid wife for the remainder of her life. Because of her needs, he could seldom leave home for more than two hours at a time.

Even with these limitations, Warfield became one of the best known and best loved seminary professors of his day. After a brief period as assistant pastor at the First Presbyterian Church of Baltimore (1877-1878), he became an instructor in New Testament at Western Theological Seminary in Allegheny, Pennsylvania. In 1887 he went to Princeton Theological Seminary. He was a champion of a strict doctrine of the inspiration and inerrancy of Scripture. In addition to his teaching he wrote extensively and became editor of the *Princeton Theological Review*. He died in 1921, a little over five years after the death of his wife.

Thank God for B. B. Warfield who taught about God's love as he lived it out in the daily attention and affection he showed his invalid wife.

William Robertson Nicoll: Dealing with Adversity

Some people, by the grace of God, can turn the worst adversities into victories. That was certainly the case for William Robertson Nicoll.

Nicoll was born in 1851 in Scotland. He was the son of a clergyman who had a small congregation and a huge library. Nicoll developed a love for books at an early age. He graduated from Aberdeen University in 1870 and completed his theology at Free Church Divinity Hall in Aberdeen in 1874. He was ordained in the Free Church and served in Kelso from 1877 until he had to resign because of ill health in 1886.

Nicoll's mother, brother, and sister had died of tuberculosis, and Nicoll's lungs were not strong enough for him to be effective as a preacher. He contracted pleurisy and typhoid. Doctors warned him to seek other employment. Unable to continue in the parish ministry, Nicoll turned his love for books into a new vocation.

During his pastorate at Kelso, Nicoll had accepted the editorship of *The Expositor*, a monthly journal of theological prominence. He succeeded Dr. Samuel Cox, considered the leading Bible expositor of his day, in 1885. Nicoll excelled as an editor, writing very little himself but securing leading British, American and Continental Bible scholars as contributors to the journal. He also founded and edited the prestigious *The British Weekly* (an influential non-denominational magazine), *The Bookman* and *The Woman at Home*. As a result, he had a profound influence on thinking in the British Isles for many years.

Nicoll's crowning achievement was, however, *The Expositor's Bible*, a monumental 50-volume work that continues to be used in our day. It was a common occurrence for Nicoll to dictate 30,000 words a week while remaining in bed due to illness a significant part of the time. It was said "with calm courage he took up one task after another and performed it with intrepid determination, undeviating fidelity and unsurpassed finesse." He was knighted in recognition of his prodigious efforts. W. Robertson Nicoll died in 1923.

Thank God for William Robertson Nicoll who overcame adversity to edit Bible expositions that would aid preachers and scholars for generations to come.

Booker Taliaferro Washington: Head, Hand and Heart

He was a slave who became a PhD. He believed the whole person uses head, hand and heart. The head is for learning, the hand for working and the heart for understanding the things of God.

Booker T. Washington was born on a plantation in Franklin County, Virginia in 1856. When he and his family were given freedom through the Emancipation Proclamation, they settled in Malden, West Virginia. Washington's mother encouraged him to get an education but their poverty prevented his getting regular schooling. At the age of nine he began working with his foster father in a salt furnace and then a coal mine.

Determined to get an education, Washington worked as a janitor in order to support himself while he attended the Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute. After graduation in 1875, he returned to Malden where he taught children by day and adults at night. During 1878-79, he attended Wayland Seminary in the District of Columbia before joining the staff at Hampton.

In 1881, Washington was chosen to head a newly established normal school at Tuskegee, Alabama. At the time, there were two small buildings, no equipment and very little money. Tuskegee Institute became the crowning achievement of Washington's life work. At his death in 1915 (attributed to overwork), Tuskegee had over 100 well-equipped buildings, 1,500 students, a faculty of 200 teaching 38 trades and professions and an endowment of two million dollars.

Washington was a Christian who read the Bible daily. He was not popular with many Black leaders of his day because his concentration was on education more than civil rights. He was adviser on race relations to American Presidents and received honorary degrees from Dartmouth and Harvard.

Thank God for Booker T. Washington whom God used to bring effective education and training to thousands.

Perspective: Christian Writers

As we have previously observed, there tend to be groupings of particular kinds of Christians at the various eras in the life of the Christian Church. Today, Christian writers are perhaps the most noticeable group. Publishing houses are selling Christian books at an astounding rate, and there seems to be no end in sight. For this proliferation of Christian knowledge we can be very grateful.

Of course, down through the centuries, there have always been Christian writers. We just didn't think of the Fathers of the Church, for instance, as being primarily writers although their written works are extremely important. The Christian mystics we have met in this book are largely known because they put their inspired thoughts and personal revelations of God in writing; but, again, we would not think of them primarily as writers.

As people we think of as Christian writers began to emerge, it was often because of one book they had written. This would be true of **John Bunyan** for his *Pilgrim's Progress* and **William Law** for *A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life*. It would even be true of later writers such as **Harriet Beecher Stowe** (*Uncle Tom's Cabin*), **Hannah Whithall Smith** (*The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life*), **Charles M. Sheldon** (*In His Steps*), **Lettie B. Cowman** (*Streams in the Desert*), and **Oswald Chambers** (*My Utmost for His Highest*).

Of the more recent writers we consider in this book, there is much more variety in their writings. **George MacDonald**, **J. R. R. Tolkien** and **C. S. Lewis** wrote both scholarly books and fantasies. **Dorothy Sayers** wrote murder mysteries before getting into scholarly Christian writing. **Catherine Marshall** and **Henri Nouwen** wrote personal, biographical books as well as ones dealing with principles of Christian living.

Thank God for the variety of writers and writings that have preserved our Christian heritage and given us guidance in how best to follow the Lord's will in our lives.

Charles Monroe Sheldon: WWJD?

The initials WWJD (What would Jesus do?) are used by many Christians to remind them to practice what they preach. Many do not realize that the origins of this expression go back to over a century ago when a Congregational pastor wrote a book that sold fifteen million copies and was translated into seven languages.

Charles M. Sheldon was born in 1857 in Wellsville, New York. He graduated from Brown University and Andover Theological Seminary. He was ordained in the Congregational Church in 1886. After three years of ministry in Waterbury, Vermont, he became the first pastor of Central Congregational Church in Topeka, Kansas. He was devoted to the social gospel movement, developing outreach programs for people in need. He wrote stories about these needs and preached them from his pulpit. Many of his stories were printed and sold.

Sheldon's greatest literary success, however, was his Christian classic *In His Steps*. In it, Sheldon describes an ordinary congregation that is challenged to ask, in the face of every situation and decision encountered in life, "What would Jesus do if Jesus were in my place?" The congregation makes a commitment to live by those principles, and their lives, the church, and the community are all radically changed.

In 1900, the publisher of the *Topeka Daily Capital* invited Sheldon to edit his newspaper for a week in the manner that Sheldon believed Jesus would have edited it. During this brief time, Sheldon refused to allow advertisements for things he believed immoral (alcohol and tobacco, for instance) or to cover news items that he believed unedifying. The paper's circulation increased dramatically. Sheldon retired from the Topeka church in 1919 and became the editor of the *Christian Herald* until 1925. He died in 1946.

Thank God for Charles Sheldon and his book that influences so many people in our day.

Pandita Ramabai: A Father's Love

Her father was a Brahmin priest, but his love for his daughter prepared her to bring many to Christ and to encourage others to works of charity. He taught her Sanskrit, the religious and classical literary language of India. Before he died of starvation, he had equipped his daughter to be a rarity in India at the time—an educated woman.

Pandita Rarambai was born in southern India in 1858. After the deaths of her parents in the famine of 1874, she went to Calcutta. Her remarkable knowledge of Sanskrit placed her in demand as a teacher, and she was given the title “Pandita” (“Mistress of Learning”). She married an attorney and had a child by him, but was widowed within nineteen months. The situation in which she found herself convinced her of the need to promote learning among Hindu women and to improve the condition of young Hindu widows.

At this point in her life Rarambai became interested in Christianity. She had found a Sanskrit Bible and a copy of the Gospel of Luke in her husband’s library and met a Baptist missionary. She founded an organization to promote education among women. In 1883, she and her daughter went to England and were received by the Church of England. When she fully realized the differences between Christianity and Hinduism, she was converted to Christ and was baptized. She was then hired as a professor in Sanskrit at a women’s college. There followed a brief visit to the United States where she learned about kindergarten methods.

Rarambai returned to India as a committed Christian with the faith and educational background to establish missionary work there. She opened a school in Bombay. She bought land and established a mission at Kedagon. She helped hundreds of girls following the 1896 famine. Her Mukti (Salvation) Mission became a revival center where the Gospel was preached and many were converted. Her work is said to have had an influence on **George Mueller** and **Hudson Taylor**. Her final years were spent in translating the Bible into Marathi, one of the principal languages in India, and she died in 1922 just after completing this monumental work.

Thank God for Pandita Ramabai who showed the love of Christ to Indian women.

C. T. Studd: “Christian Celebrity”

It has been said that if we could generate as much enthusiasm in our churches as is displayed at sporting events, we could change the world for Christ. Also, much is made of athletes and other celebrities who profess faith in Christ, while others take a dim view of idolizing well-known people whether or not they are sincere about their faith. In contemplating these anomalies, it might be worthwhile to consider the life of Charles Thomas Studd.

C. T. Studd, as he was known, was born to a wealthy family in England in 1860. He was educated at Eton and Cambridge where he became the premier cricket player in England. At the time when his name was a household word, he experienced conversion as an indirect result of the crusades in England of **D. L. Moody** and **Ira Sankey**. Because of his fame, his witness to Christ was undoubtedly effective in bringing many to conversion. Because he carried into his ministry the same zeal he had displayed in sports, he was a tireless worker for the Lord.

Sensing a call to the mission field, Studd and six others (known as the “Cambridge Seven”) went to China in 1885 for the China Inland Mission started nineteen years earlier by **Hudson Taylor**. They followed the early practice of that Mission by adapting to the Chinese culture. When he came into his share of the family fortune, Studd immediately gave it to mission. Ill health compelled him to return to England in 1894. In 1900 he sailed for India where he was pastor of a nondenominational church until again forced to return home because of illness. His doctors did not want him to take to the mission field again, but he did so in 1910, this time to Africa.

Studd continued to serve in Central Africa until his death in 1931. During that time he led the formation of the World Evangelization Crusade that sought to recruit and send missionaries to the unevangelized parts of the world. The organization's slogan is the statement that Studd made when he gave away his fortune: “If Christ be God and died for me, then no sacrifice can be too great for me to make for him.”

Thank God for C. T. Studd, the “Christian celebrity” who gave his all for Christ.

Rodney Smith: The Gipsy Boy

As we have seen, over and over again in this series, God uses all sorts of people to do his work. An English revival preacher who was known as Gipsy Smith is a clear example.

Rodney Smith was born in 1860, the son of itinerant gipsy tinkers. The story is that his father, Cornelius Smith, heard the gospel while in jail for nonpayment of debts. When he got out, he took his children to the Latimer Road Mission where, as the congregation sang “There Is a Fountain Filled with Blood,” Cornelius suddenly fell unconscious. He then jumped up shouting to the children that he had been converted and made a new man, whereupon Rodney ran terrified from the church. At 16, however, Rodney also gave his life to the Lord at a Salvation Army meeting.

Rodney got a Bible, learned to read on his own, and started preaching. **William Booth** got Smith involved in the work of the Salvation Army, and “Gipsy,” as he was known, led revivals at Hull and Hanley, England. Later he was asked to resign from the Salvation Army because of a minor infraction of their rules. Smith, however, continued his preaching as an independent Christian in a faith ministry.

Smith was described as a bouncy revivalist who commanded great attention in the pre-World War I era. He held revivals in the United States, Australia, South Africa and Britain. He also served as special missionary for the National Free Church Council in Britain from 1897 until 1912. He died in 1947.

Thank God for Gipsy Smith who showed that God can take a person from the most humble of beginnings and use him to reach people with the Gospel.

Bernard Mizeki: East African Martyr

Not a great deal is known about Bernard Mizeki but he holds an important place in the lives of many Christians today. The revival movements that have shaped Christianity in Africa came much later, but he is a reminder of the price that was paid to bring Christianity to South and Central Africa.

Mizeki was born in Portuguese East Africa (now Mozambique) about 1861. He escaped to Cape Town, South Africa where he was befriended by and converted to Christ through the efforts of Anglican missionaries. He was baptized in 1886.

In 1891, at approximately 30 years of age, he volunteered to serve at the pioneer mission at Nhowe, Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). This was an isolated and primitive area where he worked for five years gaining many converts and breaking the superstitions and ignorance that had held the people captive.

This was a troubled time for Rhodesia, however, and missionaries were often regarded as the stooges of European imperialists. Mizeki was considered to fall into this category. When a native uprising occurred in 1896, Mizeki was encouraged to flee for safety, but would not do so. He could not see himself as an enemy of the natives and he was unwilling to leave his converts to Christianity. As a result, he was brutally stabbed to death although his body, mysteriously, was never found.

A shrine near Mizeki's place of martyrdom attracts many pilgrims today.

Thank God for young Bernard Mizeki who gave his life as a witness to his faith in Christ.

George Washington Carver: God Alone

He has been called arguably the most remarkable American who has ever lived. He was kidnapped as an infant slave then bought back by his original owner in exchange for a horse, leading to separation from the mother he would never see again. Converting to Christ at ten years of age, he had to look to God alone for his future. But, what a future that was!

Born during the Civil War in 1861 in Diamond Grove, Missouri, George Washington Carver found it difficult to gain an education after emancipation because of his race. He studied as best he could on his own, and was finally allowed to attend Lincoln School for Colored Children in Neosho. His burning desire to learn took him to Simpson College in Iowa and then to Iowa Agricultural College where he graduated in 1896 with a master's degree in botany. Carver had an insatiable desire to understand the secrets of nature and how they could benefit mankind.

At Tuskegee Institute, **Booker T. Washington** was ready to introduce ways of teaching Blacks to survive by training them in indispensable occupations. Washington was impressed with Carver's knowledge as a botanist and brought him onto the faculty at Tuskegee. It was the calling to serve that Carver had long dreamed of. As might be said, "the rest is history."

Seeking to provide southern farmers with alternate ways to use their land (and to provide crop rotation from cotton which was wearing out the soil), Carver convinced farmers that they could grow peanuts and sweet potatoes. Unfortunately, once they did, there was no market for the products. In despair, Carver prayed for God to show him how these products could be used (his famous "Mr. Creator, why did you make the peanut?" prayer). As a result, God led him to discover some 300 marketable products from peanuts and more than 100 from sweet potatoes. Carver received many prestigious awards and was a friend to three American Presidents. He died in 1943.

Thank God for George Washington Carver whose creativeness, a gift from his Creator, blessed and blesses so many.

Billy Sunday: Soul Saver

He never attained the sports celebrity status of **C. T. Studd**, but he did steal ninety-five bases in a single season as a professional baseball player. Despite his success in sports, however, God had other plans for Billy Sunday.

Sunday was born near Ames, Iowa in 1862. Orphaned at a young age, he grew up in Glenwood and Davenport in Soldier's Orphanage Home (his father had joined the Union Army but died of pneumonia). There he received "a good schooling and proper religious instruction." Later he went to work on his grandfather's farm near Ames and played on a local baseball team that won the state championship. His baseball prowess led to a professional contract with the Chicago White Sox, and he played in the major leagues until 1891.

He experienced conversion to Christ at the Pacific Garden Mission in Chicago in 1886. He later said, "When I reach Heaven, I won't stop to look for Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Joseph, David, Daniel, Peter or Paul. I will rush past them all saying, 'Where is Jesus? I want to see Jesus who saved my soul one dark stormy night in Chicago.'" First as an advance man for evangelist J. Wilburn Chapman, and then on his own, Sunday went on to a spectacular career as a traveling evangelist.

