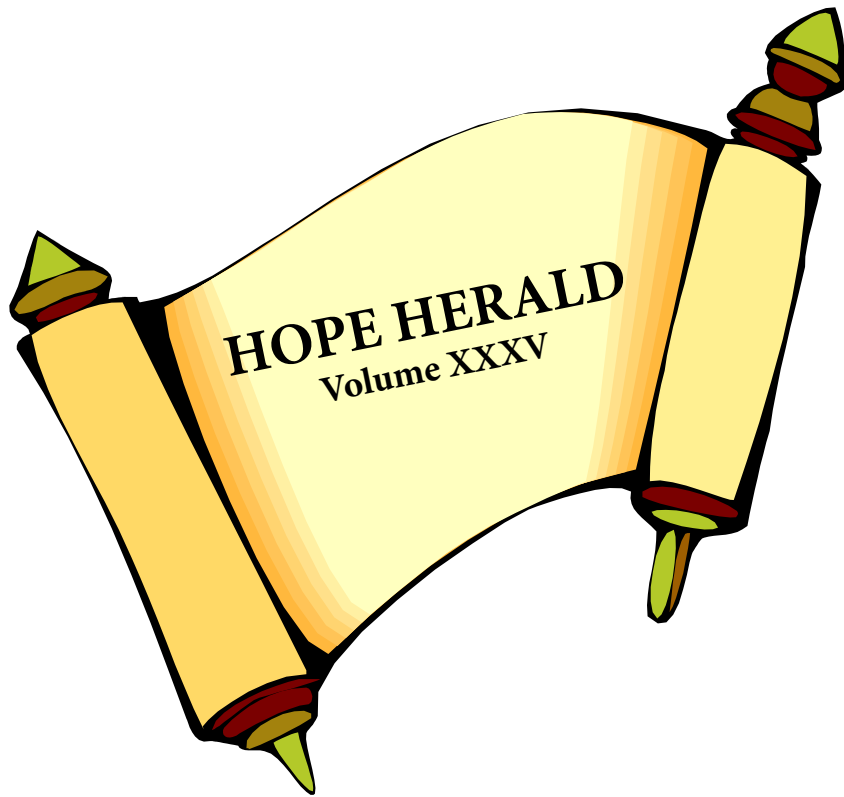


WE BELIEVE

1. There is only One True Holy God
2. The Bible is the Self-revelation of God to mankind
3. The Triune God is the Creator of all things, visible and invisible
4. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was born of the Virgin Mary
5. The Holy Spirit was sent at Pentecost
6. The Church is composed of all who truly repent of sins
7. The Christian Life is total commitment to the Lordship of Christ
8. There is a personal Devil who is the arch-enemy of God
9. There will be a bodily return of Jesus Christ
10. There will be the final Judgment



“I Hope in Your word.”

Psalm 119:81

HERALDS OF HOPE
CIRCLING THE GLOBE WITH THE GOSPEL

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With The President

WHERE IS GOD WHEN IT HURTS?



Earthquakes, floods, famine, disease, terrorist attacks, ethnic hatred, physical abuse, and more are all effects of a world tainted by sin; the world we live in every day. We are birthed in pain and often die in pain. It is an unavoidable part of our physical existence. In our pain, we sometimes ask “Where is God?” Does He see; does He know; does He care?

Frank Graeff was a Methodist minister whose cheerful disposition earned him the name of “sunshine minister.” He was the author of more than 200 hymns of faith; yet he suffered from doubts, physical pain, and depression.

One of his best known songs sprang from his struggles with doubt and pain. *Does Jesus Care* is a hymn that verbalizes the question that Christians through the ages have asked. The resounding, positive answer to the question forms the chorus of the hymn.

Does Jesus care when my heart is
pained
Too deeply for mirth or song,
As the burdens press, and the cares
distress
And the way grows weary and long?

(Chorus)

**Oh yes, He cares, I know He cares,
His heart is touched with my grief;
When the days are weary, the long
nights dreary,
I know my Savior cares.**

Does Jesus care when my way is dark
With a nameless dread and fear?
As the daylight fades into deep night
shades,
Does He care enough to be near?

Does Jesus care when I've tried and
failed
To resist some temptation strong;
When for my deep grief there is no
relief,
Though my tears flow all the night
long?

Does Jesus care when I've said
“goodbye”
To the dearest on earth to me,
And my sad heart aches till it nearly
breaks,
Is it aught to Him? Does He see?

Sincerely in the Hope of the Gospel,

J. Mark Horst, President
HERALDS OF HOPE, INC.

EDITORIAL

The Father's Favor

There are many movements in the world today working for reconciliation, peace, and justice with little, if any, success. They fail to recognize the Heavenly Father's favor as the foundation upon which to build and the divine assistance available.

The Father's favor is a quality of His character wrapped around with His love and issuing in His mercy. The Bible teaches us about the Father's favor by the term, “grace.” It is the holy response of our holy God to His creation. It is freely given to rescue and benefit the man who by disobedience lost the blessed connection to his Creator, and broke the holy relationship by choice.

Grace is the great hand of our Father open and extended to us in favor for any and every need. Our greatest need is forgiveness, cleansing from sin, to find favor in the heart of a holy God. That great need moved Him to give a perfect atoning sacrifice in the person of His only and beloved Son. As we receive this grace we become children in God's family. Grace builds that family relationship.

Grace continues to pour from the Father's open hand as He ministers to our every need. As His children we receive continuous grace and in turn minister to others. Like our Father that ministry begins with forgiveness. I'm so thankful, so happy, that grace is changing the critical, judgmental attitudes of my heart to forgiveness, wrapped in love and mercy. Grace is making me like my Father. I'm sure He is pleased. I want to walk in His favor until I take that last step. Grace will then deliver me from the very presence of sin. Amazing Grace!

This HOPE HERALD is built around Peter's letters in which grace is an important teaching.

