



PIER REVIEW

THE MINISTRY JOURNAL OF THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF ST. LUKE, ORLANDO, FLORIDA

When the Going Gets Tough...

By The Rev. Canon J. Gary L'Hommedieu

**Christians do
not lower their
expectations
during difficult
times; they
raise them.**

THE ECONOMY'S IN THE TANK. PEOPLE and politicians are squabbling back and forth. Lots and lots of people are out of work. Everybody seems to be cutting back—if not one aspect of their lives, then another. How do you say welcome to the era of lowered expectations?

There's a well-known saying: when the going gets tough, the tough get going. It sounds terribly ordinary and not particularly comforting. Nonetheless, the message is clear. Times like the present are not for the fainthearted. Like it or not, we will emerge from the present time a heartier people.

I'd like to coin a new "well known saying": when the going gets tough, the tough study Scripture. Those who think this is an invitation to escapism are those who haven't tried it. At the Cathedral people are trying it left and right.

When the times are stressful—which, truth be told, is most of the time—people return to the foundation of their lives to remind themselves of the difference between that which is fleeting and that which is solid. The real difference between normal times and times of crisis is that during the latter we don't have the luxury of ignoring reality. It stares us in the face. If we don't look back, it bites us on the nose.

The same is true for those times when the future is uncertain. As every one of us knows, the future is uncertain by definition. Sometimes we have the luxury of assuming tomorrow will be just like today, but the fact is that we never know. When tomorrow comes around looking too new for comfort, we return to our foundation. We ask ourselves, what can I count on from day to day? What is certain after all?

Christians return to their foundation in the Word of God written, the Holy Scriptures. Some may be attempted to escape into the Word—to fantasize about another world and our pretended place in it. That is not as typical an attitude as many critics suppose. Most Christians turn to the Word to reorder their priorities and to remind themselves what's really important.

A personal relationship with the personal God is nurtured through the written Word, where God speaks to us directly. He doesn't work

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Dean Clark caught in a studious pose in (of all places) the Dean's Study.

Revelation Some Markers

By The Very Rev. Anthony P. Clark

SOMEONE ONCE DEFINED A CLASSIC AS A BOOK everybody talks about but which almost nobody reads. From the perspective of some biblical scholars, we could apply the term “classic” to the last book of the Bible—the Apocalypse or Revelation to John. The Revelation to John (note the singular—there was one only one!) remains a classic—unread but much discussed—for many in the Church for one of two reasons.

On the one hand, many avoid studying Revelation because of the apparent obsession many believers have for the book. This obsession perspective leads to the correlation of many current events with the cryptic symbols of Revelation. Red China, for example, becomes the “Kings from the East” (Rev. 16:12-16) or the European Common Market is understood as the “ten horns of the beast” (Rev. 13:1-10).

Such crystal ball reading of Revelation leads to a fanaticism among those obsessed with connecting the past, present and future dots of Revelation. Unfortunately it also leads to a mistrust of Holy Scripture, because the predictions of death and destruction on a biblical proportion and the end of the world as we know it have been wrong since John first penned his revelation.

On the other hand, many avoid serious engagement with Revelation because of the irrelevance associated with it. One biblical scholar writes that because of the bizarre images, it is easy to dismiss the last book of the Bible “as an antiquated anthology...born out of paranoia and designed to moralize people by appealing to divine scare tactics.” For modern readers obsessed with “relevance”, the Revelation to John is simply foolishness.

Beginning this September I hope to navigate a course of study on Revelation between the twin extremes of

Obsession and Irrelevance. The channel markers for this study include Inspiration, Benediction and Application. Inspiration, the first channel marker, reminds us of the inspired nature of Revelation. As Paul reminded Timothy, “All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true” (2 Tim 3:16). Our course of study through Revelation will remind us that all scripture—even the cryptic passages—is inspired by God.

