

Living to Win

November 15, 2006
Volume 11, Number 11
Christian Educational Ministries

Personal from. . .

Ronald L. Dart

Faith for the Hard Times

We are heading into some very hard times. I wish I could say otherwise, but there is no point in beating around the bush. An awful lot of people are going to die, perhaps in the millions, and I can't see that there is anyway for the governments to avoid it. I will tell you why I think this; but more important, I want to tell you what you can do to prepare for that world headed our way.

First, why do I think this way? We have a long history in this world and there is one pattern that keeps repeating itself. Small men ascend to power and the power makes them crazy. In living memory, there is Adolf Hitler and his lunatic gang. There is Joseph Stalin who seems to have killed more people than Adolph Hitler. Now today, we have Hugo Chavez and Mohammed Ahmadinijad. Both men appear to be mad as a March Hare, and both are determined to jab the United States with a sharp stick.

And they are not the only ones. There are petty, tin pot leaders of Hezbollah, the PLO, and all the other gangs of Moslem fanatics, who are mad with the taste of blood, and want more. Then there is the little pot-bellied tyrant who rules

North Korea and starves his own people to death. He has nuclear weapons and is developing the means to deliver them, and it is only a matter of time before the leader of Iran does the same.

The English speaking powers can only do so much to head this off. The rest of the world, and part of our own, seems determined on the same course the British followed with Hitler, a course that led to the loss of millions of lives. Some estimates exceed 35 million.

But no one is prepared to take the brutal action that would be required to head this off, so nothing of substance will be done until it is too late. The United Nations is a laughingstock. The Europeans have taken a serpent to their breast and have been unmanned by the result of two world wars. The British have so many Moslems in their country that they will soon be unable to control them.

Frankly, I don't know what governments can do to deal with this. Actually, I do know, but no one in the free world has the stomach to do what has to be done. That being the case, every family needs to think in terms of how they will live in the new world we will face. They have to think about what they will do personally and as a family in the face of God only knows what kind of disaster we may face.

No one had a clue what was coming on 9/11, and it seems safe to say that no one has a clue what is coming in the future. So, what can we *reasonably* do? There are a number of physical things we can do, all within reason, and all useful in a variety of situations. I could list them for you, but they can be found easily in lists for hurricane preparedness. NOAA.gov has an online list called the Disaster Supply Kit. It will help with most hurricanes, a crippling ice storm, regional riots, widespread power outages, even some kinds of terrorist attacks. It is based on a 3 to 7 day model for sustaining yourself and your family

continued on page 3. . .

Tax-favored Gifts

You don't have to be wealthy to increase contributions to CEM and help reach more people with the Gospel. You can make substantial tax-favored gifts without taking a hefty bite out of current income or assets. All it takes is a little planning. CEM stands ready to help you make charitable gifts that may provide these benefits and more. Contact Larry Watkins at 1-888-BIBLE-44 to find out how.

2006 Feast in the Mountains of Tennessee

By Skip Martin

For the first time, CEM Feast attendees came from far and wide to worship and honor God in the beautiful mountainous area of Chattanooga, TN. The daily worship service, seminars, YEA classes, and many activities were held in the Chattanooga Convention Center.

Ron Dart gave four outstanding sermons and was joined by Guy Swenson, Bill Jacobs, Larry Watkins, and Jim O'Brien.

A Broad Range of Seminars by Pam Dewey - Once again the Seminar program at the CEM Feast of Tabernacles was a resounding success! Over the past several years many Feast-goers have commented that the seminars have often been a highlight of their Feast experience. This year was no exception. Approximately 125 adults regularly attended the morning seminars that were held at the same time as the YEA classes. There were 21 presenters (including some two-person teams) offering 18 different seminar sessions. The seminar topic selection provided "something for everyone," ranging from evangelism, home Bible studies, and Bible translation, to friendship, fellowship, and home schooling—and lots of variety in between. The CEM seminar program taps into the knowledge, experience, gifts, enthusiasm, and expertise of male and female speakers of all ages to educate, enlighten, inspire, and exhort those who choose to attend. Plans are already under way to put together an equally stimulating slate of seminars for the 2007 Feast of Tabernacles.

YEA - Building Relationships by Sandi McCaskill - A teaching staff of more than 40 with 106 children and teens embarked on exciting adventures of learning, building relationships, drawing closer to God, and just plain having fun at this year's Feast. Juniors acted out the stories of Elijah, and Jesus' disciples. Beginners sat spellbound as puppets and dolls brought their lessons to life. Primaries learned from their activities that we are temporary, how they can be a good example, and to do what Jesus would do. Each lesson added to the educational adventure.

