

effort to break free and protect her children, she fled with the four of us one late July 4th night bearing multiple wounds from the last beating she would suffer. She proceeded to raise the four of us as a single mom in the hardcore environment of LA's poorest neighborhoods.

When I was twelve she married again. His name was Robert. She was sure this time she had found true love. We moved to Sacramento to be near his two little girls from a previous marriage. It was there that I met and fell in love with Sue, who also became good friends with my mom. After just two years in Sacramento we fled the state of California to Washington with Robert's daughters. It was a rescue mission. The girls were being severely abused in unthinkable and cruel ways. My mother could not bear to stand by and do nothing, so we took them to Washington with the hope that the abusive mother would not pursue.

Shortly after moving to Washington, Laura Emily encountered the claims of Jesus Christ for the first time in her life. She attended a series of meetings and came home announcing that she had accepted Jesus as her personal Savior and had become a Seventh-day Adventist Christian. And, of course, she wanted all of us to join her in this new faith. She unplugged the TV, started having the pastor and other church people over for Bible studies and pronounced us all vegetarians. We all resisted except Sue, who was strongly inclined toward God and thought being a vegetarian was a nifty idea. Through their influence I soon began to see the light. Robert gave my mom an ultimatum. He said she had to choose between him and Jesus. My mom firmly chose both. To her shock and heartbreak, without notice one day Robert vanished with the girls. She was devastated. Not too long after that crushing blow she was diagnosed with lymphoma.

As a new Adventist Christian my mom loved reading the *Early Writings* Sue and I had given her. The fact that her life was ebbing away with cancer made her spiritual awareness acute. For her, the prospect of heaven was a vivid hope. Of course I was curious to see if she had marked anything in the book. There was just one section she had underlined. When I read the words my mom's pen had highlighted, I could see her, frail from the illness, looking upon these words with delight. Speaking of the time when the Father and His Son explained to the angels the plan they were about to embark upon to save fallen humanity, on page 151 Ellen White wrote,

"Then joy, inexpressible joy, filled heaven. And the heavenly host sang a song of praise and adoration. They touched their harps and sang a note higher than they had done before, for the great mercy and condescension of God in yielding up His dearly Beloved to die for a race of rebels. Praise and adoration were poured forth for the self-denial and sacrifice of Jesus; that He would consent to leave the bosom of His Father, and choose a life of suffering and anguish, and die an ignominious death to give life to other."

For greater emphasis amid the underlining, my mom had also circled the words, "die . . . to give life to others." It all flooded back to the forefront of my mind. That was our focus as new Adventists. The truth of God's self-giving love had captured our attention, although we were only beginning to grasp it. As I held mom's book in my hands these 25 years later, I began to recall the excitement that was buzzing through our home back then as we were realizing the existence of God and His great love for us. The captivating truth which had caught our attention was the love of God manifested in Christ at the Cross. And it was Laura Emily, who had set that course for us. I can't wait to see her again.

Events Schedule

- **February 7**
3ABN Live—Something Better
James Rafferty—☎(618)627-4651
- **February 15-16**
Men's Summit—Upper Columbia Conference
Camp Mivoden, Hayden Lake, ID
James Rafferty—☎(509)953-9091
- **February 27–March 9**
Riverside Farm Institute—Zambia, Africa
James Rafferty—☎260-9778-8472
rfi@zamnet.zm
- **February 28**
3ABN Live—Why Suffering?
Ty Gibson—☎(618)627-4651
- **February 29–March 2**
Kansas-Nebraska Conference Camp Meeting
Ty Gibson—☎(913)209-4455
- **March 3**
Midland Adventist Academy—Shawnee, KS
Ty Gibson—☎(913)268-7400
- **March 29**
Fall Creek SDA Church, OR
James Rafferty—☎(541)937-2257
- **April 4-5**
Centerville SDA Church, OH
Ty Gibson—☎(937)433-7007
- **April 4-12**
College Place SDA Church, WA
James Rafferty—☎(509)525-0882
- **April 25-26**
Sebastopol SDA Church, CA
James Rafferty—☎(707)664-0789

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*Light Bearers is a non-profit ministry based in beautiful Oregon State.
Our purpose is to help proclaim the gospel
of our Lord Jesus Christ through the spoken and published word.*

MISSION UPDATE

The Newsletter of Light Bearers Ministry



Something Better

By James Rafferty

In November 2007, Ty and I were privileged to tape a new series on 3ABN covering the book of Hebrews. This series will begin airing this month on the set, "Books of the Book."