During his lengthy career it is estimated that 100 million people in over 300 crusades heard him speak. His impressive physical strength, his rapid-fire preaching—it was said he occasionally spoke at 300 words a minute—and his booming voice (he spoke without amplification to thousands at a time) aided his effectiveness greatly. It is believed that he was used by the Lord to save as many as one million of those who attended his crusades. As an evangelist preaching the Gospel, he holds a primary place between the ministries of **D. L. Moody** and Billy Graham. Billy Sunday died in 1935.

Thank God for Billy Sunday who enthusiastically preached the gospel and brought so many to Jesus who had saved his soul.

Evangeline Cory Booth: Versatile Daughter

The Salvation Army must have seemed to be a family affair in its early days, because children of **William and Catherine Booth** and their spouses held prominent positions and did significant ministry. We will look at three of the Booth women over the next three days.

Evangeline Booth was the fourth daughter and seventh child of the Booths. She was born in England in 1865, the year the Salvation Army was formed, and she served it all her life. She ministered in the slums of London, served as principal of the Salvation Army International Training College and was Territorial Commander in Canada and Newfoundland (1896-1904). She led the effort in the United States from 1904 until 1934, and then became the first General of the International Salvation Army from 1934 until 1939.

Booth was noted for her ability to relate evangelistic work to meeting practical needs. Her penchant for organizing rapid response to emergency situations was legendary. When tragedy struck—earthquakes, famines, war, fires, and other calamities—relief was soon on the way.

Miss Booth's versatility was her hallmark, however. She was much more than an evangelist, social worker and able administrator. As a musician she was a harpist, wrote hymns and composed music. She was also a writer with several books to her credit. She received the Distinguished Service Medal from President Woodrow Wilson, honorary degrees from Columbia University and Tufts College, the Fairfax Gold Medal for "eminent patriotic services" and the Vasa Gold Medal from the king of Sweden. Her long and productive life ended in 1950.

Thank God for Evangeline Booth who carried forward the important ministry started by her parents.

Florence Eleanor Soper Booth: The Work in England

While other members of the family advanced the Salvation Army around the world, Florence Booth devoted her ministry to her native England.

She was born Florence Eleanor Soper in 1862 in Plymouth, the daughter of a prominent physician. She was well educated. At an early age she attended a preaching service by **Catherine Booth** in London. Following her conversion to Christ, she joined the Salvation Army and was briefly assigned to France. In 1882, while a lieutenant, she married Bramwell, the Booth's oldest son who succeeded his father as head of the Salvation Army.

Florence Booth organized and ran the Salvation Army's Women's Social Service work from 1882 until 1912. She inaugurated the Home League in 1907. This ministry introduced women of the slums to simple but effective means of homemaking and childcare. She served as a Justice of the Peace in London and as a visiting Justice for Prisons for the County of London. Additionally, she served on various committees such as Britain's Central Control Board of the Liquor Traffic and held other important positions of social service.

She lived to see the fiftieth anniversary of the International Home League, which she had started, passing away that year (1957). Many of her writings appeared in Salvation Army publications and she authored two books.

Thank God for Florence Soper Booth whom God used to teach poor women how to care for their homes and their children.

Maud Elizabeth Charlesworth Booth: The Work in America

This member of the Booth family devoted her life to the work of the Salvation Army and other social causes in the United States. Here again was a pioneer in social ministry whose life benefited the needy not only spiritually but also physically.

Maud Charlesworth was born in England in 1865. When she was 16, her mother took her to a Salvation Army meeting and she was captivated by the speaker and his message. The speaker was Ballington Booth, the second son of **William** and **Catherine Booth**. Subsequently, she met Catherine Booth who was doing Salvation Army work in France and then in Switzerland. Many people considered the work of the Salvation Army to be fanatical, and Maud was stoned, arrested and expelled from Switzerland.

Undaunted, Maud married Ballington Booth in 1886, and in 1887 the couple went to command the Salvation Army work in the United States. From 1896 until her death in 1948, Maud carried on the work of the newly formed Volunteers for America, of which she and her husband were co-founders. She was also responsible for forming the Auxiliary League program of the Salvation Army.

Under the Volunteers for America Maud started and ran the Volunteer Prison League and the Hope Hall program of halfway houses. She served as General for the Volunteers from 1940 to 1948. Another significant achievement in her life was that she was the first Salvation Army woman to be licensed to perform the marriage ceremony in the United States in 1892. Following her precedent, all women officers of the Salvation Army were also licensed to preside at weddings.

Maud Booth was a champion of prison reform, an evangelist, and an imaginative and effective Christian leader.

Thank God for the Booth family and the significant impact they had not only in leading people to Christ but also meeting a variety of needs throughout the world.

Sir Wilfred Thomason Grenfell: Newfoundland

His background was almost totally the opposite of his fellow Englishman **Gipsy Smith**. He came from an affluent family and received the best of educations. Yet, he also gave himself totally to the Lord's work, and led many to Christ.

Wilfred Grenfell was born in 1865 at Parkgate, Cheshire, England. He was educated at Marlborough and Oxford, where he received his M.D. He was converted to Christ while attending a tent revival led by **D. L. Moody**. He then studied medicine in a London hospital and, in 1889, became a medical missionary in the North Sea area. As a result of this experience, he was asked to undertake a pioneer effort to provide medical attention to the fishing fleets working off the Labrador coast of Newfoundland. He left England in 1892 to devote the remainder of his life to this ministry.

Grenfell treated 900 patients in his first two months along the Labrador coast. He quickly won the confidence of both the fishermen and the Eskimos by his sacrificial attention to their needs. In 1900 he was presented with a hospital ship, the *Strathcona*. Grenfell's courageous journeys by dogsled and his adventures in the icy seas caught the imagination of supporters in England, Canada and the United States. As a result, his hospital and a children's home at St. Anthony's became the base of the Labrador work of the International Grenfell Association, of which Wilfred was the superintendent.

Through Grenfell's untiring efforts, the needs for schools and improved general welfare among the fishing communities were more than adequately met. For his achievements, Grenfell was knighted in 1927. He retired to his home on Lake Champlain in 1935 and died five years later.

Thank God for Wilfred Grenfell who left a life of comfort and security in England to serve the people of Newfoundland for the glory of God.

John R. Mott: Nobel Peace Prize

It is doubtful that anyone has been responsible for being a vital part of the formation of so many important Christian organizations as John R. Mott. He was a great missionary statesman who lived for 90 years and took part in ecumenical endeavors all over the world.

Mott was born in Livingston Manor, New York in 1865. He studied at Upper Iowa University and Cornell. Mott consistently identified himself as a Methodist, but he never received theological education nor was he ordained. He was a lay person who spent his life in Christian leadership. **D. L. Moody** had a profound effect on his life; Mott helped organize the summer student conferences under Moody's leadership at Northfield, Massachusetts.

In 1888 he accepted appointment as traveling secretary for the intercollegiate YMCA. He helped form the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions that year and served as its chairman. He was under the conviction that it was the Christian duty to evangelize the world and to do it in the present generation. It is estimated that as many as 20,000 missionaries served as a result of the ministry of SVM. Believing that Christians should work together across denominational lines, Mott was involved in starting and leading many cooperative ecumenical efforts including the World's Student Christian Federation (formed in 1895), the Federal Council of Churches (1909), the Foreign Missions Conference of America (1911), the International Missionary Council (1921) and the World Council of Churches (1948).

Mott was an incessant traveler (it is estimated that he covered 1.7 million miles), a creative and energetic organizer, a prodigious writer (he authored 18 books), and a wise leader. He possessed remarkable powers of concentration and could carry on multiple tasks at the same time. Recognized the world over for his tireless efforts toward both evangelism and reconciliation, he received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1946. He died in Orlando, Florida in 1955.

Thank God for John R. Mott whose long and vigorous life for Christ had a beneficial effect on so many people all over the world.

Charles H. Mason: Black Pentecostal

A miraculous healing took C. H. Mason in a direction that would lead to the formation of one of the largest Black denominations in the world.

Mason was born in 1866 near Memphis, Tennessee, the son of former slaves who were tenant farmers. Twelve years later a yellow fever epidemic hit the area and the Masons moved to Arkansas. Unfortunately, they were not able to escape the ravages of the disease that took Mason's father and laid young C. H. on death's door. Early one Sunday morning "the glory of God appeared to Charles as never before" (his wife later told) and he was immediately healed.

Moved by this miracle of God, Mason became a proponent of spiritual healing and preached his first sermon in Preston, Arkansas in 1882 at sixteen years of age. He was first licensed by the Missionary Baptist Church and had a brief stint at Arkansas Baptist College, from which he departed in 1894 for an evangelistic ministry centered in spiritual healing. His teachings were unacceptable to his Baptist denomination; and, as a result, he and others formed the Church of God in Christ in 1897.

The new denomination languished for ten years. At that point, Mason came under the Pentecostal influence of the Azusa Street Revival. He assumed full leadership of the Church of God in Christ as its senior bishop. He held that position until his death in 1961. In 1970 the Mason Theological Seminary was founded, making it the first Pentecostal seminary. Mason's church is today regarded as the second largest Black denomination in the world.

Thank God for C. H. Mason, used by the Lord to form a major Christian church.

Amy Carmichael: Finding One's Place

It is said that God has a purpose for each of us. It is just a matter of growing in our relationship with God that we might be able to perceive his call upon our lives. Sometimes it takes years, maybe even a lifetime, to truly find our place, but it is something God wants us to pursue. It took Amy Carmichael a while to find her place, but there is no doubt that she finally did!

Carmichael was born in Belfast, Northern Ireland, in 1867. She was from a family that was financially well to do until her father died leaving them penniless. In the stress of the situation that followed she was able to perceive a call to overseas mission. In 1893 she sailed for Japan. Illness and other problems occurred. Amy stayed in Japan only 15 months, went to Ceylon, and then to England. She was having an extremely difficult time finding the special place God had for her.

She tried again in 1895, going to India as a missionary of the Church of England. Things didn't working out there very well either. And then it happened: Carmichael discovered that young Indian girls were being used as Hindu temple prostitutes. Repelled by this, she began to provide a home for the girls she was able to rescue from this oppressive situation. By 1904, she was responsible for 17 girls. She had to combat charges that she was kidnapping the children, and she received death threats.

Continuing this good work, she was able to form the Dohnavur Fellowship in 1927 that sponsored her work. By 1945, thousands had been placed under the care of the fellowship, boys as well as girls. Many Christian leaders have come out of the fellowship over the years. Somehow, amidst all of this work, Carmichael found time to write books about her work in India as well as devotional works. When she died at 83, in 1951, she had written 35 books.

Thank God for Amy Carmichael who eventually found her place in God's plan and carried it out to the glory of God and the benefit of thousands.

Eleanor Chestnut: Perseverance

Few people would have the perseverance to become both a medical doctor and a nurse, but perseverance was the distinguishing characteristic of Eleanor Chestnut.

She was born in Iowa in 1868. Her father abandoned her at birth and her mother died when she was three. Raised by impoverished neighbors, she was a girl without any prospects. All she had was her perseverance.

Eleanor Chestnut learned that there was a school where she could earn her way to an education, and she immediately seized upon it. While in school she joined the Presbyterian Church and developed an interest in foreign missions. To fulfill a desire to become a medical missionary, she studied medicine at the Women's Medical College in Chicago and then nursing at the Illinois Training School for Nurses. She also attended the Moody Bible Institute and was chosen to be a medical missionary to South China in 1893. She first went to Canton, then inland to Samkong near the Hunan border. She worked at Lien-chow and learned the language of the people. Her dedication to her work was exemplary. Her own bathroom had to be used as her operating room, she once removed skin from her own leg as a graft for a peasant whose leg was not healing, and she lived virtually without pay to provide materials for a women's hospital she was establishing.

During the Boxer Rebellion in 1902 she was forced to return briefly to the United States. Chestnut soon returned to Lien-chow to continue the dedicated service she had provided the people. However, in 1905 her mission compound was attacked by an anti-foreign mob and she and several others were martyred. It was said that she could have escaped, but remained to care for her patients.

Thank God for Eleanor Chestnut and the model she is for us of perseverance and dedication.

Roland Allen: Missionary Strategist

Many Christians have been more widely recognized and appreciated after their death than during their lifetime. Roland Allen was a classic example of this.

Born in England in 1868, the son of an Anglican priest, Allen was educated at Oxford and at Leeds Clergy School. He was ordained in 1893 and joined the North China Mission under the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in 1895. He was running a training school for native clergy when forced to leave the country for a short time because of the Boxer Rebellion. After returning to China, he ministered for another brief period and then left in 1903 for health reasons.

Allen served as a parish priest in Buckinghamshire until 1907 when he resigned over a dispute involving his convictions about baptism. He would not baptize where there was no evidence of Christian commitment. He would never again serve in the parish ministry, devoting his time to speaking and writing about deeply held convictions concerning missionary enterprise.

Allen believed strongly in raising up and training congregational leadership from within rather than the continual sending of foreign missionaries. Provided with private financing, he devoted his life to writing and talking about his conclusions concerning missionary service. It was his contention that modern missions imposed foreign direction, controlled the finances (inhibiting local stewardship) and promoted an alienated professional ministry. Allen wanted those converted to Christ to carry their own load, be guided by the Holy Spirit, and grow their own ministry. This is the only way he believed a local “body of Christ” could function effectively in the long run. Although he gained little headway with his arguments during his lifetime, his books (notably *Missionary Methods: St. Paul’s or Ours?* and *The Spontaneous Expansion of the Church*) have been widely read and accepted. Allen died in 1947.

Thank God for Roland Allen who held to the courage of his convictions and is being appreciated and followed in our day.

Henry Ernest Hardy: Father Andrew

Although not widely known today, this quiet English monk and amateur painter was believed by many to have expressed Christian love in his writings more effectively and prolifically than anyone since the Apostle John.

Henry Ernest Hardy was born in Kasauli, India in 1869, one of seven children of an English colonel. He was educated at Oxford and received his theological training at Ely. He was ordained an Anglican priest in 1895. He was one of three founders of the Society of the Divine Compassion, a monastic order, and served as its Superior.

Better known as Father Andrew, Hardy was a man of great and varied gifts: poet, artist, thinker and writer. All his work in those various fields was dedicated to the one great purpose of his life, the glory of God and the service of the Church. Although he went as a missionary to Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) in 1932, he traveled comparatively little outside of England. Most of his 77 years were spent in Plaistow, London, ministering to the poor.

To say Father Andrew was a prolific writer is an understatement. He was the author of nineteen books of prose, nine collections of poetry and six plays. He was also a first class amateur painter in watercolors. His selfless ministry made him well loved by all. He died at Bushy Heath, Hertfordshire, in 1946, having been a great encouragement to his flock during the trying days of the Second World War.

Thank God for Henry Ernest Hardy, Father Andrew, who gave so much joy to so many during his lifetime and then blessed so many others through his books for so many years.

Lettie B. Cowman: Devotional Writer Plus

She is best known for a devotional book still popular in our day, but her contribution to the spread of the Gospel throughout the world is much greater than that.

Lettie B. Cowman was born in Iowa in 1870. She married Charles Cowman about whom she would later write a biography recognizing him as a “missionary warrior.” The Cowmans formed the Oriental Missionary Society in Japan in 1901. Lettie became president of the society in 1928 and led its work until retiring from that ministry in 1949. She then became president of World Gospel Crusades, a sister organization.

From 1936, her primary focus was on a program called Every Creature Crusades, the purpose of which was to place Scripture in every home in every nation in which the program was undertaken. It was modeled after the Oriental Missionary Society’s Great Village Campaign of 1912-1918 during which teams visited 10,300,000 homes.

Lettie Cowman traveled all over the world encouraging missionaries and writing. During the difficult time of her husband’s extended illness, she wrote the devotional classic *Streams in the Desert*. It has experienced more than one hundred printings in English in several editions, and has also been translated into approximately fifteen foreign languages. The book, and her travels, connected Cowman with many of the world political leaders of her day.

The missionary society started by the Cowmans remains one of the primary faith missions and has influenced people the world over for Christ. Lettie died in 1960.

Thank God for Lettie Cowman who gave us a book and so much more.

