



# November 2007 Newsletter

## TnT Ministries

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Dear Friends,

### *The Doctrine of Law and Grace and how it affects our Children.*

Our children grow up in a heavily weighted culture of Law. Most families have rules that are designed to create harmony, happiness, safety, values, security and love. Rules are good and are the foundation for an orderly society. Children grow up recognising that keeping the rules affords acceptance but breaking the rules leads to perceived rejection. When old enough, children go to school where they are confronted with more rules and more conspicuously those dreaded examinations designed to evaluate their performance. Feelings of success or failure or a mix of both often follow. As they grow our children often become involved in sport and physical activities which are governed by more rules. Sports are good. Breaching the rules leads to some whistle blowing maniac stopping the action and citing one or more individuals who have transgressed the sacred commandments of the sport. More rejection and disappointment for the miscreants. Society also places burdens (Laws) on the shoulders of our children in rudimentary ways like, crossing roads, paying for purchases in shops and travelling with a ticket etc. Honesty and safety are good. The sum total of all these observations is that our children live in a perpetual **World of Law**.

It is therefore no surprise that when many children from well taught Christian homes and churches are asked "What do you need to do to be saved?" they will answer; "Live a good life", "Keep the Commandments", "Be kind to one another like the Good Samaritan", "Be good and go to church", "Read your Bible and pray". It is no wonder that they respond so, because they have grown up in a culture dominated by The Law. The challenge for parents and Bible teachers alike is to model Grace and keep on modelling Grace. The frustration is that we do teach Grace, Grace, Grace but it invariable comes out as Law in the understanding of our children. So how do we attack the problem? We all need to have a sound theological understanding of the Doctrine of Law and Grace. There is an inseparable relationship between the two and this is evidenced in The Ark Of The Covenant, you know the box in Indiana Jones' 'Raiders Of The Lost Ark' [just joking]. The lid of the Ark was made of acacia wood covered with gold and displaying two antithetically-placed cherubs with outstretched wings. The lid was also known as the Mercy (Grace) Seat and under it the two tablets of the Decalogue i.e. The Law. Grace and Law are inseparable. They are mutually dependant on each other. This is real Ark – e – ology.

### *Some ancient words of spiritual wisdom from John Bunyan.*

**"Objection.** But (you will say) methinks that giving of our selves up to live a righteous life, should make God like the better of us, and so let us be saved by Christ, because we are so willing to obey his Law.

**Answer.** The motive that moveth God to have mercy upon sinners, is not because they are willing to follow the Law, **but because he is willing to save them.** *Not for thy righteousness, or for thy uprightness of heart dost thou possess the Land,* Deuteronomy 9:4-6. Now understand this; if thy will to do righteousness was the first moving cause why God had mercy on thee through Christ, then it must not be freely by grace (I say freely), but the Lord loves thee and saves thee upon free terms, having nothing beforehand to make him accept thy soul, but onely (Ed. i.e. only) the Blood of Christ; therefore to allow of such a principle, it is to allow, that grace is to be obtained by the works of the Law, which is a gross darkness as lies in the darkest dungeon in Popery, and is also directly opposite to Scripture."

*Extract from 'The Doctrine of the Law and Grace Unfolded' by John Bunyan* [Oxford University Press 1976 ISBN 0 19 811871 6 - --Page 58.

Therefore, how do we go about modelling Grace to our children and establishing the right relationship between Law and Grace in our teaching? The Big Issue team are currently addressing the subject in their U.K. roadshow, so if you can't make any of the following dates, you will be able to get free MP3 downloads from [www.thegoodbook.co.uk](http://www.thegoodbook.co.uk) from May, 2008.

Feb 9, 2008

N.Ireland [First Presbyterian, Portadown]

Feb 23, 2008

Leeds [ City Evangelical]

Mar 1, 2008

Sevenoaks [St. Nicholas]

## Reflections on 2007

The last 10 months have dissolved into history. The early part of the year was taken up with training engagements, leaving no time for writing new materials. TnT had agreed to provide the teaching programme for the Christian Family Fellowship (CFF) Summer Holiday, which took place in August, and this involved a bigger time commitment than anticipated. The CFF camp takes place over 7 days every 2 years and is an opportunity for families to receive intensive Bible teaching. The programme for the children was based on the Exodus, starting with God's promise of many descendants and a land to Abraham and ending with the fulfilment of the promise in the new creation. This was tied in with an animated version of John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, which helped the children look at the Christian's journey from conversion to heaven and made clear the sort of battles and struggles that they might encounter which could cause them to give up. The feedback from the week was very positive. This prototyped programme will be incorporated into the King Of Clubs series.

