

# TEMPLE NEWS

THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF TEMPLE BAPTIST CHURCH

JANUARY 2013



child · like

**“I tell you the truth, unless you change  
and become like little children,  
you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.”**

— Matthew 18:3

# Thoughts from the Editor

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## Self-Improvement vs. Spiritual Growth

I recently came across this quote by Harry W. Schaumburg, a Christian licensed marriage and family therapist and author: *“When we think about spiritual growth, we are typically thinking about self-improvement, not the biblical interaction of one-anothering.”*

Wow, that was really convicting! I thought about how I’ve often prided myself on my relentless pursuit of self-improvement but, in fact, a large part of that had been to make myself feel better about myself—not to glorify God or to be a blessing to others.

That was a big step toward changing my prayer life: I now ask God to make the changes in me that *He* wants instead of the changes *I* would like to see.

Schaumburg has also said: *“The problem in the heart isn’t that we want something. We could want something good, something bad. In either case, the core problem is that we demand to have what we want...There is nothing wrong with desire! What is wrong is when that desire rules you rather than God.”*

I believe that many of us struggle with victory over sin because we want stability, a clean conscience, freedom from shame, sobriety, etc. more than we

want *God*. Even when we think we’re pursuing holiness, it’s often still about our own agenda, our own feelings, our own expectations.

Recently, at a Tuesday night Bible study, we were comparing the Fruit of the Spirit to works; the first is produced in a garden, through God’s power, the second is manufactured in a factory through human effort; the first is invigorating, effective and satisfying while the second is exhausting, ineffective and unsatisfying. One is the pursuit of God; the other is the pursuit of self. One leads to life; the other leads to death.

Holiness and spiritual growth are not optional for the believer. *“Make every effort...to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord.”* (Hebrews 12:14) And yet we must remember that trying to be better Christians through sheer will-power and discipline, through white-knuckled abstinence from sin—without inviting the Holy Spirit to do His purifying work in our hearts—is like trying to push a car down the street instead of getting in, turning on the engine and letting the gas propel it. We don’t get very far and we very quickly meet with failure.

I encourage you to ensure that *God* is in full control of your life. If you’re not sure how to do this, please speak with the pastor today. Don’t wait any longer!

*Ann-Margret Hovsepian*

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# Letters

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## Montreal, QUEBEC

*Thank you for your condolences regarding the loss of my sister. The outpouring of love and support from Pastor Joseph and members and friends of Temple Baptist Church comforted me, Sirirat and my family during this time.*

Quentin Newhouse

## Auckland, NEW ZEALAND

*It has been a while since you have heard from me. Sorry about that—life here in New Zealand has been very hectic but great. Our Lord has been working overtime with me and has been truly great in looking after me.*

*It would take pages to tell you about everything that has been going on in my life and how God has taken me, moulded me and blessed me “right out of my boots” and continues to do so. GOD IS GREAT! and I can only give him thanks for being who He is to me.*

*Thank you for keeping me up to date with my Christian family home at Temple Baptist Church with your newsletters. I really appreciate you keeping me posted. I am so very happy to hear that TBC is still as active and effective as it was when I was with you all. It is hard to believe it is almost a year since I returned back to New Zealand. Lots and lots have happened—all*

*to God’s Glory and honour.*

*God bless all at TBC and please pass on my best wishes to all for the festive season. By the way, as you all freeze, we fry. It was a lovely 25C here today and beautifully sunny. Summer is here. Thank you, Lord. Lots of Christian love to all.*

Graeme Robertson

*EDITOR’S NOTE: Last month we shared a letter we received from an inmate named William, who also goes by Cody, and some of you have been asking about and praying for him. Pastor Hovsepian has been in correspondence with him and we recently received another letter. Here is an excerpt. Please continue to pray for William.*

## Sterling, COLORADO

*Greetings in Jesus’ name! Thank you for your letter, which I received today. As soon as I saw that it was from you, I was on my knees praising the Lord and weeping many tears, like big rain drops. I could hear them falling onto my bunk bed as I knelt there reading your letter.*

*I was deeply touched that you would write back to me and that you said you and many others are praying for me. It all humbled me and I know it is true. I just felt a real welcome from you and my other brothers and sisters in Christ. Thank you!*

William (Cody)



*Please visit our website regularly for updates, messages and resources you can share with your friends!*

**[www.templebaptistmontreal.com](http://www.templebaptistmontreal.com)**

## Christmas Giving

Unfortunately, because we had to get this issue of *Temple News* printed before the holidays, we're unable to give a full report on the Christmas Outreach that took place on December 23 but we can share some praise reports about the preparation process.