See I Peter 1:13

I Peter 3:7

I Peter 4:10

I Peter 5:5, 5:10, 5:12

II Peter 3:18

Isabelle K. Yoder

TREASURES OF TRUTH

GRACE

In English the word grace occurs thirty-eight times in the King James Old Testament and 115 times in the New Testament. The word brings several thoughts to mind. One meaning of the English word is charm, or the art of proper bearing, or conduct.

In the Bible there are two basic words for grace, one in the Old Testament, *chen*, and one in the New, *charis*.

Its first use describes Noah's life in Genesis 6:8, "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord."

To understand the full meaning of Noah's condition before the Lord, we need to see the contrast with the general society of his day. The Bible reports that the thoughts of men were "only evil continually," Genesis 6:5. God saw no way to redeem the people. He was forced to destroy them. What a terrible condition that must have been. NO HOPE! That is what sets Noah off. Only he "found grace in the eyes of the Lord." God used him to save a remnant of mankind and the animals.

From what happened we get a basic meaning of the word grace, as favor. The English dictionary helps us, "unmerited divine assistance given man for his regeneration or sanctification...a virtue coming from God."

As Lot was being led out of Sodom before God destroyed the city and its people, the angels urged him to flee to the mountains to escape being destroyed with the people of Sodom. In his distress he prayed, "Behold now, thy servant hath found grace in thy sight, and, thou hast magnified thy mercy, which thou hast shewed me in saving my life; and I cannot escape to the mountain, lest some evil take me, and I die," Genesis 19:19.

We must notice the relation of grace and mercy. We conclude that mercy flows out of God's grace. The opposite of mercy is justice or judgment, which all deserve. Lot lived in that wicked city, Sodom, until he lost most of his family to the lure of that godless society. He needed grace and mercy.

Jacob's ten sons sold their brother, Joseph, to a caravan of Ishmaelites who came by. When Joseph arrived in Egypt he was bought by Potiphar, an officer in Pharaoh's personal guard. As time went on, Joseph did well. The Bible reports that "Joseph found grace in his (Potiphar's) sight, and he served him; and he made him overseer over his house, and all that he had he put into his hand," Genesis 39:4.

Joseph's faithful service earned him more favor with his master. Thus we learn that the way to find grace is to be a faithful servant. That also ap-

plies to a Christian serving the Lord. At the same time we must remember that grace is unearned favor. We cannot expect to put God in debt to us.

When all is added up, we are hopelessly in debt to Him. But as we please Him by obedient living we "find grace in His eyes."

The closeness or intimacy between God and us is well demonstrated by God and Moses as recorded in Exodus 33:12-23. What God said to Moses is encouraging. When Moses asked God for real proof that Israel was His people, God said, "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest," Exodus 33:14.

No other word could give Moses the complete assurance that he had "found grace in the sight of the Lord." The real presence of God was proof of God's grace beyond any question.

These several examples from the Old Testament should open our understanding of the meaning of grace to Noah, Lot, and Moses.

Now we come to the New Testament. Just as the word *chen*, grace in Hebrew, means unearned favor so *charis*, grace in Greek, means unearned favor. The first usage of grace that we examine is found in John 1:17. "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." By the use of but the translators created a conflict between law and grace.

The Greek reading clarifies the meaning "Because the law was given by Moses, grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." In this translation the law is the foundation on which grace can function. God gave the law to Israel to define for them and us what a holy life is to be. It is to be modeled after God who is entirely holy. Without the law we would not know what God requires or how far short we come of being holy like God is, so God brought grace and truth by Jesus Christ in harmony with law.

It is important that we look at Romans 6:14, "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace." Now we can understand that the law is God's instrument of judgment, of condemnation. Grace is the instrument of forgiveness. It is clear in Paul's mind the law was God's instrument of condemnation and grace the instrument of pardon. Therefore the joy we have issues from the grace of God in pardon, not the release from the many restrictions the law imposes.

The grace of God brought His Son, Jesus Christ, to earth to become the final atoning sacrifice for our hopeless state and to enrich us. "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich," II Corinthians 8:9.

Now we see that the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ opens His riches to us. Of course these riches are not earthly wealth. Instead they are "the riches in glory by Christ Jesus," Philippians 4:19.

To receive the grace of God does not mean inaction. Rather it gives us the wonderful opportunity to tell others that grace is available for them too. Notice Paul's words to Titus, "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation to all men hath appeared, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar (special) people, zealous of good works," Titus 2:11-14.

Thus grace is the gift of God's favor which releases us from the condemnation of our sins through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary, predetermined by God the Holy One. It opens the supply for all our needs. It also lays a duty upon us to proclaim GRACE to all people everywhere. Let us be up and doing! Amen.

J. Otis Yoder

PETER: APOSTLE OF POWER

In this character sketch of the Apostle Peter, we will focus on that portion of his life from Pentecost until his death which, tradition tells us, was in Rome where he was crucified upside down.

However, to understand better this period of Peter's life, we must first look briefly at some of his experiences prior to Pentecost.

Peter seems to be a born leader, physically strong, socially outgoing, and spiritually discerning. In the Gospels he is often in the forefront. A part of Jesus' inner circle of three, he is the bold one; the one to speak on behalf of the others. But while he is often in a leadership position, his strength, like any other man not empowered by the Holy Spirit, is in his flesh, his ability. Through his experiences during the trial and crucifixion of Jesus he learns the vital truth that "the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

In John 21:1-17 the Scripture records what is probably Peter's last fishing experience. The setting is during the time between the resurrection of Jesus and His ascension. Somehow, the relationship between Jesus and His disciples is different now. He is no longer with them continually, but comes and goes unannounced.

Peter, like many of us during times of uncertainty, seeks the comfort of the routine, the familiar. The roll of the boat beneath his feet, the sights, and sounds, and smells of the water, the feel of the net in his hands; these are the things Peter knew intimately. There is a sense of security that came through the repetition of these actions that he is so familiar with.

As this story draws to a close, Jesus is eating breakfast with the disciples and asks Peter a question. "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?" At first glance it may seem that Jesus is asking Peter if he loves Him more than he loves his fellow disciples. But I believe Jesus is asking Peter if he loves Him more than fish, or better, fishing! Jesus is asking Peter to move out of his "comfort zone", out of the routine, out of the familiar, to take up a work in which he will be solely dependent upon God's power. And Peter rises to the challenge, leaving the boat, the nets, the fish, and learning to "catch" men.

