

Virtual Christian Magazine

Hope And Encouragement For The Real World

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The Touch of Man and the Hand of God

By Noel Hornor

Humans have an innate need for contact--for physical touch. But is there greater spiritual significance to touching?



MODERN LANGUAGE contains many expressions that convey the importance of touch. We speak of friends and acquaintances "staying in touch." We describe some people as being "out of touch." We sometimes say that a tactless person has "a heavy touch."

Yet many of us live in societies that shun actual physical touch. Sociologist Ashley Montagu observes that we in the Western world "have produced a race of untouchables." He sees this as a sign of the "impersonality of life."

Others agree that the Western world suffers from touch aversion and believe that part of the cause is our addiction to gadgets such as computers and television.

A Touching Need

The most basic element of love is physical touch. Typically, the first action a mother takes toward her newborn is to pick up her infant and hold it close. This is vital to the baby in that it triggers the crucial bonding process for the newborn. As Montagu says, "Among the most important of the newborn infant's needs are the signals it receives through the skin, its first medium of communication with the outside world."

As the child grows, one of its greatest needs "if it is to prosper...is to be handled, and carried, and caressed, and cuddled, and cooed to..." A child who is completely deprived of such loving treatment may not survive.

This was illustrated in a 1945 study conducted by René Spitz of children in an institution. "A

group of children--all under three years of age--were fed and clothed adequately but, because of too few nurses, given very little personal attention," wrote James McKee in *Sociology, The Study of Society*. "No one talked to them, carried them around, or cuddled them. The human results were devastating; within two years fully a third of the children had died and the rest were mentally retarded... The conclusion seemed to be clear: loving attention is as essential as food for the human infant."

This finding was recently confirmed in Romania, in "the early 1990s, when thousands of infants warehoused in orphanages--some of them virtually left alone in their cribs for two years--were found to be severely impaired" according to an article in *Life*.

The social and psychological development of a child deprived of proper touch may be hindered also. Montagu believes such a child will develop into someone who is "physically awkward in his relations with others, but also psychologically, behaviorally awkward with them." In short, he or she will lack tact, a word which is derived from the Latin *tactus*, which means "to touch."

Parents' Role in Touching

What can parents do to help their children? Parents should shower their children with loving physical contact. This includes not just hugs and kisses but a touch on the shoulder, a pat on the back, a tousling of the hair.



In our modern society, it is particularly important that we make a point of expressing love to our children through physical touch. In days gone by, children received more physical contact with parents because of nurturing practices common in more traditional societies. One example of this is breastfeeding. Breastfed babies abundantly receive the benefits of physical touch while nursing.

Physical touch is important especially for difficult children. Parents who are attempting to correct certain behavioral problems may find that touching provides benefits. For example, taking an overly rambunctious baby or toddler into your arms may help calm his or her temperament.

When they are ill, children particularly need the comforts of physical touch and holding and the reassurance that brings.

Touch Between Couples

In some marriages couples have an active sexual relationship, but seldom demonstrate other signs of affectionate touching--holding hands, a touch on the shoulder or a warm hug.

Young couples naturally tend to demonstrate affection through these actions, but as the years go by such expressions may become less common. Affectionate touches, however, remain important throughout life and we never outgrow our need for them. They help provide reassurance of unconditional love.

Physical touch is good therapy in times of difficulty. Studies performed

Affectionate touches remain important throughout life and we never outgrow our need for them. They help provide reassurance of unconditional love. at the University of Miami Medical Center indicate that physical touch reduces stress. "A simple touch--a hand on a shoulder, an arm around a waist--can reduce the heart rate and lower blood pressure... Touch also stimulates the brain to produce endorphins, the body's natural pain suppressors" according to an article in the August 1997 issue of *Life*.

Many marital relationships suffer from not enough touching. In the hectic pace of our busy culture, we too often neglect to practice these simple acts of affection. Husbands and wives need to go out of their way to convey fondness through touch. Touch maintains the vibrancy of a relationship. It is a means of communication. There is "a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing" (Ecclesiastes 3:5). For many husbands and wives, the times they refrain from embracing are too numerous for their own well-being.