Oswald Chambers: My Utmost for His Highest

He wrote one of the most important and influential Christian books of all time, but did not know he had done so. It was compiled by his young widow and published ten years after his death.

Oswald Chambers was born in 1874 in Aberdeen, Scotland, the son of a Baptist pastor. He was converted under the preaching of **C. H. Spurgeon**. His gifts seemed to be in the field of art, which he studied in London and Edinburgh. He seemed assured of a scholarship to the leading art centers of Europe and a promising career in the field. He decided against this, however, and went to Dunoon College in western Scotland to study for the Baptist ministry in 1897.

He tutored at Dunoon, remaining there until 1906. He was widely heralded as a preacher, but believed himself to be dry spiritually until he encountered **F. B. Meyer** who spoke about the empowering of the Holy Spirit. He sought that empowering, relying on Luke 11:13. Although he experienced no personal feeling of spiritual renewal, his preaching immediately became more effective, with scores of people coming forward to give their lives to Jesus Christ.

Chambers subsequently served with the Pentecostal League of Prayer and traveled widely in the United States and Japan from 1909 to 1911. In 1911 he became the Principal of the Bible Training College in Clapham Common, London. Then, in 1915, during the First World War, he went to Egypt under the auspices of the YMCA to minister to the British troops. He was popular not only as a preacher and pastor, but also used his artistic skills to attract audiences. Thus, it was a profound loss to all when he died suddenly in Egypt in 1917 at the age of only 43. Fortunately, his widow collected his notes, lectures and sermons and compiled them into a daily devotional, *My Utmost for His Highest*, which remains very popular.

Thank God for Oswald Chambers and his wife Gertrude for giving us a Christian classic that continues to help so many.

Evelyn Underhill: After, and Before, Her Time

God works in such fascinating ways. Who would have believed that a lay woman who was a throwback to the Christian mystics of earlier generations would burst onto the scene in England in the late Victorian era and have a marked influence on the great Christian writers to follow: **Charles Williams**, **Dorothy Sayers** and **C. S. Lewis**? Yet, this is exactly what happened.

Evelyn Underhill was born in 1875 in Staffordshire, England the daughter of an attorney. She lived in London where she received her early education. She was sent to a private school at Folkstone when she was sixteen and graduated from King's College for Women in London. She was from an Anglican home but became interested in Roman Catholicism while visiting a Franciscan convent in 1907.

Underhill became greatly sought after for her teaching and writing. She was a popular retreat leader and spiritual director. She married Hubert Stuart Moore in 1907 but continued traveling, speaking and writing. She wrote in the Christian mystic tradition and practiced a quiet and disciplined spirituality that caused her to be one of the foremost Christian mentors of her day. She wrote about her own mystical experiences and translated the writings of other Christian mystics.

Underhill stressed the truth that adoration (praise) is the soul of both public and private prayer. Thus, she helped liberate Christians from sterile, perfunctory and purely intellectual worship. Her most famous book, *Worship*, was written following a lifetime of leading retreats. She revived an appreciation of the Christian mystic, writing: "It is a life inspired by a vivid and definite aim; the life of a dedicated will moving steadily in one direction, towards a perfect and unbroken union with God." Underhill wrote a number of books, some under a male pseudonym John Cordelier, that remain popular; and her writings profoundly affected later mystical writers. She died in 1941.

Thank God for Evelyn Underhill whose devotion to Christian mysticism brought its own brand of spiritual renewal to the Church.

Mary McLeod Bethune: African American Educator

During the days of racial segregation in the American South, African Americans needed people they could hold up as role models and heroes of their race. **George Washington Carver** and **Booker T. Washington** certainly fell into that category. So did Mary McLeod Bethune.

Bethune was born in 1875 in South Carolina, the daughter of former slaves. She accepted Christ early in life and was encouraged by a Presbyterian missionary to attend school. After her initial schooling she went to Moody Bible Institute in preparation for going to Africa as a missionary. However, she could not find a sponsor. She interpreted this as a message from the Lord that she was to minister to Africans right here in the United States.

Bethune believed education to be her primary way of showing her Christian witness to her own people. She taught and in 1904 opened her own school in Florida. At first, she had only five students meeting in her home. Soon, however, the school grew, and she called it the Daytona Normal and Industrial School for Girls. She taught the Bible along with basic courses and also had a Sunday school. Success brought needed funding and, in 1928, the school merged with Cookman Institute and Bethune became president. That school is now Bethune-Cookman College, an outstanding coeducational college in Daytona, Florida.

As her fame as an educator grew, Bethune's opportunities to serve her country increased: she was appointed to President Herbert Hoover's National Commission on Child Welfare; for President Franklin Roosevelt she became a special advisor on minority affairs; and under President Harry Truman she was chosen to visit William Tubman, Christian President of Liberia. She founded the National Council of Negro Women and traveled widely in its behalf. She died in 1955.

Thank God for Mary McLeod Bethune whose life was a powerful Christian witness to Blacks during the days of racial segregation in the South.

Evan Roberts: Shooting Star

He came onto the scene in Wales like a meteor flashing across the night sky. The Lord used him to give birth to the Welsh Revival. Then, spent from the effort, he faded away.

Evan John Roberts was the son of a coal miner, born in Glamorgan, Wales in 1878. He went to work in the mine at the age of twelve. However, he believed himself called to the ministry of his Calvinistic Methodist Church. He was accepted at Newcastle Emlyn College to be trained for ordination as a clergyman.

For eleven years he prayed for revival in Wales. There had been a revival in 1858, and many thought another was imminent. Roberts attended a prayer meeting at Blaenannerch and sensed empowerment by the Holy Spirit. Rather than returning to college he went home to Loughor and asked his pastor for permission to hold some evening meetings. He was just 25 years of age at the time. Only a handful came at first, but soon shops were closing so that people could attend the meetings. People left work early so they could get a seat in the church. Services lasted as late as 4:30 A.M., with confessions, conversions and reconciliation within families.

Soon the fervor of the revival that was occurring in Loughor began to spill over into the countryside. In the year that followed, Roberts and his friends made tours throughout Wales and into Liverpool, England in 1905. The Welsh Revival was in full swing and it is estimated that one hundred thousand people were converted.

The experience took its toll on Roberts. At the end of 1905 he retired to the retreat offered him by Jessie Penn-Lewis in Leicestershire and his public ministry was over. He returned to Wales in 1925 and died in Cardiff in 1951.

Thank God for Evan Roberts, the shooting star of the Welsh Revival, whom God used to bring thousands to Jesus Christ.

Clarence Edward Noble Macartney: Christ Today

Many people in our day are concerned about the diluting of the Christian message and Scripture so as to make it more easily accepted. Those are not new problems. They have been going on for decades. Clarence Macartney fought that trend in the early Twentieth Century.

Clarence Edward Noble Macartney was born in Northwood, Ohio in 1879. He was of staunch Presbyterian stock, and his father was a preacher and professor. Macartney graduated from the University of Wisconsin, Princeton University and Princeton Theological Seminary. A bachelor, he pastored three Presbyterian churches in Pennsylvania from 1905 to 1953. He was a theological conservative at a time when liberalism was growing rapidly within the denomination.

In 1924 he was Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, USA. Earlier he had opposed Harry Emerson Fosdick's highly publicized sermon "Shall the Fundamentalists Win?" and he stood against those who denied the authority of Scripture. He stated his position clearly: "A diluted Bible results in a diluted gospel. Protestantism, as it loses faith in the Bible, is losing its religion."

Macartney's sermons had a strong evangelistic flavor. "The Holy Spirit," he preached, "when he invites men to come to Christ, never says, 'Tomorrow' but always 'Today.' If you can find me one place in the Bible where the Holy Spirit says, 'Believe in Christ tomorrow'...I will come out of this pulpit and stay out of it, for I would have no gospel to preach." Macartney was a distinguished lecturer at conferences, colleges and seminaries and a prolific writer. He died in 1957.

Thank God for Clarence Macartney who stood tall for the authority of Scripture at a crucial time in the life of the church.

William Temple: Philosopher/Theologian

He is remembered as the Archbishop of Canterbury, the spiritual leader of the worldwide Anglican Communion. Yet, he only served in that capacity for two years (1942-44), a period overshadowed by the Second World War and a time during which he was ill and died. William Temple is nonetheless revered as one of the great Christian minds of the Twentieth Century.

Temple was born in 1881 in Exeter, England. He earned a “Double First” at Oxford and was awarded a fellowship to teach philosophy in 1904. He was ordained to the Anglican priesthood in 1908. After serving as a headmaster of a school, rector of a parish, then on the staff of a cathedral, he was chosen Bishop of Manchester in 1921, Archbishop of York in 1929, and Archbishop of Canterbury in 1942.

Despite a distinguished career as an ordained person, he had formed strong interests in educational and social work while still a layman. He was involved in the Workers’ Educational Association and the Student Christian Movement. He was in the forefront of ecumenical movements and presided at the formational meeting of the British Council of Churches in 1942.

Temple was both a philosopher and a theologian. It was said that he was too much of a philosopher for the theologians and too much of a theologian for the philosophers, but he was an immensely popular Christian leader. He also had a sense of humor and a vulnerability that was attractive. He told the story on himself, for instance, that he could not spell. He was particularly perplexed about whether to put the “e” or the “i” first when they appeared together in a word; so, he would make two loops and place the dot between them! He wrote a number of books, most of them scholarly in nature. However, his popular *Readings in St. John’s Gospel* reveals that his scholarship was matched by his Christian devotion. His sudden death was a great loss to the worldwide Church.

Thank God for William Temple whose bright mind and personal popularity were so important to so many as the world moved into and through the Second World War.

John XXIII: Innovative Pope

He was a big man who had a big impact on the worldwide religious scene. He was already 77 years old when he became pope. Maybe he would simply be a caretaker of the office for a few years and then be succeeded by a younger and more promising leader. For anyone who thought that, they had a real surprise coming!

Angelo Guiseppe Roncali was born near Bergamo, Italy in 1881. He studied in Rome, was ordained, and served as an assistant to a Roman Catholic bishop (1904-1914). A man of many interests and talents, he participated in social action among the working class, taught at a diocesan seminary and published scholarly works. In 1921, in Rome, he demonstrated administrative genius in organizing the papal funding agency for missions. He also taught at the Lateran University before joining the papal diplomatic corps in 1925. Assigned to Istanbul, he was papal representative in Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey.

In 1953 Roncali became Patriarch of Venice. Then, in 1958 he was elected Pope John XXIII. He was nicknamed “John-outside-the-Walls” because of his frequent trips from Vatican City to be with the people. He died in 1963.

The great work of Pope John’s papacy, of course, was his calling of the Second Vatican Council (1962-65). John was under the conviction that change was needed in the church, not change of its theology but of its practice and its view toward other Christian bodies. Although he died before the three-year effort was completed, he set the stage and outlined the vision, which he believed had been given him by the Holy Spirit. As a result, Roman Catholic liturgy was simplified and worship could be conducted in the language of the worshippers rather than in Latin. There would be more focus on Scripture and more participation by lay people. More contemporary forms of worship were encouraged. And, perhaps most important of all, dialogues were begun with other Christian bodies to encourage understanding and minimize suspicion and competition.

Thank God for Angelo Guiseppe Roncali, Pope John XXIII, in whom the Holy Spirit blew a refreshing breeze of change through the Roman Catholic Church.

G. A. Studdert Kennedy: Woodbine Willie

Just because a person is a Christian chaplain doesn't mean that he can't be a little eccentric, a "character." The army chaplain who became known among the British troops during the First World War as "Woodbine Willie" certainly fit that category. Woodbine was the brand name of the cigarettes Geoffrey Anketell Studdert Kennedy passed out to his comrades in the trenches, and the soldiers loved him.

Studdert Kennedy was born in Ireland in 1883. He was educated at Trinity College, Dublin, and Ripon Clergy College, being ordained a deacon in the Church of England in 1908. He held curacies at Rugby and Leeds before becoming vicar of St. Paul's, Worcester from 1914 to 1921 and Chaplain to the Forces from 1916 to 1919. His vivid faith and warmth of character endeared him to the soldiers and made him the best known padre of the war.

His views were unconventional, but his theology was solid. He wrote a great number of poems, many in dialect. His biographer William Purcell said, "Studdert Kennedy was more than a rhymster. He was in fact a gifted poet, and he continued writing notable verse to the time of his death in 1929. Everything he did bore the marks of a man passionate in his suffering for striving humanity, fierce in his hatred of hypocrisy and cant." His classic poem "Indifference" is still widely quoted.

Studdert Kennedy was generous to a fault, allegedly giving away furniture from his own meager household to help others he considered in greater need. These words from his most popular hymn perhaps sum up his beliefs: "To give and give, and give again, what God hath given thee; to spend thyself nor count the cost; to serve right gloriously the God who gave all worlds that are, and all that are to be."

Thank God for G. A. Studdert Kennedy who gave 100% of himself to the Lord he served and the people he loved with Christ's love.

Kenneth Scott Latourette: Yale Historian

It is difficult to talk seriously about Christian history, missionary movements and spiritual awakenings that have changed Christianity and the world without reference to Kenneth Scott Latourette. The Yale historian is simply *the* source of information for so much that is known on those subjects.

Latourette was born in Oregon City, Oregon in 1884 into a Baptist family. He was educated at Linfield College and Yale University. At Yale he became involved in the Student Volunteer Movement which **John R. Mott** had helped form in 1888. This led to a brief term as a missionary to China (1910-1912) that ended when illness necessitated his return home. He turned to an academic career, teaching first at Reed College (1914-1916) and then at Denison University (1916-1921). At that point he was called to be professor of missions and Oriental history at Yale and remained there for 32 years, retiring in 1953 as he was approaching 70 years of age. He became an institution.

Latourette never married. He had been ordained a Baptist minister in 1918. And, although he maintained active interest in missions and student work, his devotion was to world history and its interrelation with Christianity. His monumental work *History of the Expansion of Christianity* covered all aspects of Christianity over six continents and twenty centuries. He showed the interaction between the Church and the environments in which it ministered. Latourette believed that the history of Christianity is one of irregular advances and setbacks, with each new advance bringing its own unforeseen results. He concluded “the influence of Christianity has mounted and has never been greater than it is today.”

Latourette was a speaker at the first assembly of the World Council of Churches in 1948 and was highly regarded in his lifetime, as he is today. He died in 1968.

Thank God for Kenneth Scott Latourette whose scholarship has left us with valuable information on the history of Christianity to guide us in the days and years ahead.

Frank C. Laubach: Two Essentials

Most Christians would feel blessed if God would use them in one great way during their lifetime. Frank Laubach was used in two.

Laubach was born in Pennsylvania in 1884. He was educated at Princeton and Columbia universities and Union Theological Seminary in New York. He became a Congregational missionary and educator. His early career was as a missionary to the Philippines in 1915. His focus was on education and he became the dean of Union College in Manila. By the late 1920s the two great ministries of his life had taken shape. One had to do with fresh ways of looking at the life of prayer. The other concerned a method of making it simpler for people to learn to read. In both of these areas he gained worldwide acclaim.

In the field of prayer, his approach was one of practicing the presence of God, a principal interest that **Brother Lawrence** had awakened. The result of Laubach's experimenting with personal prayer ultimately led to his highly popular book *Prayer, the Mightiest Force in the World*, first released in 1951. It is a book covering the why, how, when and where of prayer. It is a practical book for lay people written in lay people's language. About it, Laubach said, "Only prayer, which releases the infinite might of God, can win the final battle for men's minds and hearts."

Laubach's other great gift to humanity is his "Each One Teach One" approach to adult literacy training. Through the Laubach Literacy Foundation, established in 1955, his own unique system of phonetic symbols and pictures has been used to teach untold thousands to read. The foundation has been responsible for the production of literary primers for as many as 300 languages and dialects in more than 100 countries. Laubach also wrote over thirty books. He died in 1970.

Thank God for Frank C. Laubach and his breakthrough ministries in prayer and literacy from which so many have benefited the world over.