Pentecost, the coming of the Holy Spirit, brings a major change in Peter's life and experience. His personality, his gifts and abilities, and his surroundings are not changed. But he is filled with a power far beyond his

own capabilities and the results are dramatic.

When the Spirit is poured out, Peter becomes the spokesman for the entire group. No longer would he deny his relationship to Jesus; no longer will he hide behind closed doors (John 20:19). He is now energized by the power of the Holy Spirit, “the Spirit of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.”

I picture him on that day of Pentecost standing in some elevated place where he addresses the multitude. Standing in defense of the truth, explaining that these who are filled with the Holy Spirit are not drunk with wine, but recipients of the promises made by the Old Testament prophets. Following his powerful sermon recorded in Acts 2:14-36, “about three thousand souls” are converted! Here are the “firstfruits” of the church.

Also, Peter is instrumental in opening the door of the Gospel to the Gentiles. His vision, Acts 10:9-18, is necessary to convince his Jewish mind that the Gospel is available to all mankind. We must admire Peter for his willingness to embrace this new revelation so quickly and to defend it so vigorously before his Jewish brethren. It proves to us again the power of the Holy Spirit to transform and inform.

The last we read of Peter in the book of Acts is of his miraculous deliverance from prison (Acts 12). Herod, the king, had already put James, the brother of John, to death.

Because that makes the Jewish leadership happy, he proceeds to imprison Peter, intending to kill him following the feast of the Passover. But Peter, connected by chains to two soldiers in the inner part of the prison, is sleeping! Would you or I be sleeping under similar conditions? Here again the power of the Holy Spirit is evident in his life. Facing execution, he is able to rest in God. And the angel of the Lord awakens him and leads him out into the street, a free man!

Our New Testament includes two epistles written by Peter. This issue of the HOPE HERALD focuses on I Peter. Peter’s writings expose us again and again to his Christlike character. Peter’s earlier self confidence has been softened by his experiences and by his desire to imitate his Savior. This is the work of the Holy Spirit in a life yielded to him. Gone is the desire for prominence and personal gain (Matt. 19:27). Peter now exhorts believers to dwell on the glorious hope that is the reward of all the faithful (I Peter 1:3-6).

In this first epistle we see many indications of Peter’s transformation. Many of his words call to mind the teachings he heard directly from Jesus. In I Peter 3:9 he echoes Jesus’ teaching from the Sermon on the Mount of returning good for evil. Peter was there when Jesus took the young children in His arms and chapter 2, verse 2, encourages us to be as infants in

desire and faith. In chapter 4, verse 7, Peter echoes the words Jesus spoke to him in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Finally, in I Peter 5:1-6, he addresses those in positions of leadership and counsels them to lead by example, not by force. Peter, the born leader, comes to realize that effective leadership, like that of his Master, is born out of a heart of love for those he serves. To all who receive his instruction, the Chief Shepherd will give a crown of glory, a reward that will never fade away.

Peter’s life is truly an example of one who has been transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit. May it be our sincere desire to follow his example.

J. Mark Horst

SERMONS FROM
I PETER
REFINED FAITH

I believe everyone has faith. Everyone believes in something. Some try to make their faith as tangible as possible so they make objects which they claim are their gods and they hold them up. The Psalmist saw that and said the heathen say unto him, "Where is now thy god?" (See Psalm 115.) They had their gods made of silver, gold, stone, or wood. But David's God and ours is in the heavens.

The object of your faith is important. Today many set up themselves as the object of their faith. A statement I once read comes to mind which says, "The self-made man worships his creator!" All that is true. Many set up themselves as the objects of their faith.

The Apostle Peter had learned that faith in one's self fails under pressure. He had said he would never deny the Lord, but when the pressure came, he did. His faith failed him. Years later, he could talk about faith from various experiences. So he did in writing this letter. He wrote about the refining of faith in I Peter 1:6-12.

6 Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations:

7 That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

8 Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:

9 Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.

10 Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you:

11 Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.

12 Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.

In Peter's words about REFINED FAITH, we find the several DETAILS to help us profit from our experiences of faith.

THE TRIAL OF OUR FAITH is a profitable detail. It causes great joy. The Apostle puts it that way. He said, "In this you greatly rejoice." The trial of our faith should create joy in us. We should rejoice when we are tried for our faith but it also creates heaviness. It creates sorrow for a season, just for a time. That time will pass. But the trial of our faith, Peter says, outweighs gold, the highly refined gold, tried by fire. The refining process of gold, I understand, is to heat it and skim off the imperfections. This is done until there is nothing left but pure gold. Peter says that the trial of our faith is more precious than that.

It will outlast gold. Yes, of course, because gold is of this world. Our faith is out of this world. It reaches to the appearing of Jesus Christ. Did you notice that? The seventh verse tells us "that the trial of our faith might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." The trial of our faith is one of the details contributing to refined faith. Our faith needs trial to temper it.

THE END OF OUR FAITH is a completing detail. The object of our faith is clearly stated: it is Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is carried from the seventh verse to the eighth with the relative pronoun "whom" referring back to Himself: "Whom having not seen, ye love." The object of our love, the end or goal of our faith, is our love for Jesus. We love Him, even though we have never seen Him. We know that He is real even though we don't see Him, yet we believe and we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory because we are going to see Him some day. The Bible says we shall. When He shall come we shall be like Him for we shall see Him as He is. Praise God!

The end or goal of our faith is to be able to see Him who is our Saviour and there will be that completed salvation, "receiving the end of your faith even the salvation of your souls." The completion of our salvation will be our entrance into glory. The object is our love for Christ, our joy in Him and the completed salvation of entering into glory. Our refined faith takes us to the glorious end, our full and total salvation.

THE SOURCE OF OUR FAITH is a historical detail. I say this because the Apostle Peter carries us further in talking about the salvation the prophets searched and prophesied and of the grace that should come unto us.

