

Viewpoint by Victor Knowles



A CULTURE WITHOUT CHRISTIANITY? IMAGINE.

[This month I gladly yield to Emmanuel A. Kampouris, editor of *The Karios Journal*.]

In 1971, John Lennon wrote a hymn for the secularist faith. The song, "Imagine," fantasized about the state of world affairs if everyone were stripped of all beliefs and prejudices – with the notable exception, of course, of the former Beatle's favorites. "Imagine there's no heaven," sang Lennon,

*It's easy if you try
No hell below us
Above us only the sky
Imagine all the people
Living for today . . .*

*Imagine there's no countries
It isn't hard to do
Nothing to kill or die for
And no religion too
Imagine all the people
Living life in peace . . .*

Now while there is certainly nothing wrong with peace, love, and understanding, the evidence suggests that Lennon's dream would in fact turn out to be a nightmare. That's the conclusion of recent historical and sociological studies from two of America's leading scholars: Rodney Stark from the University of Washington and Samuel P. Huntington from Harvard. Without any collusion, they have both found that the animating features that have made the West great – modern science, medicine, democracy and its attending freedoms – were the products of irreducibly Christian thinking derived from central biblical traditions.

In his 2004 book, *Who Are We? The Challenges to America's National Identity*, Huntington, arguably the most respected political scientist of our time, contends that the United States in particular faces a national identity crisis. What was the original identity? Beginning with G. K. Chesterton's analysis of America as "a nation with the soul of a church," Huntington lists the following traits as explanatory of America's success and global appeal:

the English language; Christianity; religious commitment; English concepts of the rule of law; the responsibility of

rulers, and the rights of individuals; and dissenting Protestant values of individualism, the work ethic, and the belief that humans have the ability and the duty to try to create a heaven on earth, a "city on the hill." Historically, millions of immigrants were attracted to America because of this culture and the economic opportunities it helped to make possible.

In sum, the Harvard professor avers, it is the Anglo-Protestant culture that arose from scriptural foundations that made the United States great. Attempts to undermine this tradition, whether one ethnically arose from this context or not, he argues, are a misguided and dangerous social experiment which could unhinge the entire project.

Without the moral restraints inspired by God's people, the world would no doubt be an unthinkable worse place in which to live.

In a similar manner, sociologist Rodney Stark tackles the secularist's mantra that serious Christianity inhibits progress [*For the Glory of God: How Monotheism Led to Reformation, Science, Witch Hunts, and the End of Slavery*]. This, Stark argues, is pure myth. To the contrary, for example, he demonstrates with lucid historical detail that "science could only arise in a culture dominated by belief in a conscious, rational, all-powerful Creator." Further, against the charge that orthodox Christianity is inherently repressive, he makes the case that while believers have sometimes behaved horribly toward others (i.e., witch hunts and inquisitions), only people who believed "that slavery was an abomination in the eyes of God" were posed to defy the evil. "It was that conclusion," writes Stark, "and only that conclusion, that enabled the West to abolish slavery." The fear of God, in other words, means freedom for men.

Imagine a world without the Bible, without Christians, and without God? That is a truly frightening thought. It would mean more slavery, far fewer freedoms, and unchecked disease. Without the moral restraints inspired by God's people, the world would no doubt be an unthinkable worse place in which to live. Even a self-possessed relativist can appreciate that. All those who love liberty, or so it would seem, have a vested interest in the continued influence and vitality of the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ.



The Knowlesletter

Celebrating 20 Years (1992 - 2012)

A Monthly Report from Victor & Evelyn Knowles, Founders, Peace on Earth Ministries.
January 2012 • Vol. 20 • No. 1

MEMORIES, MILESTONES & MISSION: POEM TURNS 20!

On September 1, 1992, Evelyn and I stepped out in faith and founded One Body Ministries. So 2012 marks the 20th anniversary of this ministry, now known as Peace on Earth Ministries (POEM). We'd like to share 20 "memories and milestones" with you in this issue of *The Knowlesletter*. (Yes, this begins Volume 20 of our newsletter as well!)