The Hand of God

Even more important than the touch of human beings in our lives is the touch of God. He, being in the spirit realm, does not physically touch us in the same way people do. But His hand of intervention and comfort is available to those who seek a close relationship with Him.

The concept of touching is so significant to God that He instituted a specific ceremony--called "laying on of hands"--for certain special occasions. Laying on of hands is a key teaching of the Bible. It is listed among several basic doctrines of the Bible in Hebrews 6:1-2.

The primary purpose of placing hands on a person was to impart a blessing. It is interesting to see how the Bible directs God's servants to perform this ceremony at key times in human lives. Let's notice some examples.

Physical contact, through laying on of hands, can assure us of God's touch in our lives, because it is God's Word that we are obeying.

The first crucial stage of human life is infancy. We have noted the importance of adults showing attention to little children through physical touch.

Jesus Christ, too, recognized this need. He set an example for us by taking infants and little children into His arms, laying His hands on them and blessing them (Mark 10:13-16). Through this act He demonstrated that God is delighted to be involved in the lives of little ones. This event was so significant that three of the four gospel writers noted and recorded it (see also Matthew 19:13-15; Luke 18:15-17).

Following Christ's example, elders in the Church of God today pray for and ask God's blessing on little children of those parents who desire it. However, they recognize that it is not the elder, but rather God, who provides the blessing.

Other Milestones in Life

Another important juncture in the life of a Christian is the commitment of baptism. At that time a Christian makes a lifelong commitment to serve God. It represents the beginning of a new spirit-led life (Romans 6:4). Scripture shows that after baptism an elder is to lay hands on the new convert. God designated the performing of this act to signify imparting His Holy

Spirit to the believer (Acts 19:5-6).

The example for this is given in Acts 8. Philip went to Samaria to preach. Many responded to his preaching and were baptized. When the apostles in Jerusalem heard of this, they sent Peter and John, "Who, when they had come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. For as yet [it] had fallen upon none of them. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit" (Acts 8:15-17).

God also uses touch to convey His power to heal us. Jesus, for example, placed His hands on people when He healed them (Mark 5:23; 6:5). He later instructed the disciples, as His representatives, to do the same (Mark 16:18). In the book of Acts, Ananias laid hands upon Saul (who was later called Paul) that he might be healed. Paul had gone blind. The laying on of hands and healing assured Saul that he was in God's hands.

When we are ill and want to ask God to heal us, we can go to an elder and ask him to pray for us. Scripture shows that today the elders are to combine laying on of hands with anointing the ill person with a small amount of olive oil (James 5:14) representing God's spirit.

Physical contact, through laying on of hands, can assure us of God's touch in our lives, because it is God's Word that we are obeying. The elder has no power in the matter. He is merely a human being given this responsibility to carry out God's instructions.

The marriage ceremony, uniting a husband and wife in a lifelong relationship, is another significant event in the lives of human beings. Though the Bible does not command it, it is the practice of elders of the United Church of God to lay hands on and pray for a couple during the marriage ceremony, asking God to bless the union. God designed marriage to be for life, so when a couple embarks on this journey, God's blessing is of utmost importance to its success.

"I Am With You Always"

The laying on of hands is a formal ceremony that is reserved for important moments or occasions. But by no means are these the only times God is involved in our lives. His hand will constantly guide you if you seek Him and welcome His involvement in your life.

David well understood the need for God's involvement in his life: "I have set the Lord always before me; because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved" (Psalm 16:8). David's close, personal relationship with God gave him peace during every crisis. He walked with God and knew God always walked with him.

David said of God, "You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me" (Psalm 139:5, New Revised Standard Version). He had this confidence because he obeyed God. He said, "Let Your hand become my help, for I have chosen Your precepts" (Psalm 119:173).

The perfect example of God's closeness is the relationship that Jesus Christ had with His Father. The Bible records this close relationship in one of Christ's prayers: "Father, I thank you that You have heard Me. And I know that You always hear Me" (John 11:41-42).

Just before Jesus died He said, "Father, into Your hands I commend My spirit" (Luke 23:46). Death is one of man's greatest fears. But Jesus Christ did not fear it, because He knew that His entire life was in the Father's hands.

