

Battle for the Soul of Canada

Companion Bible Study

**Bible Study is based on the book –
Battle for the Soul of Canada by Ed Hird**

Janis Cox

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Introduction - Seeking God’s Solution for a Spirit-Filled Canada

Rev. Ed Hird sat as a passenger in my car while I negotiated traffic congestion on Highway 7 from Guelph to Waterloo, Ontario. We were headed to *The Word Guild Gala*¹, an awards night for Canadian writers who are Christian. I had offered to drive Ed and Janet Sketchley to the Gala as they were both from out of the province. Ed is from British Columbia and Janet from Nova Scotia.

While I drove, Ed encouraged me to tell him about my spiritual journey. The traffic was heavy but our conversation was so lively that I barely noticed; the hour it took to get from Guelph to Waterloo flew by as we discussed the power of Christ in my life. While we ate dinner, he talked about the launch of his new book, *Battle for the Soul of Canada*². Our conversation was spirited, exciting and thought-provoking. Ed captivated me with snippets from his book. As he talked to me about Canada’s history and the large part faith had played in it, I began to see our history differently. I realized that God has worked through such leaders as Sir Samuel Leonard Tilley, a Father of Confederation, and I began to see how God would bless Canada if we raised up more spirit-filled leaders.

This Bible study, *Seeking God’s Solution for a Spirit-Filled Canada*, is divided into six sessions. Each session begins with an excerpt from Ed’s book that will stimulate your mind and encourage you to search deeper into the Bible. I pray that this Bible study will inspire you to listen to God, trust Christ, and follow His lead.

Battle for the Soul of Canada is based on 1 and 2 Timothy, which focus on the Apostle Paul’s instructions to his young protégé. The church at Ephesus was struggling with false teachings, and in these two letters Paul reminds Timothy that the Word of God is truth. Using the accompanying study will help your group discover how God can grow you to become leaders. Pastors and teachers are not

the only ones intended to be leaders; many other Christians are called to leadership roles. We must continue to keep growing in our knowledge and love of God so that we can hear what He wants us to do.

As Ed says,

Canada is a wonderful gift that is worth standing on guard for! How are we going to help keep Canada strong and free? Canada's best hope is in raising up Timothys, the emerging generation of leaders. Our land of Canada is in a severe leadership crisis, particularly in the churches. As goes the churches, goes the soul of our nation.³

Each session in this study starts with a Scripture. The rest of the session is laid out under the headings:

Read Excerpted Chapter from *Battle for the Soul of Canada* by Ed Hird

Points to Ponder

Thoughts to Consider

Delve Deeper into the Bible

Brainstorming

While writing this study, I have learned much about Canadian history. I have investigated and examined Scripture and prayed for enlightenment. I pray that as your group studies the Scriptures, reads Ed's chapters and answers the questions, the members will be inspired to become our new Canadian Timothys.

To each member of the group:

Each chapter has specific Scriptures that I encourage you to read. The Scriptures are holy. Every word is Spirit-filled.

Take time to reflect on the answers to the questions.

Come to each session prepared for discussion. We are all learning and need to encourage one another. I would suggest that you get a journal; record your answers in the journal.

Blessings,

Janis

1 The Word Guild Awards Gala, held once a year to celebrate what God has done in the lives of His writers, www.thewordguild.com

2 <http://battleforthesoulofcanada.blogspot.com/> or contact Ed Hird at ed_hird@telus.net, www3.telus.net/st_simons/nsnews030.html, or order it directly by sending a cheque for \$18.50 (which includes \$3.50 for shipping and handling) to "ED HIRD", #1008-555 West 28th Street, North Vancouver, BC V7N 2J7.

The book is available in over 125 Christian bookstores across Canada.

3 Ed Hird, *Battle for the Soul of Canada*, Ed A. Hird Publishing 2006, p. 151

About Ed's book

The premise of the *Battle for the Soul of Canada* is that the future of Canada lies in raising up

Timothys, the emerging generation of leaders who can bring Canada back to greatness. *Battle for the Soul of Canada*, an award-winning Canadian book, won a top non-fiction prize at The Word Guild 2007 Writing Awards—<http://www.thewordguild.com/newsreleases/index.html>.

Included in his book are the stories of nine key Canadian pioneers who have shaped our nation's Judeo-Christian heritage, including Sir Leonard Tilley, Governor James Douglas, Simon Fraser, David Thompson, George Vancouver, A.B. Simpson and Mayor William Howland.

Copies of Ed's book can be obtained by emailing Ed at ed_hird@telus.net or www3.telus.net/st_simons/nsnews030.html or ordering it directly by sending a cheque for \$18.50 (which includes \$3.50 for shipping and handling) to "ED HIRD", #1008-555 West 28th Street. For 10 copies or more, there would be a \$3.00 discount per book (which works out to \$12.00 plus \$3.50 shipping and handling = \$15.50).

Endorsements for *Battle for the Soul of Canada*

Ed Hird writes out of first hand experience on the 'Battle for the Soul of Canada'. His passion for God's Truth, and for this nation to come fully into her God-given destiny, shines through every page. I was encouraged by the stories of those who have gone before us and personally challenged afresh to do my part to raise up this generation's Timothys and Timotheas.

Sally Start, National Director, Alpha Canada

His book is a real page-turner, hard to put down once you have gotten into it.