When asked our congregation to drop off donations of chocolate bars or gift cards for us to wrap and give out as random acts of kindness during the tract distribution outing just before Christmas, we never expected such a generous response! Our collection box was overflowing and, even with grouping small items into bags, we ended up with about 60 gifts.

Special thanks to all of you who donated gifts, to those who helped us wrap them up with a tract and stickers inviting recipients to the church, and to those who participated in the outreach. Please pray for those we made contact with on December 23.

Another outreach we were able to participate in was dropping off four shopping bags of non-perishable food items, soap bars and other small gifts at Logifem, a local Christian shelter for women. The director, Sally Richmond, later sent us this note: *"Thank you so much for your contribution. It helps us to make this time of year special for the residents and we are greatly encouraged by your support."*

## Thanks, Men!

The editor believes she can safely speak on behalf of the women at Temple Baptist Church in thanking **Quentin Newhouse** and the Men's Fellowship for blessing us again with the gift of song.

During the December 16 Christmas celebration, the men sang a rousing rendition of *We Three Kings of Orient Are*, complete with three brave souls singing one verse each as a solo.

Some weeks earlier, the men had sung *They'll Know We Are Christians By Our Love* during a Sunday morning worship service and their presentation was so moving that they were asked to sing again at Christmas.

## More Christmas Thanks

We also want to thank **Jessie Hovsepian** for organizing a choir to sing on Sundays, December 16 and 23; **Ann-Margret Hovsepian**, **Tamar Dekirmenjian** and **Jill MacInnes** for organizing the December 16 Christmas program; and all those who helped set up for the lunch, who cooked and baked, who helped in the kitchen with food preparation, who cleaned up and washed dishes, who participated in the program when volunteers were needed, and who shared inspiring testimonies and comments during the fellowship time.

We look forward to more of the same teamwork in the months ahead!

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*Happy  
Birthday!*

Magy Libarian - January 1  
Ping Didsbury - 5  
Abeku Duncan - 6  
Isabel Marquez - 7  
Ann Clark - 8

Koffie Amesse - 10  
Elise Guekguezian - 10  
Valaria Tomlinson - 15  
Philip Pehlivanian - 20  
Rudi Ptacek - 24

## Missions Partners

On an increasingly frequent basis, we are hearing from people both locally and around the world who are excited about serving God through evangelism and missions. We've shared with you letters from people who have received and responded to our tracts and others who have requested copies to distribute in their own countries or states.

We recently heard from a gentleman in British Columbia who has a burden for sharing the gospel with Armenians and Iranians. After several phone calls and emails with us, we were able to connect him with a couple of our contacts in Yerevan and he is now preparing a group of about 15 young people who will go to Armenia in March. One of their main goals is to give out multilingual copies of the *Jesus* video.

We've also been in touch with an elderly gentleman in Montreal who is eager to help us do outreach however he is able to. He plans to mail copies of our tracts to all his contacts.

Please pray for these and others who want to spread God's Word to those who don't know Him. We also encourage you to prayerfully consider how you can get involved. Please speak with **Shubroto Shikdar**, **Vahe Dzaghouni** or **Rita Assan** if you'd like to participate in our monthly tract distribution projects.



## Married Couple's Fellowship

The next Married Couples' meeting will be held on Saturday, January 26 at 7:00 p.m. at Pastor **Joseph** and **Jessie Hovsepien's** home.

The theme this month is service.