Faith in God's Care and Concern

The disciples of Jesus had a similar faith and trust in God. We see this faith in the life of Stephen, one of the first martyrs of the Church. As Stephen was being stoned to death for believing and teaching the truth, he cried out "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit" (Acts 7:59). He was confident that God's intervening hand was present for him just as the Father's hand had been there for Christ.

If you respond to God's call, you can have assurance of His presence. You can experience His touch in your life.

When the apostle Paul was being tried in a Roman court that had the power to execute him, he did not fear. He said "the Lord stood with me and strengthened me" (2 Timothy 4:17). You can have assurance that God will be with you in the travails of your life.

We live in a world of great uncertainty. Ours is an age of worry. Much of our anxiety results from not understanding God's purpose and our lack of a close relationship to Him. But it doesn't always have to be that way. If you would like to know God's purpose and have His intervening hand in your life, you must seek Him. God is seeking people to worship Him (John 4:23).

If you respond to God's call, you can have assurance of His presence. You can experience His touch in your life. Jesus said, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him" (John 14:23). To have this kind of relationship with God, you must respond to Him and seek Him with all your heart.

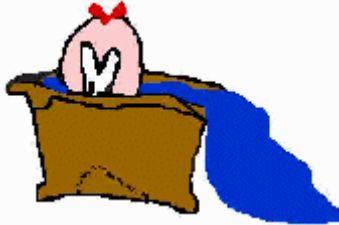
Recommended Reading

How can we develop a close relationship with our Creator? First we should begin to understand His design and purpose for our lives. [What Is Your Destiny?](#) helps you understand God's surprising plan for you from the pages of your Bible. [The Road to Eternal Life](#) shows you how to take the first steps toward attaining that awesome destiny. Both of these booklets are free for the asking when you contact our office in your country, or the country nearest you, listed on the United Church of God home page www.ucg.org.

Don't Throw Out the Baby With the Bath Water!

By Larry J. Walker

Scandal and hypocrisy among religious people can be devastating to others' faith. Can human failure lead us to reject God?



AS A YOUNG MAN growing up in a small midwestern town, I attended church on a fairly regular basis. Until one day I found out about a scandal that was common knowledge throughout the congregation. It seems one of the elders of the church was having an affair with the wife of another member of the congregation. This elder was a prominent man in the community and a heavy financial contributor. The pastor was aware of the problem, but took no disciplinary action.

This hypocrisy offended me to the core. I stopped attending. I threw in the towel on religion and even questioned the existence of God. "If this is supposed to prove there is a God, I don't believe it" was my thinking.

My grievous error is an example of going against the adage, "Don't throw out the baby with the bath water."

But God didn't throw me out. Later He led me to see that He does exist, that He is working out His plan here on earth. God called me into the ministry where I have served for many years.

What should be tossed out are the attitudes and errors that cause the problems, not the things that God established.

A few years ago disillusioning circumstances arose that led to my resignation from the church organization for which I had pastored for 30 years. This time, my departure did not involve giving up on God and the Bible. I became part of a new church that was formed to preserve the same basic truths that I had proven, preached and committed my life to.

Unfortunately, thousands of members who experienced similar discouraging circumstances are sitting at home--hurt, confused and turned off on "organized religion."

How many people make the tragic mistake of throwing out the baby with the bath water? Some who experience spousal abuse become completely soured on the marriage institution. Some children who grow up in dysfunctional families vow never to marry because of the distorted image portrayed by their parents. How many women hate all men? How many men hate all women?

God established the marriage institution "at the beginning" (Genesis 2:24, Matthew 19:4-8).

He also made us male and female (Genesis 1:27), with differences that can lead to harmony and productivity or chaos and strife. God intended that marriage be a joy for husbands and wives. The Bible teaches that love and respect are to go hand-in-hand (Ephesians 5:33).

God also instituted the church for our good. Jesus said, "I will build my church" (Matthew 16:18). The church, when functioning as God intended, guides us over the rough spots, and teaches God's solutions. The ministry is commissioned to lead God's people to love, support and respect each other.

What should be tossed out are the attitudes and errors that cause the problems, not the good things that God established.

Another well-worn saying suggests, "If all else fails, read the instructions." Instructions for happiness in marriage, information on male and female differences and teachings about the importance of the church are all found in the pages of the Bible.