We may sometimes think that our faith is just at the moment but we must remember that our faith has a long history. It reaches back to the prophets. In fact, I could say it reaches all the way back to Adam. The Apostle Peter, however, concentrates upon the prophets as he speaks of

the source of faith. He said they spoke about the grace that should come to us. They were searching what or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify. They saw Jesus coming and they saw His suffering and they saw how that would be ministering unto us. They testified, they wrote about the coming and suffering of Jesus Christ.

It was revealed unto them that they were not only writing for themselves, but they were writing for succeeding generations, even for us all the way down here to the second decade of the twenty-first century. They were writing for us. They ministered unto us and they ministered unto those sojourners, those believers that Peter was writing to. They heard the message of the Gospel that was preached unto them.

And so it has been with us. If you're a Christian, you listened to the Gospel that was preached. So the source of your faith reaches all the way back to the prophets. Our refined faith has its source in the prophets long ago. It is not only for now.

So then, my friend, our faith is refined by trial, by the end, and by the source. We are not alone in the walk of faith by any means. Many have walked before us. Our fathers have also had that faith. The challenge comes to us to walk in that faith until our salvation is complete, and lead the coming generation to faith in our Lord Jesus.

CHRIST, THE LIVING STONE

Some years ago a man arose in our country who called himself Father Divine. He said he was God. He said he wouldn't die. People flocked to him by the hundreds. He lived luxuriously. But do you know? There came a time when his mortality caught up with him. He died. They buried him.

History tells us all founders of religions have died. They are all dead. Their tombs become shrines for their followers.

Our Master is alive! Jesus Christ arose from the dead and He ascended to glory. He returned to the Father. What's more, He is coming back one day!

The Apostle Peter refers to Jesus Christ as the Living Stone. The title of this message is CHRIST, THE LIVING STONE. We base our faith on our Living Lord. Let's rejoice in that from I Peter 2:1-8.

1 Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings,

2 As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:

3 If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.

4 To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious,

5 Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

6 Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.

7 Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner

8 And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.

I find that Peter defines the wonderful RELATIONSHIPS we can have with Christ, the Living Stone.

HE CONTROLS OUR ATTITUDES is the first relationship our Living Stone affects. I want you to look very carefully at this Scripture and see the attitudes we are to lay aside. He names them. He says, "laying aside all malice." Malice is a mean disposition, an evil inner feeling. It is in the heart. Lay that aside.

And he says, "and all guile." Guile is just plain dishonesty. Lay that aside.

Then he says, "lay aside also hypocrisies." Hypocrites are people who live behind a mask. They put out front what they want you to think they are and behind the mask they are something quite different. They are stage players, unreal.

He continues, "lay aside envies." Envy is an evil eye looking at someone else and thinking mean things about him because you are not as he is. It is the first cousin to jealousy.

And finally he says, "all evil speakings." That means all defamation, all the talking down of people.

Now these are the attitudes we are to lay aside. These are the attitudes our Living Stone will control by putting them out of our lives.

After laying aside these attitudes, the Apostle Peter encourages us to cultivate an attitude. Very simply, it's one attitude: "Desire the sincere

milk of the Word” (v. 2). Desire the pure, undefiled, unpolluted, undiluted Word that you may grow by it, that you develop by it, that you may increase by it.

Cultivate that attitude. It is based on whether or not you have really tasted that the Lord is gracious. And He is! Yes, the Lord is gracious. So He is gracious enough to impart the necessary nutrients to grow by, the milk of the Word. One chief aim we should have is to grow in grace and the knowledge of Jesus Christ our Lord, thus becoming living stones.

So here is the first relationship that we may have with Christ our Living Stone. He controls our attitudes. He helps us to lay aside the wrong ones and cultivate the right one.

HE CONSECRATES OUR SACRIFICES is the second relationship our Living Stone offers. Notice accurately the next two verses, 4 and 5. You see, our Living Stone was chosen of God and precious. It made no difference that men rejected Him, though they did. “Disallowed,” this Scripture says which means rejected of men. They rejected Him to their hurt because God had chosen Him and He is precious to the Father.

We come to Him as living stones. He is the Living Stone and we come to Him as living stones and we are built up in Him. He builds up a spiritual house and a holy priesthood. We are the ones who make up that house and that priesthood, so we can serve God. That’s what the priesthood is to do. The priesthood is to worship and serve God. This relationship with Him makes it possible for us to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God.

The animal sacrifices were finished when Jesus offered Himself on the cross of Calvary. The animal sacrifices are no longer needed. Now we can come with spiritual sacrifices. The Psalmist David in Psalm 51:17, makes this striking comment: “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.”

Even in the days when the animal sacrifices were important in the life of Israel, David saw that there were spiritual sacrifices that far outweigh the earthly sacrifices. Christ, our Living Stone, consecrates our spiritual sacrifices, our praises and worship. They are acceptable by Jesus Christ.

HE CONSTITUTES OUR FOUNDATION is the third relationship our Living Stone supplies. Now let us concentrate on the last three verses, 6-8. The Apostle Peter is quoting from Isaiah 28:16, “Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.” Here is the way Peter puts it: “Behold, I lay in Sion a chief cornerstone, elect, precious and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.”

God has laid in Zion a chief cornerstone, precious, so that anyone who believes will not be ashamed or confounded. There is the act of God in laying the precious cornerstone. Then comes the act of the believer: “Unto you therefore which believe he is precious.”

We have the same relationship to that cornerstone that God has. The cornerstone that was precious to God, becomes precious to us and He becomes the head of the corner. He becomes the chief cornerstone. In other words all the building is framed by this cornerstone, by this head of the corner. All the building then is fitly framed together as the Scripture teaches us.

There is also the act of unbelievers. There is the act of God, the act of believers, and the act of unbelievers. Because unto those who are disobedient, Peter says, “the stone the builders disallowed, the same is the head of the corner.” It becomes for them “a stone of stumbling, a rock of offense, because they stumble at the Word, being disobedient.” They stumble and are offended.