## Offering Envelopes

If you give regularly but don't have a box of offering envelopes, please speak with either **Helene Kazarossian** or **Cecilia Hum** and they will make sure you receive a set. In the meantime, you can simply write your name on any type of blank envelope.

## Annual Meeting

Please mark Sunday, February 17, on your calendars and plan from now to attend our annual business meeting. This is a once-a-year gathering that our official members have a responsibility to attend, but non-members are also welcome to be present as observers.

Those of you who chair committees or are responsible for a particular department or ministry will need to prepare and submit an annual report by the end of January. If you're not sure whether you are expected to write one or what needs to be done, please speak to the clerk, **Ann-Margret Hovsepien**.

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## Men's Fellowship

Breakfast and fellowship on  
Saturday, January 12 at 9:00 a.m.

## Women's Fellowship

Christmas brunch on Saturday,  
January 19 at 10:00 a.m.

## Investing in Your Children

By Rita Assan

*“These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.”* (Deuteronomy 6:6-9)

In our everyday lives, we have experienced trouble, temptation and trials; however, we only need a little reflection to observe how God’s hands sustain us. We overcome because of His promises and grace.

It is incredible how many of us are concerned about being financially secure

in our retirement and also providing financial protection for our children upon our death. There are just two lasting bequests we can hope to give to our children. One of these is *roots* and the other is *wings*.

Our children are growing up in an uncertain and confusing world—a world that teaches what is contrary to the Word of God. They face a lot of peer pressure, challenges and temptations out there. How can they handle life’s storms if they are not fed with the Word of God? When the knowledge of God is impacted into our souls, it equips us to deal with the real world.

As Christian parents, we have the awesome responsibility to teach our children the Word of God. As we impart God’s wisdom to them, we experience the blessing of helping them become responsible and God-fearing adults. *“The Lord will be the sure foundation of their time; a rich store of salvation and wisdom of knowledge; the fear of the Lord is the key to this treasure.”* (Isaiah 32:3)

It is absolutely true that the best seeds you sow in your children today will



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## Share with us...

*Has God taught you something through a personal Bible study, a sermon, a hymn, an unexpected situation, or a special relationship? Why not tell others about it so that they can be blessed, challenged and inspired, too? Or how about sharing your personal testimony of salvation, if you haven't done so yet?*

*We encourage you to send in your thoughts and testimonies...whether you write a paragraph or a whole page! For next issue, please submit your material to Ann-Margret Hovsepian by **January 25**. Our contact information is on page 2.*

# Inspirations

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have a great impact on them tomorrow. In Hebrews 4:12 we read: *“For the Word of God is living and active, sharper than a two-edged sword.”*

As Christian parents, if we ignore our call to educate our children in the knowledge of God, we will eventually build a difficult life for them. In Hosea 4:6, God said, *“My people are destroyed because of lack of knowledge.”*

Even though along the way of life they may drift away from God, it is likely that God will always remind them of their first love. In Isaiah 55:11, God gave this promise: *“So is my Word that goes out from my mouth; it will not return to me empty but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.”*

Parents will not always be there for their children; we will one day be separated from our family by death or marriage. If we want to change the world, let us first change ourselves; then we can lead others. *“As you do not know the path of the wind or how the body is formed in a mother’s womb, so you cannot understand the work of God, the Maker of all things. Sow your seed in the morning and at evening let not your hand be idle, for you do not know which will succeed...”* (Ecclesiastes 11:5-6)

My brothers and sisters in Christ, I beseech you to prayerfully reflect on this and start the New Year with a commitment to invest in your children.