Foreword by the Rev. Dr. J.I. Packer

Endorsements for *Battle for the Soul of Canada – Companion Bible Study*

I fully endorse this very creative Bible study by Janis Cox on 'Battle for the Soul of Canada'. Jan's insightful clarity shone through her study. May many Canadians make use of this most helpful guide.

Rev. Ed Hird, North Vancouver, author of *Battle for the Soul of Canada*

What a lot of Spirit-guided work to produce these questions and insights! I've never seen a study like this, quickening our national as well as spiritual consciences. This looks simple enough to not intimidate people, yet deep enough to provoke change.

Janet Sketchley, Nova Scotia, author

*I have had the privilege of facilitating many Bible studies, and I believe *Battle for the Soul of Canada – Companion Bible Study*, is a great complement to Rev. Hird's book, *Battle for the Soul of Canada*. It is an excellent start for further discussion wrought with wonderful, thought-provoking questions.*

Kimberley J. Payne, Ontario, author

Session One God's Plan for Seasoned Leadership

Read: 1 Timothy 1:2, 18

To Timothy my true son in the faith:

Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and

Christ Jesus our Lord.

Timothy, my son, I give you this instruction in keeping with the prophecies once made about you, so that by following them you may fight the good fight.

**Read the following excerpt – “God’s Plan for Seasoned Leadership”
from *Battle for the Soul of Canada* by Ed Hird (pages 24-26)**

I will never forget back in 1977, while doing my Master’s degree, when a fellow student told me that he was in early middle-age. I was flabbergasted that he was so old, until I found out that he was actually only thirty-two years old. The U.S. Census Bureau defines middle age from 45 to 64. So by that definition, I have just over two years until I reach the middle of middle age! ¹

I recently read a health article entitled: “Ouch: Baby Boomers’ Knees Reach Middle Age.” The author observed that the 77 million-strong “baby boom” generation in North America born between 1946 and 1964 is discovering middle age, and along with it knee problems made worse (or at least more obvious) by lifestyles that stay vigorous well into the later years. I have noticed that in everything we do as baby boomers, we tend to act as if we have just invented it.

I turned age 50 on August 22nd 2004, and I have to tell you that I had been looking forward to this for a long time.² Some people dread turning 50. I couldn’t wait. The highlight of my turning 50 was a surprise birthday party with my friends, family, and people from St. Simon’s North Vancouver. I felt like I had died and gone to heaven. There was such a wonderful sense of love and joy among the people at the birthday. I have taken many funerals over the past 26 years of ordained ministry. When I hear the funeral eulogies from family members, I often wish that I had known the deceased better. Many people tragically wait until the loved one is dead to say how much they loved him.

I often wonder: “Why wait?” Hearing the kind comments at my 50th made me feel like I was participating in my funeral—only I was still alive to enjoy hearing it all!

Some people fear that life is over at 50. Quite frankly I feel like it is just beginning for me. With a new bishop, the Right Reverend TJ Johnston, and a new Canadian Anglican Coalition³, I feel like I have begun a brand new phase in my life and ministry. The doors have opened wide. The shutters have been taken off the windows. Having reached age 50, I feel like one of the early Canadian pioneers striking out into unknown, exciting territory.

Bishop Chuck Murphy said to us that there are two kinds of people: pioneers and settlers. Pioneers are willing to take risks and try something new. Settlers prefer to play it safe and stay at home.⁴ Turning 50 has convinced me that it wouldn’t work for me to just be a settler, waiting for something to happen. I could wait for ever.⁵ Rather I need to seize the moment, conquer the dragons, and not wait for someone else to solve my problems. Like Timothy, we Canadian Anglicans need to overcome our crippling passivity.

One of my favorite mentors, Dr. E. Stanley Jones⁶, entered his 50’s by deciding that it would be the most fruitful decade of his life, and it was. When he became age 60, age 70, and then age 80, he decided the same thing once again, and each time it was. The nonsense about

“freedom 55” and retiring early sells people short. E. Stanley Jones reminds people in his 29 books⁷ that there is no such thing as retirement from a biblical perspective.

Recycling, repositioning, yes. But we can never retire from being fruitful in life and making a lasting difference. Jones said:

*Never retire; change your work. The human personality is made for creation; and when it ceases to create, it creaks, and cracks, and crashes.*⁸

In his million-plus best-selling book, *Abundant Living*, E. Stanley Jones warned of middle age’s hidden pitfalls:

*Firstly, watch for decaying enthusiasms and ideals. Look out for a desire for softness and comfort. In our middle age, we are very liable to settle down, become safe—and decay. Secondly, watch the growing power of money over us. Thirdly, watch the growing power of the crowd upon us. In middle age, we cease being different, take on protective resemblance to our environment, fit into the crowd—and die of suffocation. Fourthly, watch out for the sexual mid-life crisis that destroys many marriages. Fifthly, watch our middle. There are four signs of approaching age: baldness, bifocals, bridges and bulges! Sixthly, remain a hero to our children. Always keep growing, learning, and reaching out. And finally keep a living center—God—amid all the changes.*⁹

C.S. Lewis similarly comments:

*The safest road to hell is the gradual one—the gentle slope, soft underfoot, without sudden turnings, without milestones, without signposts. The long, dull, monotonous years of middle-aged prosperity or adversity are excellent campaigning weather for the devil.*¹⁰

In the battle for the soul of Canada, those of us who are baby-boomers need to turn away from self-absorption and comfort, and invest our lives in raising up the emerging generation.