Robert Laidlaw: Businessman for the Lord

Over the course of this series of biographical sketches we have looked at a great variety of Christian leaders, but most of them have been ordained ministers who served God in different ways. Ministry is not limited to the ordained, however. All Christians are called to ministry, including businessmen. Robert Laidlaw was an example of this.

Laidlaw was born in England in 1885, but soon moved with his family to Dunedin, New Zealand. His parents were devout Christians and he experienced conversion to Christ at the age of seventeen, a year after he had begun work as a junior clerk in a hardware business. When the family moved to Auckland two years later, Laidlaw became senior wholesale traveler. During his travels he came across a Montgomery Ward catalogue from which he got the idea of starting a mail order business in New Zealand. In 1909 he opened his own mail order business and it flourished from the start. In 1918 it merged with Farmers' Union Trading Company, with Laidlaw as General Manager, a post he held for over 50 years.

One of the first things Laidlaw dealt with was the stewardship of his money. He was a convinced tither, pledging to give God ten percent of his income initially and then to increase that proportion on a graduated scale as his income increased. At the age of 25, he changed his plan and decided to give fifty percent of his earnings to the Lord's work. He maintained that level of giving over the remaining years of his life, setting up the Bethesda Charitable Trust that distributed untold thousands of dollars to missionary and evangelistic purposes.

How to share his faith with his many employees led to the writing of *The Reason Why*, a 46-page booklet telling his own story and helping others to commit their lives to Christ. It has been said to be the most effective evangelistic tract ever written. Twenty million copies have been sold or given away, and hundreds of thousands of people have been led to the Lord through it. Perhaps Laidlaw's greatest sense of achievement came during the Second World War, however, when he had the opportunity to witness to countless numbers of military personnel who were facing death every day.

Thank God for Robert Laidlaw and the many lay people whom God has used and uses to reach others for Christ.

Robert C. McQuilkin, Jr.: God's Other Plans

As we have seen in the lives of several people we have encountered in this series, God sometimes has plans for us other than what we at first thought. This was certainly true for Robert McQuilkin.

McQuilkin was born in 1886. He was a Christian at twelve years of age, but continued to have doubts throughout his young life. While he was a student at the University of Pennsylvania he attended a missionary conference in New Jersey led by Dr. Charles Trumbull. Trumbull, in giving his testimony, had talked about the doubts he had faced until he realized that Jesus Christ was the only ultimate answer to life's questions. McQuilkin sought out Dr. Trumbull and they talked.

In 1911, when he was 25 years of age, McQuilkin was ready to make a decision. He entered a prayer room under the conviction that he would not come out until his life had been given fully to the Lord. He gave his doubts to God and came out a man filled with the Holy Spirit. Under the influence of Dr. Trumbull, he became associate editor of the *Sunday School Times* (1912-1917). He wanted to be a missionary to Africa, but the First World War prevented it. God had other plans for him.

As early as 1913 he had begun a series of victorious life conferences, so he poured his energies into these with their strong missionary emphasis. In 1923, McQuilken and his associates turned the conferences into Columbia Bible College (later, Columbia International University) and he became president for the next 30 years of his life. This South Carolina institution has become one of the great Christian and missionary training centers in the United States. McQuilken died in 1952 at the Ben Lippen Conference Center, which he had founded, near Asheville, North Carolina.

Thank God for Robert McQuilkin for whom God had other plans.

The Baillie Brothers: Doubly Gifted

John and Charles Wesley are a classic example of brothers who came along during the same period of history, making a significant impact on Christianity. John and Donald Baillie, though to a lesser extent, fall into that category.

John Baillie was born in 1886 and Donald Macpherson Baillie the following year in Gairloch, Scottish Highlands. John went from Inverness Royal Academy to Edinburgh to study philosophy at the university and theology at New College to be trained for ministry in the United Free Church. After teaching in Canada and the United States from 1919 to 1934, he was Professor of Divinity at Edinburgh from 1934 until 1956, also serving as Principal of New College. Students from all over the world were attracted to Edinburgh because of John Baillie. He became Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 1943, and was Joint President of the World Council of Churches from 1954.

John Baillie wrote many books, but his most popular one with lay people was his *A Dairy of Private Prayer*. It was published in 1936 in Britain where it sold over 150,000 copies.

Donald Macpherson Baillie, in the meantime, studied at Edinburgh, Marburg and Heidelberg and was ordained in 1923. He was regarded as an equally distinguished preacher, theologian and ecumenical statesman to his brother. He taught systematic theology at St. Mary's College, St. Andrews, from 1934 until his death. He drew international attention following the publication of his *God Was in Christ* in 1948. Donald was supportive of the Student Christian Movement and the Iona Community. He, like his brother, was deeply devoted to the Calvinist faith and his Highland upbringing. Donald died in 1954 and John lived until 1960.

Thank God for John and Donald Baillie whose teaching and writing inspired generations in Scotland and beyond.

Perspective: The World Wars

The First and Second World Wars had, of course, a profound effect upon the world, and must therefore have had an impact upon Christianity. It is difficult to explain, in a brief piece such as this, the exact impact of the First World War on the Church. Clearly, it led to Christian nations fighting one another. The Allies would certainly have thought God favored them in the war, but there were Christian leaders in Germany who saw their position as the one that would be the prototype of a just war. Even though the Allies triumphed, seeds of discontent were deeply sown which ultimately led to the Second World War.

As Hitler and the Nazi party began rising to power in Germany, many Germans saw only the good that was resulting. A new national pride emerged and the economy became more stable. Both Lutheran and Roman Catholic leaders seemed either unable or unwilling to stand against Hitler as the evils of Nazism became evident. Those religious leaders who did—**Karl Barth**, **Martin Niemoller**, **Maximillian Kolbe** and **Dietrich Bonhoeffer**—were imprisoned, expelled from the country or martyred.

As the Second World War continued, individual Christians became powerful witnesses to the gospel. **Corrie ten Boom** helped rescue Jews in Holland and **Philip Strong** stood bravely against the Japanese in New Guinea. **Robert Laidlaw** witnessed Christ to soldiers facing death, and **D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones** and **William Sangster** pastored the people of bomb-scarred London.

In the aftermath of the war, people rallied to the Christian churches. Having faced the fear of death and the deprivation that wars always cause, their faith became more important to them. The percentage of Christians to the total population of the United States had not increased during the period 1910 to 1920, but became 49% of the population in 1940, then 55% in 1950 and 69% in 1960, demonstrating significant post-War growth. The World Wars may also have added impetus to the ecumenical movements that followed.

Thank God for those who stood strongly for the faith during and after the World Wars.

Karl Barth: Eminent Theologian

His early theological views were liberal, but the pressure of the First World War on the border of his native Switzerland deeply affected his theology and shaped him into being regarded as the outstanding theologian of the Twentieth Century.

Karl Barth was born in 1886 in Basel, Switzerland. He was educated at Bern, where his father taught New Testament and church history. Barth studied theology in Berlin, Tübingen and Marburg, and he was ordained in 1908. He taught in Geneva (1909-1911) and pastored a small industrial congregation in Safenwil (1911-1921).

As noted above, he exhibited theological liberalism in the early days, but that changed during World War I. His commentary on Romans, written in 1919 and revised in 1921, challenged the historical/critical method of studying Scripture that had begun with German theologians and had spread like wildfire across Protestantism.

Barth was immediately a prominent figure and was called to professorships at Göttingen (1921), Münster (1925) and Bonn (1930). His teaching during this time is said to have influenced a major theological movement called *neo-orthodoxy* (exhibited in the teachings and writings of Emil Brunner, Rudolph Bultmann, Paul Tillich and Reinhold and Richard Niebuhr) although Barth himself never identified with the movement. He, instead, was deeply concerned about the growth of Nazism. While others were willing to overlook the obvious during the early days of Hitler's rise to power, Barth stood strongly against the National Socialism movement in Germany. He drafted the *Barmen Declaration* in 1934, which urged the Church back to orthodoxy, rejected Nazi control over church affairs, and resulted in his dismissal from Bonn in 1935. Back in Basel, he taught until 1962. In the meantime, there were significant trips: back to Bonn for some teaching in 1947 and aiding with relief efforts; an address to the Amsterdam Assembly launching the World Council of Churches (1948); lecturing in the United States (1962); and to Rome (1966) in connection with Vatican II. Barth died in 1968.

Thank God for Karl Barth whom many consider to have been the preeminent theologian of the Twentieth Century.

Sundar Singh: Unique Disciple

The stories about him are as strange as those about the early Celtic Christians—**Patrick**, **Brendan** and **Brigit**—yet he did exist and his ministry was effective across a large segment of the world.

Sundar Singh was born in 1889 into an affluent Sikh family in North India. Sikhs rejected both Hindu polytheism and Muslim intolerance and were, in effect, a nation of their own. Singh would sit under the teachings of a Sikh holy man but also was sent to a Christian mission school to learn English. His mother died when he was fourteen, and he vented his grief on the Christian missionaries by burning a Bible page by page. That night, however, he believed he saw Jesus and heard him speak. He immediately gave his life to the Lord.

His father expelled him from his home as a result of his conversion. At a farewell feast prepared for him by his father he found that the food had been poisoned, but the Christian community nearby saved him. He was baptized on his sixteenth birthday. During this time he was serving at a Christian Leprosy Home and he continued there for another year. In 1906, at the age of seventeen, he became an itinerant Christian “holy man” (sadhu) wearing nothing but a yellow robe and turban.

Over the years he traveled far and wide witnessing to Christ. The small Christian communities he visited referred to him as the Apostle with the Bloody Feet. At one point, he was encouraged to train for Christian ministry at an Anglican college in Lahore. He later found, however, that to serve as an ordained person he would have to forsake his yellow robe for respectable European clerical attire and engage in formal Anglican worship, so he abandoned pursuit of ordination. Singh particularly felt called to Tibet, a closed country dominated by Buddhism and devil worship. He made incursions into the country on several occasions. His harrowing tales of miracles he experienced and hardships he suffered there are hard for western minds to accept. However, by 1918-22, Singh had attained an international reputation and traveled worldwide. In 1929 he attempted his last visit to Tibet and was never heard from again.

Thank God for Sundar Singh who, though many would consider him a strange witness to Christ, had a powerful ministry among those whose lives he touched.

Henrietta Mears: Gospel Light

The most effective Christian education goes on in the home as children experience how their parents live out their Christian lives day by day. However, Sunday schools have been an important means of additional Christian education for most of us. Henrietta Mears has had a huge impact on the effectiveness of Sunday school methods and materials.

Mears was born in Fargo, North Dakota in 1890. She attended college in Nova Scotia and then taught in two towns in Minnesota where she also organized Sunday schools. In 1928 she became Director of Christian Education for First Presbyterian Church in Hollywood, California. Over her first two and a half years of leadership there, the Sunday school attendance increased dramatically from 400 to 2,400. Eventually attendance averaged over 6,000!

Mears was not satisfied, however, in simply finding ways to conduct effective Sunday school programs; she was appalled at the lack of quality, Bible-based curricula. She began preparing materials and this effort became the forerunner of Gospel Light Publications, which she founded in 1933. It is now one of the largest publishers of biblically based materials for Sunday schools.

A gifted speaker and Bible teacher, Mears influenced the lives of many people who have become Christian leaders and missionaries such as Bill Bright and David Halverson. She also established the Forest Home Camp Grounds as a youth center in the late 1930s and was cofounder of the National Sunday School Association in 1946. In 1961 she established Gospel Literature in National Tongues to spread Sunday school literature throughout the world. She died in 1963.

Thank God for Henrietta Mears and all she did to make Sunday schools more effective and more biblically based.

John Ronald Reuel Tolkien: Master Storyteller

Children have vivid imaginations, and that is why they are so taken with stories about wizards and supernatural happenings. Fortunately, there are such stories that are solidly based on Christian principles, such as those by J. R. R. Tolkien and **C. S. Lewis**. Many are the Christian families who have forsaken the television set in the evenings for the fascinating stories of these writers.

Tolkien was born in 1892 in Bloemfontein, South Africa. The son of a bank manager, he came to Oxford, England for his education and served in the First World War. He then taught at Leeds University before returning to Oxford as a professor of Anglo-Saxon (1925-1945), and of English language and literature (1945-1959). Under early influence from Andrew Lang and **George MacDonald**, he wrote *The Hobbit* in 1937. He believed that the most deeply held truths can best be expressed in tales and myths. Although middle aged and little known outside of the academic community at the time *The Hobbit* was published, he soon became an international figure.

The Lord of the Rings, in three volumes, appeared during the period 1954-55 and became hugely popular. The series was followed by other volumes and in 1977 his son Christopher edited *The Silmarillion* four years after Tolkien's death.

Tolkien was an emotional man, given to pessimism. He had odd tastes in clothing and food. He traveled very little because his imagination took him to places more fascinating than those he could physically see. He was a staunch Roman Catholic who decried the changes in that church brought about by Vatican II. He loved the beauty of Church of England structures but despaired that his friend C. S. Lewis remained an Anglican.

Thank God for J. R. R. Tolkien and his fascinating stories that have provided healthy family time for so many.

Martin Niemoller: Hitler's Prisoner

He was a German submarine commander in the First World War. As a Lutheran pastor he supported National Socialism and voted for Adolph Hitler to be Chancellor of Germany. After the Second World War he became politically liberal and opposed the formation of the Federal Republic of Germany. Such was the life of Martin Niemoller.

Niemoller was the son of a Lutheran pastor. He was born in Lippstadt, Germany in 1892. After graduating from high school in 1910, he entered naval cadet training and became a U-boat commander by 1918, and a decorated officer by the end of the war. He had a strong sense of patriotism, a heroic devotion to duty, and was politically conservative. These characteristics did not leave him as he married, fathered seven children, tried farming briefly, and then sought ordination. He graduated from the University of Munster in 1924 and was ordained a Lutheran clergyman.

Niemoller first served in the Munster Inner Mission, a social service agency. Then he accepted the pastorate of St. Anne's Church in Berlin, the only parish he ever served. He had a deep devotion to Jesus Christ but he was not an intellectual or theologian. His Christian life was enmeshed in the life of the Church. Although he initially supported Hitler, he had a personal confrontation with him in 1937. Hitler had called together a number of church leaders and told them to confine themselves to the church and he would take care of the people. Niemoller spoke up saying, in effect, that God had given pastors a responsibility to take care of the people and no one could take that away from them. He soon faced harassment and then prison. When it appeared that the court would acquit him of the charges against him, Hitler had him placed in solitary confinement as "my personal prisoner" which he remained for the duration, spending the last four years in the Dachau concentration camp.

Miraculously, Niemoller survived his imprisonment and the war. In one sense he had become a national hero for standing up to Hitler, and he served in many important roles for the remainder of his life. However, he repudiated his earlier conservative, nationalistic ideals and instead fought for pacifism and other liberal causes. As a member of the World Peace Commission he traveled widely to promote international reconciliation. He died in 1984.

Thank God for Martin Niemoller who stood against Nazism and survived.

Samuel M. Shoemaker: Twelve Steps

He was considered to be one of the finest American preachers of the Twentieth Century, he was a strong evangelist who had a social conscience, and he started a number of important ministries. He is most remembered, however, for his work with Alcoholics Anonymous.

Samuel Moor Shoemaker was born in Baltimore in 1893. He graduated from Princeton in 1916 and went to China for two years with the YMCA. Returning home, he attended General Theological Seminary and Union Theological Seminary from which he graduated in 1921 and was ordained into the Episcopal Church. After serving briefly at Grace Church, New York City, he became rector of Calvary Church there. In the space of five years he had opened two ministry centers, Calvary Mission and Calvary House. In these settings he was able to minister to alcoholics and others who were down and out while sharing the saving message of Jesus Christ.