The focus of the book of Hebrews is something "better," a word that is literally found 13 times in the 13 chapters of Hebrews (1:4, 6:9; 7:7, 14, 22; 8:6; 9:25; 10:34; 11:16, 35, 40; 12:24). It means, "stronger, nobler." The focus of its use is broad but primarily on Christ, His priesthood, His new covenant, and the experience of God's people who rely on Him. While the word "better" is not always present in every chapter, the theme of "something better" is.

Hebrews I reveals a picture of a God who does not require sacrifice from us, but one who makes the sacrifice for us (a better God; Hebrews 1:3). This is a God who takes the nature of humanity upon Himself in order to legally and righteously take

personal responsibility for the sins of humanity (a better man; Hebrews 2:9). In doing this God has built us a better home (family), free from guilt and condemnation (a better house; Hebrews 3:6). A home free from guilt leads us to a better rest, a salvation rest of grace in Christ (Hebrews 4:10). Salvation rest in Christ provides us with a better obedience in Christ as the author of our salvation (Hebrews 5:9). In Hebrews 6 we find better promises made by God to us, and fulfilled by God in spite of us (Hebrews 6:18). Our attention is then directed to a better priest, Jesus, always working in our behalf with full ability to completely save us from sin (Hebrews 7:25). The next chapter naturally flows from these better promises to the better covenant, based upon God's power rather than man's faulty promises (Hebrews 8:6). Then we are directed to a better sanctuary in the heavens where Christ stands in the presence of God for us (Hebrews

9:11). Hebrews 10 follows by pointing us to a better sacrifice than that of animals, the sacrifice of God Himself, in the person of Christ, whose life alone can atone for all sin (Hebrews 10:10). This gives way to a faith-picture of the history of God's people that excludes all their failures and sins, and reveals a better experience (Hebrews 11:40). And this faith-picture points us to place our complete trust and focus on Jesus as the Author and Finisher of our faith, the better way of salvation from sin (Hebrews 12:1-2). And finally we complete this picture of God by experiencing a relationship with Him that brings forth a better praise, a sacrificial praise that is heard continually (Hebrews 13:15).

We believe this new series on Hebrews will be a genuine blessing to you and your family. We are praying that you will experience something better in your walk with God for 2008 and beyond.

CONSIDER THIS . . .

“Something better” is the watchword of education, the law of all true living. Whatever Christ asks us to renounce, He offers in its stead something better. Often the youth cherish objects, pursuits, and pleasures that may not appear to be evil but that fall short of the highest good. They divert the life from its noblest aim. Arbitrary measures or direct denunciation may not avail in leading these youth to relinquish that which they hold dear. Let them be directed to something better than display, ambition, or self-indulgence. Bring them in contact with truer beauty, with loftier principles, and with nobler lives. Lead them to behold the One “altogether lovely.”

Ellen G. White,
Mind Character and Personality,
pp. 342-343

Instead of disparaging Jacob’s well, Christ presented something better. “If thou knewest the gift of God,” he said, “and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.” He turned the conversation to the treasure he had to bestow, which would satisfy the craving of mind and heart. He offered the woman something better than anything she possessed, even living water, the joy and hope of the gospel of his kingdom.

This is an illustration of the way in which we are to work. It is of

little use for us to go to pleasure-lovers, theater-goers, drunkards, and gamblers, and scathingly rebuke them for their sins. We must offer them something better than that which they have, even “the peace of God, which passeth all understanding.” We must make it as plain as possible to them that the law of God is binding upon all human beings, and that this law is a transcript of the divine character, an expression of that which the Creator wishes his children to become.