They try to reason out why God did this and how He did it, probing the mind of God instead of receiving what God has said about Him. He is our spiritual foundation. So they stumble because they set their minds, their intellects, above the simple plain Word of God.

Let me emphasize that as a spiritual foundation, Jesus is essential for us to reach God. The disobedient, the unbelievers, will never reach God by their efforts and programs. But when we who believe receive Him as precious then we have access to God. Indeed Christ, the Living Stone, is precious because our relationship with Him makes it possible for Him to control our attitudes, to consecrate our sacrifices, and to constitute our foundation. Surely no one will be disappointed by trusting in Christ, the Living Stone. Yes, Amen.

HOW TO EVALUATE LIFE

How much is a man worth? I raise a question with you, my friend. What kind of price tag would you put on a person's life? We all know that life insurance companies have high prices on the chief executive officer. Thousands of dollars they put on a man's life.

But Jesus, our Precious Lord, had a different equation when evaluating life. His principle is stated in Mark 8:34-37: "And when he had called the people unto him with his disciples also, he said unto them, whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it. For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

You see what I mean? Jesus had a way to evaluate life quite different from the insurance companies or people in business. The value of life cannot be measured on the accountant's balance sheet. There's another balance sheet which has to be taken into account.

This message, HOW TO EVALUATE LIFE, will help you find the essential elements necessary to make a valid evaluation of life from I Peter 4:7-11.

7 But the end of all things is as hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.

8 And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.

9 Use hospitality one to another without grudging.

10 As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same to one another; as good stewards of the manifold grace of God

11 If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister; let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

I submit that from Peter's words we can and should establish the basic CONSIDERATIONS essential to evaluate life.

THE BREVITY OF TIME must be considered to evaluate life. The end is always a stark reality. We are not born to live here forever. There is birth and there is death. I'm speaking about the mortal body. I'm not speaking about the spiritual. There is a stark reality to the end of life, to the brevity

of life.

Mortality has a terminal point. And this world in which we live is mortal. Everything around us has a terminal point it seems.

So the end calls for rationality and Peter counsels us to "be sober-minded." That means to think straight. Don't let your thoughts get all twisted up. Be on the watch for those twisted ideas that are floating about. Be sober-minded.

And he said to watch and pray. 'Watch unto prayer,' be awake and pray. Three disciples went with Jesus into the garden when Jesus prayed just before His crucifixion. Peter said that he would go with Him, even unto death. But when Jesus asked them to watch with Him they fell asleep. Jesus said to them, "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation." He added, "The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak." The brevity of time is one consideration in evaluating life.

Jesus told about that rich man who thought he had the future before him. So when his land produced heavy crops so that he had no room to store his goods, he decided to tear down his barns and build greater. While he was in the process of doing this, God came that very night and said to him, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee, then whose shall these things be?" He had not considered the brevity of life. He had thought about the ease and comfort he could have in the future. I tell you, to evaluate life you must consider the brevity of time.

THE BEAUTY OF LOVE must be considered. Yes, that's what Peter said, "Above all things have fervent love." So top everything off with love. Let love be right up on top. And he said, "fervent love." Fervent love means earnest, unsullied love that has no flaws in it. We can even say love without partiality, without hypocrisy. He said have this among yourselves. He meant the body of Christ, the church. The people who really love the Lord love one another.

And he said that love will cover a multitude of sins. Let me give you a little caution here, however. It doesn't mean that love is a cover-up to hide sin. It does not mean you wouldn't expose that person's sin because he's a very close friend of yours. The point is you will realize that in your own life you too have some needs. There's a cover to realize all need love.

I Corinthians 13:4-7: "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things."

That's the kind of love Peter is talking about, the kind of love that can

absorb. Consider the beauty of love.

Peter then counsels to use hospitality one to another. Entertain guests and give yourself as you entertain those guests. The kind of love that Peter is talking about, beautiful love, is a giving love. It's the kind of love that God had. The Bible tells us in John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life." So then to evaluate your life, consider the beauty of love.

THE BLESSING OF SERVICE must also be considered. Peter goes on to tell us every man has received a gift. So he should use that gift to minister to another person. This is the same word that in the noun form is "deacon," be a deacon to one another. A deacon, we learn from Acts 6, is a person appointed to look after people, to take care of their needs. Use your gift for the blessing of others. Minister to one another.

Peter then brings us to the point of stewardship, as "good stewards of the manifold grace of God." A steward is a caretaker. He doesn't necessarily have anything of his own, but he takes care of someone else's properties or manages someone else's affairs. So Peter says we should be good stewards of the manifold grace of God. How marvelous is the grace of God, super abounding grace reaching beyond that we would normally think.

Then acknowledge that you are servants. And acknowledge the servant role. Remember that God is in control. So whatever you do, do it as a servant of God.

Notice how Peter puts it in verse 11: "Let him speak as the oracles of God." When a man speaks he should be sure he has a message from the Lord. You know how the prophets of the Old Testament often said, "The word of the Lord came unto me." Whenever anyone speaks for God, he should be sure that he is speaking for God.

Peter continues, "as he ministers, let him do it with the ability that God giveth." That is a challenge. So much is done in the power of the flesh rather than in the ability that God gives. I want to challenge you, in your Christian service, rely upon and draw upon the ability that God gives.

Now there is a goal for this. The aim is to glorify God, that He may be glorified in all things through Jesus Christ. To whom be glory, "to whom be praise and dominion forever and ever." Praise God! Jesus Christ and God are worthy of our praise.

Consider the blessing of service: when we serve God, we serve Him as our Master, as our Lord. In Matthew 20:26-28, Jesus said it this way:

"But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let

him be your servant: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

Consider the blessing of service. To evaluate life you must think of how others can benefit from the use of your gift in the service of God.

Friend, how do you feel about your life? Here are the basic considerations to help you evaluate your life. Remember, life is not evaluated on the accountant's balance sheet, but by the Master's principles. So consider the brevity of time, the beauty of love, and the blessing of service. They help you glorify God through Jesus Christ. He is worthy.