Shoemaker served at Calvary for 27 years. During this time he helped the founders of Alcoholics Anonymous develop the “twelve steps” that are so essential to the AA program (and the many other Twelve Step Programs that have emanated from it). Shoemaker was then called to be rector of Calvary Church in Pittsburgh where he served for ten years (1952-62) before retiring due to ill health. In his new location he developed the Pittsburgh Experiment through which the various Christian organizations worked together for the good of the community. “Dr. Sam,” as many called him, wanted Pittsburgh to be as famous for Jesus Christ as it was for steel. During this time he was also instrumental in starting the Faith at Work lay witnessing movement.

Through the influence of Shoemaker, a phenomenal number of men felt called to the ordained ministry. However, he also worked closely with lay people, encouraging them to undertake the “30 Day Experiment of Prayer,” committing themselves to “give as much of themselves as they could to as much of God as they could understand.” Shoemaker also preached nationwide on the radio and wrote many books. He died in 1963.

Thank God for Dr. Sam who expended his formidable energies in so many helpful ways, including giving the world the “twelve steps.”

Dorothy L. Sayers: Versatile Writer

She became popular writing the Lord Peter Wimsey detective novels, but that simply gave her the financial security to spend her later years on serious Christian literature.

Dorothy L. Sayers was born in Oxford, England in 1893, the daughter of a country vicar. She was educated at Oxford in modern languages and taught school and worked as an advertising copywriter. Her real interest was in medieval studies, but in 1921 the first of her sixteen detective novels appeared. In this series she was able to incorporate her serious literary skills into popular reading material. This provided her a launching pad to move into her more significant role as a Christian apologist.

One of Sayers' more important works was the play *The Man Born to Be King* which was run as a series on BBC radio in 1941-42 and later published in book form. Her own academic prowess is shown in her translation of Dante's *Divine Comedy*. Perhaps her most important work was her book *The Mind of the Maker* that revealed how effective she was as an orthodox Christian apologist and teacher.

Sayers' writings are still popular and have influenced many over the years. During her Oxford years she was closely associated with **J. R. R. Tolkien** and **C. S. Lewis**.

Thank God for Dorothy Sayers whose refreshing literary talent has blessed so many for so long.

Corrie ten Boom: Survivor

A clerical error saved her life in her middle years and she went on to become one of the most beloved speakers and writers of her day. God always seemed to have his hand on Cornelia (Corrie) ten Boom.

She was born in 1893 in Haarlem, the Netherlands. She became a Christian at a young age, and worked in her father's watch shop that had been in the family for a century. Corrie became the first woman watchmaker licensed in Holland. When World War II broke out, she and her family participated in the underground movement to protect Jews from Nazi persecution. As a result, Corrie, her brother and sister and her aged father were imprisoned in the Ravensbruck concentration camp. Her father died ten days later, and her sister became one of 96,000 women who perished at Ravensbruck. But the grace of God, a clerical error resulted in Corrie being released just before thousands more were put to death.

After the war, Corrie helped turn the concentration camp at Darmstadt, Germany into a home for victims and refugees of the war. She became a popular speaker on the subject of God's grace in her life. Once, when speaking about the necessity of forgiveness, a former Nazi prison guard who had tormented Corrie and her sister at Ravensbruck came forward and asked for forgiveness. It was one of the greatest tests of her Christian faith, but she was able to forgive him.

Corrie wrote 18 books, the most popular being *The Hiding Place*, which sold a million copies. It tells of her experiences and was made into a movie. She made her home in the United States during her later years, continuing to be in demand as a speaker. She died in 1983 on her 91st birthday.

Thank God for Corrie ten Boom who, in the providence of God, survived a Nazi concentration camp and shared her powerful Christian witness all over the world.

Maxmillian Kolbe: Sacrificial Act

Few people are known down through the annals of history because of one thing they did. The story of Maximillian Kolbe is often told and hopefully will never be forgotten. He was a Nazi concentration camp prisoner who, by his own choice, never had the chance of release that **Corrie ten Boom** experienced.

Kolbe was born of a pious Roman Catholic family in 1894 near Lodz, Russian-occupied Poland. At the age of 13 he entered the Franciscan seminary at Lwow. At 16, he was admitted to the order as a novice and showed such promise that he was sent for further study at Cracow and Rome. Although plagued with tuberculosis, Kolbe and six other young men launched a crusade to spread love and counter evil, especially among the anti-Catholic Freemasons in Italy. He was ordained in 1918, taught at Cracow seminary and attempted, through his writings, to confront the secularization of society. He established a religious community that grew to 762 friars, and went to Japan in 1930 to establish a friary and a magazine.

The crisis of his life occurred, however, when the Germans invaded Poland in World War II. Kolbe's Polish patriotism and continued proclamation of truth in the face of Nazi oppression inevitably led to his imprisonment at Auschwitz. Despite chronic health problems, Kolbe not only carried out the arduous labor forced on him, but was able, by the grace of God, to give encouragement and comfort to fellow prisoners.

One day, when a shovel was missing, the Germans lined up ten men to be shot for the offense. One of them cried out for mercy because he had a wife and family. Maximillian Kolbe stepped forward, said he had no wife and family, and asked to be substituted for the distressed man. The offer was accepted. The men were placed in a crowded cell without food, water or other facilities and left to die. Instead, Kolbe was able to lead them in worship, with the result that they lived much longer than expected and had to be exterminated by other means.

Thank God for Maximillian Kolbe who gave his life that another might live.

Ethel Waters: His Eye Is on the Sparrow

The song “His Eye Is on the Sparrow” is certainly an appropriate theme song for the life of Ethel Waters. God obviously had his eye on her the 81 years of her life.

Waters was born in 1896 in the greater Philadelphia area. Her maternal grandmother raised her amidst poverty conditions. She began singing in church programs at five years of age. The grandmother worked as a domestic servant and could not provide Ethel with a healthy environment in which to grow up. The child soon saw the negative effects of drugs and alcohol and, by the grace of God, was able to steer clear of these dangers.

Being able to attend school for only a few years, she became a housemaid. At twelve years of age she had a spiritual awakening. At thirteen, her family talked her into marrying, but that lasted only one year. Her joy came in singing, and she did so whenever and wherever the opportunity provided itself. Her professional career as a singer began in a neighborhood saloon in 1917. Her style was more sophisticated and dignified than most of her contemporaries, and she was the first woman to sing “St. Louis Blues.”

In 1919 Waters had the opportunity to sing in Harlem and her popularity grew. Despite the limited education she had received, she became a true professional with her refined voice, excellent diction, and unique style. In 1952 she was nominated for an Academy Award for her role in the screen version of the play *The Member of the Wedding*. In 1953 she starred in the television series “Beulah.” It was in 1957 that Waters, feeling empty and spiritually dry, attended Billy Graham’s New York Crusade. She joined the choir and was asked by Cliff Barrows to sing “His Eye Is on the Sparrow.” As a result, she rededicated her life to Christ and from then until her death in 1977 was a featured singer at Graham crusades.

Thank God for Ethel Waters whose rich and beautiful voice inspired and uplifted her audiences to the glory of God.

Aiden Wilson Tozer: Prophet

It was said that when he gave his life to Christ, A. W. Tozer's early cynicism and doubt were refined into gifts of discernment, insight and critical thinking. Nonetheless, to the complacent and spiritually apathetic, Tozer's messages must have stung like the words of the prophets of old.

A. W. Tozer was born in what is now Newburg, Pennsylvania in 1897. He was the third of six children in a family of humble origin. Because he had to work on the family farm, he was only able to complete elementary school. He was blessed to have a grandmother, however, who encouraged him to read and that became a major joy of his life. In 1912, the family moved to Akron, Ohio and Tozer worked at Goodrich Rubber Company. There he attended church for the first time and was converted to Christ in 1915 as he was about to turn eighteen.

Zealous for his new-found faith, Tozer became an itinerant evangelist on street corners and in homes and schoolhouses. He drew the attention of the Christian Missionary Alliance and, without theological training, was appointed pastor of an Alliance church in West Virginia. He also held pastorates in Ohio and Indiana before going to the Southside Alliance Church in Chicago where he served from 1928 to 1959. The church grew and so did Tozer's reputation. In addition to a far-reaching preaching ministry, he edited the Alliance's weekly magazine for thirteen years, writing some memorable editorials.

Writing was Tozer's great legacy. The early church fathers and the Christian mystics were a strong influence on him, and he was appalled by the materialism and complacency of much of American Christendom. He was aesthetic in his own lifestyle, refusing sometimes even to accept increases in his salary; and he opposed the "feel good" approach to bringing people to Christ. He believed it was the Christian's obligation to God to do things as well as possible, not in a hurried or sloppy manner. Despite being a hard taskmaster and speaking prophetically to his listeners and readers, his popularity was great and remains so today. He wrote some thirty books of which *The Pursuit of God* (1948) was the most popular. Tozer died in 1963.

Thank God for A. W. Tozer, a self-educated man whom God used as a prophet to awaken Christians to their responsibility to live a holy life.

Paul Tournier: Christian Psychiatrist

He came along at a time when many Christians questioned the practice of psychiatry. Likewise, many psychiatrists undoubtedly questioned his focus on Christianity. Yet, Paul Tournier saw the importance of doctoring on the whole person.

Tournier was born in Geneva, Switzerland in 1898, the son of a pastor. Except for brief service in the Swiss army during the Second World War, his entire professional life from 1928 was as a general practitioner in private practice in Geneva. He discovered religious faith in 1932, and his focus from that point onward was healing the whole person. He saw that illnesses had emotional and spiritual as well as physical causes.

Tournier believed that science and faith could work together. In his book *The Person Reborn* (1967) he said, “Psychoanalysis explores the problems in order to bring them out into the daylight; grace dissolves them.” This view was hard for many of his colleagues to accept, but that did not deter Tournier. The secret of his popularity as a writer was that he was a psychiatrist who could write in terms any lay person could understand. He included many of his personal experiences in his books, which gave them an authenticity that was especially compelling. He greatly influenced other Christian writers such as Keith Miller.

A devout Christian, Tournier was an active participant in international meetings concerned with the interrelation between the Christian faith and medical practice held at the Ecumenical Institute in Switzerland. He traveled in the United States and won worldwide acclaim for his books. These include *A Doctor's Casebook in the Light of the Bible* (1954) and *The Meaning of Persons* (1957). Paul Tournier died in 1986.

Thank God for Paul Tournier who understood the connection between spiritual, emotional and physical illness and wrote and spoke so effectively about healing the whole person.

C. S. Lewis: Surprised by Joy

Because a tragedy of major international proportions (the assassination of President John F. Kennedy) occurred on the same day, the death of C. S. Lewis in 1963 went largely unnoticed in the Christian world. Yet, this was the end of an era for many. Lewis had been the most effective spokesman for orthodox Christianity in the English-speaking world throughout the mid-Twentieth Century; and, arguably, there has been no one like him since.

Clive Staples Lewis was born in Belfast, Northern Ireland in 1898. He was raised in a Christian home, but lost his faith before reaching his teenage years. He was educated at Malvern College and then privately tutored by an atheist, with the result that, when Lewis went to Oxford University in 1917, he described himself as an unbeliever. After taking a triple First at Oxford, he was elected to a fellowship in English at Magdalen College, Oxford, a post he held until becoming Professor of Renaissance English Literature at Cambridge in 1954. During his Oxford years he wrote a number of works of literary criticism.

His autobiography, *Surprised by Joy*, tells the story of his conversion to Christianity in 1931. A man of extraordinary intellect and imagination, combined with a solidly orthodox faith, Lewis became a Christian apologist of great scope and popularity. It was said that his 1942 book *The Screwtape Letters* was able to “make righteousness readable.”

Many of Lewis’ books remain Christian best sellers. *Mere Christianity* is a classic outline of the Christian faith, and his Narnia series of fantasy books has always been a delightful way to teach children the foundational truths of the faith while entertaining them with intriguing adventures. A cheerful and saintly man, Lewis gave two-thirds of the income from the sale of his books to charities.

Thank God for C. S. Lewis who used his brilliant and imaginative mind to reach millions of readers with Christian truth.

Nicholson, Hill and McKnights: Gideons

As the flame of God's love has passed from Christian to Christian over the centuries, there have been many unknown individuals and groups who were inspired by God to do great things. Only God knows their life stories. It is in honor of such as these that we consider the Gideons.

The Gideons grew out of a meeting that took place between John Nicholson and Samuel Hill at the Central Hotel in Boscobel, Wisconsin in 1898. The following year, joined by W. J. McKnights, these Christian businessmen formed an association of traveling business and professional people. Originally named the Christian Commercial Travelers Association of America, they became known as the Gideons. The name was derived from the story in Judges 7 of Gideon leading a small band of Israelites to victory over a large army of Midianites. They did so with nothing more than torches and pitchers. The Gideons' emblem became a two-handed pitcher with a torch.

Throughout its history the Gideons have been composed primarily of lay people who are dedicated to evangelism mainly through the distribution of Bibles. The Gideons began placing Bibles in hotel rooms in 1908, and also placing them in hospitals, prisons and schools. There are now tens of thousands of members of the organization functioning in some 75 countries. Millions of Bibles and New Testaments have been distributed over the years.

In addition to Scripture distribution, the Gideons conduct hundreds of worship services every year in missions, penal institutions and senior citizens' centers. The ministry is carried on primarily through monetary gifts from individuals and churches.

Thank God for Nicholson, Hill and McKnights and all those who have followed in their footsteps in making Scripture so widely available in this country and around the world.

D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones: A Man Sent from God

The truth that had become the life work of **Paul Tournier** was the same one that brought England's greatest Twentieth Century preacher to conversion. While being trained to be a medical doctor under the foremost medical man of his day, Martyn Lloyd-Jones saw that the root of a person's illness ran far deeper than the physical or even psychological level. Life with God was essential to wholeness.

Lloyd-Jones was born in Cardiff, Wales in 1899. He became a member of the Calvinistic Methodist Church in 1914 and studied to be a medical doctor. He received his medical degrees in 1921 and was brought into a personal relationship with Christ a couple of years afterward. This, in turn, led to his abandoning medical practice to become England's finest preacher. He started as a lay preacher but was soon ordained (1927) and began eleven years of powerful ministry in South Wales. Although never receiving a formal seminary education, he avidly read the works of **John Owen**, **Jonathan Edwards** and **B. B. Warfield**.

In 1939 he became co-pastor of famed Westminster Chapel in London just as England entered the Second World War. The war took its toll on the Chapel and its ministry. When it was over in 1945 there were only a handful of communicants and the building was dilapidated. Jones, now sole rector, did not waiver, however. During an age when the gospel was being compromised and churches were attracting increasingly fewer people, Lloyd-Jones—biblically-based and uncompromising in his message and method—eventually drew thousands to his services in the heart of London. He was a man sent by God for those times.

Lloyd-Jones continued at Westminster Chapel until 1968 when illness ended his work there. However, he continued to preach when he could and wrote sermons for publication when he couldn't until 1980, and then died a year later. Many of his sermons have been compiled in book form and continue to have a profound influence on preachers and others.

Thank God for D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones and his powerful preaching ministry through which multitudes were led to the Lord in his day and whose written sermons inspire preachers and preaching in our day.

Philip Nigel Warrington Strong: Stay the Course

The people of New Guinea suffered greatly during the Second World War. When the Japanese invaded in 1942, Christians especially endured pain and death. Many European clergy and missionaries had been withdrawn, chose to leave or were forced out prior to the invasion. The Anglican bishop of New Guinea, however, determined that he and his clergy would “stay the course.”

Philip Strong was born into a clergy family in Derbyshire, England in 1899. He was educated at Cambridge and was ordained in 1922. His early ministry was in the poorer areas of northern England. In 1936, however, he was consecrated the fourth Bishop of New Guinea. Anglicans ministered especially on the north coast of Papua, and it was here that bitter fighting raged during the war.

Strong urged his clergy not to abandon the young Papuan church. “We must endeavor to carry on our work,” he pled. “God expects it of us. The church at home, which sent us out, will surely expect it of us. The universal church expects it of us. The people whom we serve expect it of us. We could never hold up our faces again if, for our own safety, we all forsook [Christ] and fled....” They stayed, and almost immediately there were arrests. Eight clergymen and two laymen were executed as an example. That was only the beginning of the suffering the Church of New Guinea endured. Strong, however, by the grace of God, survived and continued to minister in the war zone.