Unfortunately, some who claim to represent the teachings of the Bible misunderstand and misrepresent the truths of the Scriptures. "Even supposing some of them have proved untrustworthy, is their faithlessness to cancel the faithfulness of God? Never!" (Romans 3:3, Moffatt translation). "Let us think of God as true, even if every living man be proved a liar" (Romans 3:4, Phillips version).

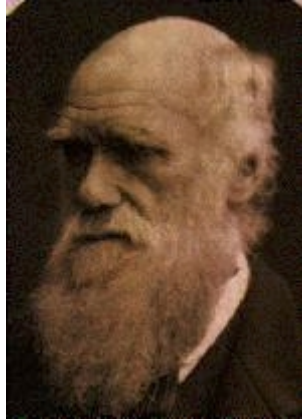
God's truth and faithfulness will stand. These are sure promises we can count on in times of trouble, even troubles brought on by "religious people."

Don't throw out the baby with the bath water!

Proving God

By C. Sue Evans

At age 19 she was challenged to prove her religious beliefs. It's been a rich and rewarding journey ever since...



AT AGE 19, I was challenged to prove my religious beliefs. This challenge brought many questions to my mind. How did I know for sure that what I believed was correct? Could I prove the things I had been taught? Was I certain that there really was a God? Could I prove that He existed and that evolution was false? If there really was a God, did He have a purpose for mankind, and why was I born?

I learned through research and extensive study that God does exist and has a purpose for mankind. Putting this knowledge into practice and living His way of life results in peace of mind, happiness and blessings, not just for the present, but forever.

What were some of the things I studied to prove God's existence for myself? I researched the fossil record, studied radioactivity and looked at the wonders of design in nature.



As an example, the human eye possesses 130 million light-sensitive rods and cones that convert light into chemical impulses. These signals travel at a rate of a billion per second to the brain. How could so many intricate components independently evolve to work together perfectly when, if a single component did not function perfectly, nothing could work at all?

Charles Darwin, the father of evolution, described the eye as one of the greatest challenges to his evolutionary theory. In his book *On the Origin of Species*, he admitted, "To suppose that the eye with all its inimitable contrivances... could have been formed by natural selection, seems, I freely confess, absurd in the highest degree."

The theory of evolution cannot explain why we pursue intangibles like beauty and higher spiritual yearnings. Our minds are far too complex to have arisen passively or accidentally. Disproving the theory of evolution gave me the proof of creation and the existence of God. I now had a basis for belief and a solid foundation on which to build.

Next I went to the Bible. I found that the Bible is the manual or instruction book God gave to mankind. God's remarkable purpose for humankind is revealed in His Word. God created man with a mind capable of communicating with God and thinking like He thinks.

In the Bible I found that God made man in His image and likeness. This is the most fundamental difference between humans and other creatures. The image of God imparts special meaning, harmony, intelligence and design to human life. Man stands apart from all other living creatures because of his relationship with God.

The Bible fills in the missing dimension in human knowledge. In it, God provides the Ten Commandments, which show us how to live (Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5). The first four commandments show us how to love God, and the last six commandments show us how to love our fellow man. This eternal spiritual law, if followed, will help us develop the spiritual character of God.

I learned that "the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ" (Romans 6:23). God has determined to give all human beings every possible opportunity to choose life.

Peace results from knowing that if you put God first and trust in Him, He will protect and keep you. You can go to sleep at night without worrying. The last 30 years of striving to live by God's way have produced great happiness and enjoyment for me and my family. My husband Gary and I celebrated our 32nd anniversary last year. Soon our eighth grandchild will be born. Our family is a close one. I attribute this closeness to putting God first in our lives. Peace results from knowing that if you put God first and trust in Him, He will protect and keep you. You can go to sleep at night without worrying.

In Deuteronomy 6:7, God commands us to teach our children diligently when we walk and when we talk with them. Our first three children are happy, productive adults and our teenagers are a pleasure to have around. We have taught them God's values about sex and marriage. We hope that they will always strive to please God.

We have also tried to teach them to treat others as they want to be treated, and that when we fail we have a loving, merciful God just waiting to forgive us. "He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us" (Psalm 103:10-12).

The blessings from living God's way never cease! God has provided all of our needs and many of our wants.