Footnotes:

1 “Ouch: Baby Boomers’ Knees Reach Middle Age”, Dan Ullrich, *HealthLink* Contributing Writer, <http://healthlink.mcw.edu/article/1031002271.html>

2 “The Dangers of Turning 50”, The Rev. Ed Hird, September 2004 *Deep Cove Crier*, http://www3.telus.net/st_simons/cr0409.html

3 Anglican Coalition in Canada, <http://acicanada.ca/>

4 “AMiA ‘under construction’ during second winter conference”, *ECUSA News*, Jan Nunley, Wednesday, January 30, 2002 http://www.ecusa.anglican.org/3577_20629_ENG_HTM.htm

5 Anglicanism, in particular, suffers from glacially-slow transitions. The Anglican Coalition in Canada, as one African Archbishop said, is an African Anglican response to “children in a burning house.” They could not, in good conscience, leave us in that impossible situation.

6 <http://www.christianashram.org/site/Templates/template4.aspx?tabindex=1&tabid=67>

7 Books by E. Stanley Jones that can be ordered online: <http://www.christianashram.org/site/Templates/template4.aspx?tabindex=0&tabid=90>

8 E. Stanley Jones, *Abundant Living*, Abingdon Press, 1942, 1970, p. 293

9 Jones, p. 292

Answer the following based on your reading

1. Where are you in your life? Ed Hird says, “I feel like I have begun a brand new phase in my life and ministry. The doors have opened wide. The shutters have been taken off the windows.” Can you relate to this? Explain why or why not?
2. What do you think of the quote: “There is no such thing as retirement from a biblical perspective”?
3. “Never retire; change your work. The human personality is made for creation; and when it ceases to create, it creaks, and cracks and crashes.” Retirement: Think of it as realignment, repositioning or recycling. Does this change your view of retirement? Why or why not?

Points to Ponder

1. Tell us a life highlight at each of these different ages:

Age 20-30 ~

Age 30-40 ~

Age 40-50 ~

Age 50-60 ~

Age 60-70 ~

Age 70-80 ~

Age 80 and over ~

1. There are two kinds of people: pioneers and settlers. Pioneers are willing to take risks and try something new. Settlers prefer to be comfortable where they are and stay at home. On a scale of 1-10, where settlers are 1 and pioneers are 10, where would you place yourself? Give a reason for your answer.

Thoughts to Consider

Read the following quotations:

Our money in itself is existence and perishes with all existing things, but our money in Him becomes life. It is alive and it creates life, opens opportunity for others, inspires, creates new hopes and new lives.¹

Stanley Jones reminds people that there is no such thing as retirement from a biblical perspective. Recycling and repositioning are possible.

1. Where have you seen this in action in the world, in our country, in your city or village?

“People,” said ES Jones, “retire to enjoy their wealth. Nothing is more elusive and fatuous. You cannot enjoy your wealth. Your wealth must be creative in creating and in augmenting the joy of others, or else it is ill-th, not weal-th.”

1. Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not? Can you give examples from your own experiences where you have seen this to be true?

- 1 E. Stanley Jones, *Christian Maturity*, Abingdon Press, Nashville, 1957, p.55
- 2 Jones, *ibid* p.39)

Delve Deeper into the Bible

Let’s look at a couple of pioneers from Scripture.

God calls Moses out of retirement:

Read: Exodus 3:10

God said, “So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt.”

Even though Moses feels unequipped for the job – he does it.

1. Is there a job you know you should do but don’t feel qualified? Or have you ever done a job you didn’t feel qualified for but God helped you?

God inspires Nehemiah to rebuild Jerusalem.

Read: Nehemiah 2:4-5

The king said to me, “What is it you want?” Then I prayed to the God of heaven, and I answered the king, “If it pleases the king and if your servant has found favor in his sight, let him send me to the city in Judah where my fathers are buried so that I can rebuild it.

Nehemiah saw a need and prayed for help. God opened the doors for Nehemiah to rebuild Jerusalem.

1. What needs do you see in your church, your town or your country? What prayer could you pray to address these needs?

Brainstorming

1. Taken from *Abundant Living*¹, read the modified checklist below:

Read each quote and decide how to number the statements in order – from number 1, the one you have the most under control, to number 7, the one that needs the most work. Discuss the reasons for your answers.

Watch for decaying enthusiasms and ideals. Look out for a desire for softness and comfort. In our middle age, we are very liable to settle down, become safe – and decay.

Watch the growing power of money over me.

Watch the growing power of the crowd upon me. In middle age, we cease being different, take on protective resemblance to our environment, fit in to the crowd – and die of suffocation.

Watch out for the sexual mid-life crisis that destroys many marriages.

Watch my middle. There are four signs of approaching age: baldness, bifocals, bridges and bulges!

Remain a hero to my children. Always keep growing, learning and reaching out.

Keep a living centre – God – among all the changes.

1. Discuss how the group can pray for you.

1 E. Stanley Jones, *Abundant Living*, Abingdon Press, 1942, 1970, p. 292

Session Two - Is God Religious?

Read: 1 Timothy 1:12-17

I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength, that he considered me faithful, appointing me to his service. Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief. The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.

Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst. But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his unlimited patience as an example for those who would believe on him and receive eternal life. Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

This is our Christian statement of faith told by Timothy.