Following the war, Strong built up the local ministry, and, under his leadership, the church grew. He became a member of the legislative council of Papua and New Guinea (1955-63). In 1963 he was chosen Bishop of Brisbane and went on to become the Archbishop of Australia. He was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II in 1970 and died in 1983.

Thank God for Philip Strong who stood boldly by his people in a time of great crisis and inspired the heroic acts of many to the glory of God.

William Edwyn Robert Sangster: More Than Shelter

While **Martyn Lloyd-Jones** was becoming co-pastor of Westminster Chapel in London at the beginning of the Second World War, William Sangster was appointed to Westminster Central Hall in London at the same time. Both men were great preachers and blessed their congregations even during the painful years of war. But Sangster was able to do something else: he made space for an air raid shelter in the basement of the church where he could both protect and minister to a variety of people and their many needs.

Sangster was born in 1900 in London. He was converted at a Methodist mission when he was thirteen. He left school early and became an accountant. After serving briefly in the army, he attended Richmond College and was ordained. He served several Methodist churches in northern England before being appointed to Westminster Central Hall in 1939. While still in his 30s, he had attained his Master of Arts degree from London University and went on to get his Ph.D. His doctoral thesis was Wesley's preaching on sanctification and it was published as *The Path to Perfection* in 1943.

A man of great energy and determination, Sangster's preaching packed Central Hall while, at the same time, he ministered to his congregation in many other ways. He was widely recognized for his spiritual leadership in the Methodist Church, and became Secretary of the Home Mission Department in 1955 in hopes of reversing the decline of English Methodism.

An illness incapacitated him from 1957 until his death in 1960. However, he is said to have remained a vital Christian witness during his debilitating decline in health. He is remembered for his many popular devotional books including *He Is Able* (1936), *The Pure in Heart* (1954) and *The Secret of Radiant Life* (1957).

Thank God for William Sangster, a good shepherd who provided for both the physical and spiritual needs of his flock.

Lillian LeVesconte Dickson: Mustard Seed

Most Christians probably have a mental picture of the Apostle Paul that resembles a human dynamo. When we think of all he did during his lifetime in spite of the hardships he faced, we know that it was only by the grace of God he could have done so. Even a brief look at the life of Lillian Dickson can likewise leave us breathless.

Lillian LeVesconte was born in Prior Lake, Minnesota in 1901. She graduated from Macalaster College in St. Paul in 1924. After teaching for several years, she attended Biblical Seminary in New York. In 1927 she married James Dickson and they went to Taiwan under the auspices of the Canadian Presbyterian Church.

Lillian Dickson was surprised to find that missionary wives were not encouraged to work in tandem with their husbands in ministry. Seeing the potential to put these women to effective use, she started a missionary enterprise that later became known as The Mustard Seed, Inc. This outreach resulted in the establishment of untold clinics, orphanages, schools, tribal churches, havens for homeless street children, chapels and craft centers. These not only met immediate needs but prepared and encouraged people to make the most of their lives.

When her husband died in 1967, Dickson set up, as a memorial to him, a missionary society to send Christians to Borneo. Then, in Papua, New Guinea and Indonesia, she began providing schools, churches, vocational training centers and community centers in remote areas. Like the mustard seed referred to by Christ in Matthew 13:31, a tiny ministry started by a missionary wife has grown into huge resources for thousands of people over a great area. And, as a consequence, multitudes have been led to the Lord. Lillian Dickson died in 1983 but her work goes on.

Thank God for Lillian Dickson who was able to do so much for so many because she had a mustard seed of faith.

Eric Liddell: Honored

Just before the start of the 400 meter run in the Berlin Olympics, someone slipped Eric Liddell a note reminding him of God's word: "Whoever honors me, I will honor" (taken from 1 Samuel 2:30). God honored Liddell with a record setting Gold Medal run, adding to the acclaim that was heaped upon one of the finest athletes of his time. Honoring God was much more important to Eric Liddell than winning races.

The exploits of the "Flying Scotsman" were chronicled in the award-winning motion picture *Chariots of Fire* and certainly the fire of God's love was evident in Liddell. He was born in China in 1902 of missionary parents and sent to Scotland (his parents' home) for his education at the age of nine. While in college he joined the Glasgow Students' Evangelistic Union and spoke often at Christian gatherings. His fame in cricket and running preceded him; and, like **C. T. Studd**, his celebrity status gained him large audiences.

What added to Liddell's fame was his unwillingness to run in the 100-meter dash in the Berlin Olympics because the time trials took place on a Sunday. Liddell believed it against God's will for him to run on the Sabbath. For this he came under great pressure and criticism. Many believed it was unpatriotic of him to go to Berlin representing Scotland and then refuse to run in the event he was most expected to win. Others, including Christians, believed he was interpreting the Fourth Commandment too narrowly. Nonetheless, Liddell stuck to his beliefs. He came to be even more greatly honored because of this display of Christian integrity and commitment.

Following completion of his education at Edinburgh University, in 1925 he went to China as a missionary teacher. He married Florence Mackenzie in China and they had three daughters. China was at war with Japan; and, when Britain entered the war, Florence and the girls were evacuated to Canada. Eric remained, at this time being involved more in direct evangelism than teaching, but always doing whatever needed to be done on behalf of the people. In 1943 he was captured and placed in a concentration camp where he continued to minister to the people, but died of a brain tumor in 1945.

Thank God for Eric Liddell who became a witness to us all by standing on the courage of his convictions.

Peter Marshall: Senate Chaplain

In our day there are those who seriously oppose having a Chaplain of the United States Senate on the argument that this defeats the principle of separation of Church and State. Yet, not so many years ago, Peter Marshall gained national attention because of his service as Senate Chaplain.

Marshall was born in Coatbridge, Scotland in 1902. He studied at Coatbridge Technical School and Mining College (1916-1921) and was a machine operator and foreman in a tube mill until 1927 when he immigrated to the United States. Following a year of employment in Birmingham, Alabama, he entered Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Georgia and became a Presbyterian minister. After pastorates in Covington and Atlanta, he moved to the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church in Washington, D. C. in 1937 and became a U. S. citizen.

Because of his reputation as a compelling preacher, he was chosen Chaplain of the Senate in 1947. He was a man of dynamic faith and a popular and straightforward preacher. He stressed the reality of God and prayer in human experience, commitment to Jesus Christ, relevance of the Christian faith to everyday life, and personal and national righteousness. He was referred to as the “conscience of the Senate.”

He had married **Catherine Marshall** (later, **LeSourd**) in 1936. She shared his commitment and is largely responsible for the fact that Peter Marshall became even more widely known following his death of a heart attack in 1949. Her biography of her husband, *A Man Called Peter*, was a best seller and was made into a popular motion picture. Catherine also published books containing her husband’s sermons (*Mr. Jones, Meet the Master*) and his prayers (*The Prayers of Peter Marshall*).

Thank God for Peter Marshall who served this nation by giving spiritual inspiration to its political leaders during the critical post-Second World War years.

Gladys Aylward: God Looked Down

Gladys Aylward was convinced that God wanted her to be a missionary in China despite the discouragement of others toward her doing so. She later is said to have stated it this way: “I wasn’t God’s first choice for what was to be done in China. There was somebody else. I don’t know who it was—God’s first choice. I don’t know what happened...perhaps he died or was unwilling. And God looked down...and saw Gladys Aylward.”

Aylward was born near London in 1902, the daughter of a mailman. She received only a basic education and became a shop girl, a nanny and a housemaid. She experienced conversion to Christ at eighteen years of age. Her heart was set on going as a missionary to China, but was turned down by the China Inland Mission because of her lack of education. Later, at a Primitive Methodist meeting she heard a plea for mission work in North China. She saved up her meager earnings and, in 1932, traveled to China. It was a hair-raising trip because she went overland by rail through Europe and Asia during a time of war between Russian and China.

She arrived in remote Yangcheng where she joined another single woman missionary (Jeannie Lawson) who died a year later. She learned Chinese by hearing others speak it. She ran an inn that catered to mule drivers. People were attracted to the inn because Gladys told stories from the Bible. Later a local official provided support by making her Inspector of Feet as an attempt at stopping the practice of binding girls’ feet. Gladys so fully identified with the people that she became a naturalized Chinese citizen in 1936. When the Japanese invasion reached her area in 1940, she led 100 children to safety, an epic undertaking that was later made into the film *Inn of the Sixth Happiness*.

Serious illness forced Aylward’s return to England in 1949. She went back to the Orient in 1955, however, opening an orphanage in Formosa and working there until her death in 1970. A tiny woman with a big heart, she was a successful missionary because of her love of people and her skill as a storyteller.

Thank God for Gladys Aylward and her courage and determination that can be an inspiration to each of us as we contemplate “God looking down” on us to let us know the ministry he has in mind for us.

Watchman Nee: House Church Pioneer

Stories abound today about the health of Christianity in China despite government oppression. Obviously much of the credit for this must go to missionaries, many of whom we have met in the pages of this book. They laid the foundation. But it was a little known man named Nee Shu-Tsu, who has since become known as Watchman Nee, who started the house church movement in China that has preserved Christianity in the face of totalitarianism.

Nee was born in Guangdong, China in 1903. He was trained in Chinese classics and Christian studies. Initially he hated Christianity and cheated on a Bible examination. This prevented his entrance into the university. It was such a humiliating experience for him that he repented and was converted to Christ. This occurred when he was seventeen years of age. He said, "I realized the magnitude of my sins and the reality and efficacy of Jesus as the Savior." As God's will for his life became clearer, he changed his name to To-Sheng, "God's Watchman".

Nee was influenced by the writings of renowned Brethren such as J. N. Darby and also by the Holiness movement. Most of the mainline Protestant churches in China had not heard of holiness or sanctification in the Christian's life. As a result, readers were challenged by these concepts in Nee's magazine *The Christian*. In the meantime, Nee began to establish local congregations based on his conviction of "one church for one locality." Headquartered in Shanghai, each of these congregations became known as a "Little Flock."

War and other hardships facing China during the period of 1923-1949 led many Christians to leave their own denomination and become part of these "Little Flocks." There were 700 such assemblies with some 70,000 members. They became the backbone of the house church movement through which orthodox Christianity has been preserved in China. Nee was arrested on trumped up charges in 1952 and died in prison in 1972. A number of his books have been published in the United States and widely throughout the world, including *Sit, Stand, Walk* (1961) and *The Normal Christian Church Life* (1969).

Thank God for Watchman Nee whose faithfulness to Christ's call upon his life has helped preserve the Christian faith in China.

Perspective: Ecumenism

Ecumenism or the Ecumenical Movement involves cooperation and unity among Christian churches of differing denominations. Unity among Christians has always been vital, and until the Sixteenth Century the primary instrument of unity was the Church Council. The Council of Trent in 1545 even tried to handle the doctrinal differences caused by the Reformation, although it only served to deepen the divisions. Since the Reformation there have been various attempts to bring reconciliation and understanding between specific denominations, but worldwide ecumenism is a relatively recent development.

In the Nineteenth Century Bible societies and YMCAs brought Christians together across denominational lines, but these groups didn't deal with doctrinal issues. It was early in the Twentieth Century that the ecumenical movement actually began. Missionaries had found that living as a minority among non-Christians drove them and their converts into alliance with one another despite their differing church affiliations. To carry the missionary enterprise forward, the churches needed to work together. This led to the first World Missionary Conference at Edinburgh in 1910. Out of this grew, in 1921, the International Missionary Council. **John R. Mott** was chairman of the Edinburgh Conference and became the first chairman of the I.M.C.

Further ecumenical conferences occurred in Lausanne in 1927 and Edinburgh in 1937. Ultimately, a provisional committee was appointed under the leadership of **William Temple** to form the World Council of Churches. The Second World War intervened, but the official formation of the World Council took place in 1948. **Kenneth Scott Latourette** was a speaker at that Conference and **David du Plessis** addressed the World Council at its assembly in 1954. In recent years the WCC has come under criticism from a number of Protestant bodies for controversial positions its leadership has taken and other problems.

Perhaps ecumenism at its best is reflected in organizations that serve Christians across denominational lines such as those formed by people like **A. Wetherell Johnson** (Bible Study Fellowship), **Dawson Trotman** (Navigators), **Francis Schaeffer** (*L'Abri*), **Lillian Dickson** (Mustard Seed) and **Samuel M. Shoemaker** (Pittsburgh Experiment).

Thank God for those who have been willing to work together for the good of all Christians despite their denominational affiliation.

David du Plessis: Mr. Pentecost

David du Plessis is one of the people in this book your author had the privilege of knowing. We were both part of an Ecumenical Prayer Dialogue supported by the Lilly Foundation and convened by Helen Shoemaker, the widow of **Samuel M. Shoemaker** and the founder of the Anglican Fellowship of Prayer, during the 1980s. A small man with a great heart, his leadership in the charismatic movement of the time resulted in his nickname: “Mr. Pentecost.”

Du Plessis was born in Cape Town, South Africa in 1905. He experienced conversion to Christ while in his teens. He studied at colleges in Ladybrand and Johannesburg, and was ordained into the Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM) in 1930 and became its General Secretary from 1936 to 1947. He resigned from his position when the AFM refused to share his vision of global Pentecostalism. He then became organizing secretary of the Pentecostal World Conference and taught at Lee College (Church of God) in Cleveland, Tennessee (1950-52). He was on the staff of the Far East Broadcasting Company from 1952 to 1954.

Du Plessis’ ecumenical interests resulted in his being invited to address the World Council of Churches in 1954. He lectured at leading American and Swiss theological centers, was received by three successive popes, and was the only representative of Pentecostalism at Vatican II.

Support of the modern charismatic movement by du Plessis upset those involved in traditional Pentecostalism. Although the Assemblies of God had accepted his AFM credentials initially (1962-1980), they withdrew his ministerial status over the issue. The National Association of Evangelicals, on the other hand, was concerned about his involvement with the World Council of Churches. Despite these setbacks, du Plessis continued on in his beliefs. He was a key figure in initiating Catholic Pentecostal dialogue, and became a consultant for ecumenical affairs for Fuller Seminary (1985-87). Du Plessis became a naturalized American citizen. He wrote several books including *The Spirit Made Me Go*. He died in 1987.

Thank God for David du Plessis who became an apologist for charismatic renewal and touched the lives of many throughout the world.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer: The Cost of Discipleship

A teaching position awaited him in the safety of the United States during World War II; and, as a brilliant and innovative theologian, he could have had considerable influence on the theology of his day. Instead, he accepted the “cost of discipleship” (the title of one of his best known works) and remained in Nazi Germany. As a result, his writings had an authenticity to them that would never have been possible within a protected environment. His ultimate martyrdom brought him in death a fame that much more powerfully influenced Christian thought than if he had lived. Instead of a considerable influence on the theology of his day, he had a great influence on the theology of the future.

Bonhoeffer was born in Breslau, Germany in 1906 the son of a Berlin professor of psychiatry. He studied at Tübingen, Berlin and at Union Theological Seminary in New York City. He became a Lutheran pastor, influenced in his theology by **Karl Barth**. In 1935 he was made head of the Finkenwalde Confessing Church Seminary, which was closed by the Nazi regime in 1937. Bonhoeffer turned aside the 1939 plea that he come to the United States to teach and stayed to resist Nazism, confront those Christians within Germany who were seduced by it, and reform the church in general.

Bonhoeffer became active in the resistance movement. In 1942 he met his friend Bishop George Bell of Chichester in Stockholm and revealed plans for Hitler’s overthrow. He was arrested in 1943 for his involvement in smuggling 14 Jews into Switzerland. He was incarcerated at Tegel Prison, Berlin, for 18 months, during which time he wrote a considerable number of letters and poems, many of which were published after his death. He was hanged in the concentration camp at Flossenbürg on April 8, 1945.

