



CONNECTED

April—June, 2021

In this issue

Contentment When Plans Are Rearranged	1
FLY!	1
A True Yokefellow in the Lord	2
Jesus is the Door that is Always Open	2
Blessed With Opportunities	3
Book Review: <i>Unbroken</i>	3
Making Disciples Requires an Investment	4
<i>What We Believe and Why</i> , a 2-volume set	4
Cremation?	4



Fly! By God's grace ALWAYS be the best you can be! NEVER mediocre!

A good character is the best tombstone. Those who loved you will remember. Carve your name on hearts, not on marble.

CONTENTMENT

If you know me very well at all, you are aware that I am not a *hip-shot* guy. Usually I don't like surprises, especially those home-made crises due to lack of planning and preparation. I have observed that a large percentage of all crises are home-made, but God gets the blame: "It just wasn't the will of God."

Upon retirement from pastoral ministry, it has long been my intent to plunge right into producing chapters for my newest book, "What's So Wrong with Doing Right?" So far, that hasn't happened. Between Thanksgiving and Christmas Mrs. Hutson's left hip went out completely; bone to bone. Overnight she was on a walker. (I learned that the correct language is an "in-house support device.") We saw her orthopedic doctor on January 4. Bro. Darren Simpson became sole senior pastor of Northwest Baptist Church on January 1. Talk about the timing of the Lord; He freed me just in time to take care of the love of my life to who I will soon be married for 59 years.

At first, her complete hip-replacement surgery was scheduled for January 27; however, COVID-19 worsened, and the Methodist Hospital System halted all elective surgeries where the patient required an overnight stay. Margaret was bumped and her surgery didn't happen until February 23. Her situation was worse than her surgeon anticipated, and recovery is taking longer; but she's steadily improving. Our deep and humble thanks to all of you who have prayed for and encouraged her (us) with so many calls, texts, emails and cards.

Instead of writing chapters, I have found myself taking care of the human I love most in this life. As I mentioned to a group of friends, this experience has given me a new perspective and appreciation for Jesus' words, "It is more blessed to give than to receive," Acts 20:35.

What a joy it has been to give myself to this lovely lady who found herself in need of most everything. Through the years, repeatedly she's been there for me: car wreck, heart attack, cancer surgery, urinary sepsis and many other times. I could never live long enough to repay her.

Some in colder climates tend to snicker at us who live where it is normally *hot as a pistol*, but the cold snap that came in February to a large city and region where almost 100% of the plumbing is in the attic was no laughing matter. The morgue and funeral homes in Galveston were full; the mayor rented a refrigerated 18-wheeler to take care of the overflow of frozen corpses. I suspect that if a big hurricane slammed into some of the colder regions, there wouldn't be much laughing. Mrs. H and I lost power and water for three days; but we're campers, and weathered the situation pretty well. Thankfully we had no broken pipes.

For reasons often unknown to us God sometimes rearranges our plans, and never consults us in the process. He's still in charge, and has the final say. How grateful I am that He is good, and always does right, even when it looks wrong and bad to us. We might as well get used to a few "surprises;" they're sure to come. It's a good thing to *trust God!* All the time! In the times of ease, and in the storms of life! "Be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee," Hebrews 13:5.

I'm getting a lesson in flexibility. I'm the guy who likes a *place for everything, and everything in its place*. I find chaos, clutter and indecision hard to take. A long time ago I woke up to the reality that God owns me; He "purchased" me "with His own blood," Acts 20:28. I'm a slave; He's my Master. I can plan all I want to, and shame on me if I don't; but ultimately He calls the shots. God forbid that when He rearranges my

life, I moan and complain and grip. Oh, it's easy to be negative, and to *throw a little hissy-fit or pity-party* when things don't go our way.

The Apostle Paul said, "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content," **Philippians 4:11**. Oh, that preaches so good, and will draw the "Amen's;" however, finding real, bona fide *contentment* in actual practice is pretty hard to do, even among *the faithful*. Too often all it takes to send them into a tailspin and into an attitude, spirit and discontentment that can compete with any non-Christian are a few *bad things* that didn't go as planned. "Contentment" is not innate; it is an acquired behavior. It comes with realizing who is in real control; and in trusting Him, even to run your life perhaps in a way that you don't understand.