- 1992 – One Body Ministries begins
- 1993 – *In the Cauldron of Russia* published in both Russian and English
- 1994 – "Resurrects" *Morning Star* in Russia
- 1996 – One Body Ministries becomes Peace on Earth Ministries
- 1997 – Speaks for first time at Pepperdine University Bible Lectures
Victor & Evelyn teach in Havana, Cuba
POEM hosts Convocation at Ozark Christian College
- 1999 – Victor & Evelyn write *Double Exposure*
- 2000 – *One Body* receives Addy Award
- 2004 – Mission of mercy to Beslan, Russia, site of school massacre
Howard Publishing gives Victor & Evelyn "Spiritual Development Award" at Pepperdine University Bible Lectures
- 2006 – *Together in Christ: More Than a Dream*
- 2007 – Coordinates 25th and final Restoration Forum at Ozark Christian College
Victor & Evelyn celebrate 40 years of marriage and ministry
- 2009 – Speaks in Pittsburgh, PA at 200th Anniversary of *Declaration & Address*
- 2010 – Makes 7th trip to Poland
- 2011 – Pepperdine University gives Victor "Distinguished Christian Service Award"
POEM assists in Joplin tornado recovery effort
- 2012 – CAFÉ (Canadian-American Fellowship Exchange)
Centennial issue of *One Body*

We'd like to thank the hundreds of individuals and scores of congregations who have made it possible for us to serve God in these kingdom endeavors. As we have said so many times before, we simply could not do what we do without your faithful prayers, encouraging words and financial gifts. Truly, you are the wind beneath our wings! As God graciously grants us health and strength, we will endeavor to continue to make the prayer of Jesus a priori-

ty in this ministry. "That they all may be one . . . that the world may believe (John 17:21). We dare not make secondary what our Lord made primary. If you have never given a \$17.21 gift to POEM before (as many do each month), this would surely be the year to do it. Monthly givers are the vital lifeline of this ministry.

ONE BODY TO CELEBRATE "CENTENNIAL ISSUE" IN 2012



It hardly seems possible but this year will see the 100th issue of *One Body* roll off the press! It was back in 1984 when Don DeWalt (publisher) and I (editor) got the first issue out. *One Body* was a tabloid until 1990 and we could barely get two issues out a year. We have been a *bona fide* quarterly magazine since 1993. Our Summer 2012 issue will be our "centennial issue." You will not

want to miss it! Actually, you will not want to miss *any* issues in 2012! The Winter 2012 issue, *CHRISTLIKE*, was mailed January 2. It contains outstanding writing by Gene Shelburne, Gary Strubhar, Carl M. Johnson, the late Thomas Langford, and our regular columnists. A brand new feature: CAFÉ (Canadian-American Fellowship Exchange). Jim Tune is now assisting me as Associate



(Traveling spiritual "Route 66" with Victor in his 66th year of life)

JAN 8-10
Bible Conference
Community Christian Church
Apache Junction, AZ

MAR 14-17
Tulsa Workshop
Tulsa, OK

MAY 1-4
Bible Lectures
Pepperdine University
Malibu, CA

JUN 23-24
All-School Goldfield High School
Reunion
Goldfield, IA

JUN 29 - JUL 1
Midwestern Heritage Homecoming II
Ottumwa, IA

JUL 10-13
North American Christian Convention
Orlando, FL

Editor. I do believe that being Christlike is the key to Christian unity and world evangelism. Subscribe or renew today for just \$15. And when you subscribe or renew at the regular rate, you can subscribe for as many friends as you like for just \$10 each! That's about the price of two Happy Meals! Aren't your friends worth that much? I thought so! Make them happy. Don't delay. Write to us today! Make sure you are paid up so you will not miss getting the 100th issue of *One Body*, a true "collector's item."

SOME THINGS NEVER CHANGE

Ben Merold, minister-at-large with Harvester Christian Church in St. Charles, Missouri, is one of my favorite preachers. He recently wrote an outstanding article under the above title in the Oct. 2, 2001 *The Lookout*. Here are some excerpts. "I am in favor of most of the new approaches to evangelism . . . However, some things should never change. I'm referring to some very important facts that must be included in the conversion of people to Jesus Christ. Without the inclusion of these facts, we will fall short of the biblical concept of evangelism.

"People must be faced with their 'personal lostness.' They must be made to realize that without Christ, they are condemned and under God's wrath . . . All of this can be brought about by biblical preaching and teaching . . . The use of the Bible is imperative to the work of the Holy Spirit in conversion. This never changes.

"The presentation of the gospel demands a decision and while there are many ways to extend the invitation, the requirements for decision remain the same. There is a New Testament plan of salvation and it can be outlined in the words faith, repentance, confession, and baptism.