I have learned over the last 30 years that there is a God, that He does have a purpose for mankind and that living His way of life results in peace of mind, happiness and blessings. These things are given now and will continue far into the future. I am glad I accepted the challenge to prove these things for myself.

The Most Important Thing

By Mike Bennett

What would you say if someone asked: What one thing would your church want people to come away with?



I WAS SITTING AT THE LUNCH TABLE at work, gobbling a late lunch of potatoes baked in the microwave. Most of the other employees had eaten some time before, so I was all alone till Drew came in.

Drew programs for our company's Web publication. He's a big, friendly, mountain of a man, who usually pulls his hair back in a ponytail at work with the fluorescent plastic band that's attached to his work key. He's interested in spiritual matters from many different traditions, and recently he and his "pardner" Jen had a baby girl.

Drew knows I'm religious, and that my church is not one of the big ones. "What's the name of your church?" he asked.

"United Church of God," I said. After establishing that we weren't related to the Unitarians or United Airlines (Drew's a kidder too), we talked a little about what makes my church different.

Then Drew asked a question I wasn't expecting, though as I thought about it later, it was the question I should have been most prepared for. It's a question I, as a Christian, should have been thrilled to answer.

But my mind was still focused on how small my church is. So when he asked, "What one thing would your church want people to come away with?" I hesitated. Was he asking what defined us as different? No, it didn't seem like that was what he meant. Then my mind began to race, thinking of dozens of answers and no answers at all. I stammered out something about wanting people to know that Jesus Christ is Lord and Savior.

Not a bad answer, but I wasn't satisfied with the unsure way I said it and whether those important words really conveyed deep meaning, or whether they've just become hackneyed, pious-sounding words. As the conversation drifted to his little baby girl and the challenges of raising kids, I felt disappointed that I'd had trouble answering such a fundamental question

about my faith.

What Would You Say?

What about you? Many of you probably had an answer come quickly to mind when you heard the question. I applaud you. But maybe you too have trouble summarizing the great sweeping themes of the Bible at the drop of a hat. It seems there are many ways to look at the most important thing. Even if you already have an answer in mind, it might be interesting to think of some of the other possible answers. Perhaps you looked at it in one of the following ways.

One way to sum up the theme of the Bible would be to look at the beginning and the end. The Bible introduces us to the most important character in Genesis 1:1, "In the beginning God created...." The theme of creation, re-creation and a new creation flow through the Bible all the way to the new heavens and new earth of Revelation. We can read to the end of the book and see that God and His people win. The Bible ends with Jesus Christ, the Son of God, telling us He will return, and the Apostle John urging Him, with great longing, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus!" (Revelation 22:20).

Or you could sum up the most important thing with one or two other scriptures recorded by John. These show God's motivation, and also imply our response. "He who does not love does not know God, for God is love" (1 John 4:8). And probably the most famous verse of all also reveals part of God's plan for us, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

You could make a case that every scripture can be a good starting point, and that no one scripture covers it all. That makes the Bible as a whole such a precious gift.

What should be our first priority? In His famed Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said not to worry and focus on the physical things, "but seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you" (Matthew 6:33). This starting point leads to a whole study of God's Kingdom, and our part in preparing for it.

What are the greatest commands God has ever given us? Jesus summed up the whole of Scriptural commands in Matthew 22:37-40: "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets." Going from here, we can discover deeper details throughout the Bible of how to apply these great principles in our everyday actions.

Then again, maybe the most important thing we would want people to come away with would be found in what Peter preached as the church began on the Day of Pentecost. After his sermon summarizing the Old Testament prophecies and their fulfillment in Jesus Christ, the crowd cried out, "'What shall we do?' Peter answered, "'Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit'" (Acts 2:38).

Peter's call for repentance echoed the trumpet blasts recorded by the prophets, like Isaiah: "Cry aloud, spare not; lift up your voice like a trumpet; tell My people their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins.... Your iniquities have separated you from your God; and

your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear" (Isaiah 58:1, 59:2). Considering the times of trouble Jesus mentioned in Matthew 24, it seems this message of witness is also of vital importance.

Yet we can't leave out that these warnings are a backdrop for God's message of hope and comfort. "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light" (Matthew 11:28-30).

