

DEVOTIONAL

Psalms 126:5-6 "Those who sow in tears shall reap with shouts of joy! He who goes out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing shall come home with shouts of joy, bringing his sheaves with him."

Winners of souls are first weepers for souls. When our hearts are so burdened for the lost and our love for them is so great that it causes tears of sorrow, we shall then do whatever the Lord calls us to do in winning souls.

What connection there is between sowing in tears and reaping in joy?

There are tears which are seed that we must sow; tears of sorrow for sin, our own and others; tears of sympathy, tears of compassion and tears of tenderness in prayer

A joyful harvest is God's promise of a sorrowful seed time. Let the hope and prospect of this joyful harvest encourage us under all the glooms and distresses of these tears.

1. There must be sowing before reaping: 1Cor 3:6-8 "I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. So then neither is he who plants anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase. So be planting, and he watering, are one..."
2. What men sow they will reap: If they sow precious seed, they will reap a precious harvest. Gal 6:7 "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked. For whatever a man sows, that he also will reap".
3. The quality of the work and motive of the heart will be tested: 1Corinth 3:8,12-13 "So he planting, and he watering, are one, and each one shall receive his own reward according to his own labour ... And if anyone builds on this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble, each one's work shall be revealed. For the Day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try each one's work as to what kind it is."
4. In proportion as they sow, they will reap: 2Cor 9:6 "But I say this, He who sows sparingly shall also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully shall also reap bountifully."
5. The sowing may be with sorrow, but the reaping will be with joy: John 4:35-37 "Do you not say, It is yet four months, and the harvest comes? Behold, I say to you, Lift up your eyes and look on the fields, for they are white to harvest already. And he who reaps receives wages and gathers fruit to life eternal, so that both he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together. And in this is the saying true, One sows and another reaps."
6. Prayer over the harvest and for the labourers: Matt 9:37-38 "Then He said to His disciples, the harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few. Therefore pray to the Lord of the harvest that He will send out labourers into His harvest."

We are now reaping what we have sown over the past. We have sown atheism, humanism, violence etc. We have reaped people who no longer believe in God, Jesus Christ, the Bible, creation etc

And what will be the reward for those who in this busy time stand idle?

Until we Christians start to change our heart attitude and sow with much tears and prayer then the harvest will continue to decrease. If we start sowing faithfully now we will see the joyful harvest in the future.

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AROUND THE WORLD

WITH CHALLENGE

The potential for Malawi is enormous

The potential of Challenge newspaper in Malawi is simply enormous.

Malawi is a country where free literature will be read by everybody since it remains one of the ten poorest countries in the world. Malawi has a population of almost 14 million, and is among the world's least developed and most densely populated countries

There is a large potential readership for a Christian newspaper that is half in English and half in Chichewa, especially since Malawians love to read their secular newspapers. The Challenge format, with its simple clear testimonies with whom the readers can identify, along with short articles of Bible teaching and attractive quizzes and a children's section all make the newspaper very successful in contemporary Malawi. In a nation where there is still a very small proportion of the population who read books, the short, attractive, clear and interesting format of Challenge is simply excellent for those who might never read a book, but who do want to read something that they can understand and is relevant to them.

When we printed the first edition and produced 10,000 copies we simply could not satisfy the demand. The next edition of 20,000 did not satisfy the demand either, but it will enable us to expand the distribution network to include Lilongwe (the capital city) as well as Blantyre-Limbe (the largest urban centre). In truth, across all the towns in Malawi the paper would have a large readership and great potential for touching many lives. God-willing, it would be our hope that in the future we could reach the capital of the Northern Region of Malawi – Mzuzu.

A crucial point to grasp about the importance of Challenge in Malawi is that there is a real problem with free literature from the cults in the country. Almost everywhere and in every office one can find Jehovah's Witness literature and material from other cults. Sadly, Christians will read this material because it is free and they don't have access to anything else to read. The Challenge newspaper can counter this problem by offering them an evangelical alternative to the literature of the cults that has infiltrated Christian homes and work places.

We have formed a committee here in Malawi to work with Challenge in Australia, to "tailor" the excellent basic package of the Challenge format to fit Malawi and its readers. This makes the paper that much more effective, by becoming more identifiably "Malawian" in terms of its content and general philosophy. We thank the Lord for the openness of the people at Challenge, Australia to this development because there is no doubt about the paper's current and potential blessing.

The beauty of Challenge newspaper for contemporary Malawi is that it can be read and then passed on to somebody else either in the office, in the home, at the market, on the bus or on the street. As such, it will continue to circulate and pick up readers, unlike First World nations where many free papers now are simply thrown into the bin.