The writings of Bonhoeffer are controversial because they are said to have influenced the “death of God” theology of the 1960s and the liberation theology that has come to prominence more recently; but his writings have also greatly affected the traditional understanding of Christian discipleship, personal sacrifice and martyrdom for the faith.

Thank God for Dietrich Bonhoeffer who had the courage to stand up to the Nazi regime when many of this fellow German Christians were rationalizing their acceptance of it.

Dawson Trotman: Discipling

The event that really turned him to Christ was his trying to save a young girl from drowning and their miraculous rescue. Ironically, years later he would die attempting to save someone else from drowning. But, what a ministry he had in between!

Dawson Trotman was born in Bisbee, Arizona in 1906. He grew up in southern California, had a high school education, coped with his parents' divorce and struggled with alcohol, gambling and other moral failures as a young man. He later attended Los Angeles Baptist Theological Seminary and Biola University, but graduated from neither. An intelligent and natural leader (he had been both valedictorian and president of his high school class), once he dedicated his life to Christ when he was twenty years of age, God used him in a powerful way. His special calling was to emphasize the importance of discipleship and he developed one of the most effective discipleship programs in the world.

“Daws,” as he was universally known, became a self-taught Christian. He memorized Scripture and systematically studied the Bible as a part of his daily devotional life. He was married in 1932 to Lila Clayton whose dedication to Christ was vital to Daws in his ministry. The Trotmans' home became a center for discipleship and witnessing.

What Daws understood was that bringing people into a saving relationship with Christ was only a first step. Someone needed to disciple them to aid their growth in the faith. His “each one teach one” method of discipleship led to the formation in 1933 of The Navigators, now a worldwide discipling ministry whose motto is “To Know Christ and to Make Him Known.” Although Trotman died in 1956 at only 50 years of age, the ministry he started has flourished. The Navigators functions in scores of countries and cultures today, and spawned NavPress—one of the leading Christian publishing houses—in 1975. It has been said of Daws that he single handedly shaped the methodology for following up from evangelistic meetings and crusades during the second half of the Twentieth Century.

Thank God for Dawson Trotman who taught the importance of discipleship and left us with an effective organization to focus on that vital ministry.

Jesse and Evelyne Brand: Team Ministry

There have been legendary missionary couples over the years, but certainly Jesse and Evelyne Brand were among the most exemplary. They served India for the better part of the Twentieth Century and left a special legacy: their son, Dr. Paul Brand.

Jesse Brand was a missionary in southern India in 1907, young and unmarried. He had studied at Livingstone College where he took an abbreviated course in medicine. He also studied at Madras University. On a trip back to his native England he met Evelyne Harris. She had been born in 1880, the daughter of a prosperous merchant, in a London suburb. The Harrises were devout Christians of a Baptist persuasion, and missionaries were welcome in their home. Through Jesse's stories of his work in India, Evelyne undertook local support for missionaries to India. Then, in 1913, she felt called to the missionary field herself, went to India and married Jesse Brand.

Jesse built a home for them. "Trust and Triumph" was their slogan, and they reached the Indian people in word and deed. Jesse taught Evelyne the language and together they preached the gospel. Jesse, with his limited medical knowledge, treated as many as 1,500 patients in one year. The Brands also taught the people many practical skills. When Paul and his sister Connie were born to the couple, Evelyne taught them at home; then Paul was sent to England for further education. During this time, in 1929, Jesse contracted a fever and died.

Undaunted, Evelyne returned to England for reassignment to India, although that was not common at the time. She wanted to finish the work she and her husband had started. She was allowed to do so and continued to serve until she was ninety-five years old, dying in 1975. Known as "Granny" Brand, she was regularly seen hiking across the mountains doing God's work. The Brands' son Paul went on to become a world famous missionary physician who developed effective methods for treating leprosy.

Thank God for Jesse and Evelyne Brand, courageous missionaries and faithful servants of the Lord.

William Barclay: Daily Study Bible

William Barclay is another person in this book the author was privileged to know. Barclay had written a popular book for beginners in Bible study called *Introducing the Bible*, which our organization, the Bible Reading Fellowship in the United States, was distributing widely. We wanted an audiocassette by Barclay to accompany the book, so I was able to go to Glasgow and record his message. At the time, he was regarded as perhaps the most popular Bible scholar of his day, but I was especially impressed with his humility.

Barclay was born in Wick, Scotland in 1907. He studied at Glasgow and Marburg universities and was ordained in the Church of Scotland. He served as a pastor in Renfrew (an industrial area) from 1933 to 1946. He was then appointed lecturer (1947) and, later, professor (1964) at Glasgow University.

William Barclay considered himself a secondary scholar of the Bible. That is, he relied heavily on the exegesis of others, pulling together the results of their toil and formulating their scholarship into commentary on Scripture that the average lay person could clearly understand. It was said of him (as it also was of **C. S. Lewis**) that he sought to “make righteousness readable.” Barclay was not a thoroughly orthodox evangelical; he had a problem with the miracles in the Bible, for instance. But he had a way of presenting the New Testament in such an interesting manner that his prodigious work has encouraged literally millions of people around the world to study Scripture in more depth.

The *Daily Study Bible* was Barclay’s masterwork. It is his seventeen-volume commentary on the New Testament. It has sold a million and a half copies and has been translated into many languages. In his role as a professor he took great interest in his students. He also taught on a successful religious television series, maintained a worldwide correspondence, conducted a college choir and wrote a column for a weekly paper and more than 50 books. He died in 1978.

Thank God for William Barclay who, as much as anyone else in the recent past, has given lay people tools with which to study the Bible effectively and enjoyably.

Audrey Wetherell Johnson: Bible Study Fellowship

As we have seen many times in this series, God's plans for the lives of his people are often hard to fathom at the time they are being carried out. It is only later, as we look back at the pattern of how such plans have been shaped, that we can see the genius of the Lord in them. Such was certainly true in the life of A. Wetherell Johnson, known affectionately as "Miss J."

Johnson was born in Leicester, England in 1907. Although raised in a devoutly Christian home, she had not come to faith when she went to France to continue her education. There, under the influence of French intellectuals and secular philosophical studies, the foundation of the biblical truths she had been taught in the home began to erode. Later, however, a personal crisis led to a deep commitment to Christ and motivated her into sacrificial missionary service in China. During her missionary years, she spent two and one-half years in prison, internment by the Japanese during World War II, and 18 months under house arrest by the Communists before she was ultimately forced to leave China.

Arriving in the United State in 1950, Miss J yearned for a return to the mission field. When nothing opened up for her to resume missionary service, she was talked into leading a Bible study for five women. The teaching of Scripture to people who had little or no experience of the Bible had been her great love. She was reluctant to "spoon-feed" a small group of Christian women in an affluent country; but God, speaking to her through Scripture, convinced her that was what she was to do.

Johnson agreed to teach the women only if they were willing to dig into the passages themselves, answering questions she had prepared for them. This method proved so successful that it ultimately led to the formation of the Bible Study Fellowship through which hundreds of thousands of people have undertaken in depth study of Scripture. When the headquarters of BSF was dedicated to Miss J in 1980, she was embarrassed by the honor, saying she "hadn't wanted to do this work in the first place." She died in 1984.

Thank God for Audrey Wetherell Johnson who undertook a ministry that didn't seem to be the right one for her but ended up being exactly what God had in mind.

Cuthbert Bardsley: Fire in Coventry

Cuthbert Bardsley is another person the author had the pleasure of knowing and working with. He was a man of great stature, spiritually as well as physically. Perhaps his importance to Christianity could be summed up in the fact that the hundred and first Archbishop of Canterbury, the famed Donald Coggan, wrote Bardsley's biography and did so while Bardsley was still living.

Cuthbert Bardsley was born in England in 1907 into a clerical family that had already produced three bishops. He was educated at Eton and Oxford before studying theology at Wescott House, Cambridge. After ordination in the Church of England in 1932 he served as an assistant at All Hallows by the Tower in London and then as vicar of St. Mary Magdalene in Woolwich. Later, he was Provost of Southwark, Bishop of Croydon and Bishop to the Forces. He became a figure of worldwide reputation when appointed Bishop of Coventry in 1956.

As chronicled in Stephen Verney's book *Fire in Coventry*, Bardsley's leadership in the restoration of the cathedral was little short of phenomenal. Coventry Cathedral had been bombed out during the Second World War. It would have been easy for people to carry resentments against Germany for the destruction of the beloved 500 year old cathedral. Instead, Bardsley saw the rebuilding of the place of worship as a vehicle toward reconciliation. From the rubble of the destroyed cathedral a priest picked up three 14th Century nails, from which the vision came of their being fitted together in a Cross of Nails, which became a symbol of the rebirth of the cathedral.

Against this background Bardsley saw that the physical rebuilding of the cathedral was not enough. When the building was ready to be consecrated, he wanted a consecrated people throughout the Diocese of Coventry. A dedicated evangelist, Bardsley spent the years of physical reconstruction of the cathedral by also spiritually reconstructing the people. Among other things, he taught them to pray. He was a confirmed bachelor until he was 65, at which time he married Ellen Mitchell. Bardsley toured the United States many times, teaching and preaching, and was a co-founder of the Anglican Fellowship of Prayer. He died in 1991.

Thank God for Cuthbert Bardsley, a spiritual giant who brought renewal to his people and a message of reconciliation to the world.

Alfred Stanway: Versatile Leader

Another Anglican evangelical of note lived basically during the same time span as **Cuthbert Bardsley**. He began in his native Australia, spent most of his life in Africa and ended as the first dean of a seminary in the United States.

Alfred Stanway was born in Australia in 1908. He trained at Ridley College, Melbourne, and sensed a call to missionary work in Africa. He began in Kenya in 1937. In 1951 he was consecrated Bishop of Central Tanganyika, a diocese that covered half of the country. Following the principles of **Roland Allen**, he placed primary responsibility for growing the church on local Christians. As a result and because of his own dynamic leadership and encouragement, the church grew rapidly. African bishops were consecrated and new dioceses were created.

Stanway advanced medical and educational ministry and developed a network of Bible schools. His focus on the value of Christian literature led to the creation of bookshops and the Central Tanganyika Press. Tanganyika became the mainland part of Tanzania, and, when Stanway left Tanzania in 1971, there was an African archbishop, and an Africa bishop succeeded Stanway. He returned to Australia to become the deputy principal of Ridley College.

In 1975 Stanway was given the opportunity to be the founding dean of an orthodox Episcopal Seminary in the United States. Concerned with the theologically liberal drift in the Episcopal Church, several bishops, priests, seminary professors and lay people started Trinity Episcopal School for Ministry in Ambridge, Pennsylvania. Initially housed in a converted supermarket, the seminary has become one of the largest in the denomination. Stanway provided strong leadership to the fledgling seminary until retiring in 1978. He died in 1989.

Thank God for Alfred Stanway who provided vital Christian leadership on three continents.

Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhui: Mother Teresa

She was probably the most admired and honored woman of the Twentieth Century, an Albanian nun who spent her life ministering to the dying in India. Her self-sacrificial love was an inspiration to all, with the result that this humble little woman touched the heart of the world. Gandhi once said that he would have become a Christian if he could have seen Christians truly living as Jesus did. Too bad that she came along after Gandhi was gone.

The woman who became Mother Teresa was born to Albanian parents in Skopje, Yugoslavia in 1910. She joined the congregation of the Loreto nuns in Bengal at seventeen. She was sent to Ireland to learn English in preparation for her to minister in India. After two years in Darjeeling, she moved to Calcutta where she taught geography and history for seventeen years. From the window in her room she was constantly faced with the sight of the slums of Motijeel. In 1946 she was called by God to live there among the poor

Mother Teresa founded an order, the Missionaries of Charity, and received recognition of it from the pope in 1950. The order started its first children's home in 1955 and its first lepers' home in 1957. In subsequent years, the order has expanded its work to include schools, food distribution centers and AIDS hospices worldwide. The Missionaries of Charity vow to serve the poorest of the poor in the name of Jesus. They see Jesus in every person to whom they minister and therefore minister to that person as they would minister to Jesus.

In response to a question about how she could do all she had done, Mother Teresa answered, "I simply do what I can, where I am with what I have." An American housewife awed by the scope of Mother Teresa's ministry, asked her what she could do back in her little hometown. Mother Teresa told her, "Just smile a lot." This frail, simple little woman wielded mighty influence for the Lord. She received many honors worldwide including the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979. She died in 1997.

Thank God for Mother Teresa who was a classic example of WWJD.

Mahalia Jackson: Joyful Noise

Mix a powerful voice with an early childhood in New Orleans with its jazz, and singing in an African American children's choir, and the result you get is Mahalia Jackson.

Born in New Orleans in 1911, Jackson sang in the children's choir in her "sanctified" church. It is said that she was reduced to tears by the powerful beat and rhythm of the church music where she worshipped, music rooted in the slavery era. She was, of course, also influenced by the jazz that is an inherent part of that city. These foundations on which her singing style would always be based were not, however, her motivation. Her singing, instead, was in obedience to the teachings of Scripture to "make a joyful noise unto the Lord" and to "praise the Lord with the instruments."

Jackson moved to Chicago in 1927 to live with an aunt. It was the home to gospel music at the time, and she had the good fortune to begin to work with a professor of music who wrote songs for her as well as becoming her mentor and publisher. Soon she was in demand, singing in the many storefront churches in Chicago. From this beginning, lucrative singing offers began to arrive. Jazz recording companies sought to lure her away from purely gospel singing, but she rejected these offers. She wanted to establish herself as a distinctively Black gospel music singer. She was said to be the "most majestic voice of faith" of her generation. From her first recording, "God Shall Wipe Away All Tears," in 1937, she went on to record many favorites that continue to sell.

Mahalia Jackson was more than just a singer, however. She was active in civil rights movements. She sang at many rallies, including the 1963 "March on Washington." She established the Mahalia Jackson Scholarship Fund to allow poor young people to attend college. She was honored with a Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award and had more than 30 recordings to her credit. She died in 1972.

Thank God for Mahalia Jackson who made a joyful noise unto the Lord.

Francis August Schaeffer: L'Abri

He was a man always engaged in the search for truth. It left him with the conviction that there were others out there facing a similar journey. God led him and his wife Edith to establish a place for these people and they called it L'Abri (The Shelter).

Francis Schaeffer was born the only child of a working class couple in the Germantown section of Philadelphia in 1912. His parents were nominal Christians. On his own he attended a Presbyterian church that was theologically liberal, and Schaeffer could not find ultimate truth there. He turned to philosophy for answers, but thought he should also read the Bible as a part of that pursuit. After six months of Bible reading, he became convinced that Scripture is true and the only adequate source of answers to life's questions.

With his conversion in 1930, he left trade school and entered Hampton-Sydney College in Virginia in 1931. He graduated *magna cum laude* in 1935 and was chosen the class' outstanding Christian. Schaeffer then entered Westminster Theological Seminary in Pennsylvania. However, during his college and seminary days, the theological battle between liberals and conservatives was reaching fever pitch in his denomination, the Northern Presbyterian Church. Schaeffer's consistently orthodox stand led him to switch to Faith Theological Seminary in Wilmington, Delaware, which he helped to found. Until 1947, he pastored churches in Pennsylvania and St. Louis, Missouri.

His denomination sent him and his wife Edith (whom he had married in 1935) to Europe to reflect on the spiritual needs of post-war Europe. The result was the founding of Children for Christ in Lausanne, Switzerland in 1948 and, in 1955, the establishment of L'Abri Fellowship there. Their experience in Europe had convinced the Schaeffers that young people had questions that deserved answering. Francis saw no dichotomy between an intellectual and a spiritual approach to Christianity. As a result, L'Abri (later moved to Huemoz, Switzerland) became a place where people could come and search for the truth Schaeffer had found in his own life. He died in Rochester, Minnesota in 1984.

Thank God for Francis Schaeffer who sought truth through Scripture and thereby helped many to find the answers to life's questions.