"So these things never change in evangelism. We need to use the Bible, point people to Christ and the cross, explain that the grace of God that comes through faith in Christ, and hold to the New Testament way of personally accepting Christ as Savior. Who would want to change them?"

You may read Ben's article at:

www.lookoutmag.com/articles/articledisplay.asp?id=1036

BROTHER HAMEED

Ahmad Hameed was one of the finest Christians I have known. He was born into a Muslim family in Pakistan, was raised a Muslim, and lived the greater part of his life as a Muslim. His good wife **Mohini** became a Christian and earnestly prayed for his salvation. In the providence of God, the family immigrated to America. **Lee Turner**, Director of Key Communications, then located in Seattle, Washington, put Ahmad Hameed, a newspaper editor, to work translating B. S. Dean's book *Outline of Bible History* into Urdu. Though Muslims believe the Bible is corrupted, Brother Hameed came to believe that the Biblical record is true. **Bill Paul**, then preaching at the Crown Hill Church, studied with Brother Hameed, who soon embraced Christ

and was baptized. Muslim recruiters in Seattle often sought his participation in radical Muslim causes, but he steadfastly resisted. In fact, he consistently told them he was a follower of Christ and tried to point them in the same direction. Under the pen name **Al-Basheer** he wrote a small treatise, *God in Islam and Christianity*. I had several occasions to visit with Brother Hameed when I was in Seattle. He was so kind, loving and appreciative in greeting me: "Brother Victor!" What a transformation Christ made in this man's life! At his funeral on November 26, 2011, Brother Turner said, "Though the death, burial and resurrection of Christ are blatantly and explicitly denied in the Koran, Brother Hameed turned his back on those denials and embraced Jesus with all his heart." I praise God for the life of Brother Ahmad Hameed. He was living proof that the power of love (Christianity) is greater than the love of power (Islam). I look forward to seeing him again in Heaven. "For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus" (Gal 3:26).



"I TRULY ENJOYED IT!"

"Just a quick note to thank you so much for the copy of your first volume. I truly enjoyed it and know Mom [Evelyn Sayles] would too. Lots of great memories — and many coincide with my life since I grew up in Eugene, loved your father as a teacher and preacher, know so many of the same people you remember, went to Boise Bible College when

you were living in Boise, attended churches you remembered, etc. Thanks again for the memories!" **Arlene Sayles Scharich, Bullhead City, AZ** Order your copy of *Victor: Since 1945* (Vol. 1) for \$22.95. Price includes shipping & handling. 463 pages, 52 photographs, and more!

FROM BRANSON TO "BETHLEHEM"

I took some rare time off to visit with my three sisters (**Becky, Muriel, Bonnie**) and their spouses at Branson, Dec. 4-7. We enjoyed visiting and seeing Old Branson. We returned to Joplin on the 7th so Evelyn could work at Life Choices Wednesday morning while I caught up with things at the office. Thursday we drove to Jefferson City to be with **Mindy, Trent, Portia & Jason** (where I got a Facebook message asking me to preach Sunday morning at Mt. Hope). From there we went to Crocker to be with **Amanda & Darren** and their family. We enjoyed going to the outdoor "Journey to Bethlehem" at the Crocker Christian Church on Friday night. Our grandchildren **Shawn & Emily** were angels and **Kyle** played the part of a traveler in the production. We returned home Saturday so I could study. On Sunday morning, Dec. 11, I preached "Do I Have Good News for You!" from 1 Thess 5:9-10 at the Mt. Hope Church of Christ in Webb City. I also brought the Communion and Offering meditations. Busy, busy, busy from Branson to "Bethlehem." Evelyn joins me in wishing you a Happy New Year!

WE'VE GOT MAIL!