Some Conclusions

All these scriptures are important. And many others come to mind as well: 1 John 3:1-3 talks about the fantastic potential God holds out for us; 1 Corinthians 13:13 lists faith, hope and the greatest gift, love; Micah 6:8 summarizes God's requirements; Matthew 4:4 tells us to live by every word of God. In fact, you could make a case that every scripture can be a good starting point, and that no one scripture covers it all. That makes the Bible as a whole such a precious gift.

So, what is the most important thing I want someone to know about my church and my faith? In some ways I'm still not sure. It could really depend on the situation, and on the person I'm talking to. But I am thankful to Drew for focusing my mind on this important subject.

Drew, the most important thing I'd say right now is that I believe God loves and has a plan for everybody, for you and Jen and Hannah. I believe He outlines that plan and what He wants us to do in the Bible. As I said, I believe Jesus Christ was willing to be our Savior--to die so we can live! He is also the Lord--our Master and the King of the Kingdom of God, which we pray will come soon to bring peace to this troubled world.

I know that's more than one thing, and I know that there's a lot more to God's message. But it's a start.

Virtual Christian Magazine Editorial

Spiritual Troubleshooting

By Les McCullough

A NEW DAY BEGINS. You sit down before your computer and chances are you never think twice about what goes on as you punch the start button. You may hear a reassuring hum from your hard drive. Then your screen begins to brighten. You are ready for the day. At some point, you call up your e-mail or decide to see what is on the Net.

However, what if your computer doesn't respond to these or other commands? What goes through your mind? "I must have done something wrong" is the thought, because we all know the computer only does what it is told to do. You try again and nothing. What else could it be? It must be an overload, so I will wait until it clears. It never clears. What else can it be--the telephone lines? No, all is well there. Oh no, don't tell me my computer has crashed from the thunderstorm last night!

Now, what doesn't go through your head?

You don't consider that the technology is all wrong. You don't doubt the mechanics of computer science. You believe all that is solid and secure. You have absolute confidence that you or someone or something else is at fault. You are confident that what you can't see and perhaps can't explain is absolute and sure.

Theologically speaking that is called faith.

Look at another scenario. You have lost your job, become sick or worse yet have been diagnosed as having an incurable, inoperable disease. The only place to turn is God. But when you pray, you don't hear a hard drive come on. Maybe somewhere in cyberspace a screen has brightened, but how do you know? What is the problem? As with the computer example, a good place to start is with yourself.

However, the human tendency is to start with God. It is hard to assume the lines are down or there is an overload. So the problem must be God.

If only we had as much faith in God as we do in computer science. If only we had the same absolute confidence that the trouble isn't with God when we have personal difficulties, as we do that the problem isn't with technology when our computer crashes.

If only we had faith. We can exercise it toward things, but find it difficult toward the Creator. We have learned faith in science and technology by education and practice. The same will prove true in our relationship with God.

When the answer doesn't come, the problem isn't with God. It lies somewhere else. He is even more sure than your computer.

It's a thought.

Letters to the Editor

Making Hard Copies



Thank you so much for *Virtual Christian Magazine*. We enjoy the articles very much and we make copies of some of them and take them to Sabbath services to share with the brethren who do not have access to a computer. (Ours is new and we don't know much about using it, but we are really glad to have it.) We feel as if we are helping the body grow by doing this small thing and we are so happy to do it.

-- Bea and Jerry Childs

More Help and Encouragement



I really appreciate the Virtual Magazine as I live in a remote area. I am also married to a man of another religious belief and our three children are being raised that way. I would like to see more articles that offer help and encouragement for those of us in marriages with unbelievers, especially as it seems it is getting very close to the end of this age.

Thanks again for the great work you are doing in God's name.

-- SR

What is Hope?



Great article on hope by Don Ward!

-- Cecil E. Maranville

Exciting Way of Spreading the Gospel



I am a new computer user and really appreciate the new magazine. The print and graphics are outstanding, especially the large clear type for these old eyes.

I am actively involved in the *Good News* Waiting Room Program and this is an exciting way of spreading the gospel through an internationally accessed medium. Wow! Our world right

now is fearsome, but God still is opening doors.

My prayers are with all of you involved in this Christian work.

Thank you for following God's lead.

-- Marcia Winne