



CONNECTED

July—September 2020

In this issue

A Time Without Parallel for All of Us	1
My wife of 58 years	1
Crisis Can Produce Dramatic Change	2
Ravi Zacharias	2
More Free Gifts at the Rodgers Conference	3
5 Vital Truths	3
Book Review: The Wave	3
Along the trail there are always Measuring Sticks	4
Exposing the Heart	4



I'm glad to be an American, and to be married to this dear lady for 58 years.

This is our home in Houston, Texas. You can reach us at lesterhutson@gmail.com

Listening is usually better than talking!

A Time Without Parallel for All of Us

In my 79 years of life on this planet, I have never lived through any period of time parallel to what we've seen with this Coronavirus pandemic. Wow! On a kaleidoscope of fronts, "normal" is gone. We've read about the plagues in *Egypt*, the bubonic plague in *Europe*, the Great Depression in the *United States* and the Holocaust in *Germany*. As big and bad as they are, most calamities are localized to one country or area in the world. This Coronavirus seems to have touched the entire planet.

It certainly reached me. In the middle of February, I was cruising right along. Bro. Dmitry and his children had just returned to Belarus. I was trying to get over a very invasive repair surgery from a bout with cancer in 2007. Our new pastor here at [Northwest Baptist Church](#) was in the process of the move to Houston, and I was looking forward to plunging into the transition. All of a sudden, here came the Coronavirus. Within days, social distancing and sheltering in place at home became the standard everywhere. How true ring the words of our great Bible, "Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth," **Proverbs 27:1**.

Most of us can use a lot more flexibility. I have learned that the difference between winners and losers is not the trials and stresses they face. The difference is response. Sooner or later everybody gets roughed up and faces uncertain times. The losers turn negative, get all bent out of shape, whine, point fingers and sometimes get mad at God. They waste away and make life miserable for everybody around them. Winners get up. They accept the fact that some things in life are painful and *over their heads*. They realize that they may never know *why*. All of the griping and

complaining won't change a thing; getting up and moving forward will.

Down here at Northwest Baptist Church, it was quickly apparent to me that I had two major areas of responsibility: (1) to the best of my ability, make decisions and take actions to protect the welfare and lives of the people who go to church here and (2) to do all within my power to protect the corporate welfare of this church. Both fronts are laden with great ramifications. I realized that in spite of my best efforts, I could not guarantee that no one here would get sick or die. I also realized that I could not prevent someone from suing our church. If I did all I could to protect our people and church, I could live with myself. If I neglected my responsibility to look out for the welfare of the sheep and the Lord's church, I would have a hard time living with myself. Yes, I believe that God has given us a division of labor. He will always do His part, and ultimately success is all due to Him; however, that doesn't mean we can sit around idle neglecting what we are responsible to do. Solomon made it very clear that the sluggard will not do very well when hard times come. If a man expects to eat, according to the Bible he has to work. God does all the saving, but he won't save anyone who refuses to believe on Him as personal Savior. Thus we quickly implemented measures to protect our church, both the people individually and the church corporately. For six Sundays we had no in-house services; they were videotaped and shown on [YouTube](#). On May 3 we moved back inside with lots of safeguards in place. It's been a hard and heartbreaking time; however, the Lord has greatly blessed our church.

This *stay home time* has enabled me to gain ground on a backlog of paperwork which always seems to be there for me. I am happy to say that the first round of my major edit *What We Believe and Why 2* is complete. With the help of some of my friends, fine tuning is now in progress. It seems pretty safe to say that by the end of this year and possibly by the end of the summer, the new, revised edition of *What We Believe and Why 2* will be available on [Amazon.com](#).

Sickness, suffering and death never take a holiday. One of my dearest friends of almost 58 years was [Mary Jo Bridgewater](#). She was my personal secretary at Berean Baptist Church for over 15 years. Right in the middle of all this chaos, she had a stroke and went home to be with the Lord. She was one of the godliest persons I've ever known.

The surgery I had back in January to repair damage from cancer surgery in 2007 was a miserable failure. A 2nd surgery was in the wings, but the Coronavirus pandemic put a moratorium on elective surgeries. I'm happy to say that the 2nd surgery was done on May 18. I am still pretty sore and gimpy, but looking forward to better days ahead. Thanks to all of you been praying for me.

The biggest thing on my immediate to radar is the transition from me to our new pastor, Bro. Darren Simpson. He is now fully settled in Houston, and we are both looking forward to the transition days just ahead. I am eager to give myself more fully to the ministry of writing good Christian materials.

God loves you!

CRISIS CAN PRODUCE DRAMATIC CHANGES

February 1, 2020: robust economy purring like a kitten. April 1, 2020: economy in freefall, *stay-home order*, the whole world crippled by an unseen Coronavirus. May 25, 2020: George Floyd murdered by police in Minneapolis. Mayhem erupts.

Friends, it doesn't take a long time for the landscape to dramatically change. Peter predicted this day: *"Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation," 2 Pet. 3:3-4.* Even for most believers, the Second Coming of Christ and the end of time is great preaching material; but that He might come in June or July, 2020, and the antichrist could be consolidating his power before the end of this year is rushing things. Innately we tend to think it will take a long time for things to get to that point.