At the Boards of Trustees and Governors strategy day in March much time was spent praying and thinking through the best way to recruit Trevor and Thalia's replacements for when they retire in April 2009. This process has continued throughout the summer and the job description for a Training Director appears towards the end of this letter.

This August Trevor and Thalia were able to take a well-earned holiday visiting family and friends in Australia. A refreshing stopover in Singapore meant that they could revisit old friends they met in 2006 (see report following). They arrived in Sydney to torrential rain, which was much needed, although it did not last long enough, and was followed by a week of warm, sunny weather. They had a great time. Trevor went crocodile hunting and buffalo shooting (camera only) in the Topend in 40 degree Celsius temperatures. Thalia went shopping for croc/buff shoes. Both have returned refreshed and ready for the autumn training programme.

## Singapore

In October 2006 Trevor and Thalia flew to Singapore for two weeks to lead a number of intensive training sessions for churches there, sponsored by Adam Road Presbyterian Centre (ARPC), a large evangelical church. In 2005, ARPC sent Karen Leo, their children's worker, on the Youth and Children's Ministry course at Oak Hill Theological College, where she met Trevor and Thalia. She enjoyed the TnT training and suggested that her church would benefit from it, hence the invitation.

The first training engagement involved a weekend retreat for all ARPC's children's leaders and helpers. Training took place all day on Saturday and Sunday and there was also time for some fun. It was really helpful to

have an extended time with the leaders so that Trevor and Thalia could get insight into their specific problems and much was discussed over the meal table. TnT had been asked to introduce some of the more creative ideas for teaching children the Bible and these were well received.

The following week saw 2 evening seminars for leaders from other churches and an all day seminar on the Saturday for parents on raising godly children. The church hired a banqueting suite in a hotel for the parenting seminar and it was exciting to see approximately 120 parents who were keen to discover how they could teach the Bible to their children.

All too soon the fortnight drew to a close and it was time to return home. Trevor and Thalia are so grateful for all the kindness and warm fellowship they received from ARPC and for the way they were welcomed into their church family. Nobody does hospitality like the Singaporean Christians. Since returning to UK, TnT have heard good reports of what is happening in the children's church at ARPC and of the new training initiatives for both children's leaders and parents.

In August this year we had the opportunity to spend 48 hours in Singapore on our way to visit family in Australia. Again we experienced amazing hospitality and renewed friendships made the previous year. We were able to spend the Sunday morning in Children's Church and were pleased to see how well things are going and some of the changes they have made as a result of the training.

## Training

The period from January to April was a busy one. There was very little call for the basic training package, but an increase in bespoke training. The collaboration with the Good Book Company in the Big Issue Training events, has been most challenging and is taking TnT into those theological minefields that might otherwise go into the too hard basket. This Autumn has seen the start of a series on Grace and Law, which spotlights the Christian walk, as well as the way it is taught to children. It is so easy to raise little Pharisees!

### **Training events completed since last report:**

- Jan 13 Cockfosters Training Morning - Focused Fun
- Jan 20 St Helen's Bishopsgate Training Morning
- Jan 22-25 Big Issue Residential, Biblical Youthworker 5
- Feb 3 Big Issue, Portadown, N. Ireland
- Feb 19 Cornhill Training Course
- Feb 22 Creative Teaching Techniques, St Paul's Hadley Wood
- Mar 3 Big Issue, Leeds
- Mar 13 Training Morning, Holy Trinity Lyonsdown Rd
- Mar 17 Big Issue, Bristol
- Apr 22 Training Afternoon, All Souls Langham Place
- Apr 27 Cornhill Training Course
- Apr 28 Training Day, Criccieth Beach Mission Team
- Oct 13 Big Issue, Cambridge

Nov 10 Big Issue, Nottingham  
 Nov 13 Oak Hill Theological College, Y&CM Course  
 Nov 20 Oak Hill Theological College, Y&CM Course  
 Nov 27 Oak Hill Theological College, Y&CM Course

**Future training events in 2007/08:**

Dec 8 Training Day, Birmingham  
 Jan 21-24 Big Issue Residential, Biblical Youthworker 6  
 Feb 9 Big Issue, Portadown, N. Ireland  
 Feb 23 Training Morning, Billericay Methodist Church  
 Mar 15 Big Issue, Bristol  
 May 10 Cockfosters Training Morning

**Publishing**

The books continue to require regular reprints of titles in all the age ranges. Christian Focus Publications decided last year to reformat the range for 3-9s and 9-11s to give them an up-to-date feel, so this has necessitated a more time-consuming proofing than normally. Approximately 10 to 12 books have been proofed and gone for re-print so far this year.