Read the following excerpt – “Is God Religious?”
from *Battle for the Soul of Canada* by Ed Hird (pages 28-30)

My middle son Mark regularly shares Christ with other students at Simon Fraser University.¹ There has been some fruit but also a lot of spiritual hardness. Mark recently returned from a six-week Campus Crusade for Christ mission trip to Tanzania where their 42-member team saw almost 3,000 people give their lives to Christ.² There is such a “Day of Pentecost” hunger for the gospel in the Global South. (Acts 2:41, 47)³

Why does Canada seem to be so resistant to the Good News of Jesus Christ? As I have visited many Canadians over the years, a number have told me that they are not religious. They are often surprised when I respond, “Who ever told you that God is religious? Spirituality is not about religion. It is about relationship!”

According to a recent poll by Environics Research Group,⁴ 60% of Canadians agree with the statement, “I’m not a religious person, but I am a spiritual person.” Spirituality, even in this very busy stressful world, is still very important to most Canadians. Other survey findings by Environics Research Group back up this assessment.

The survey discovered:

- Eighty-two percent of Canadians consider it important to have a frame of reference for making moral decisions.
- Seventy-eight percent consider developing their own philosophy of life to be important.
- Sixty-nine percent consider having a spiritual inner life to be very or somewhat important.
- Sixty-two percent say that prayer is important.
- Fifty-eight per cent feel that searching for the meaning of life is very or somewhat important.

All these research findings are strong indicators that Canadians, while very private and almost shy about their spirituality, are a deeply spiritual people. Canadians are natural Timothy’s, shy but spiritual.

At the age of 13 my mother suggested that one day I might become a priest, but I was convinced that this was not for me. From Grade 3 to Grade 10, I was determined that I would become an electrical engineer like my father and work in the area of telecommunications.⁵ Why then did I become a priest, you might wonder? It wasn’t because I suddenly became “religious.” I was not religious as a teenager. Instead I preferred skiing on Sunday morning. Religion has never attracted me. What grabbed my interest at age 17 was Relationship. I was seeking to develop my own philosophy of life, and, like those Canadians in the survey, I was searching seriously for the meaning of life. While in Grade 12, I met some young people who seemed to have more inner peace, more fulfillment, and better relationships than the rest of my friends. I was curious as to what made these teenagers different. I said to them: “Whatever you have, I want it.” They said to me: “It’s a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.” With unusual openness, I said: “If that’s what works for you, I want it too.” So I prayed and asked Jesus to come into my life and fill me with peace. I was amazed at how different I felt inside. I hadn’t become “religious.” I had just discovered a new source of inner peace. It was a simple step of surrender that I took, but it has changed everything in my life.

As Paul said in 1 Timothy 1:12, I also say: “I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me

strength.” Rather than trapping me with endless rules, I have found that Jesus wants to show me mercy (vs. 13), pour out his grace (vs.14), and display to me his unlimited patience. (vs. 16) I never imagined how deeply God really loved me and how much joy I would experience through doing things God’s way!

I have discovered that not even church has to be done in a so-called “religious” way. It is okay to have fun in church, to laugh and sing and even dance. I had always thought of church as something you endure in order to fulfill some religious obligation or duty. Never had I imagined that having a relationship with Jesus could be more fun than going to a party or getting drunk. The term “relationship” just means “the shape of one’s relations.”

What I’ve discovered is that much that is called “religion” binds you with a lot of rules and external rituals. But genuine spirituality sets you free to enter into deeper more intimate relationships with God and those around you. Even the Latin root for “religion” (*religare*) means literally “to bind” (*ligare*).⁶

I have discovered to my surprise that the Bible is not a “religious” book, Jesus is not a religious person, and God is not particularly interested in religion per se. The only kind of authentic religion that interests God is:

taking care of widows and orphans and keeping oneself from being polluted by the world. (James 1:27)

My prayer for those reading this book is that we may be liberated from the chains of false religion, and released into the freedom of genuine religion, that of intimate spiritual relationship with our heavenly Father.

Footnotes:

1 <http://www.sfu.ca/> ;”Simon Fraser: More than Just a University”, the Rev. Ed Hird, Feb 1999
Deep Cove Crier, http://www3.telus.net/st_simons/cr9902.htm

2 <http://www.crusade.org/>

3 Acts 2:41: *New International Version Bible*: “Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.”

4 <http://erg.environics.net/>

5 <http://www.tmcadvisor.com/tmc/people/ted/bio.php>

6 *Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary*, <http://www.m-w.com/dictionary/religion> The term “religion” therefore as “re-ligare” can either positively mean “to voluntarily bind oneself to one’s God”, or negatively to “be bound up in rules and regulations.”

7 James 1:27, *New International Version Bible*: “Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.”

Answer the following based on your reading

1. Why do you think Ed says, “Never had I imagined that having a relationship with Jesus could be more fun than going to a party or getting drunk?”
1. James 1: 27 says, “Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.” We know we need to agree with this but in what ways are you challenged in following it? How can we keep ourselves from being polluted by the world? Choose one thing to work on this week and be prepared to explain your decision.

Points to Ponder

1. As a child or young adult did you have any church experience? If so, describe it.
2. When did you first encounter Christ? Explain your feelings and what happened before and after your discovery of the truth.
3. Have you ever led someone to know Christ? If so, explain how it happened and what occurred.

Thoughts to Consider

1. Why are people coming to Christ by the thousands in Africa and other underdeveloped countries?
2. Why is this not happening in Canada?
3. What do you think is the meaning of a “religious” person?