Intermediates and Senior Teens were actively involved in discussion groups, problem solving, memorizing Scriptures, and amazing the teachers with their commitment and desire to have a closer relationship with their Savior. Half the Senior Teen class has been baptized, and three more are seriously considering it. Teachers went out of their way to get to know their students and include everyone in the activities.

Quoting one teacher, "Building relationships with our young people is essential to the future of our church. . . Hearing them pray in class, singing, and learning touches my heart." Another teacher comments, "I honestly think my Feast would not have been the same without those children!" What an incredible opportunity we have to make a difference and touch the lives of children and young people at the Feast. YEA is involved in building the future *TODAY!*

An Abundance of Activities by Wade and Shirley Hamil - Choosing where to go and which activity to attend was difficult because so much was offered: Meet and Greet; Fun, Food, and Fellowship in the Faith for teens; the Family Dance; Pie and Ice Cream Social; Variety Show; Game Night; White Water Rafting; Teen Bowling; Civil War Theater; Children's Chocolate Fantasy; Country Music Dinner Cruise; Senior's Luncheon; Golfing; Mystery Dinner Theater; and the free *Paper Clips* movie. Friday's Family Picnic was the climax of these activities where free, all-you-could-eat chili dogs and hamburgers were enjoyed by all.

We had an awesome team this year! Shirley and I would like to thank all of you who helped.

Outstanding Music by Brent Kern - One of the highlights of this year's music program was the choir's performance on the Last Great Day of John Rutter's arrangement (with my interpretations) of *When the Saints Go Marching In*. With me playing the clarinet and Trish Anderson on the piano, the choir brought a level of energy and enthusiasm to the service that is hard to express. The audience not only clapped along, but was

continued on page 4. . .

*Faith for the Hard Times
continued from page 1 . . .*

without utilities or supplies. This stuff is all common sense, and are things a family can do *and can maintain over time in principle*. The maintenance over time is important. It is easy to forget, to let down.

I can add a couple of ideas to the list. Everyone should keep key phone numbers in their wallets to leave messages as to their whereabouts. It took months to get lost kids from Katrina back with their families. Don't let that happen to your family. Have agreed upon rendezvous points in case of widespread telephone failure. We depend so much on cell phones, we could be in deep trouble if they don't work.

I remember one of the big earthquake movies. A woman caught in downtown Los Angeles—her kids were at home miles away—was prepared. She couldn't drive home. Too much chaos on the roads. She opened the trunk of her car, took out walking shoes and a prepared backpack with snacks and water. She shed her high heels, put on the walking shoes, shouldered the back pack, and set out to walk home.

There are other things, like keeping enough gas in your car at all times, and always having sufficient cash. Oddly, with no power, credit cards may be useless. Do not depend on the government for anything. If government aid comes, well and good, but don't bet your life on it. Life and death can sometimes hang on small issues of preparedness, *and mental preparedness is every bit as important as food in the house*. Panic

can kill. Mental preparedness can prevent panic.

All this is good advice for anyone. But I want to go a step further and talk about mental and even spiritual preparedness. The Bible holds up the nuclear family as the ideal. It is also the ideal unit for disaster preparedness. Divorce is a luxury you can't afford. Your kids are going to need two parents when the going gets rough. And you may need the help of a mate to survive. You don't just prepare yourself, you prepare your family. Ignore the words "safe" and "safer" as used by government leaders. I wish they wouldn't talk the way they do. Safety is always an illusion.

No government can "keep us safe." You aren't safe walking through the parking lot at Wal Mart. It is up to you to keep your head up, to look around, to be attentive to your own safety. Some time ago, author Peggy Noonan urged us to think in terms of a "national neighborhood watch." In point of fact, it is one of our strongest defenses against terror attacks. We have to take care of one another.

Recently, a woman with a baby at home allowed a woman in to make a phone call. The woman cut her throat and stole her baby. The mother survived, and because of our national neighborhood watch, someone where the baby had been taken realized something was wrong and called the authorities. The baby is now home. We need to remember that, in our country, we are the government, and we have to depend on one another. There are better ways to handle a situation than to allow a stranger into your home to make a phone call.