It seems to me that most of us are pretty spoiled, especially Americans. I confess to being high on the list. I can also honestly tell you that the last three months for me have been a time of true contentment and bliss. The time with my precious wife has been some of the best we've had since we said, "I do" back on August 3, 1962; and the "rest" I have experienced in the Lord has been truly rich.

The coining of a new word:
Ineptocracy
(in-ep-TOC-ra-cy)

A system of government where the least capable to lead are elected by the least capable of producing, and where the members of society least likely to sustain themselves or succeed are rewarded with goods and services paid for by the confiscated wealth of a diminishing number of producers.

A TRUE YOKEFELLOW IN THE LORD

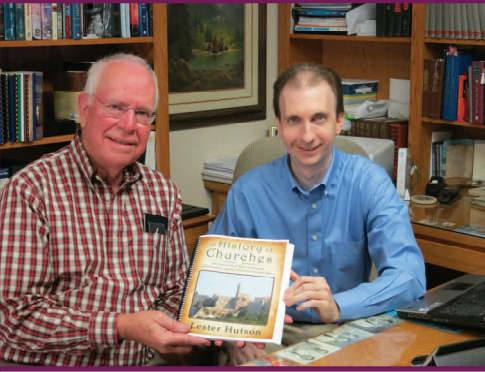
In the church which was at Philippi, Paul had a “yokefellow.” The Greek word **suzugos** means “co-yoked.” We’re talking a companion of the closest rank; not necessarily in a marriage relationship though it could be, but a relationship where the focus is clearly on the work of the Lord.

I have a yokefellow in the Lord; in fact I have several. I’m talking about people who are really close, and who help me in very substantial ways. Most of them are quietly behind the scenes; they’re not in it for accolades or limelight. They’re servants of the living God, and are giving themselves to Him. They’re not into chest-beating.

He is truly *in the gearbox* with me, and has been for about two decades. He’s perhaps the most unassuming person I have ever known. He just does the work expecting nothing in return. He’s is the consummate high-tech man, high up the ladder with Chevron; but you’d have to

hunt to find out how brilliant he is. He’s the man who does the technical work for the books I write and publish; he makes sure I satisfy all of Amazon’s many requirements. He makes them look good: the margins, titles and sub-titles, the spacing, the fonts and so much more unrealized work that gives the books that professional status. He’s the proof-reader of proof-readers; even writes specific computer programs to find errors and inconsistencies. He is my chief editor; always holding me to the highest standard of excellence from wording to clear thinking and expression of ideas. He’s the closest of advisors, ever urging good use of my time. He’s one of my most-trusted and chief advisors. He keeps my computer programs current, clean and uncorrupted. He’s the unseen guide behind my website, every *Connected Newsletter* passes through him and he has prepared hundreds of PowerPoints for me.

Nobody knows for sure who the “yokefellow” mentioned by Paul is. I know who one of my chief “yokefellows” is; he is Philip Rice. That’s him sitting beside me in the picture. He’s a quiet, in-the-shadows man; but God knows him well. God knows ALL yokefellows; and at *The Judgment Seat of Christ*, they’re going to shine and glitter like gold.



“To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding; To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity; To give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion. A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels: To understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings. The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.”

Solomon the son of David,
king of Israel

PROVERBS 1:1-7

JESUS SAID, “I AM THE DOOR”

I am reminded of a fable about a ruler who sought to identify the wisest man in his domain to be his prime minister, a sort of Pharaoh-Joseph situation. Legend has it that the ruler put his three prime candidates into a small room with one door. The lock on the door was the most sophisticated and secure that the ruler could devise.

Upon entry into the room two of the brilliant men immediately began to devise combinations for unlocking the door. The third man just sat there in deep thought. After a while he got up, went to the door and opened it. The entire time, the door was unlocked.