STUDY QUESTIONS FOR

I PETER

The first epistle of Peter was most likely written sometime around 62-65 AD, just prior to the outbreak of Roman Emperor Nero's persecution of the Christian faith. It was addressed to the elect (Christians) scattered throughout Asia Minor (modern day Turkey), both Jewish and Gentile.

This is a warm, pastoral letter, full of encouragement and hope. Peter seeks to help the believers see their sufferings as temporary, compared to the anticipation of eternal glory. He gives practical instruction on how Christians should live in an ungodly society and warns them that such a lifestyle will bring persecution from those who misunderstand their love for God.

May the Holy Spirit lighten your mind and bring Spiritual fruit as you study the book of I Peter. The following outline may aid you:

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------|
| I. Elect Believers | 1:1-25 |
| II. Chosen Generation | 2:1-25 |
| III. Obedient Followers | 3:1-22 |
| IV. Good Stewards | 4:1-5:14 |

It is our sincere prayer that you will come to a deeper understanding of the truth as you work through these study questions. May you experience much joy and blessing from Peter's counsels to "the chosen."

In Living Hope,



J. Mark Horst, President

Please do NOT mail these lessons to Heralds of Hope.

We CANNOT return them to you.

Study and answer the questions. Check your answers from page 31.

The chapters and verses are in I Peter.

I PETER STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What are the two (2) parts of sanctification? (I Peter 1:2)
2. What has the resurrection of Christ secured for believers? (1:3, 4)
3. What words are used to describe this inheritance? (1:4)
4. How is this inheritance obtained? (1:5)
5. What is the relationship between the trial of faith and the eternal inheritance? (1:6, 7)
6. How is our faith like gold? (1:7)
7. What is the purpose of this purifying? (1:7)
8. What is the goal (end) of our faith? (1:9)
9. What role did the Old Testament prophets have in our faith? (1:10-12)
10. What characteristics should the believer show? (1:13)
11. What is Peter's command to us in verse 15? (1:14-16)
12. Where do we apply this teaching of holiness? (1:15)
13. How will every man be judged? (1:17)
14. What attitude should Christians have toward God's justice? (1:17)
15. What was the cost of our redemption? (1:18, 19)
16. What were we redeemed from? (1:18)
17. When did God plan for our redemption? (1:20)
18. As believers, how are we commanded to love each other? (1:22)

19. What is the contrast between God's Word and the "glory of man?" (1:23-25)
20. What are believers to lay aside? (2:1)
21. What should we desire? How? (2:2)
22. What word picture does Peter use to describe our position in Christ? (2:5)
23. What is our purpose? (2:5)
24. What promise is made to those who accept Christ as the chief corner stone? (10:5)
25. Who is "the stone which the builders rejected?" (2:7)
26. What is His position now? (2:7)
27. What is Christ to those who refuse to obey Him? (2:8)
28. List the 4 terms Peter uses to describe believers. (2:9)
29. What is our calling? (2:9)
30. How does Peter describe our transformation? (2:9)
31. What are we urged to avoid? (2:11)
32. What should be our attitude toward those in civil authority? (2:13)
33. What functions of government does Peter describe? (2:14)
34. A life of righteousness will have what effect? (2:15)
35. What are we instructed not to do with our freedom in Christ? (2:16)
36. What should be the attitude of servants toward their masters? (2:18)
37. What kind of suffering will God reward? (2:19, 20)

38. Why should we be willing to suffer? (2:21)
39. What should be the response of the servant to suffering? (2:23)
40. What titles are given to Jesus in 2:25?
41. What attitude should a Christian wife display? (3:1)
42. What possible act could occur through this submission? (3:1)
43. What should be the "ornament" of Christian women? (3:3,4)
44. What should they avoid? (3:3)
45. Who did Peter point to as examples for Christian wives? (3:5)
46. What 2 commands are given for wives in verse 6? (3:6)
47. How should Christian men respond to their wives? (3:7)
48. A lack of these responses will cause what problem?(3:7)
49. What characteristics does Peter encourage? (3:8)
50. How should we respond to evil and insults? (3:9)
51. What disciplines will promote a productive life with God's favor? (3:10-12)
52. What enables the believer to be calm and courageous amid persecution? (3:15)
53. How should this hope be expressed to our persecutors? (3:15)
54. What will be the outcome of godly lifestyle? (3:16)
55. What was the purpose of Christ's suffering? (3:18)
56. At the time of His crucifixion what kind of body did Jesus have? (3:18)

57. After His resurrection what type of body did He have? (3:18)
58. The proclamation of His victory was made to whom? (3:19)
59. When did these fallen angels display their disobedience? (3:20)
60. What comfort can suffering believers gain from these verses? (3:17-20)
61. What term does Peter use to describe baptism? (3:21)
62. Does baptism bring salvation? (3:21)
63. Where is Christ now? (3:22)
64. What groups are subject to Him? (3:22)
65. If Christ has authority over these powers should we fear their persecution?(3:17-22)
66. What can Christians use to prepare themselves for suffering? (4:1)
67. What does it mean to be dead (has ceased) to sin? (4:1)
68. What is to be the guiding principle for believers? (4:2)
69. Why do unbelievers speak evil of those who do right? (4:3, 4)
70. Does persecution unto death destroy the believer? (4:6)
71. What is the “end of all things?” (4:7)
72. Knowing that judgment is near should motivate what behavior? (4:7)
73. What is more important than these disciplines? (4:8)
74. What is one proof of Christian love? (4:9)
75. What does every Christian possess? (4:10)

76. What is the purpose of that gift? (4:10)
77. What is the goal of ministry? (4:11)
78. Should Christians view suffering as an unusual thing? (4:12)
79. Why can Christians rejoice in suffering? (4:13)
80. What blessing rests upon those willing to suffer for Christ? (4:14)
81. Is the judgment “at the house of God” punishment for sins? (4:17)
82. What should be our response if we suffer for doing right? (4:19)
83. What group does Peter specifically address in this verse? (5:1)
84. What is the responsibility of the church elders? (5:2)
85. How are they to lead? (5:2)
86. What is the most effective form of leadership? (5:2)
87. What is the reward of faithful leaders? (5:4)
88. What attitudes should be cultivated by all believers? (5:5, 6)
89. What promise is given to those who humble themselves before God? (5:6)
90. What privilege do Christians have regarding their burdens? (5:7)
91. To what animal does Peter compare Satan? (5:8)
92. What is our response to him? (5:8, 9)
93. What is Peter’s prayer for the suffering believers? (5:10)
94. Who was Peter’s helper in writing this letter? (5:10)

