

## Walking Free Newsletter –February 2018

### Lent: Giving Up (Billy D. Strayhorn, Cross Eyed: Focus)

Lent is a period of preparation to welcome Easter. While it is marked by Easter eggs and Hot Cross buns in the community, for Christians it is a period of self denial. Self Denial is about making a sacrifice that makes a difference, focusing on the Cross and reminding ourselves what Christ gave up for us.

While people give up chocolate or wine or some other food or beverage, here is a list to consider where you give up something that has eternal effect.

- GIVE UP grumbling! Instead, "In everything give thanks." Constructive criticism is OK, but "moaning, groaning, and complaining" are not Christian disciplines.
- GIVE UP 10 to 15 minutes in bed! Instead, use that time in prayer, Bible study and personal devotion. A few minutes in prayer WILL keep you focused.
- GIVE UP looking at other people's worst attributes. Instead concentrate on their best points. We all have faults. It is a lot easier to have people overlook our shortcomings when we overlook theirs first.
- GIVE UP speaking unkindly. Instead, let your speech be generous and understanding. It costs so little to say something kind and uplifting or to offer a smile. Why not check that sharp tongue at the door?
- GIVE UP your hatred of anyone or anything! Instead, learn the discipline of love. "Love covers a multitude of sins."
- GIVE UP your worries and anxieties! They're too heavy for you to carry anyway. Instead, trust God with them. Anxiety is spending emotional energy on something we can do nothing about: like tomorrow! Live today and let God's grace be sufficient.
- GIVE UP TV one evening a week! Instead, visit someone who's lonely or sick. There are those who are isolated by illness or age. Why isolate yourself in front of the "tube?" Give someone a precious gift: your time!
- GIVE UP buying anything but essentials for yourself! Instead, give the money to God. The money you would spend on the luxuries could help someone meet basic needs. We're called to be stewards of God's riches, not consumers.

- GIVE UP judging others by appearances and by the standard of the world! Instead, learn to give up yourself to God. There is only one who has the right to judge, Jesus Christ.

Give up something for Lent and be changed by the power of God's sacrificial love.

Happy Lent

Rev John

*Prayer:*

*Lord,*

*Let everything I do this day and in this season of Lent  
come from you, be inspired by you.*

*I long to be closer to you.  
Help me to remember that nothing is important in my life  
unless it glorifies you in some way.*

*It's so easy to get caught up in the day to day of my life and keep saying,  
"Tomorrow, I will spend more time in prayer,"  
but now my longing meets your love and I want to do it now.  
Help me to rely on you for help.*

*The prayer asks you that I reach perfection.  
Please, Lord, remind me that "perfection"  
isn't the crazy, "successful" way I try to live my life,*

*but a perfection of my most authentic, real self.[]  
My "perfection" might be holding my many flaws in my open hands,[]  
asking you to help me accept them.*

*Heal me, Lord, and help me to find you in the darkness of my life.[] []  
Let me reach out in this darkness and feel your hand and love there to guide me.*

**Walking Free:** We continue to pray for clients on Tuesdays and Thursdays. We have seen some significant breakthroughs and healing by God. We are grateful to Diane for coming one day a week which gives Liz a chance to do other important work. We are now praying for 15-20 clients per month again. We are amazed and how God leads people to our doorstep.

We continue for 2018 waiting on the Lord. He has not told us to close this ministry.

**Bible Studies:** This year we are preaching and studying the Gospel of Mark to see his take on our saviour Jesus. Mark was there at Pentecost and was influenced by the preaching of Peter. He went with Paul and Barnabas on the first missionary journey but went back because it was too hard. He was the source of a severe disagreement with Paul and Barnabas that led them to split up. Later he redeemed himself to Paul and was welcomed back into the fold. God touched him to write the first gospel at a time when the apostles and Christians were losing their lives and something about Jesus had to be written down or else Jesus' story would be lost. We do bible study on Monday afternoons and Wednesday nights.

**Finances:** 2017 saw our half time Walking Free salary plus costs halved. We still manage and are grateful to God for all His provision. Many of our clients struggle financially.

We are looking for more sponsors to support the healing and teaching work of Jesus through Walking Free. No matter how small the donation, we welcome new donors. Remember that each donation to the gift fund is tax deductible. If you would like to become a sponsor, it is a matter of a one off or regular donation to the following:

Walking Free Renewing Ministries Gift Fund

BSB 084-961 ACC 82-215-5845.

Use your name if you would like a tax receipt at the end of the financial year.

**Praise God for His provision.**

- Thank God for the healing and restoration He is bringing to our clients.
- Pray for more finances to support Walking Free Ministry
  
- Pray for team in Adelaide who pray for the ministry: Margaret, Lesley, Diane, Valda and Tim.
- Please pray for team at Toowoomba: Hal and Debbie.

**Family Life.** Life has been blessed with our four grandchildren and the opportunity to speak into their lives. Liz and I celebrated 41 wonderful years of marriage and I turned 65 this month. We plan to go to Paris and Lesbos (Greek Island) in May to mark the occasion.

**Pray for Naomi, Jonathan, Jennifer and Emily; David, Maddy and Elijah and Gabriel; Jess**

**Church:** Hawthorn is a small church of 20 people. It has become a hospital church helping people in need through the worship, preaching and praying after church. We continue to seek God about the future. July will be a test as the UCA Assembly meet and may make a decision about same gender marriage. If this same gender marriage is approved, people will struggle to stay in the UCA including people at Hawthorn.

**India:** Our friends continue to proclaim the gospel in India. I have been sending my sermons to teach and encourage them and their local pastors. Pastors Devadas and brother CH travel to villages who have not heard the gospel and share Jesus with the local people. Rev Sambabu is now Bishop Sambabu and operates out of Eluru with his local church, feeding the poor, caring for orphans and training pastors for ministry.

*We are so glad to inform you that yesterday we went to some unreached villages where tribal people are living. One of our Believers and me went to share gospel with people who have never heard about Jesus Christ, these people are living 37 miles away from us. When we shared about Jesus with these people really showed more interest to hear about Jesus and some people responded Gospel. Please pray for us to reach many more tribal people in days to come. Thanking you!!!*

**Pray for the work of the gospel in India with Pastor's Devadas, C H (his brother) and Rev Sambabu. Pray for their families.**

**Kenya:** Pastor Newton continues to preach the gospel and supports ministry at Homa Bay, Garissa and Mombasa. He travels a lot to encourage the local pastors.

*I've completed my mission in Ethiopia today, will return home after morning service. It was successful trip. I've managed to build the church to them at the refugees camp made of mud on the wall and thatched roof made of grass. No church chairs, bibles congregation just sit on stones and big logs made of wood. One of local refugees offers a land to build a church. Right now they are 35 church members, more are still on the way to come. Remember the church is*

*situated in Turkana county in Kenya but we got the church land in Ethiopia, 11 kilometers from Turkana . One can cross to buy items. Most of pastoralist going to graze their cattle in Ethiopia. It borders Kenya to the North*

**Pray for Pastor Newton , his pastors and people in Homa Bay and Garissa. Pray for their families**