JONATHAN NEWELL, Christian Brethren Missionary,
Blantyre, Malawi

If you would like to join the next Impact Africa trip for 2009 please contact the office:

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PLEASE TURN OVER

**CARL CARMODY**

Managing Editor

I grew up in Ireland in a very strong Roman Catholic home and spent my early years in a Catholic boarding school. After my family moved to Australia in 1969, I began to have a growing desire to find out what it meant to really know God. Being a devout Catholic, I continued going to church and mass, but I had this niggling concern that I wasn't really experiencing the reality of what it meant to know God.

When I graduated from university, I couldn't get work in my area of radio journalism, so I took up a position as a gardener with the Education Department. It was there that I met a lady who talked to me about what it meant to have a personal relationship with Jesus. Trish managed the school canteen and we got into regular discussions about God. Around that same time I watched a TV show called 'The Word' – a three part 80's blockbuster about the discovery of a supposedly authoritative 'book of the Bible'. Eventually, it was exposed as a fraud, but millions of people worldwide had already bought it. Strange as it may seem, God used this to speak into my life because, like the people in this show, I wanted to find answers, I wanted to know God.

The next day I went and asked Trish for a Bible. I began with the gospel of Matthew and it made sense to me. Each day, I read a little more and then I would talk to Trish about it. On August 16th at around 1.30pm we had been discussing the things of God, when she asked me out of the blue if I would like to commit my life to Christ. There in that school canteen I prayed a very simple commitment of my life to Christ, not realising for a moment that it would change the whole course of my life. That prayer translated me from being religious into having a personal relationship with Jesus.

From there I met with the founder of Challenge, Eric Evans, and started working in this ministry in July 1982. It was out of that, I had a growing burden and desire to be able to get out the good news of Jesus Christ that had transformed my life, to those who had never heard. Today, we have the privilege of not only getting the paper out around Australia but also to places like Southern and Central Africa, Latin America, North America and this month into India for the first time. It is amazing to see what God is doing and how He is doing it.

One of the growing needs in our ministry is the area of personal support. It is never easy to talk about money, but unfortunately we can't do anything unless we have it. So part of the reason I am sharing my testimony and some personal insights is to raise some personal support for Carolyn and me. We would love to have our friends pray with us and where possible contribute to our monthly support to help cover our ongoing needs.

POINTS TO PONDER**PRaise POINTS**

- Honduras (Central America) – A short-term mission team from an American church tell us God used the American 'Challenge' Hispanic edition to bring in 170 first time commitments to Christ and 100 re-commitments. The team members tell us the streets went silent as people stopped to read the papers! Glory to God!
- Thank God for the personal commitments that continue to come into our offices all over the world, as well as for the many people who contact a local church.
- Praise God for our faithful supporters, both prayerfully and financially.
- For new opportunities that are presenting themselves globally.
- For churches and individuals who see the importance of sharing the gospel.
- For finances that have come in.
- Praise God that His timing is always perfect.

PRayer POINTS

- India – Please pray for the official launch of this edition in March, for inevitable teething problems, and for the development of a follow-up network. Please also pray for our financial commitment to this work.
- USA – Carl and Graeme are currently travelling through USA to share about the work of Challenge globally. They are working to raise support for this work and also to promote the use of the paper by churches in USA.
- Australia – For an increase in the effectiveness and impact of the Australian edition. As the work expands globally, we have a great need for more office staff, especially an editor and desktop designer.
- South Africa – Please pray for Harold Peasley, Director of partner organisation Multi-Ministries, as he recovers from triple bypass surgery.
- Globally – That God would appoint translators as needed for future entry into more countries in South Africa and South America (eg. Portuguese).

We are enormously grateful to the many who give so generously to the work of Challenge. What Challenge has realised is the need to maintain the general giving to the work as well as personal support. If you feel you can support Carolyn and me we would love to hear from you. We look forward to an ongoing relationship as we chart new waters in the development of the Challenge ministry.

**MY RESPONSE**

Post to: Challenge Literature Fellowship, PO Box 978, Cloverdale WA 6985 or Fax to **(08) 9453 3006**

Name: _____

Address: _____

Post Code: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

with God's help I would like to be a partner in supporting the ministry at Challenge in the following way(s):

Prayer: Please send me updated prayer information

Financial: Please receive my: Monthly Quarterly Yearly One time contribution of:

\$50 \$75 \$100 \$200 Other: \$ _____

Credit Card: Visa Mastercard

Credit Card #: _____ - _____ - _____ - _____

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