

MAORI POSTAL AOTEAROA

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Kangahake Gorge

July-August, 2014

Dear Prayer Partners

Kia Ora Koutou Katoa. Recently I have been having a closer look at Paul's letter to Titus with the view to preparing another series of our "advanced lessons". Not only does the letter contain important doctrine for the Church, but also sound practical advice for Christian living. The heart of the letter is found in chapter 2, verses 11 through 14. These verses emphasise the theme of the letter which is godly living first among Assembly leadership and then among all believers. As an overview of these verses, verse 11 refers to Christ's first coming, verse 13 to His second coming and verse 12 shows how believers (members of the Church) are to live in the meantime.

Verse 11: The greatest display of God's grace is seen in the Person of Christ and His completed redemptive work at Calvary. Such an outflowing of God's grace was and is not a secretive thing. It has "appeared to all mankind". Christ, His life, death and resurrection is the central point of all history. This grace that God has revealed "brings salvation" where nothing else can. It fully deals with human sin and replaces it with divine righteousness. It has the capacity to bring salvation to all people but is only effective in those who receive it. It saves from the penalty, the power and ultimately the presence of sin.

Verse 12: To those who receive God's salvation it gives both the desire and the ability to reject all that is contrary to the will and character of God — that is, ungodliness and worldly passions. It empowers us to reject or to say "No" to these things. It delivers us from sin's power on the one hand, and empowers us to live lives that are pleasing to God on the other. It "teaches us to deny ungodliness and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age" (in stark contrast to Cretan society at the time of Paul's writing). We need this empowering because the spirit of this present age is opposed to God and, until we are fully changed to be like Christ, we still have the old nature with its natural tendency to please self rather than God.

Verse 13: The culmination of our salvation will be our entrance into our Lord's immediate presence at physical death or at His coming. This is the "blessed hope" mentioned in this verse. Then we shall be delivered from the very presence of sin. In the meantime we are to live in the expectation of His coming, as implied by the words "waiting for" (NIV) or "looking for" (NKJ). Living in the light of His coming will help us to live pure and holy lives (see 1 John 3:3) and also to live through times of discouragement and hardship. His coming is described as "the glorious appearing". It will be the time of the manifestation of His glory to His redeemed people (see John 17:24). Appropriately, He is described as "our great God and Saviour" — a very clear reference to the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Verse 14: All this is made possible only because He "gave Himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and purify for Himself a people that are His very own". This verse gives two reasons why Christ gave Himself for us:

1. To redeem us from all wickedness. To redeem is to release someone held captive, on the payment of a ransom. The price was Christ's blood paid to satisfy God's justice. Through the shedding of His precious blood Christ has set us free from the slavery of sin (Romans 6:17-18).

2. To purify for Himself a people who are His very own. We are now His special treasure and will be so through the countless ages of eternity (Malachi 3:17, 1 Peter 2:9). Because salvation gives us the desire and ability to overcome the dictates of the old nature and instead gives us the desire to please God, we have the phrase, "Eager (zealous) to do what is good". Such is true of all who genuinely belong to the Lord.

LESSON PARCELS

In the last lesson despatch we sent out two months' lessons in the one parcel to conserve costs, but for August we are reverting to just one month once again. This is due to the fact that we are planning that the next issue of "Tupu Whakarangi" be despatched with the September lessons. To send the magazines with two months' lessons would make the parcels too large and awkward.



Please do not hesitate to contact HQ if at any time you are not receiving the correct quantities of either lessons or magazines.

SALE OF HOUSE

As you may know by now, the house belonging to MPA that we once used as our office before the sale of the printery, has been on the market for some months. If you know of anyone who may be interested in purchasing this property please contact us at HQ for further details. It could be used as a first home purchase or as a rental investment. There are two bedrooms and a small room that could be used as a third bedroom or a study. At present the thinking of the committee is that it would be better to sell the property outright rather than rent it.



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1. Large concrete area in back yard.
2. Sunny kitchen with gas stove.
3. Back bedroom.
4. Bathroom with new shower over bath.
5. Open plan living area with gas heater.

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HERE'S AN IDEA!

We have put together a number of these containers for leaders to display MPA enrolment forms. They could be placed in appropriate public areas (where allowed) so that people can have access to them. There are forms for people to fill in and then place in the slot ready to be collected. The containers would need to be checked regularly for this reason and the contacts followed up. If you would like to give this idea a try, let's know and we'll get one (or more) off to you.



CALENDAR FOR NEXT YEAR



It will soon be time for us to be thinking about the calendar for next year. We would value your suggestions and comments regarding any changes we should make in order to ensure it is as effective as possible. Over the past several years PMP Print have printed the calendar for us at their Christchurch plant. We have dealt through Wendy Hearn who up until recently was their Wellington agent. But PMP Print have since closed their Wellington agency and Wendy is now employed by another firm, Image Print. She has given us a price for our calendar for next year — \$7795 for 25,000 copies — which is slightly cheaper than PMP's price for this year's calendar. Feed-back we have had so far is that the calendar is valuable as a means of Gospel witness and for the propagation of the work of MPA. But we would like to hear from others concerning its value, so please let us know what you think. The continued publication of our calendar will, of course, depend on available funding. If we print another edition we may need to reduce the quantity for next year as we seem to have less people to distribute it.

WELLINGTON MAORI PASTORATE

During a recent trip to Wellington for my youngest brother's 60th birthday, Evelyn and I visited Corrina and Tawhiri Tupene of the Wellington Maori Pastorate Presbyterian Church. They have been using our Te Kupu Whakaora study books for their various Bible study groups and we took the opportunity to show them the range of material we have available. We were very warmly welcomed at their marae/church and had a profitable time with them, learning more of their ministry. There are about ten such pastorates throughout the country. We have been invited back to present certificates and speak to their congregation later in the year.



FROM A PRISON INMATE

“The Apostle Paul said that when we actually tell others about the Gospel of Jesus Christ, we should set forth the truth plainly and that is exactly what your Bible study does. It tells us everything about the Bible, for we should be knowledgeable about the Bible and about the reasons for our belief and sometimes we need to explain those reasons. But the most compelling and effective story we can tell puts Christ in the centre and that is why I enjoy doing the Bible study in your books. Because God is the keeper of our salvation, with renewed confidence in Him we trust Him with our lives. ‘Father God, please use me in the lives of others. Remind me to talk about who Jesus is and His life and teachings, and not to be dragged into debate, but to share Jesus. Amen.’” (This man is currently working through our advanced series).

We seem to have had few reports from leaders of late which is disappointing. Please let us know how things are going in your area -- not just the encouragements, but also the discouragements. We can then spend time praying about the various issues and where appropriate share with others for their prayer fellowship as well. Here again are our email addresses for you to contact us: --

To contact me personally -- graham@maoripostal.co.nz. To contact the office (Tony and Rachael) info@maoripostal.co.nz. To contact Evelyn -- evelynbatson@gmail.com.

Please continue to pray for the future direction of this ministry. We need the input of younger committed people to become involved as leaders to carry the work on in whatever form the Lord directs.

Yours in Christ

Graham and Evelyn