For those who know the Lord and His Word, the current Coronavirus/Floyd crises should shake us into reality. Within days from the arrival of COVID-19, civil authorities were telling us what we could and couldn't do. The president limited us to groups of 50 and then 10. Governors, County Judges and Mayors issued mandatory orders to stay home, social distance and wear masks. Failure to comply meant possible fines. Businesses, parks and churches shut down. The media fanned the fires of crisis. Social media became a battering-ram. Government controls varied from state to state and with cities; but the thing that stands out like a sore thumb is that civil authorities can take over and it doesn't take a long time. All it takes is a crisis that scares the vast majority they're all going to die and that they must have a savior. When they fear for their lives on a global scale, they will do pretty well anything the *Big Brother* saviors tell them they have to do. The last few months are eerie confirmation of that reality.

Serious Bible people know that a one-world order is coming. During the end of this age, antichrist will rule the world, and especially with his *Mark of the Beast*, he will seek to eliminate everyone who opposes him. It's called the *great tribulation*, the grizzliest, most macabre time Planet Earth will ever experience. For many people this sounds like science fiction, but it's not. It's time for believers to wake up to the fact that the end of this current age could be very near at hand. One good global crisis, and he could suddenly emerge on the scene to save us from ourselves and destruction. Obviously all who stand in his way will have to go; as Hitler and his Nazi Party saw it, *it's all about the common good.*

Truly it is time for God's people to stand up and boldly proclaim Jesus Christ as the only true hope for mankind.

Most people would learn from their mistakes, if they were not so busy denying them.

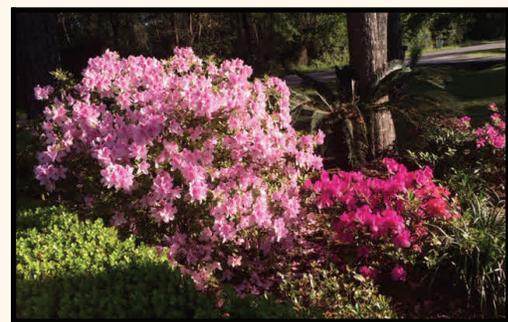
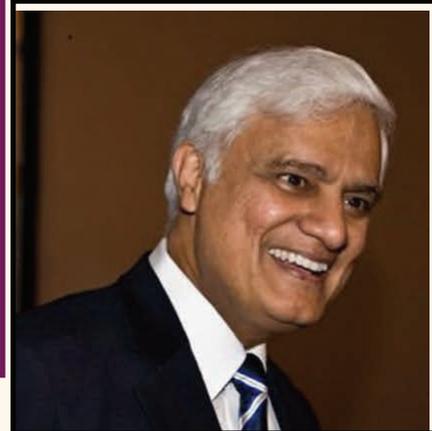
GOD'S DESCRIPTION OF ANCIENT ISRAEL (AND OF MODERN AMERICA)

"Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the LORD hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider. Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the LORD, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward. Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment," Isaiah 1:2-6.

A GIANT AMONG US

Ravi Zacharias has been promoted. *"And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them," Rev. 14:13.* What a great Christian voice he was: articulate whether spoken or written, poised, the consummate gentleman, brilliant, able to stand toe-to-toe with the greatest of intellects and do so with power and without offense.

In my opinion Ravi Zacharias was a spiritual giant, a true Christian champion. He worked hard in the service of our great God; no doubt his works will follow him until Jesus returns, especially his written works. He inspires me to do better, to never be content with mediocre, to routine excellence.



God loves beauty!

So do I.

Contact us at:
lesterhutson@gmail.com

ANOTHER SPECIAL GIFT AT THE RODGERS MISSIONS CONFERENCE

Lord willing I will again attend the [Rodgers Baptist Church](#) Missions Conference July 20-22. Last year gave away several copies of my [Survey of Bible History](#) books. This is a 3-book set that covers Genesis and includes a couple of chapters on Job. Each of the 3 books has 13 chapters for a total of 39 chapters. They move through Genesis on a story by story basis. Each major story is addressed and includes a systematic outline study plus a prose summary. They are prepared in lesson form and each lesson has 20 group participation questions. They are designed as teaching material for Sunday schools or small groups.

These books will be in the book room at Rodgers. I am giving free copies to all who are interested. I am giving the 3 book sets in both 5 1/2 X 8 1/2 format and 8 1/2 X 11 wide-margin format. Anyone who would like one or many sets of these free books should see me at the Missions Conference. Again, there are no strings attached.

Caller inquiring about legal requirements while traveling in Europe:

"If I register my car in France, and then take it to England, do I have to change the steering wheel to the other side of the car?"

5 THINGS EVERY LOST PERSON SHOULD KNOW

1. Every person is a sinner.
2. Sin carries the spiritual death penalty.
3. No person has the ability to address his own sin problem.
4. All hope is in Jesus Christ, the only capable intercessor.
5. To have Christ as your intercessor you must personally trust Him as Savior.