Delve Deeper into the Bible

Read: Colossians 2:1-5

I want you to know how much I am struggling for you and for those at Laodicea, and for all who have not met me personally. My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. I tell you this so that no one may deceive you by fine-sounding arguments. For though I am absent from you in body, I am present with you in spirit and delight to see how orderly you are and how firm your faith in Christ is.

1. What does this tell you about worldly wisdom and fleshly, human-based solutions?

Read: James 1:5

But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all men generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

1. What does this verse tell you about where to find wisdom and answers to life's questions and struggles? Do you ask God questions in your every day lives? When have you talked to him today? What types of questions could you ask Him right now? What does it mean that He gives generously and without reproach?

Brainstorming

- I.** What has a relationship with Christ given you?
 1. In what ways can we interact with people to show our true relationship with Jesus?
 2. If people are to “enjoy” church and not just “endure” it, what suggestions can you give to make this happen? Think about your attitude when entering the Sanctuary? What about your attention during the sermon? How can you approach church in a new way?

Session Three - From Sea to Shining Sea

Read: 1 Timothy 2:1-2

I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.

Read the following excerpt – “From Sea to Shining Sea” from *Battle for the Soul of Canada* by Ed Hird. (pages 33-34)

Paul taught young Timothy that he needed to have a heart for his nation and his city. Prayer is the foundation of our battle for our nation of Canada.

As Paul said to Timothy,

I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. ¹

Without fervent, persistent, united prayer, the vision of our Canadian forebears will not be fully realized that “He shall have Dominion from Sea to Shining Sea.”

Sir Samuel Leonard Tilley, a Father of Confederation and twice the Lt. Governor of New Brunswick, rose each morning to start his day with prayer and Scripture reading.² As the thirty-three Fathers gathered in Charlottetown to discuss and draft the terms of the British North America Act, there were many suggestions on what to call this new “United Canada.” That morning, as Tilley read from Psalm 72:8, he became so convinced that Canada should be a nation under God, that when he came down to the Conference session, he presented the inspired name *Dominion of Canada* for our nation.³ The other Fathers readily agreed and accepted.

The Term *Dominion of Canada* beat out the Confederation Fathers’ other competing names: “The United Colony of Canada”, “the United Provinces of Canada”, “the Federated Provinces of Canada”, “the Republic of Canada”, “the Realm of Canada”, “the Union of Canada”, and “the Kingdom of Canada” (strongly favoured by Prime Minister Sir John A. MacDonald!).⁴

Today the following words hang in the corridor near the Confederation Chamber in the PEI Province House:

In the hearts of the delegates who assembled in this room on September 1, 1864, was born the Dominion of Canada. Providence being their guide, they builded better than they knew.⁵

Having recently visited the Prince Edward Island Province House,⁶ I was able to read and even touch the words of that plaque and then give thanks in the Spirit in the very Confederation Chamber⁷ where God birthed our nation. Canada is a gift from God worth contending for!

The usage of the term “Dominion” was formalized in 1867 through Canadian Confederation.⁸ The letter that established Canada’s name to Queen Victoria is signed by Sir John A. Macdonald who explained to her majesty that *Dominion of Canada* was “a tribute to the principles they earnestly desired to uphold.”⁹ As our Canadian Charter of Rights so clearly states, “... Canada is founded upon principles that recognize the supremacy of God and the rule of law.”¹⁰

This Dominion motto was even placed in Latin on our Canadian coat of arms, *A Mari Usque Ad Mare*¹¹ (from sea to sea) drawn once again straight from Psalm 72:8. “He shall have dominion from sea to sea.” Thanks to Canada’s leadership, the term “dominion” caught on throughout the world, also used by Australia and New Zealand.¹²

One day every knee shall bow and every tongue confess. God’s heart is that every person in Canada will know His redeeming love and mercy. One way or another, God will have dominion in this great nation from sea to shining sea. I want to be part of the solution and not the problem. That is why I am so passionate about raising up Timothys across our great nation.

Footnotes:

1 1 Timothy 2:1-2

2 “Celebrating Our True North”, *Thunder Bay Source* Newspaper, by Doug Doyle <http://www.tbsource.com/tbLIFE/index.asp?cid=84281>

3 “Sir Leonard Tilley”, *Canada’s Christian Heritage*, <http://www.ccheritage.ca/biographies/leonardtrolley.php>

4 “From Sea to Shining Sea”, The Rev. Ed Hird, February 2006 *Deep Cove Crier* http://www3.telus.net/st_simons/cr0602.html

5 http://www.canadahistory.com/sections/documents/king_-_canada's_diamond_jubilee.htm
Canada’s Christian Heritage <http://www.ccheritage.ca/facts/>

6 Province House, http://www.pc.gc.ca/lhn-nhs/pe/provincehouse/index_e.asp

7 Confederation Chamber, http://www.pc.gc.ca/voyage-travel/pv-vp/itm3-/page5_e.asp

8 *Quick-Seek Encyclopedia* <http://canadasname.quickseek.com>

9 “Matter of Faith”, *Globe and Mail*, Lorna Dueck, <http://www.listenuptv.com/lorna/nationbuilders.htm>

10 *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, <http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/charter/index.html>

11 <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/indea.dfm?PgNm=TCEParams=A1ARTA0000001>

12 “Dominion”, *Wikipedia Encyclopedia*, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dominion>

Answer the following based on your reading

Our country was brought together by fervent, persistent prayer.