## Time Not Wasted

Charles Francis Adams, a 19th century political figure and diplomat, kept a diary. One day he entered: *“Went fishing with my son today—a day wasted.”*

His son, Brook Adams, also kept a

diary, which is still in existence. On that same day, Brook Adams made this entry: *“Went fishing with my father—the most wonderful day of my life!”*

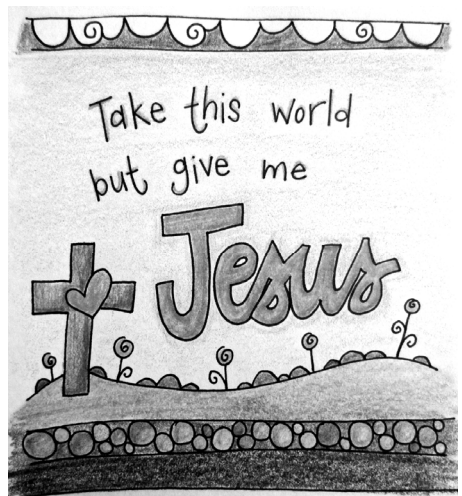
The father thought he was wasting his time while fishing with his son, but his son saw it as an investment of time. The only way to tell the difference between wasting and investing is to know one’s ultimate purpose in life and to judge accordingly.

*Silas Shotwell, Homemade, Sept. 1987*

*Children are like wet cement.  
Whatever falls on them makes  
an impression.*

## Artists’ Corner

To encourage our readers to share their creative talents with us, Ann-Margret Hovsepian would like to launch this section with a sample from her art journal. Please send us your photos, drawings, poems or other inspiring creations that reflect your faith in Christ.

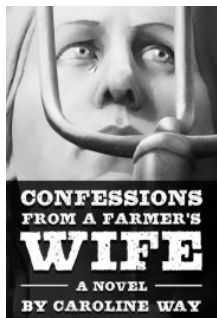


# In Our Library

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## Confessions From a Farmer's Wife

Author: Caroline Way (Canadian)



Three things can make me like a book: a great story, great writing, or a great message. *Confessions From a Farmer's Wife* has all three.

Though the story is based on and more-or-less parallels the life of Job in the Bible, it is not merely a modern retelling. It is a fresh story with a rich cast of characters and unexpected plot twists and turns. I found almost nothing about this story predictable even though I know the story of Job very well.

Secondly, Caroline (who has a background in film) paints beautiful images with her words. She injects humour, tension, joy and pain into this tale and skilfully brings each character and each moment to life—you feel like you're right there on the farm, watching things unfold.

Finally, and this is the most important thing, *CFAFW* isn't just a great novel. You can't just put it back on your

shelf and think, "That was great entertainment." *CFAFW* will challenge you to rethink every time you've questioned God for allowing pain and trials into your life. I'm not sure I can even really explain how well this story explores the human experience of suffering and loss, the need for understanding and answers, the struggle to connect with one's Creator, and the ultimate challenge of fully surrendering one's will to Him in faith.

Somehow Caroline delves into all of this without coming across as preachy or heavy-handed. She leaves you with a sense that you have had a heart-to-heart chat with someone who has been there—and indeed you have, since the story is narrated by Jessie, Job's wife—and knows what she's talking about. There's no trickery there. The author doesn't lure you in with a great story and then hit you over the head with a sermon. It's just real—like the God who proves Himself to be good, merciful and loving.

Final lesson learned? Pain and suffering isn't about punishment. It's not about finding answers. It's about courage, strength, faith and transformation.

Review by Ann-Margret Hovsepian

To learn more about our library and the many other books and resources we have available, please speak with our librarian, Stella Papadopoulos.

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## Don't Forget the #1 Book in Our Collection!



Please join us for Bible study on  
Sundays at 9:45 a.m. and  
Tuesdays at 7:15 p.m.

# The Pastor's Page

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...continued from page 12

Life." (John 6:35) People were, and still are, spiritually hungry, searching for something that can satisfy their hunger and fill them.

Jesus said: "*I am the light.*" (John 8:12a) Seven hundred years before the birth of Christ, Isaiah had said: "*The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned.*" (Isaiah 9:2).

Life without Christ is like groping in the darkness. Jesus said: "*I am the Light of the world, whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.*" (John 8:12)

Jesus said: "*I am the gate. Whoever enters through me will be saved.*" (John 10:7, 9) Jesus also said, in Matthew 7:13-14, "*Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.*"

Jesus said: "*I am the Good Shepherd. The good Shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.*" (John 10:11)

Jesus said: "*I am the Way and the Truth.*" (John 14:6) Who else can you trust? Who else can you believe? Athletes use drugs and steroids. Politicians and religious people are being accused or convicted for sex and other crimes. Where can someone go for the truth?