Application, the second channel marker, reminds us that Holy Scripture—even the bizarre Apocalypse—is given by God for use in our lives. God’s Word, including Revelation, enables us to follow St Paul’s counsel to the Christians in Philippi: “Fix your thoughts on what is true and honorable and right. Think about things that are pure and lovely and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise. Keep putting into practice all you learned from me and heard from me and saw me doing.” (Phil. 4:8b,9a)

Benediction, the third channel marker, originates in Revelation. John underscores the importance of this final book of Holy Scripture by saying, “God blesses the one who reads this prophecy to the church, and he blesses all who listen to it and obey what it says” (Rev. 1:3a). We may never know the specific nature of God’s blessing in our study of Revelation, but we can trust the LORD’s promise about the efficacy of his Word: “I send it out, and it always produces fruit. It will accomplish all I want it to, and it will prosper everywhere I send it.” (Isaiah 55:11) PR

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“I will not neglect your word.” (Ps 119:16)



The Word of the Lord

By The Rev. Richard E. Grant, Associate Priest

I CANNOT THINK OF A TIME WHEN I WASN'T conscious that the Bible had significance, though I didn't come from a family of Bible readers. Nonetheless, I grew up knowing that the Bible (the book) was important and was to be respected.

As a child I was given my grandmother's old KJV Bible and thereafter saw to it that it was never put on the floor, never had a wet glass set on it, and never was used to prop up something else. Why? Because, it was “the Word of the Lord,” which I thought meant it was *about* God. I knew that it was read in church, and from it we learned about Adam and Eve, Jacob's ladder, Joseph' colorful coat, Moses, David and Goliath, John the Baptist, Mary, Joseph, and Baby Jesus.

As a youth, I tried to read it like any other book by starting at the beginning and slogging all the way through to the end. I never made it. I got bogged down in the “begats” and figured I wasn't old enough to understand God's Word. For the longest time, I let others read those Sunday passages to me. I made sure that the Bible (the book) was given proper handling. I figured that by being “a good boy,” and going to church, I'd be okay.

But then I grew up and married a Baptist girl who had become an Episcopalian. Somehow she thought such a nice boy who went to church regularly would know a whole lot more about the Bible than not to set a wet glass on it!

Eventually, through the influence of a group of adults who knew that the Bible is not written *about* God but *by* God and that it is *about* His

relationship with us, my spirit and soul began to be nourished by the Word of the Lord. It didn't take me long to actually hear Him and know that He had been calling me since I was a little boy. Within a decade I was ordained, but still needed to study that Word.

Today I meet with a group on Tuesday mornings that began in 2002 right after Amy and I arrived in Orlando. It started with Ross, Bill, Matt, Roger, Tom, Jim, Seth, Bob and me. After a while two of them figured 6 a.m. was too early, but then David joined us. Then Bill died, and another Bob joined us. Tom died, Roger began going off for six months at a time, and Matt took a new job. So now the “regulars” are Bob, Bob, Ross, David and I. We pray for understanding, we listen, we struggle, we argue with God and each other, we laugh, we commiserate, we comfort, we pray, and then we go eat! But always we are blessed and strengthened by our fellowship and by the assurance that God is with us and through His Word He will guide us.

The Psalmist says, “I have hidden your word in my heart that I might now sin against you. I rejoice in following your statutes as one rejoices in great riches. I meditate upon your precepts and consider your ways. I delight in your decrees; I will not neglect your word” (Ps 119:11, 14-16).

The Word of the Lord.

PR

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***Believing God begins Wednesday,
September 9, 6:30-8:30 P.M.***

Believing God

By Jennifer Crone, Nursery Coordinator

BELIEVING GOD IS DIFFERENT THAN believing *in* God. Acknowledging the existence of our God and accepting the salvation He offers us through Jesus Christ is still passive in comparison to actively believing what God has said to us through His Word, the Bible.

