

Walking Free Newsletter – December 2016

A man who lived on Long Island, New York, was able one day to satisfy a lifelong ambition by purchasing for himself a very fine barometer. When the instrument arrived at his home, he was extremely disappointed to find that the indicating needle appeared to be stuck, pointing to the sector marked "HURRICANE."

After shaking the barometer very vigorously several times, its new owner sat down and wrote a scorching letter to the store from which he had purchased the instrument. The following morning on the way to his office in New York, he mailed the letter.

That evening he returned to Long Island to find not only the barometer missing, but his house also. The barometer's needle had been right--there was a hurricane!

Who or what do you put your trust in? Do you put your trust in the bureau of meteorology even though they did not predict the hail storm that caused millions of dollars to cars recently? Do you put your trust in your government to make wise decisions for the benefit of state and country?

In Isaiah 7:13,14;9:2-7; 11:1-9, we are given three prophecies that we quote this Christmas season about the Messiah, Jesus. They are very familiar to us as they look ahead to Immanuel, God with us, being born. These prophecies have been the subject of songs sung and words preached.

But the context of these prophecies is just as important and the throw away lines that have a sting in the tail are just as relevant to us this Christmas time.

The kingdom of Solomon had now disintegrated into two kingdoms: Israel to the north and Judah to the south. Each had their own kings and their own prophets warning the kings and people about their idolatrous behaviour.

At the time of Isaiah, Ahaz was king of Judah. The kings of Israel and Syria had formed a pact and joined forces to depose Ahaz. As they moved south to attack Jerusalem, Isaiah came with his son to give God's word. If Ahaz put his trust in God, God will deliver him.

Now Ahaz was not a King of faith. Rather than turn to God, he turned to the king of Assyria to help him out. God would give Ahaz a sign that a virgin would bear a son. But Ahaz did not want

a sign but wanted help from Assyria.

Assyria came to Ahaz's help but Ahaz paid a huge financial penalty of homage and ended up bringing back the gods of Assyria to Jerusalem.

Isaiah finishes this prophecy with the words "*If you do not believe, you will not be confirmed; established*"

I like the way the Message bible puts it: ***If you don't take your stand in faith, you won't have a leg to stand on!***"

The message of Isaiah at this Christmas time is ***If you don't take your stand in faith, you won't have a leg to stand on!***"

We have and we will face enormous challenges as a Christian, this year and the coming years.

Christmas is not just nice stories about a baby in a manger with pretty angels singing carols above. Christmas asks the question to each of us *In whom or what do you put your trust? Have you totally put your trust in the Saviour, Jesus.*

Like Ahaz, we will face challenges from the north seeking to take over our lives; changing them forever. It may be a financial crisis or a health crisis or a relationship crisis. Whatever has come or will come, it will be a faith crisis. Can I trust God fully to help me and get me out of this? Or do I revert to the default position of trying to save myself!

The bottom line for all of us is is ***If you don't take your stand in faith, you won't have a leg to stand on!***

Can I encourage you this year to go beyond the tinsel of Christmas and really take a stand in faith for yourself and family; for your work colleagues and social network!

While I do not wish you bad things for 2017, I do know that each year brings its own challenges

in so many ways. It is easy to go to the default position and try and handle it yourselves. Then once you are deeper in the quagmire, you then call out to Jesus.

Rather than go into the quagmire, ask Jesus to sort things out with you and for you from the beginning. But you will need to stand in faith until the worst is over.

This is what we celebrate at Christmas. We have Jesus, Immanuel, God with us, to be there for us 24/7. He is our life saver and he is there to help us. But like the person caught in the undertow and being swept out to sea, we need to wave our hand in the air and cry out for help.

Too often we try and do it ourselves and we get swept under and drown.

Let the message of Christmas become more than a nice story. Know that Jesus is your life saver.

Liz and I would like to thank you for all your support (love, prayers and financial) for 2016. This

year we have conducted over 200 ministry sessions to help people be free by the power of Jesus. We have been privileged to witness Jesus bring deep healing to many people's lives. Though it can take a number of sessions, we witness God do miracles and set people free.

God has provided a team that is growing in numbers to join us in prayer at our prayer meetings and in the prayer room.

We have seen our friends in Toowoomba, Hal, Debbie and Stephanie minister to people under walking Free.

For this work, we are forever grateful to God for asking us to join Him in His healing ministry.

From all of the team at Walking Free, we wish you all a blessed Christmas and a prosperous (in the Lord) 2017.