Jesus said: "*I am the way and truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.*" (John 14:6).

Jesus said: "*I am the Resurrection and the Life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies, and whoever lives and believes in me will never*

*die.*" (John 11:25-26) Many are afflicted by fear of the future and death. Life without the hope of life after death would be a tragedy (a play that has a high purpose and a sad ending).

Who is Jesus to you? Do you believe that Jesus is the Son of God, the only true Light, the only Truth and the only Life?

The world has become a society of short-sighted, selfish and materialistic individuals, ready to give almost anything, including their soul, in order to get more money and pleasure.

Jesus said: "*What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?*" (Matthew 16:26) But Jesus did not stop there. He also said: "*Come to me, and I will give you rest.*" (Matthew 11:28)

We recently celebrated Christmas. The child in the manger was not just a little baby who became a great man or a wise teacher. The child who was born in a manger in Bethlehem and was named Jesus is "Immanuel — God with us." (Matthew 1:23)

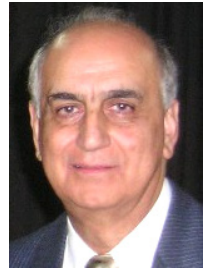
Jesus is the Alpha and Omega. "*Through Him all things were made; without Him nothing was made that has been made.*" (John 1:3)

Pastor Joseph Hovsepian

## GOOD NEWS!

Tune in to WCHP 760AM every  
weekday at noon  
to hear a short  
inspirational  
message by Pastor  
Joseph Hovsepian.





## Who Is Jesus?

Millions claim to believe in Jesus Christ. In fact, more than two billion people say they are Christian. I wonder how many of those who are called by His name really know Him—I mean *really* know Him.

Suppose you had to draw a picture of Jesus for someone who did not know Him. How would you illustrate Him?

As a gentle Jesus, carrying a lamb or hugging a child? Jesus was certainly gentle, but He was also tough, as we see in the account of Him clearing out the Temple (Luke 19).

As revolutionary Jesus, with a Bible in one hand and a sword or machine gun in the other? Jesus was certainly a revolutionary. He said: *“I have come to bring fire on the earth...Do you think I came to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but division...”* (Luke 12:49, 51) But Jesus’ revolution was a revolution of love, not one of guns.

As a wealthy Jesus, standing in front of a palace in fine clothing? Though He certainly created and owns everything, the Bible says Jesus had *“no place to lay his head.”* (Matthew 8:20)

As a sad-looking Jesus, with tears in His eyes? Yes, Jesus wept, but He also made many happy and promised “great joy” to those who come to Him and follow Him.

So, who is Jesus? We know that He is a historical figure for whose existence there is actually more evidence than there is for Julius Caesar.

Although Jesus was perfectly human—He would feel tired, sleepy, hungry, sad or angry—He was, at the same time, more than human.

He was hungry, but He fed thousands of people.

He was tired, but He stepped in and caused the storms to stop.

He cried when His friend died, but then He raised Him from the dead.

Jesus also made some shocking claims about Himself:

- He claimed to have no sins.
- He claimed to be one with God the Father.
- He claimed to be able to forgive sins.
- He claimed to be the only door to heaven.
- He said “Come to me” instead of “Go to God.”

Because there were many opinions concerning Jesus (as there are today), Jesus asked His disciples the following question: *“Who do people say I am?”* (Mark 8:27) One of His disciples, Simon Peter, answered: *“You are the Christ the Son of the Living God.”* (Matthew 16:16)

If Jesus was not the Son of God, He would have corrected Peter. Instead, He said: *“Blessed are you, Simon, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in Heaven.”* (Matthew 16:17).

Jesus came with a mission; He came to fulfill God’s plan to save the human race from eternal death. Manmade religions are man trying to reach God, but Jesus is God reaching down to us!

### The Great “I Am”

Some of Jesus’ claims about Himself were difficult to understand! For example, He said: *“I am the Bread of*

*...continued on page 11*