I gained a great deal of insight into this difference when I read Beth Moore's book *Believing God*. That book changed so much of my faith—making it stronger and taking it to a new level of incorporation in my daily life. I have re-read the book several times but have always wanted to participate in a group study of this material through her women's Bible study called by the same name. As it turns out, the Cathedral had this study tucked in a storage closet waiting for a moment like this one.

The purpose of the study is to help women truly believe God is who He says He is, that He can do what He says He can do, that we are who God says we are, and that every one of us can do all things through Christ. The study is a great opportunity to examine our individual belief systems and how they came to be shaped the way that they are.

For example, I always thought of God as my Father—that He was there to discipline me when I wandered off the path and bless me when I was faithful and staid on it. I found that this is a narrow vision of who God is compared to what it says in His Word. While I have been busy worrying over how I look to my heavenly Father (“Am I good enough? Am I generous

enough? Am I loving my husband and children enough? Am I doing what He wants me to do?”), God has not been sitting there watching me and putting numbers on a scoreboard. He has already told me I am forgiven, I am loved, I do have a purpose, and if I just spend time with Him and trust in His Word, I will walk the path He has for me.

Sounds like an airtight formula... and then life with four children, two part time jobs, and one travelling husband happens. Once again that time I needed to devote to studying God's Word and listening for His voice is eroded away, and again I feel off the path and out in the wilderness. The only way I know to get back on track is to go back and begin to study again.

This Fall I will be doing just that. One part of it will be through facilitating the Beth Moore Bible study *Believing God: Experiencing a Fresh Explosion of Faith* on Wednesday nights. But the larger part will be carving out time to commit solely to God for prayer, reading, and listening. As simple as it sounds, that time is the path back to Him.

I joyfully begin this journey because God has already promised that I will find Him. As He says in Jeremiah, “You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.” **PR**

While I have been busy worrying over how I look to my heavenly Father, God has not been sitting there watching me and putting numbers on a scoreboard.

Women's Sunday morning Bible Study
resumes Sunday, September 13, at 9 A.M.
in the Chapter Room



Theresa Anstett leading the Women's Bible Study.
Theresa began her first semester
of law school this August.

Opening the Word

By Theresa Anstett

THIS MAY SOUND STRANGE," SAID LINDA Werner, author of *Legacy Principles*, "but I live for my funeral."

Yes, Linda, that does sound strange. But you've got my attention!

At the 2008 Cathedral Women's Retreat Linda Werner brought us God's message. She asked us to ponder what we would like people to say about us at our funerals. Then she challenged us to examine our current objectives, relationships, time management, and walk with the Lord in light of how we hope people will remember us.

One area Linda encouraged us to cultivate is our time in the Word, especially that we would commit to meeting together as Cathedral women to study the Bible, pray and grow in our relationships with one another and with our Heavenly Father. The result of this has been our Sunday morning Women's Bible Study.

Remember Enoch? Genesis 5 tells us, that Enoch walked with God for 300 years... and then he was no more, because God took him into heaven. We know almost nothing else about Enoch, but if we had attended his funeral (or whatever type of service follows a bodily assumption into heaven), we could say with confidence that he was a man who "walked with God". What better legacy could he leave? When I grow up, I want to be just like Enoch!

If Enoch were alive today, I imagine that we would find him regularly pouring over the Scriptures, seeking God's face and meeting with other men to do the same. It's very difficult to walk with God if we don't these same things.

In 2 Timothy 4:3 the apostle Paul warns, "For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear." Doesn't that sound like the culture in which we live!

It's been a privilege for me to open the Word of God with other women at the Cathedral. Together we are exploring in Genesis the foundation for the most important doctrines of the Christian faith. We are discovering anew those familiar Bible "stories" that we used to sing about in children's church. But most of all, we are discovering the God Who Is, rather than the god we have squeezed into our convenient little boxes. We are watching His story of love and redemption unfold. And we are learning to trust Him in new ways with the practical everyday challenges of life.