For Christians, there is another consideration. God does not promise that He will always keep us safe from harm. I know, it runs counter to what we think should be the case, but if we read our Bibles, we know that safety means something different to God from what it means to us. Jesus explicitly warned His disciples that they might face death for His name's sake. He said that the time would come when "whoever kills you will think that he offers God service."

That has never been more true than it is today. Real live Christians have been killed in the name of Allah; others forced to convert to Islam at the point of a gun. This year. This is not ancient history, but today's newspapers. The Bible is full of illustrations of men and women willing to die for the faith. These days are not over. Those who look for mere safety will not be prepared for the hard times ahead. We have, regretfully, become a soft people, and that is just as true of Christians as of society as a whole.

There is a story of the earliest days of the church. Peter and the others had been beaten and commanded not to speak any longer in the name of Jesus. When they went out, the Apostles were "rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ." Frankly, I wonder where you would go to find Christians like that in today's world. What was it that gave these men that kind of faith? Jesus had prepared them. But it was also in what they had long known of God.

continued on page 4 . . .

Faith for the Hard Times
continued from page 3 . . .

Of all the disaster preparedness we can do, nothing even comes close in importance to the shoring up of our faith. God will see us through whatever comes our way. But we have to be prepared to remain faithful even if he does not. Indeed, he may not save our miserable hides, for God is playing for much higher stakes.

I worry about Christians caught up in the prosperity gospel. Far be it from me to deny that God will make us prosperous. But if that is where our hearts are, what will we do when everything is gone? People want to see evidence of God, to see the tree plucked up and cast into the sea. They want to see prosperity follow after the tithes. They want to see the lame walk, the deaf hear, the blind see. What do you suppose God wants to see? I think God is looking for the man or woman who, seeing nothing, still believes.

There is more, but I can't cover it here. I would like to send you a presentation titled, *Faith for the Hard Times*. It is *FREE* and is available on either cassette tape or CD. Just mark the enclosed card to indicate your preference and send it back to us. We have enclosed an envelope for your convenience.

Thanks for being in touch,

Ronald L. Dart

PS. The presentation is *FREE*, so don't hesitate to ask for it. Your contribution will help us a great deal, but don't let that stop you from requesting the program.

2006 Feast in the Mountains of Tennessee
continued from page 2 . . .

moved by the slow solemn middle section of the piece. In the end, the congregation was moved to a standing ovation for the music the choir had offered up to God.

Another highlight of the Feast was the Praise band on Thursday's "Contemporary Service." Four vocalists, four guitarists, a drummer, a flutist, and a pianist rounded out the band that led the congregation through many of the top 25 list of contemporary favorites in America.

The format of the hymn portion of the worship service was changed to make the service flow from one song to another with short Scripture readings. This added movement to the service while allowing the congregation to truly focus on the praise of God.

The Feast was truly a group effort. A special thanks to Kimberley and Danny Joe, Trish Anderson, Jeannie Hinds, Bernard Carmen, Chris Watkins, and Ken Swiger, all who participated in the Praise Band and Orchestra, all performers of special music, and to the dedicated choir.

Feast-goers left feeling uplifted, informed, and inspired by this wonderful Feast and all eagerly look forward to gathering together again in 2007!

Christian Educational Ministries

Statement of Cash Flows
For the Three Months Ended
July 31, 2006

Receipts:	
Contributions	\$329308
CEM Bookstore	21562
Youth Ministries	9130
Interest Income	7222
	\$367222

Expenses:	
A/V Supplies	\$ 9134
Rents	9474
Office & Adm. Expenses	11457
Mailing Expenses	5123
Postage	17712
Printing	12949
Radio Expenses	182542
Telephone & Utilities	2263
Youth Ministries	12473
CEM Bookstore	20500
Foreign Operations	1510
Conference Expenses	7644
Equipment Acquisitions	3251
Employee Benefits	21515
Wages & Payroll Taxes	103168

Total Operating Expenses	\$ 420715
Decrease in Fund Balance	<u>(\$ 53573)</u>

LOST COAT

FOUND: Black Jos. A. Bank,
44 long sport coat.
Owner should call CEM
at 1-888-BIBLE-44.

In Memory

CEM would like to express
its gratitude for the most
generous memorial given
in honor of Jim Ross
whose life was remembered
in a PowerPoint presentation
at the Feast.

Christian Educational Ministries

PO Box 560
Whitehouse, Texas 75791
phone: 1-888-BIBLE-44
fax: 903.509.1139
e-mail: adm@cemnetwork.com
website: www.borntowin.net

*That the man of God may be proficient
and equipped for every good work.*