1. Tell how we came to be known as the Dominion of Canada. (When? By whom? How?)
2. Which Scripture does it come from? Copy out this verse.
3. How does the Canadian Charter of Rights see the founding of Canada?
4. What are the words on our Coat of Arms and what do they mean?

Points to Ponder

1. What is your first recollection of saying a prayer? (age, place, type of prayer)
2. What do you usually pray about?

Thoughts to Consider

There are many different methods to help us in our prayer lives.

Here are a few using acronyms:

ACTS – Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving and Supplication (praying for yourself or someone else)

PRAY – Praise, Repent, Ask, Yield

PATH¹ – Praise, Admit, Thanks, Help

No matter which way we choose, prayer is about a relationship with God. It is sharing our thoughts, ideas and concerns with our loving Creator. In Luke 11:1-4, Jesus taught us what we call the Lord's Prayer as another model.

1. How do you pray? When do you pray?
2. Have you ever prayed for Canada or other parts of the world? If yes, how? When?
3. Have you ever prayed for our leaders, federal, provincial and municipal? If yes, how? When?

¹ Kimberley J. Payne, *Fit for Faith*, Within Reach, p. 26

Delve Deeper into the Bible

Read: Philippians 4:6-7

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

1. How are we told to live our lives?
2. What is the promise if we do this?
3. Can you give an example of how prayer has helped you?

Read the following passages out loud:

Acts 1:14

They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.

Mark 9:29

He replied, 'This kind can come out only by prayer.'

John 14:13

Jesus said: 'And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father.'

1. Joining together in prayer is powerful. Why?

Brainstorming

1. Are you struggling with something that needs God's attention? Have you come to Him with all

that is on your heart and mind? If you can, share your concerns with the group and have someone pray for you.

2. In our country, what problems do you see that need God's intervention? Make a list together and pray over those needs with your group.

Session Four A.B. Simpson – A Canadian Hero

Read: 1 Timothy 2:8

I want men everywhere to lift up holy hands in prayer, without anger or disputing.

**Read the following excerpt – “A.B. Simpson: A Canadian Hero”
from *Battle for the Soul of Canada* by Ed Hird. (pages 39-41)**

Why do so many Canadians tend to lack vision for their own nation? Many Canadian young people seem to know more about American history and legends than about some of their own Canadian heroes. A.B. Simpson is an unsung Canadian hero who has had a remarkable lasting impact on millions of families not only in Canada, but throughout the world. Simpson was a man of vision. He once said that people

must always dream dreams before they blaze new trails and see visions before they are strong to do exploits.¹

Albert Benjamin Simpson was born on Prince Edward Island on December 15th, 1843 of Scottish Covenanter heritage.² The Simpson family had emigrated from Morayshire, Scotland to Bayview, P.E.I. After the collapse of his father's shipbuilding and export business in the 1840's depression, his family moved to a farm in western Ontario. The Rev. John Geddie, on his way to the South Sea Islands as Canada's first missionary, baptized baby Albert and in prayer committed him to future missionary service.³

Fresh out of seminary in 1865, Simpson had accepted the call to pastor Knox Church in Hamilton, a congregation with the second largest Presbyterian church building in Canada.⁴ Over the next eight years, 750 new people joined the congregation. Dr. William McMullen, another Presbyterian minister, said that Simpson

stood out at that time as one of the most brilliant young ministers of our church in Canada...⁵

Out of the blue, Simpson was called to lead Chestnut Street Presbyterian Church in Louisville, Kentucky.⁶ The recently ended Civil War left bitterness and division between the various churches. As a neutral Canadian pastor, Simpson was used to bring racial reconciliation and forgiveness among the churches. At Simpson's encouragement, the pastors went to their knees and poured out their hearts for such a baptism of love as would sweep away their differences. As the pastors joined their hands together in unity, over 10,000 local residents joined them in prayer meetings lasting for a year.⁷ A.B. Simpson lived out Paul's exhortation to Timothy that "men everywhere...lift up holy hands in prayer, without anger or disputing." (Chapter 2 vs.

8)

Simpson's success led him to being invited to lead 13th Street Presbyterian Church,⁸ a prestigious New York congregation. Simpson loved to reach out to those who wouldn't normally feel comfortable in a traditional church setting. When 100 Italian immigrants responded to Simpson's message, he asked his church Board to admit them as new members. His Board "kindly but firmly refused" for fear of being overwhelmed by immigrants and poor people.⁹ Out of that rejection came Simpson's vision of a fellowship of Christians where everyone was welcome, regardless of race, income, denomination, or social class.¹⁰

Simpson decided to abandon his security and reputation, in order to start a community where all were welcome in Christ. He began afresh with just seven other people, in a poorly heated dance hall.¹¹ But Simpson had recently discovered an inner strength and resilience that kept him from slipping into discouragement. In the past he had been such a workaholic that he had destroyed his health. Simpson's medical doctor had given him three months to live.¹² But upon meeting an Anglican physician, Dr. Charles Cullis,¹³ at Old Orchard Camp in Maine,¹⁵ he experienced a remarkable healing of his heart. The next day, Simpson was able to climb a 3,000 foot mountain, and successfully pray for his daughter Margaret's healing from diphtheria—the very disease which had earlier killed his son Melville.¹⁶