Consider the Bible as a love letter to you from your Heavenly Father, rather than as a dusty textbook you pull out when you need to cram for life's exams. One of our ladies summed it up this way: "My prayer as I study Scripture typically was, 'Lord, I want to learn about you.' Then I realized that that was a distancing phrase. What I'm doing is deepening my relationship with the Lord, not learning 'about' Him. And that made me feel very peaceful."

Thank you, sister. I also want to be like you when I grow up!

**Consider the Bible
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PR



“By their involvement in Sunday morning activities, Cathedral children will be surrounded by role models who openly pray, read Scripture, honor God and love each other...”

Take the Family Challenge

By Nicole Franco, Director of Children’s Ministry

FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE CHURCH, the family home was considered a holy and sacred place. It is not only the place where we reside and keep our material possessions—it is the place where we live, learn and love. Just as the church is not defined by the bricks and mortar, our homes are not “houses” but places built on the foundation of respect, common and shared values and an unconditional love for those inside.

As parish families we should consider our homes and families as an extension of the church. We are all part of a greater community of believers. We share the same hopes and concerns for our children and aging parents as well as the same uncertainty of the current economic times. We live in a society that often seems to undermine the work we do to raise God-loving and moral children. I believe it is important to see our friends in Christ as allies and a support system that can lend comfort in busy and trying times.

Christians are called to form Christ-centered homes, and it is often difficult to keep this in mind as we struggle to meet the demands of family life. Our impossible schedules of work and daily living get in the way of our best intentions. Children learn to value what they see their parents spending their time and energies on. As a mother of three young children, I am

often left feeling that I will never get everything done. And the reality is that I won’t! But I ask our Cathedral families to take the challenge along with me to meet the most important demands that God has. God wants our time, our energy and our talents to glorify Him.

By their involvement in Sunday morning activities, Cathedral children will be surrounded by role models who openly pray, read scripture, honor God and love each other. They will also feel the love that comes from being a part of God’s community—His loving family. They will be surrounded by a hedge of protection that comes from the many members who regularly pray, teach and serve our youngest and most precious members.

So whether it’s making it to Sunday School, praying as a family before dinner or having lunch with a fellow Cathedral family after church, remember that our homes will be the formation of Christian families to come. Our children will be blessed beyond measure with a sound and solid faith that will be theirs to grow on their own one day. Blessings for a beautiful fall and a happy school year! PR

“...They will also feel the love that comes from being a part of God’s community—His loving family.”

2009 FALL CHILDREN’S MINISTRY EVENTS:

KIDS CLUB

Begins Sept. 9
Wednesday nights 6:30 PM

CHORISTERS WED 4:30 PM

Begins Sept. 9

SUNDAY SCHOOL 9:15 AM

Begins Sept 13
Ages 3 – 5th grades

ST LUKES’ FAMILY FEAST DAY WITH CHILI COOKOFF

Oct. 18 Great Hall and courtyard
Following 10:15 AM service

ALL SAINTS DAY PARISH PICNIC

Nov. 1 (Save the Date!)
1:30 PM (location TBA)
Family games and fellowship

Where Else?

The view from the Yergey Library window looks out on the former site of the Bishop's residence prior to the building of the Orange County Court House, now the History Museum.



Resources for Bible Study

By The Rev. Christine L. Maddux

...At Your Cathedral Library

THE CATHEDRAL'S YERGEY MEMORIAL LIBRARY is a rich storehouse of Bible study aids, including several sets of authoritative Bible commentaries, and many different Bible translations. The shelves hold volumes suited to all levels of Bible study, from beginner to doctoral scholar. Here is a sampling of the holdings and their call numbers. All members of the Diocese are welcome to borrow books from the library, with simple registration.

Understanding Your Bible from Adam to Zion, by Alister E. McGrath (1997), 220.7 McG. Commentary on key characters, places, events, features and lessons of each book of the Bible, with photos and maps; by a leading evangelical scholar and Cathedral guest preacher.