Never Underestimate the Power of Our Great God

Today at 7AM, I woke up feeling ill, but decided I needed the money, so I went into work. At 3PM I got laid off. On my drive home I got a flat tire. When I went into the trunk for the spare, it was flat too. A man in a BMW pulled over, gave me a ride, we chatted, and then he offered me a job. I start tomorrow.

A BOOK I HAVE READ & HIGHLY RECOMMEND

The Wave

Morton Rhue
Penguin Random House UK
ISBN 978-0-141-36893-1
80 London WC2R 0RL

The Wave is a fictionalized account of a fascinating teaching experiment in a California high school in 1967. It is based on a true incident that occurred in a high school history class in Palo Alto, California. 'The Wave' disrupted an entire school. This book shows how the powerful forces of group pressure can persuade people to join movements and give up their individual liberties even to their own great harm and to the harm of others. You will be shocked at how quickly tyranny and fear can take over; Rhue's book covers approximately one week in the life of a high school.

The history teacher's intent was to wake up his history students as to what happened in Nazi Germany. It's an absolutely intriguing story; gripping, shocking, the unimaginable happening with every new page in the short book of 161 easy-to-read pages. You will find it hard to lay down this book. Not only will the developments in the high school intrigue you; the ease and dynamics of how a Fascist State like Hitler's Germany will intrigue you. What multitudes of naive people think could never happen did happen less than 100 years ago. The dynamics for hatred, power, conformity, idealism and a mindless group mentality are always nearby. Deep down the seeds of Fascism are in all people.

This is a very skillfully written book. It is inseparably linked to reality. The fiction is so rooted in reality that the entire story seems like an actual account. It's eerie, chilling and a powerful reminder that apart from vigilance, the worst nightmares of humanity can repeat themselves. Rhue creates tremendous drama in this book; suspense escalates to the final chapter.

Every person who values freedom and hates tyranny should read this book. It should be required reading for every young person. It has a powerful subliminal message and is a strong warning. I purchased this book at the Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum bookstore in Jerusalem, Israel. I highly recommend the book, and urge parents to see that their children read it.

ALONG THE TRAIL THERE ARE ALWAYS MEASURING STICKS

It's not too hard to tell the difference between summer and winter. The sun and the moon tell us when it's night or day, and help us keep track of time. Along our interstate highways there are mile markers. An incident like the Coronavirus also measures us. The Center for Disease Control is constantly measuring how many cases we have, how many have died and how many have recovered.

I have noticed that spirits and attitudes are also being measured. Through the centuries, Christians generally have not been known for being cooperative, tolerant or peacemakers. Too many Christians love to fight, pick and meddle especially with each other. Sadly, our kind has a reputation for negativity and for ugly spirits. This Coronavirus pandemic has exposed that not-too-glorious underbelly of some Christians.

Almost from the start, there were efforts to view efforts to identify and contain the virus as an attack on Christianity and churches in particular. Unfortunately there are overzealous politicians and special interest groups which have capitalized on this virus as a means of suppressing religious freedom, but there can be no denying that there is a very real and deadly virus out there. For at least a few Sundays, most churches ceased in-house worship. Plans to restart services have proven to be a hotbed for division. How soon do we restart? What safeguards do we put in place? Even among churches of very close and similar convictions, there has been much disagreement on just what to do including timing. Internally most churches have felt considerable stress over the same considerations.

It seems to me that this pandemic is measuring much more than how many people get sick and die from the virus. It is also measuring some of the more fundamental aspects of true Christianity: the ability to disagree without going to war with each other, fundamental kindness, basic respect, the ability to refrain from meddling in a matter that is not your own and how good we are at peacemaking versus division. Even preachers have used the Internet to suggest cowardice and fear in those who are taking the pandemic seriously.

Through the years I have observed that Christians are often their own biggest enemies. There's a time to fight, even to the death. There's a time to stand up, be counted and sound off like a trumpet. There's a place to draw a line in the sand. I've never been able to understand those who say ugly things and treat as enemies those who are almost exactly like them on 100% of fundamental Christian issues and very close on the remaining 5%. So often they stand in pulpits slamming and damning. Social media has become the clothesline for dirty laundry and war-mongering. Unborn babies are being aborted by the millions, sex trafficking is rampant, false teachers are damning millions to hell with false plans of salvation, alcohol abuse continues to break up homes and slaughter people on our highways, separated Christian living is almost nonexistent in the Christian community; and there is an eerie silence in the same pulpits and on the same social media platforms where Christians are beating up on each other over whether or not the Coronavirus is real and serious, and on how to respond to it.

Yes, in my opinion this Coronavirus pandemic is measuring much more than how many are getting sick and dying.

"The Heart is Deceitful above All Things, and Desperately Wicked"

Jeremiah 17:9

The line at the grocery store was long. It was 7:30. The store would open at 8:00, a special time just for senior citizens.

A young man came from the parking lot and tried to cut in the front of the line; an old lady beat him back into the parking lot with her cane.

He returned, and tried again to cut into the line, but an old gray-haired codger punched him in the gut, kicked him to the ground and rolled him back. The words and looks were far less than kind or Christian.

As the young man approached the line for the third time he said, *"If you don't let me unlock the door, you'll never get in there."*