Jesus is the door that is always unlocked. *“The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely,”* Revelations 22:17. Anybody can come to Him any time; but all who come must come His way. They must come in faith; yes, trusting Him as their only hope for forgiveness of sins and eternal life.

So many daily doors are open to those who will humble themselves and come to the Savior, trusting Him for help in all areas of life. Hear His words, *“Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you,”* Matthew 7:7. Far too often we find ourselves locked into a room of hopelessness and despair when there’s an open door right there. Jesus said, *“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest,”* Matthew 11:28. Those who try Him have everything to gain, and nothing to lose.



Attitudes generally speak
for themselves!

“A ship is always safe at shore, but that’s not what it is built for.”
Albert Einstein



I was driving with my three young children one warm summer evening when a woman in the convertible ahead of us stood up and waved. She was stark naked! As I was reeling from the shock, I heard my 5-year-old shout from the back seat, ‘Mom, that lady isn’t wearing a seat belt!’

GREATLY BLESSED WITH OPPORTUNITIES

During more than 60 years of pastoral ministry, God truly blessed me in a multitude of ways. Door after door of opportunity swung open to me; I am aware they opened by the great unseen hand of God "that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth," **Revelation 3:7**.



Since 2005 Mrs. Hutson and I have regarded a missionary trip to Papua New Guinea as a great time of opportunity for us. We visited missionaries David and Carol Holland whom God used to establish from scratch a powerful indigenous work in Karimui, a village with no roads and only a trail which takes a week by foot. We flew into a grass airstrip on a Missionary Aviation Plane.

Hundreds of tribespeople walked days to participate in the two weeks of intense Bible teaching. By American standards the situation was deplorable, but they came and stood for hours through the singing and messages which went through interpreters from English to Pidgin English to one of the more than 800 native languages spoken in New Guinea. On the way, we spent a week in Australia with our close brethren in an Independent Baptist Church was planted by Northwest Baptist

Church in Houston.

For me, teaching *Basic Bible Truths* both in Australia and New Guinea was an overwhelming experience. In Papua, I was also moved to my core by the opportunity to sit down with three old men who were cannibals in their younger years. For them, a meeting with Jesus Christ changed everything. When it's real, and not merely a religious experience, meeting Christ ALWAYS changes lives for the better.

The picture above is of the *Basic Bible Truths Chart* written in Pidgin English on a sheet of plywood. Pidgin English is the trade language in New Guinea. There are more than 800 native languages in the country, but most of the people there know Pidgin. Bro. David Holland interpreted my messages and lessons into Pidgin.

The men in this picture are pastors and leaders of the churches which are flourishing there. Missionary David Holland did it the right way. He pioneered an area where there was no Christian witness, and one-on-one began to win men to Christ and teach them. He won Kimin to the Lord, taught and groomed him and God called him to preach. He became the pastor. Hundreds were reached, other churches were planted and these men are testimony to the fact that God's way still works. Pastor Kimin is in the deep blue shirt. I am standing next to Bro. Holland.



Intriguing beyond my ability to adequately describe was the opportunity to sit down with three old men who grew up as cannibals. None of them knew their age; they told me how terrified they were at their first sight of an airplane. They thought it was a huge monster bird which would swoop down and eat them. They fled like a covey of quails. We know planes flew over New Guinea in World War 2 in the mid 1940s. At that time these men were little boys. When I was there in 2005, they were close to 70 years old.

The man on the left is Karbi. Due to leprosy, most of his fingers were missing. Both legs were off at the knees. He had to scoot, crawl and be helped wherever he went. Medical help, especially for a person in this condition, is virtually non-existent over there, yet Bro. Holland said Karbi was one of the most faithful Christians over there. Oh friends, God smote me! I am so ashamed of how soft and spoiled most of us are. I am so guilty of taking blessings for granted; and of moaning, griping and complaining. For Margaret and me, three weeks *down under* was truly a great opportunity and blessing; but it was very sobering. Do not take your blessing for granted!