Catherine Marshall LeSourd: Discovering a Gift

At the time of his death, her first husband was one of the most popular clergymen in the United States. He was **Peter Marshall**, Chaplain of the U. S. Senate. Perhaps his name would not have remained in prominence, however, except for the fact that his wife discovered a gift for writing when her biography of her husband, *A Man Called Peter*, became a best seller and a popular motion picture. Catherine Marshall, the name under which she wrote even though she married Leonard LeSourd later in life, became one of the foremost Christian writers of her day.

She was born in 1915 and educated at Agnes Scott College in Atlanta. Peter Marshall was a young Presbyterian pastor, born in Scotland. The marriage was a happy, if short-lived one. Catherine was able to write about their life together with such poignancy that *A Man Called Peter* was on the New York Times bestseller list for more than 50 consecutive weeks. It grew to even greater popularity after being made into a movie of the same name.

Marshall also wrote *Christy* about the life of her mother who, as a young woman, taught school in rural Appalachia. It sold over eight million copies and was made into a television series. As Marshall coped with life, sharing glorious experiences of the Lord's presence but also recurring health problems, she was able to put her thoughts, feelings and experiences into words with which people could easily identify. As a result, books such as *Beyond Ourselves*, *To Live Again*, *Something More* and *The Helper* all became Christian best sellers. In 1980 her autobiography *Meeting God at Every Turn* was published.

In 1959 she married Leonard S. LeSourd, an editor and publisher, and they founded the Breakthrough intercessory prayer fellowship. Catherine Marshall LeSourd died in 1983.

Thank God for Catherine Marshall LeSourd whose writings have helped millions of Christians cope with life and grow in their faith.

Festo Kivengere: Ugandan Evangelist

We now come to another man the author was privileged to know and work with. He was a great man of prayer, and often preached and taught on that subject, but he is best remembered as an evangelist. He was a key person in the great East African Revival that brought so many to Christ in Kenya, Uganda and throughout the region. The revival began when one tribal chief asked another tribal chief who was his natural enemy to forgive him. Their reconciliation opened the door for repentance and new life in Christ. Thus, reconciliation was a major theme on which evangelism was based in the area.

Festo Kivengere was born of a royal family in North Kigezi, Western Uganda in 1919. He was converted at sixteen and trained as a primary school teacher at Bishop Tucker College. In 1945 he and his wife Merabu accepted a call to be Anglican missionaries to Tanzania. Kivengere served as a teacher and evangelist there for thirteen years. He then returned to Uganda where he supervised church schools in the Kigezi district until he resigned in 1960 to focus on his natural gift: preaching. He received additional theological education in Pittsburgh, was multilingual and could communicate effectively. He worked with Michael Cassidy in founding the Africa Evangelistic Enterprise in East Africa and served as its leader. He preached the gospel on every continent and at many international gatherings.

Kivengere was nominated Bishop of Kigezi in 1972 but only accepted on the condition that he could continue his worldwide preaching ministry. At the time, 70 percent of Ugandans had become Christians, but Idi Amin overthrew the government of Uganda and became its dictator. One of his goals was to convert Uganda to Islam. As a leading Christian, Kivengere's position and Amin's were immediately in conflict. This led, in 1977, to Amin's murder of **Janani Luwum**, Archbishop of Uganda, and exile for Kivengere until Amin was overthrown in 1979.

On his return to Uganda, reconciliation again became Kivengere's theme as he worked with various political factions to rebuild the government. He was also a leader in Christian social action movements. He wrote several books, including *When God Moves* and *Christ Our Reality*. He died in 1988.

Thank God for Festo Kivengere who preached the gospel all over the world and, at the same time, was a major factor in the spread of Christianity in his own East Africa.

Janani Luwum: Modern Day Martyr

When we think of martyrs, we normally have in mind those who died in the early days of Christianity or those whose beliefs led them to death in connection with the Reformation. In fact, however, it is said that more Christians died for their faith in the Twentieth Century than in all the previous centuries combined. Janani Luwum was one of those.

Luwum was born of poor Christian parents in East Acholi, Uganda in 1922. He was educated at Boroboro Teachers' Training College. Following his conversion in 1948, he studied for Christian ministry at the Buwalasi Theological College and was ordained in 1955. He was a parish priest for three years, went to England for further theological studies, and was principal at Buwalasi for two years. He became Bishop of Northern Uganda in 1969 and Archbishop of Uganda in 1974.

In 1971, an army general, Idi Amin, had seized control of the Ugandan government. Posters in Kampala proclaimed him "Amin, Our Christ." Uganda had become largely Christian, but Amin and his followers were Muslims. Tribal warfare and a reign of terror ensued. Luwum on several occasions boldly confronted Amin with the injustices that were occurring in the country, thus putting his life in danger. In 1977 Luwum and his bishops sent a strongly worded message, protesting the government's atrocities, especially those against Christians. From that time on, Luwum was a marked man.

In February of that year, Ugandan radio announced that Luwum had died in a car accident. The story of what really happened was reconstructed later. Amin had arrested Luwum and told him to confess that he was an enemy of state, threatening to overthrow the government. When Luwum refused, he was stripped and beaten. Luwum still refused to sign the confession, praying for those abusing him. Amin threw a fit of rage, screamed obscenities, commanded his soldiers to molest him and then shot him twice in the heart. The government refused to make Luwum's body available for Christian burial. Although deeply shocked, the Church in Uganda continued to grieve.

Thank God for Janani Luwum who faced martyrdom with the courage of those who had gone before him, and who thereby became an inspiration to his beleaguered church.

Charles M. Schulz: The Gospel According to Peanuts

He was a popular cartoonist and lay preacher. Even after his death, his work continues to be seen regularly in many newspapers. He affected for good the age in which he lived to a greater extent than any of us can know. He certainly taught us how to laugh at ourselves in a healthy manner.

Charles M. Schulz was born in Minneapolis, Minnesota in 1922. He took correspondence courses from the Art Instruction School in Minneapolis during the period 1940-43. He served in the army for two years, including being one of the liberators of the dreaded Dachau concentration camp. Upon returning home, he succeeded in having his cartoons published while he worked for the correspondence school that had taught him to draw.

In 1948 his weekly cartoon series began to appear in the *St. Paul Pioneer Press*. He also had some cartoons appear in the *Saturday Evening Post*. Then, in 1950, Schulz began his highly successful *Peanuts* series, which was soon widely syndicated. His cartoons were a reflection of the times. Although only children appeared in the strip, they illustrated all of the emotions of adults. We saw ourselves at our best and worst, but always as a means to help us cope with life. In subtle ways, Schulz wove Christian themes and principles into the strip.

All the while, Charles Schulz was a lay preacher in the Church of God (Anderson, Indiana). Thus, he was able to reach people directly through his preaching and indirectly through his cartoons. *Peanuts* became the overwhelming favorite cartoon strip of its day. Collections of the strip in book form were also produced by Schulz as well as animated television specials. Schulz died in 2000.

Thank God for Charles Schulz who taught us to laugh at ourselves and enriched our lives through the characters in *Peanuts*.

Henri Nouwen: Spiritual Insights

Little known to people except through his books, he is one of the most oft-quoted Christians of the last century. He led a quiet and self-sacrificial life; but, from that, he gained great spiritual insights that he communicated effectively to others.

Henri Nouwen was born in the Netherlands in 1922. He was ordained to the Roman Catholic priesthood in 1957. He also studied psychology at the University of Nijmegen until 1964, and became a visiting professor in psychology at Notre Dame from 1966 to 1968. From there he became associate professor in pastoral theology at Yale. In 1974 he spent seven months with the Trappist monks of the Abbey of Genesee in New York. He also spent a brief time in Central America. In his last years he shared his life with people with mental disabilities at the L'Arche-Daybreak Community in Toronto, Canada.

Nouwen expressed his special vocation well in his introduction to his book *With Open Hands*. He wrote, "Aren't my own experiences so personal that they might just as well remain hidden? Or could it be that what is most personal for me, what rings true in the depths of my being, also has meaning for others? Ultimately, I believe that what is most personal is also the most universal. To arrive at this point, however, friends are necessary, for they are the ones who help you distinguish between superficial sensations and deep human experiences."

Those who have read some of Nouwen's many books will have lived with him through the crises in his own life with which we can universally identify. In books like his *Inner Voice of Love* (1996), Nouwen shares one of the most difficult periods of his life when he was filled with inner doubt. Yet, out of every one of his books there are lessons for us all to learn and spiritual insights to guide us through our times of joy and of tribulation. Nouwen's classics include *The Wounded Healer*, *Reaching Out*, *The Genesee Diary*, *Out of Solitude* and *The Return of the Prodigal Son*. Nouwen died in 1996.

Thank God for Henri Nouwen, his honesty about the joys and discouragements of his own life, and the way he was able to share them for the benefit of others.

Jim Elliot: Brief Flame

Those who have passed the flame of God's love from one person to another down through the centuries have not all been blessed with long life. What is important is that the flame has burned brightly. Jim Elliot is a good example of this.

Elliot was born in 1927 in Portland, Oregon. He grew up in a devout Christian home, his parents being Plymouth Brethren. He loved Scripture and he loved the great outdoors, with Mt. Hood visible from the home of his youth. In 1945 he enrolled in Wheaton College and proved to be a brilliant student. He graduated in 1949 *summa cum laude*. Elliot was not only diligent in his studies, but in every other aspect of his life. He was known to shout across campus to acquaintances saying, "Glory, Brother! What's your verse for the day?" He expected the other person to reply with the Bible verse the Lord had given that person that morning. Elliot became known as the "Glory Boy," and many shied away from his company.

The year following graduation Elliot spent at home in Portland for time to reflect on the future God had for him. The clear call seemed to be to pioneer missionary work. He became intrigued with evangelizing a totally remote tribe, the Aucas, in Ecuador. He began, through prayer, to try to build a missionary team, and attended the Summer Institute of Linguistics in Oklahoma. Following more study and putting the missionary team together, he and the team spent 1952-53 at a Plymouth Brethren mission among the Quichua Indians at Shandia, Ecuador. A flood destroyed that jungle station and Jim returned to the States to marry his sweetheart of several years, Elisabeth Howard.

After working again among the Quichuas, in 1956, Elliot and four others sought out the Aucas, only to be attacked by ten warriors who killed all five with primitive wooden spears. Elisabeth Elliot, undaunted by her husband's death, later went among the Aucas—just she and her infant daughter—and led them to Christ.

Thank God for Jim Elliot who said, "He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose," and gave his all for Christ.

Martin Luther King, Jr.: Overcomer

While **Charles Schulz** helped us laugh at ourselves, Martin Luther King, Jr. forced us to look at ourselves in less comfortable ways. In a sense, he was as much a martyr as **Janani Luwum** although he was the victim of an assassination by a deranged, isolated gunman. He made an impact on America unmatched in the Twentieth Century.

King was born in Atlanta, Georgia in 1929, the son and grandson of pastors at Ebenezer Baptist Church there. He attended Morehouse College, Crozer Theological Seminary and Boston University where he received his PhD. In 1953 he married Coretta Scott.

After graduation and ordination, King returned to the South as pastor of Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama. In 1955, while serving there, an African American woman, Mrs. Rosa Parks, refused to move to the back of a racially segregated bus and was arrested. That event, more than any other, set the young pastor on the course that would shape his ministry and lead to his death. His first step was to organize a bus boycott that led to the desegregation of the buses and propelled him into national prominence. He became president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and provided dynamic leadership to the Civil Rights movement.

The keys to King's success were his commitment to his Christian faith and his belief in non-violent response to racial injustices. Grounded in the African American evangelical tradition tempered by a commitment to social justice, he saw Christianity as the force that could change society. His vision gave substance and energy to the Civil Rights movement. Enormous progress was made during the thirteen years of his leadership. King was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964 in recognition of his courageous efforts. He knew the dangers he faced, but he never slowed down. An assassin's bullet ended his life in 1968 when he was only 39 years of age.

Thank God for Martin Luther King, Jr. who forced us to face our racial prejudices and led the fight to end racial segregation.

Todd Beamer: Let's Roll

The track of the flame of God's love will not end until Jesus returns. Every day there are Christians around the world who reveal lives referred to in Galatians 2:20: "I no longer live, but Christ lives in me." Todd Beamer was an example. He also exemplified John 15:13: "Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends."

Todd, a Wheaton College graduate and a devout layman, was aboard United Flight 93 on September 11, 2001. A Sunday school teacher, he was happily married, the father of two children with a third on the way. He was a young man with a good job and a great future here on earth. But God had a mission for him that would change all of that permanently.

Through cell phone contacts, the passengers on Flight 93 realized that three other airliners had been hijacked in ways similar to theirs and had been used as weapons of mass destruction against the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. It was obvious to them that their own flight was to be the fourth in that series, probably aimed at either the White House or the Capitol. Something had to be done.

Beamer called the GTE Customer Center in Oakbrook, Illinois and told the supervisor that their plane had been hijacked and what the passengers planned to do. He asked her to pray the Lord's Prayer with him, which she did. When they finished, Beamer prayed, "Jesus, help me. I don't think we are going to get out of this thing. I'm going to have to go on faith." Next, Todd and his fellow passengers prayed the 23rd Psalm. Then he turned to the team of men who would force their way into the cockpit and uttered the words, "Are you guys ready? Let's roll." From the cockpit recorder, we know that Beamer and other brave passengers were responsible for the fact that the plane crashed into a field in Pennsylvania, where they all perished.

Thank God for Todd Beamer in whom the flame of God's love burned so brightly he was willing to lay down his life for the sake of others who might well have included top leaders of the nation.

William R. Bright: Just Plain Bill

Many believe he touched more lives for Christ than any other person in the Twentieth Century. It would be hard to find anyone who had such a heart for God and who was so focused on bringing people to Christ. Yet he was a humble man who disciplined himself to use only an 800-word vocabulary so he could communicate effectively with anyone.

William R. Bright, known to millions simply as Bill, was born near Coweta, Oklahoma in 1921. In Coweta, he attended a one-room schoolhouse through the eighth grade. There he met Vonette Zachary, who became his wife of 54 years and his constant companion in ministry. Bright distinguished himself in high school and college in many ways that would later serve him in his mission: academics, student government, journalism, oratory and debate. He graduated with honors from Oklahoma's Northeastern State College in 1944.

Bill Bright moved to Southern California after graduation and began a successful business venture. Before his conversion to Christ, he was both competent and self-confident in his ability to succeed in anything he undertook. However, by 1951 he had completed courses of study at Princeton and Fuller theological seminaries and felt called to leave his business and follow Christ's command to "go and make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19). He and Vonette signed a contract to become slaves of Jesus Christ and, that fall, began Campus Crusade for Christ at UCLA. As the saying goes, "the rest is history."

Over the years, Bright authored more than 60 books and booklets, but none was as influential as his little Four Spiritual Laws booklet of which more than 2.5 billion copies have been printed. He was responsible for worldwide evangelistic rallies and programs such as the "I Found It" campaign in the '70s and the World Evangelism Crusade in South Korea in the '80s. The JESUS film which came along in 1979 has now been viewed by more than 5.1 billion people in 234 countries in their native languages. In the meantime, Campus Crusade has spawned a great number and variety of Christian ministries serving the world for Christ.

Bill Bright was brought to tears by the fact that so many people failed to understand the gift of Jesus Christ for their lives. He spent his life trying to remedy that and died on July 19, 2003.

Thank God for Bill Bright, a slave for Christ, who directly, and indirectly through the ministries of others, brought undoubtedly millions of people to the saving grace of Jesus.

Epilogue

We pilgrims on the journey
Of the narrow road
And those who've gone before us line
The way
Cheering on the faithful, encouraging
The weary,
Their lives a stirring testament to
God's sustaining grace.

Surrounded by so great a cloud
Of witnesses
Let us run the race not only for
The prize
But as those who've gone before us
Let us leave to those behind us
The heritage of faithfulness passed
On through godly lives.

Oh may all who come behind us find
Us faithful.
May the fire of our devotion light
Their way.
May the footprints that we leave
Lead them to believe
And the lives we live inspire them
To obey.
Oh may all who come behind us find
Us faithful.

from Find Us Faithful
by **Jon Mohr**

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