These poor souls are engaged in a wild chase after worldly pleasure and earthly riches. They have no knowledge of anything more desirable. But pleasure will not satisfy the soul. Show them how infinitely superior to the fleeting joys of the world is the imperishable glory of heaven. Seek to convince them of the freedom and hope and rest and peace to be found in the gospel. God’s people, young and old, are to lift up Jesus, who alone can satisfy the restless craving of the heart, and give repose to the mind. Wealth can not do this. Intoxicating drink can not do it. Worldly pleasure can not do it. Title, rank, learning, power,—all are worthless unless the name is enrolled in the Lamb’s book of life.

Ellen G. White,
Youth Instructor,
September 11, 1902

BACK IN TIME



By Ty Gibson

We are so forgetful. At least I am. As the years move by we often lose touch with significant parts of our personal history. The memories and emotional sense of those experiences and people that shaped us take on a distant feel as if it was all a dream. But then, sometimes an event or an encounter can serve as a trigger to bring it all back as near as the present.

That’s what happened to me on November 10 of this last year.

I was speaking for the Upper Columbia Conference Winter Convocation. This was a return to my home conference. Sue and I were baptized as teenagers at the Spokane Valley Church. On Sabbath morning as I stood in the area behind the auditorium stage thinking through the message I was about to preach, a woman with a vaguely familiar face stepped through the door.

“Hi Ty. My name is Thelma. I have something that belongs to you.”

She handed me a hardcover copy of

She was the woman who bore me in her body and brought me into the world. By the time I was twenty she was already gone.

Early Writings, by Ellen White. Then she explained.

“If you will open the front cover you will see that this book was given by you and Sue as a gift to your mother.”

I lifted the cover with my thumb. There, in blue ink, I saw my youthful handwriting:

“Nov. 5, 1982.

From Ty and Sue Gibson.”

I had also written in under our names, “Amber,” the name of our new little baby girl. As I examined the precious volume, Thelma continued.

“I was a good friend of your mother’s, Ty, and I was one of those who cared for her during the last weeks of her life. Somehow this book came into my possession and I have been meaning to return it to you all these years. I thought you would like to have it.”

Flipping through the pages of the book my mind began flipping through the pages of my life. My stomach felt a little queasy, my eyes began to moisten and my head became light.

How far away from my thoughts had she become? I recently passed the age my mother was when she passed away.

When I look in the mirror I see a person with his best years ahead. It has always seemed to me that she died very young. That’s how I remember her—as a young woman. So many years have passed since that fateful day when she ceased to breath. Hearing her voice and seeing her face is becoming less vivid with the passage of time, but not less real. Sometimes I have dreams about her, and when I wake up there is a uniquely pleasant feeling over me.

Laura Emily.

How I love that name.

She was the woman who bore me in her body and brought me into the world. By the time I was twenty she was already gone. In some ways I never knew her and in some ways she was the only person I really knew at all. But I was certain she knew me. I always felt like she was focused on me, devoted to me, protective of me. Her mother’s love was somewhat jagged and dysfunctional, but so genuine and unquestionable. For most of the first twenty years of my life her love was the only thing I was certain of. There were so many questions I was never able to ask her—about her, about my dad, about

myself. When she died I felt absolutely alone in the world. The sense of isolation lingered for more than a year. I would have given anything to watch her grow old in her womanhood. In so many ways she was my reference point. She had to a large degree defined me.

Laura Emily was a fiery girl with Scottish, Irish and Welsh blood running through her veins. In her early teens she left home, lied about her age and got a job as a waitress. Soon she met Johnny, who would become my father. At 21 she gave birth to me. When I was not much more than a year old, they went their separate ways because he was into drugs and alcohol and she didn’t want that kind of life for her child. She found herself alone as a single mother in 1964.

Soon she met a man named Charlie and believed that he loved her. But she had no idea what kind of man he really was. I remember her telling me how shocked she was when, on the night of their honeymoon, he hit her for the first time. Feeling trapped and afraid she endured his beatings for nine years. Finally, in a desperate