FOUR THINGS YOU CAN DO WITH YOUR HANDS

- ⇒ Wring them in despair.
- ⇒ Fold them in idleness.
- ⇒ Clinch them in anger.
- ⇒ Use them to help someone.

Contact us at:

lesterhutson@gmail.com

This is our primary method of communication: about books, preaching or seminar appointments, questions, news, distribution list, website, etc.

A BOOK I HAVE RECENTLY READ & HIGHLY RECOMMEND

Unbroken: A World War II Story of Survival

Laura Hillenbrand
Random House Audio
USBN # 9781448755905

Unbroken is the gripping, dynamic true story of Louis Zamperini, but it is far more. There are many stories within this story: a rebellious son in a staunch Christian family, a reckless youth, an enormously gifted athlete, a young man caught in the horror of world war, survival at sea, Japanese captivity, a prisoner of war singled out for breaking, a return to civilian life with severe Post Traumatic Syndrome, alcoholism, a wrecked marriage and life, a meeting with Christ that changed everything, greatly used of God.

Even more is the nauseating over-riding story of fallen humanity, the depraved nature of mankind and especially the hard-to-believe lengths that some people (entire societies) will go to subdue, torture and break all opposition. Only the failure of the imagination limits the cruelty and heinousness of people against other people. It's a nature that's in all of us; and it especially manifests itself where a notion of superiority exists, and where prejudice is unchecked. Men have the sinister capacity of justifying whatever they choose to do against another human or a group of humans.

In World War II, the Japanese were masters at it, especially in their Prisoner of War camps. Hitler and the Germans were there too, but *Unbroken* is about Japan and the Pacific theatre which they attempted desperately to subjugate and enslave, thinking themselves to be superior to all others. What they did in terms of mayhem across most of Asia and Australia defies comprehension: the death marches, kamikazes, slavery, rape, the wholesale government sanctioned sex slavery of subjugated nations for the gratification of Japanese soldiers, the massacres of whole islands and people groups, total regard and sneering at the *Geneva Convention Rules*, the infamous *Kill all Prisoners* order. So much comes to light in *Unbroken*. It staggers the imagination and boils the blood until we realize that nature is in all of us.

Louis Zamperini's experience in four different interrogation Centers and Japanese Prisoner of War Camps defies adequate description. Every placid person, especially Americans who know or care little or nothing about the price of freedom, should be exposed to this piece of history. It's chilling to the spine. Zamperini's experiences with Mutsuhiro Watanabe are the worst of the worst. It's hard to read.

After the war, Louis Zamperini became a shipwreck of a different sort. Back in the States, his popularity put him into compromising circles. Daily flashbacks of the war, particularly the POW abuse by Watanabe whom was known as *the Bird*, took away his sleep. Zamperini drank and drank himself into poverty, the edge of divorce and near suicide. He had married Cynthia Applewhite, the strong-willed daughter of a wealthy California family who rejected Louis. Through much poverty and abuse, Cynthia stayed with Louis, doing all within her power to turn him. Against strong opposition, she was able to get him to a Billy Graham Crusade in Los Angeles. Zamperini remembered his promise to give his life to God in exchange for deliverance while on a two-man raft adrift in the Pacific. He and his pilot friend Phil drifted 2,000 miles in 47 days, were strafed and then captured by the Japanese. His life was immediately changed. Louis forgave Watanabe and Japan. No more hatred and burning desire to return to Japan to hunt down and kill Watanabe! His marriage was reconciled. During the 1998 Winter Olympics, Louis Zamperini returned to Kyoto, Japan, and ran the Olympic torch past the cruel Naotsu Prison where he was liberated by America forces only days before the infamous *Kill All Prisoners* was to be implemented.

Unbroken is not an easy read, and it is soul-searching and soul-shaking. Free men and women need to read this book, especially the children.

MAKING DISCIPLES OF CHRIST REQUIRES AN INVESTMENT

I do not claim to be much of an expert when it comes to making disciples of Jesus Christ. I've been at it for a long time, but I consider my track record pretty poor. Discipleship has long been a great burden of mine, and I've even written a book about how to do it, but the bottom line is that I have talked about it more than I have actually done it.