Answers for I Peter

1. Salvation through the blood of Christ and obedience to the Word
2. An eternal inheritance
3. Incorruptible, undefiled, fadeless, reserved
4. Through God's power and our faith
5. Suffering increases our longing to be with Christ
6. The more it is tried (refined), the purer it becomes.
7. That we might have praise and honor and glory at Christ's appearing
8. The salvation of our soul; present and future
9. They spoke what was revealed to them by the Holy Spirit even though they didn't live to see it fulfilled
10. Alertness, sobriety, and hope that is completely in Christ
11. Be holy because God is holy
12. To all of life (conversation-lifestyle)
13. By his work
14. Reverent awe (fear)
15. The precious blood of Christ
16. Empty religion (paganism)
17. Before the foundation of the world
18. Sincerely; with a pure heart; deeply
19. Man passes away. God's Word endures forever.
20. Malice, deceit (guile), hypocrisies, envy, evil reports
21. The milk (nourishment) of the Word; as newborn babies
22. Living stones; individual stones in the building of the church
23. To offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ
24. They will never be ashamed
25. Jesus Christ
26. The head of the corner i.e. exalted
27. A stone of stumbling, a rock of offense
28. Chosen generation, royal priesthood, holy nation, people belonging to God
29. To make known His deeds to the unbelieving
30. From darkness into His marvelous light
31. Fleshly lusts or desires that bring us into destruction
32. Submission for the Lord's sake
33. Punish evildoers, reward good
34. Put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.
35. Use it as a covering for wickedness
36. Submission and reverence
37. Wrongful suffering; or suffering because you do right
38. Because Christ suffered for us
39. Commit his cause to Him who judges righteously
40. Shepherd and Overseer
41. Submission to her own husband
42. The salvation of an unbelieving husband
43. A meek and quiet spirit
44. Outward attractiveness at the expense of inner character and beauty
45. Holy women of old time. e.g. Sarah
46. Do what is right and do not give way to fear
47. With understanding and honor
48. Hindrance to prayers
49. Unity, compassion, brotherly love, pity, and courtesy
50. Give blessing in return
51. Pure, honest speech; hatred of evil and pursuit of peace
52. Our hope in Christ
53. With gentleness and respect
54. Our critics will be ashamed
55. To bring us to God
56. A natural, human body
57. A spiritual body
58. Spirits in prison (fallen angels)
59. In Noah's time
60. Those who oppose Christians will ultimately be defeated
61. A figure, representation, or copy
62. No, it is a cleansed conscience through faith in Christ's resurrection
63. In heaven on the right hand of God
64. Angels, authorities, and powers
65. No
66. Knowledge of Christ's sufferings
67. Sin no longer controls us
68. The will of God

69. Because believers do not take part in their excesses
70. No, he lives in the spirit
71. The judgment spoken about in verse 6
72. Self-control, sobriety, watchfulness, prayer
73. Love for each other
74. Show hospitality without complaining
75. A spiritual gift
76. Minister to other Christians
77. For God to be glorified through Jesus
78. No
79. They will share in Christ's glory
80. The spirit of glory and of God
81. No, it is suffering that promotes cleansing
82. Continue to do what pleases our faithful Creator
83. The elders, or leaders
84. Feed the flock of God
85. Willingly; not for financial gain
86. A good example
87. An eternal crown of glory
88. Humility, submission
89. They will be exalted in due time
90. They can cast them on Christ
91. A roaring lion
92. Be sober, vigilant; resist firmly
93. Complete, strong, firm, and steadfast
94. Silvanus (Silas)

We Must HEAR From YOU!!



Have you been receiving the HOPE HERALD for several years? **If we have not heard from you within the past FIVE (5) YEARS**, you will be put on our "inactive" mailing list! If that happens, you will not receive your annual copy of the HOPE HERALD.

We don't want that to happen. But to be good stewards of the resources God has given, we must have your complete, accurate mailing address. If you move, please let us know as soon as possible.

If you haven't written to us for several years, do it now, by e-mail at hope@heraldsofhope.org, or by post at **PO Box 3, Breezewood, PA 15533**. That way you will not need to miss out on receiving your copy of the HOPE HERALD.

Yours for the Asking!

"Sojourners in Faith" - selections from I & II Peter

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Sojourners
in Faith
J. Otis Yoder



Linguablast Update!

In 2013 our Linguablast site 'lifted off' featuring our 15-minute program of Bible exposition, "Hope for Today." Bible teaching is currently available in English, Mandarin Chinese, Nepali, and Spanish, with additional languages to be added in the future. You can listen at www.media.heraldsofhope.org

Linguablast was engineered and developed by Trans World Radio (TWR) to make the Gospel readily available to all people. It is a cutting-edge web distribution platform converging audio, video, and text resources into a fully translated, searchable site by eliminating the English barrier that often stands in the way of non-English speaking users. Our Bible teaching programs are accessible from any electronic devices, from PC to smart-phone.

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Linguablast
powered by TWR

PRAYER AND PRAISE

Please unite with us in prayer with fasting the first Monday of each month.