Word spread fast in 1881 of these healings.¹⁷ Simpson was besieged by many with pleas for help. By others, he was vilified and ridiculed as another quack miracle worker. Despite such criticism, Simpson received strong support from medical doctors like Dr. Jenny Trout, the first female doctor and surgeon in Canada,¹⁸ Dr. Robert Glover from Toronto, and Dr. Lilian Yeomans, a Canadian-born surgeon in Michigan. He also received much encouragement from well-known Canadian Anglican priests like Dr. Henry Wilson, Dr. Kenneth Mackenzie,¹⁸ and Dr. W.S. Rainford.¹⁹ Simpson started Friday-afternoon healing and holiness meetings, which quickly became New York's largest attended spiritual weekday meeting, with 500-1,000 in attendance.²⁰

Simpson had a real love for the whole Christian community, regardless of denomination or nationality. He said:

I want to enjoy the broadest fellowship possible myself, and I want my people to receive the benefit of the ministry of all God's gifted servants, regardless of whether they agree with me in everything or not.

A Canadian Anglican priest, Dr. Henry Wilson, was healed through Simpson's prayers, and then received permission from his bishop to become A.B. Simpson's associate pastor! He was even allowed by his bishop to erect an altar table at the Gospel Tabernacle, and conduct an Anglican service of Holy Communion each Sunday morning. In a show of interdenominational unity, Dr. Simpson the Christian and Missionary Alliance founder would preach and Dr. Wilson would serve communion. Another Anglican priest, Dr. Kenneth Mackenzie, actively participated in Alliance Conventions, taught at the Alliance Missionary Training Institute, and contributed articles to the Alliance magazine. Simpson publicly stated that he would prefer to have Dr. Mackenzie's presence and teaching as an Anglican clergyman than as an Alliance worker.²¹ A.B. Simpson had a passion for interdenominational Christian Unity and Missions that is only now beginning to be appreciated by other churches.

I thank God for Canadian heroes like Albert Benjamin Simpson, who have helped tear

down the walls of misunderstanding, bitterness, and mistrust between the churches. Years ago the Christian and Missionary Alliance Church was weak,²² and the Anglicans were strong in Canada. Nowadays the Alliance Church is booming in most communities,²³ and faithful Anglicans are just beginning to rebuild from the rubble of heresy and the loss of our buildings. Rather than competing with one another, may we join hands in reaching our very lost and hurting nation.

Footnotes:

- 1 "A.B. Simpson: A Canadian Hero", The Rev Ed Hird, May 1996 *Deep Cove Crier*, http://www3.telus.net/st_simons/cr9605.htm
- 2 *Alliance National Archives*, <http://www.cmalliance.org/whoweare/archives/timeline.jsp>
- 3 Rev. John Geddie, <http://www.lifebpc.com/resources/pdf/briefsurveymissions2.pdf>; *All for Jesus: God at Work in the Christian and Missionary Alliance over One Hundred Years*, by Robert L. Niklaus, John S. Sawin, Samuel J. Stoez, Christian Publications, 1986, p.19 paragraph
- 4 "All for Jesus: The Revival Legacy of A.B. Simpson"
http://www.ag.org/enrichmentjournal/199902/082_all_for_jesus.cfm
- 5 *AB Simpson: his Life and Work*: by AE Thompson, Christian Publications, 1921, 1960, p. 46
- 6 "AB Simpson: Our Founder", <http://www.rrac.ca/founder.html>
- 7 "AB Simpson: Portraits of Great Christians", *In Touch Ministries*, http://www.intouch.org/myintouch/mighty/portraits/ab_simpson_213600.html
- 8 <http://www.holytrinitynewrochelle.org/yourti17415.html>; <http://www.fwselijah.com/simpson.htm>
- 9 Niklaus, p. 36, 43
- 10 *Alliance National Archives*, <http://www.cmalliance.org/whoweare/archives/timeline.jsp> ;Niklaus, p. 51
- 11 "Section 4- The Founding of the Alliance", http://online.auc-nuc.ca/alliancestudies/ahtreadings/ahtr_s4.html ; Niklaus, p. 52
- 12 "Christian and Missionary Alliance" Religious Movements Homepage, <http://religiousmovements.lib.virginia.edu/nrms/chmissionalliance.html>
- 13 *Cullis Consumptive Homes*, <http://www.dorchesteratheneum.org/page.php?id=250>; Lindsay Reynolds, *Footprints: The Beginning of the CMA in Canada*, Buena Book Services, Alberta, 1981, p. 63
- 14 "All for Jesus: The Revival Legacy of A.B. Simpson"
http://www.ag.org/enrichmentjournal/199902/082_all_for_jesus.cfm
- 15 *Simpson Anecdotes*, http://online.aucnuc.ca/alliancestudies/ahtreadings/ahtr_s1.html "I shall never forget the first time death entered my family circle. [Simpson's first son, Melville, died at the age of four.] I had held the little one in my arms for two nights, his mother having fled in agony and collapse from the room, choking with croup. I saw that little life panting in the arms of death and I felt myself helpless to hold him back or help him. It was our first bereavement."; Niklaus, p. 41
- 16 Reynolds, p. 96 "In 1889 a Toronto periodical described the Christian Alliance (early CMA) as 'the faith-healing school of America'"
- 17 Notable Women Ancestors: Dr. Jenny Trout, <http://www.rootsweb.com/~nwa/jennie.html>; Lindsay Reynolds, p. 152
- 18 Thompson, p. 87
- 19 <http://www.usaca.org/leagues/metropolitan/history.htm>
- 20 <http://www.fwselijah.com/simpson.htm> Many of Simpson's strongest supporters were Canadians, like William Fenton, Albert Thompson, E.D. Whiteside, who had been remarkably healed from diseases such as cancer, tuberculosis, and epilepsy.
- 21 Thompson, p. 87
- 22 Reynolds, p. 170, 178 "The Toronto Churchman predicted in the 1890's that the Christian Alliance (the early CMA) had 'had its day'."
- 23 For some reason, the Alliance Church is much stronger in the Western part of Canada, than in the East.