The Illustrated Guide to the Bible, by J.R. Porter (2000), 220.6POR. A richly illustrated guide to the books, episodes, people and places of the Bible; brief book-by-book summaries; major themes; 300 color photographs, maps and charts.

All the People in the Bible, by Richard R. Losch (2008), 220.9L. Subtitled "An A-Z Guide to the Saints, Scoundrels, and Other Characters in Scripture," written in a narrative style.

Women in Scripture, Carol Meyers, Ed. (2000), 220.9M. A dictionary of named and unnamed women of the Old Testament, New Testament and Apocrypha, with commentary and contextual significance.

Introducing the Old Testament, by John Drane, 2001, 221.6D. A comprehensive yet accessible volume exploring the history, spirituality and religious values of the Old Testament, as well as ethical issues raised by the Old Testament in relation to contemporary concerns.

The Five Books of Moses, by Robert Alter (2004), 222.6A. The author's translation of scripture, with commentary/

extensive footnotes; focused on the Hebrew Bible as a cohesive work of literature.

The Pentateuch, by Joseph Blenkinsopp (1992), 222.1B. A scholarly introduction to the first five books of the Bible, by a professor of biblical studies at Notre Dame.

The Book of Psalms, by Robert Alter (2007), 223.2A. A translation with commentary, offering spiritual grounding for our daily lives, our joys and sorrows.

An Introduction to the New Testament, by Raymond E. Brown (1996), 225.6B. A magnum opus including book summaries, historical overview, discussions of key theological issues and plentiful supplementary material, plus issues and problems for contemporary reflection.

The New Testament and the People of God, by N. T. Wright (1992), 225.6W. Subtitled "Christian Origins and the Question of God"; a literary, historical and theological exploration of the New Testament, and particularly of Jesus and Paul.

Tell It Slant, by Eugene H. Peterson (2008), 226.06P. "A conversation on the language of Jesus in his stories and prayers," illuminating selected New Testament passages as models for holy and forthright communication.

The Gospel & the End of Time, by John R. W. Stott (1991), 227.8S. Links Paul's letters to the Thessalonians to the theological and moral issues of today; by one of the foremost Anglican evangelical authors.

The above list is just a sampling and barely scratches the surface of the resources available at your Cathedral library. PR

View of the Bible study section



A ceramic rendition of the Church's most famous son, King Henry VIII, on display in the Yergey Memorial Library



pier \pîr\ *n.*

1. *Architecture* Any of various vertical supporting structures, especially:
 - a. A pillar supporting an arch or roof.
 - b. The portion of a wall between windows, doors, or other openings.
 - c. A reinforcing structure that projects from a wall; a buttress.
2. *Literature* The monthly ministry journal of The Cathedral Church of St. Luke, Orlando, Florida.
 - a. Editor/Designer
The Rev. Canon J. Gary L'Hommedieu
 - b. Contributing Writers
The Rev. Christine L. Maddux
Ellen M. Smith
 - c. Proof Readers
Rosemary Atwater and Theo Gordon
 - d. Staff Photographers
The Rev. Canon J. Gary L'Hommedieu
William Maddux

WHEN THE GOING GETS TOUGH CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

magic. People looking for easy answers to difficult problems will be disappointed.

This fall members of the Cathedral have sensed God calling them to revisit the Word of God with a renewed interest and passion, perhaps to reorder some basic priorities, perhaps to be reminded of what really matters and what endures. Some of their stories are contained in this "back to church" issue of *Pier Review*.

Christians do not lower their expectations during difficult times; they raise them. They find the areas of life where they have settled for less than what God has to offer. They don't try to see around corners to spy out the future. They regain their footing in the present and walk into the future on wwsolid ground.

When the going gets tough, Christians return to their foundation, the Word of God. PR