1. Thank God, the Gospel Light has come to you! Pray God to send that Light into every corner of the globe.
2. Thank God for the listener follow-up of dedicated workers in India! Undergird them and the Team in Ranchi producing "Asha Deep" aired from CIS each week day.
3. Bless God for courageous believers in Muslim lands! Ask Him to bring their leaders to faith in Jesus.
4. Thank God He knows all our needs and can supply! Seek His face for Gospel ministries needing literature, equipment, buildings, funds, and personnel for follow-up.
5. Thank God! He is saving fathers, mothers, and children! Pray that fathers be the spiritual leaders in their homes, that mothers be understanding partners, and both loving and teaching the children.
6. Magnify the Lord for the outreach of TWR on Bonaire! Ask Him to meet listener needs in the increased coverage of Latin America and the Caribbean in both English and Spanish.
7. Praise Jehovah the Almighty for the many Jewish people coming to the Messiah—Jesus! Undergird every Messianic witness reaching Jewish people in many countries.
8. Bless the Lord for Galcom making solar powered radio receivers, stations, etc! Intercede for this Canada-based company furnishing thousands of radio receivers around the world.
9. Thank God for growing Christian witness in West Africa! Pray for His anointing upon Christian leaders in Liberia, Nigeria, and every other country.
10. Magnify, the Lord for English HOPE going into South Africa! Pray for TWR's Staff, for TWR's additional coverage from Johannesburg, for Wednesday am and Sunday pm broadcasts of HOPE FOR TODAY, and for nationals producing language programs.
11. Thank God for revealing the radio secrets to our world! Pray His anointing on our HOPE messages translated into Guarani, and aired in early morning from 12 national stations in Paraguay, South America.
12. Magnify the Lord for His abundant and effective grace! Pray His grace on producers and listeners of the Arabic program to the Muslim Middle East each week.
13. Rejoice that Gospel radio reaches into prisons! Pray for prison witnesses and prisoners seeking spiritual help and rehabilitation.
14. Bless the Lord for His Sovereign hand ruling over all! Pray actively for the men on all levels of government in your land for understanding and cooperation between nations.
15. Rejoice in the Christian ministry of HERALDS OF HOPE, INC. Ask the Lord to

guide and provide daily grace for the Team and Board seeking to practice faithful stewardship and proclamation.

16. Give thanks for God-called Evangelists and Gospel Teams! Undergird them ministering in various languages in all the countries of Africa, in crusades, in schools, in hospitals, on buses, etc.

17. Bless the Lord for HOPE translated into Mandarin Chinese. Seek Spirit anointing for strength and instruction upon every Chinese listener each Saturday and Sunday evening.

18. Thank God for increased education in emerging countries! Ask Him for Christian materials and Christian teachers for all ages, especially the youth, everywhere.

19. Bless God for He assures complete victory over sin! Intercede for people struggling to be free from sinful habits and evil powers.

20. Praise the Lord for many Christians in Bible training! Ask God to multiply Bible schools and students, directing all Bible teachers to stay by the WORD, teaching truth with faith and obedience.

21. Rejoice that God's love and salvation reaches all races! Seek His peace for peoples destroying themselves by racial and religious hatred in many countries of Africa, Asia, and Europe.

22. Rejoice that God is Sovereign Controller of history! Ask Him to keep the door of witness open for our Turkish broadcasts in Turkey.

23. Rejoice in the gracious ministry of the Holy Spirit! Pray for His work of revival to increase and touch every church and nation.

24. Bless God for brave believers in Jesus among the Arabs! Ask Him to shelter and nurture seeking Muslims coming to faith in Jesus.

25. Magnify the Lord for the blessings of the printed page! Pray God to increase, protect, and anoint Christian literature in the various languages and take the Word of God to unreached people.

26. Praise the Lord that Jesus is stronger than the enemy! Ask God to teach Christians how to resist the devil and avoid evil, how to use the blood and the name of Jesus to triumph over evil.

27. Rejoice in the preaching gift God has given Brother J. Mark Horst! Ask Holy Spirit guidance and strength in his teaching and writing.

28. Praise God for the saving power of the blood of Jesus! Pray for the Holy Spirit to use that power to break the chains of sin and reach unbelievers blinded by Satan's deceptions.

29. Praise God for unnumbered answers to prayer! Pray for true witnesses in countries opening to the Gospel such as Nepal, Tibet, Turkey, Russia.

30. Magnify the Lord for the Blessed HOPE—resurrection or rapture! Seek His Spirit to keep His remnant ready, you and your family.



INTERNATIONAL RADIO & INTERNET

I. English - "Hope For Today"

Radio Africa - West Africa	21675khz	20:15UTC	Fri
Radio Africa - East Africa	21525khz	16:30UTC	Tue
KTWR-Guam Southeast Asia	11965khz	15:50UTC	Fri
TWR-Malawi	100FM	21:30UTC	Sun
TWR-Swaziland South Africa	9500khz	9:30UTC	Sun
TWR-Swaziland South Africa	3200khz	21:30UTC	Sun
TWR-Swaziland South Africa	4775khz	9:30UTC	Sun
TWR-Swaziland South Africa	6120khz	9:30UTC	Sun
TWR-Southern Africa (Satellite)	155Sat.	9:30UTC	Sun
TWR-Southern Africa (Satellite)	33Sat.	9:30UTC	Sun
WWCR Africa	15825mhz	14:30UTC	Sat

II. Other Languages

West Africa: <u>Hausa</u> TWR - Benin	1566AM	4:45UTC	Sun
Ethiopia: TWR - Johannesburg			
<u>Amharic</u> <i>Telling News of Hope by Radio</i>	9655khz	6:30UTC	Sun
<u>Oromo</u> <i>Hope for Today</i>	9655khz	6:30UTC	Tue
India: <u>Hindi</u> TWR - CIS "Light of Hope"	9910khz	14:30UTC	M-F
Kenya: <u>Swahili</u> TWR - Sifa FM <i>Hope for Today</i>			
Lodwar	101.9FM	19:45UTC	M,W,F
Garissa, Marsabit, and Voi	101.1FM	19:45UTC	M,W,F
Lamu	101.3FM	19:45UTC	M,W,F
Wajir	101.7FM	19:45UTC	M,W,F
China: <u>Mandarin</u> KTWR - Guam Asia	11905khz	20:00UTC	Sun
China: <u>Mandarin</u> KTWR - Guam Asia	11905khz	18:30UTC	Sat

INTERNET: www.media.heraldofhope.org English, Mandarin, Spanish, Nepali - 24/7