This seems to be the case with most pastors and even whole churches. It's always on our lips, and why shouldn't it be? After all, it's right there in the Bible, the chief assignment of God for every believer. It's the heart of Jesus' Great Commission, **Matthew 28:19-20**.

My discipleship book (*Basic Discipleship*) is a systematic set of Bible study materials specifically designed to take a new believer through what he or she needs in order to produce spiritual growth. Lots of people who want to make disciples bog down right here. They simply do not know what to say to another person who needs to grow in the Lord. Very few have a structured, step-by-step growth plan for the person who needs to be mentored. They are afraid of up-close-and-personal contact because they don't know where to start, let alone where to go next. My book is simply a structured body of materials for newborn babes in Christ.

I am convinced that making good Disciples of Christ is impossible apart personal relationships. You have to get into a person's life: get to know him, answer his questions, show him an example. Making disciples is work, and it can be trying. The person you are trying to make into a disciple has a mind of his or her own; and Satan will do all he can to frustrate your efforts. It takes time over the long haul.

In my opinion that's where the breakdown is for most of us. We are too busy; we don't have and are not willing to make time for mentoring other people. I have constantly fought the clock throughout my ministry. Since I have been grown, I can't remember going to bed when some pretty important thing was not left undone: an unreturned phone call, a visit I should have made, an unfinished sermon or lesson, some piece of church business, plans for a coming meeting and the list seems endless. I have wanted to be in more lives, helping people become true Disciples of Christ; but too often more pressing things prevailed. The more immediate urgent needs prevailed over the more important eternal business of making Disciples of Christ. I'm not a bit proud of that, but I suspect I am typical of many of God's people, including preachers.

In the headline of this article I said, "*Making Disciples of Christ Requires an Investment.*" It does. There must be an investment of love and concern, a well-planned approach and lots of time. When it comes to making Disciples of Christ, there is no substitute for a relationship; and relationships are deliberate, not accidental.

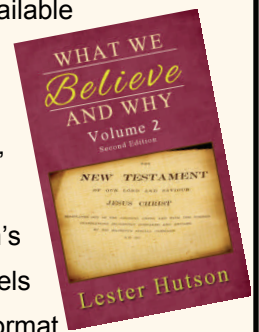
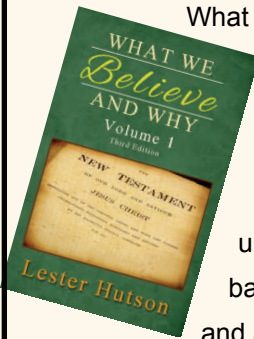
Simper Fi

Our son, Mark Hutson, is a United States Marine. He now works as an Environmental Scientist for the Southern Ute Indian Tribe in Ignacio, Colorado.



THESE TWO VOLUMES NOW AVAILABLE FROM AMAZON.COM

What a blessing to announce that this [two-volume set](#) is now available from Amazon. Combined in these volumes are 105 Bible studies. This is a collage of chapters dealing with key issues such as abortion, homosexuality, the death penalty, the sin unto death, the unpardonable sin, miracle healing, unknown tongues, Joel's Prophecy, falling from grace, John's baptism, repentance, saints, church discipline, guardian angels and a great many more. The studies are in annotated outline format making them ideal for study and teaching. They are loaded with thousands of Scripture references. Claims are made and proofs are given. This is study material for serious Bible students.



WHAT ABOUT CREMATIONS?

Historically many pagans have burned their dead to release the spirit; to join ancestors, to become an animal spirit or into stasis. Of course, burning corpses reduces the potential of spreading of diseases.

The Christian way of disposing of a body as seen throughout the Bible is burial. Abraham was buried. God buried Moses. Jesus was buried! The spirit immediately departs the body at death.

In the current era, many people chose cremation because of the cost. However it is done, disposing of a body is expensive. I have been a Christian since I was 13. When I die, I want a Christian burial.