Thanks for being my friend and brother in Christ, and for "feeding" our souls. We love you! **Charlie & Jean Burgin, Louisville, KY** • We do appreciate what you do for God's kingdom. We enjoy reading your monthly newsletter and want to keep receiving it. **Bonnie & Jack Regouby, Tulsa, OK** • Today and always, wishing you all the best that life can bring. We appreciate your ministry so much. **Howard & Marilyn Robertson, Ft. Worth, TX** • May the enclosed gift cover the postage for your newsletter which I appreciate receiving. May God bless you and grant you a fruitful year of service. **Glen Wheeler, Columbus, OH** • God bless you in your love and faithfulness to our blessed Lord. **Ruth Cradic, Indianola, IA** • I finally started reading your book (*Victor: Since 1945*). It's great! Dick really liked the Lone Ranger and the other cowboys you mentioned too. What fun we had growing up! **Pat Torrey, Culver, OR** • We look forward to your POEM publications and Volume 2 of *Victor*. The first volume was so interesting as we know the places you've been and the people you know! **Marjorie & Charles Conger, Centerville, IA** *I am still working on Victor 2 and hope to have it out by May 1* • Thank you, Victor, for keeping on keeping on to bring unity among God's children here on earth. May God continue to bless and use you mightily is my prayer. **Susan Calderon, via Facebook** • I appreciate your newsletter. A nice mix of information, teaching, as well as family news. **Anonymous** • This donation is sent in response to your November "When the Blessing Precedes the Need" letter. May God continue to bless you and Evelyn. Happy 66th birthday! **Mary & Jim Tuttle, Tulsa, OK** • We enjoy your newsletter very much! I also enjoyed your book — especially the part when you were in college in Iowa. I might have gone there, but L. A. was closer. Thanks for the article about the Chambers [**Earl & Shirley**]. I've known them for 60 years. **Bill & Louise Fleenor, Madera, CA** • We look forward to your *Knowlesletter* for the personal words and testimony. God bless you. **Roger Starkey, Fresno, CA** • Thank you for mentioning us in your newsletter. We have received many calls, cards, and emails because of it. God bless you in your continued service for the Lord. **Earl & Shirley Chambers, Greenwood, CA** *The Sunday edition of the Sacramento Bee (Oct. 30) carried a wonderful article on the Chambers' life and ministry: "Faith Fuels Ageless Ministry." I liked this sentence: "In their twilight years, the Chambers are showing churchgoers that ministry doesn't have to end with age."* • Here's a little gift for your ministry. God bless you. **James & Susanne O'Brien, Cincinnati, OH** • We already have the first volume of your autobiography and we're eagerly awaiting Volume 2. It sure brought back lots of memories! **Gale Vermeulen, Oskaloosa, IA** • Thank you very much for your work. Evelyn's short article in your Oct. newsletter ["A Penny Saved"] encouraged me a lot. There are many little things in which we could save, so reading about that was a great reminder for me. **Lena Mutoonono, Slidell, LA** • Thanks for preaching on Sunday. Many said what a good sermon you shared with us. **Ron Ahlgren, Worthington, MN**

FALLING ASLEEP IN THE ARMS OF GOD

by Evelyn Knowles



God is a "high and lofty" God (Isa 57:15a). When approaching Him in prayer, Jesus taught His disciples that they should be aware of God's place and name. "Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name" (Matt 6:9 KJV). Revering the Father's exalted status reminds us of our own humble and needy position before Him. God, through Isaiah, continues, "I live in a high and holy place, but also with him who is contrite and lowly in spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite" (Isa 57:15b).

So we know God is perfect and holy. He knows our weaknesses. *So why do we feel guilty when we occasionally fall asleep in the middle of our prayers?* "As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him; for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust" (Psa 103:13-14). When our son Lincoln was a little guy, I would lie down with him at nap time. He would twist his hair with his finger while we sang songs and talked. Often in his chattering, however, he would drop off to sleep in mid-sentence. Did I ever think that showed a lack of respect for me, his mother, or that he was not sincere in what he was talking to me about? No! I knew my little son was worn out, yet he had chosen to communicate with me, tired as he was.

I do a lot of praying in the night, in bed, when I'm weary. I treasure this uninterrupted time with my God. I come to Him in the name of Jesus, actually planning to fall asleep that way, because I don't want to say "Good night" to Him. So I keep on praying until I fall asleep in the arms of my Heavenly Father. I really don't think He minds. Sometimes I wonder: does He kiss my forehead and pull up the covers?

OUR DEPARTED

Carl Bowers, former elder at Fairview Christian Church, Carthage, MO. I always appreciated Carl's tender heart and kind words.

Curtis Pile, Mesa, AZ, killed in a motorcycle accident. Curtis was the son of *Carmelita* and the late *William Pile*.

Our sympathies go to both families — strong families in the Lord and in His kingdom.

THE KNOWLESLETTER IS A READER-SUPPORTED MINISTRY. WE NEED & APPRECIATE YOUR SUPPORT.



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PEACE ON EARTH MINISTRIES
 "Proclaiming peace to the nations" Zech. 9:10