**God's Miracle Maker: Elisha**, has been added to the King of Clubs series, It is designed to teach children about their need for salvation. Through the Elisha stories they learn about the reality of God's judgement and that his gracious mercy is available for everyone who turns to him in repentance and faith. The next book in the King Of Clubs pipeline will be a series from Acts about the spread of the gospel.

Work on the series of Bible studies for 14-18s continues slowly but surely and God willing the first books will be available next Autumn. Less training engagements are booked for this Autumn, resulting in more time to concentrate on producing new materials.

The team at Christian Focus Publications continue to be encouraging and supportive and their professionalism inspires our partnership in this word ministry.

**Finances**

In the last newsletter your attention was drawn to a projected budget deficit of £12,500. All at TnT would like to thank everyone who responded, both prayerfully and financially. The year finished with a small deficit of £2,500. Your generosity and the faithfulness of so many long term donors has ensured the continuation of this vital ministry. Trevor and Thalia are particularly grateful for God's blessings in times of financial strains. Book sales through the TnT office have continued at a lower level, as more people are purchasing through bookshops and directly from the publisher, resulting in less income from the materials. This means that TnT will probably end April, 2008 with another slightly higher deficit.

**Training Director**

At the strategy day in March a sub-committee was set up to look at Trevor's and Thalia's replacements. Recognising that the bulk of the writing of teaching materials has been completed, the decision was made to concentrate on a Training Director, who will oversee

and direct all of the training work, building on the existing programme and developing new opportunities. He or she will be supported by a part-time Office Manager. The original job description was tabled and reviewed and those present concluded that the Archangel Gabriel would have failed the skill test and subsequent interview, so it was suitable modified to what you see below. It is proposed to appoint someone in the autumn of 2008 so there can be a 6 month overlap period. Please read the job description below and bring it to the attention of anyone you feel might be suitable. The Trustees wish to appoint 'God's person' for this role and are, therefore, open to applicants with a variety of backgrounds and experiences.

**Training Director of TnT Ministries**

The Training Director will be responsible for:

- leading the well established training ministry of TnT Ministries.
- the tactical focus and direction of the training activities, including new product development and opportunities.
- overseeing the day-to-day running of the ministry, including supervising the activities of the Office Manager, consultants (e.g. accountant, webmaster), any support staff and volunteers.

The Trustees wish to appoint a man or woman of godly character with a passion for ministry to children and young people and for the training of leaders. It is anticipated that the person will:

- be a mature Christian with strong evangelical convictions.
- have experience of working with children in a church setting.
- have experience of working with and training volunteer leaders.
- have a passion to see God's word taught faithfully and engagingly to children and young people.
- be a person of adaptable personality, able to work with people from a broad variety of backgrounds, churchmanship and experience.

For a complete job description please contact the TnT Office, email: [trevor@tntministries.org.uk](mailto:trevor@tntministries.org.uk). **Applications close Friday, 11<sup>th</sup> January, 2008.**

**How You Can Help TnT**

We are most grateful for the support we receive from so many people - we really could not carry on without you! Please therefore continue to remember us in your prayers, and we are always grateful for any financial contributions you can make. Do mention TnT's training, materials and books to Christian friends and if you know anyone who might fit the profile of the Training Director please point out the advert to them.

## Prayer Points

### Thank God:

- For the wisdom, energy and unity of the Trustees and Governors in managing TnT's affairs.
- For an almost balanced set of accounts for 2006-7.
- For general good health and safety of Trevor & Thalia in travelling and training.
- For the opportunity to train in South Africa in 2008.
- For the encouragement of so many gifted teachers attending training events and the children they teach.
- For the wonderful experiences in Singapore and the exciting Christian witness going on there.
- For the knowledge that Grace is a Gift freely given.

### Please pray:

- For Trevor & Thalia's replacement(s).
- For funding to meet the ministry costs and proper stewardship of assets.

If you would like to receive future newsletters by email please send email details to [trevor@tntministries.org.uk](mailto:trevor@tntministries.org.uk)

- For wisdom in the preparation of the teaching programmes for Johannesburg, Durban, Port Elizabeth and Cape Town next year.
- For continued unity of Trustees and Governors.
- For patience, wisdom and faithfulness for Trevor & Thalia as they train and counsel childrens' workers.
- For preparation for Gobbet groups for Youthworker 6 in January, 2008
- For continued travelling safety and energy for Trevor & Thalia as they conduct training throughout the country and abroad.
- For increase in sales of TnT materials and a workable commercial strategy to help meet ministry costs.

Once again many thanks for your support and prayers.

Your friends in Christ,

Trevor & Thalia