Answer the following based on your reading

1. Why do you think that Simpson was blessed from his birth?

1. What success did Simpson have?
1. How was God able to enhance the Kingdom even though Simpson's request was refused by the church board?
2. What did Simpson have to let go in order to accomplish this?
1. What kept Simpson from slipping into discouragement?
2. Which actions demonstrate Simpson's desire for interdenominational unity?

Points to Ponder

1. How welcoming is your church?
2. How would you feel if someone came into the sanctuary carrying a coffee cup or a bottle of water?
3. How do you feel when children are being children and maybe run around or chat during the service?
4. In what ways does your church connect with other churches or community based groups? Does your church extend itself beyond the borders of its walls?

Thoughts to Consider

Answer the following Canadian history questions

1. Who was Canada's first Prime Minister?
2. Which four provinces were the first to be members of Confederation?
3. How many territories and provinces does Canada have?

Delve Deeper into the Bible

Read: Matthew 9:10-13

While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew's house, many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with him and his disciples. When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" On hearing this, Jesus said, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."

1. Why is it shocking to the Pharisees that Jesus eats with tax collectors and sinners?
2. Why do you think Jesus took time with these people?

Read: John 10:16

I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd.

In Jesus day, many people were ostracized from the Jewish religion. Even those who were practicing Jews could not possibly follow all the rules set by the leaders. God knew this and for that reason He sent His Son Jesus to show us how He wanted us to live, lead us and be the ultimate sacrifice for us.

1. What can you do, personally, to bring others to know Christ?

Brainstorming

1. Does your church seek to connect with others outside its walls? Explain.
2. Do you invite friends and neighbours to worship with you? Why or why not?

Session Five Open-Minded and Open-Hearted

Read: 1 Timothy 4:1-2

The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron.

Read the following excerpt – “Open-Minded and Open-Hearted” from *Battle for the Soul of Canada* by Ed Hird. (pages 49-51)

Paul reminded Timothy in Ch.4 vs. 2 that in the later times, people’s consciences would become seared as with a hot iron. Rather than seeking truth, people would develop

an unhealthy interest in controversies and quarrels about words that result in envy, strife, malicious talk, evil suspicions. (1 Timothy 6:4)

Paul warned Timothy not to waste his time in quarreling:

Don’t have anything to do with foolish and stupid arguments, because you know they produce quarrels. (2 Timothy 2:23)

Sometimes people just like a good argument for its own sake. Isn’t it strange how often the most closed-minded people end up being the very ones who pride themselves on their openness?

In our culture, the very mention of spirituality may cause people to quickly change the subject to discussing something safer like sports or gardening. In this age of TV channel changers, many of us are well-skilled at switching things off.¹ Canadians, in general, are such polite people that it is not always easy to notice when we are being close-minded. Sometimes we hide our close-mindedness behind the polite phrase: “No, thank you...not interested.”

What I’ve been struck by recently is that God is deeply interested in all people, even those who have no interest in Him. God cares for those who don’t care about Him. God loves those who wish that God didn’t exist. God is open-minded towards those who are close-minded to Him. When Jesus died on the cross, he died especially for those who want nothing to do with him.

Winston Churchill defined as a fanatic:

*someone who won't change his mind and won't change the subject.*²

Most people in our culture see themselves as open-minded and willing to listen. Few would describe themselves as closed-minded bigots. Most of us, however, could probably think of someone who comes across as a closed-minded person. It seems that closed-mindedness is like bad breath. Even your best friends won't tell you that you've got it.

In visiting people over the years, I've noticed that everyone is an expert on the Bible and about who Jesus really is. It is amazing the number of people with very fixed views of the Bible and Jesus who haven't opened a Bible since Sunday School days or have never opened the Bible at all. I have met hundreds of people who tell me with great conviction that the Bible is full of errors and contradictions. I love to chat with people, so I gently ask them to show me an example. In most cases, these same people are unable to point to any specifics.

An open-minded person is someone who is willing to sit down and find out for herself whether the Bible is full of holes. Perhaps you yourself believe that the Bible is full of inaccuracies. Are you open-minded enough to check out the source documents by opening the Bible and finding out for yourself whether or not it is true? Perhaps you believe that Jesus was just a nice moral teacher, no more, no less. Are you open-minded enough to open up the Bible and find out for yourself who Jesus really was? Perhaps you believe that the church is full of hypocrites. Are you open-minded enough to come and find out for yourself whether that perception is really true?

A while back, I was invited to speak to a philosophy class at Capilano College about my spiritual journey with Jesus and its relationship to the philosophy of religion. I found the class willing to listen and dialogue about spirituality, but largely ignorant of the documents and material that have formed the spiritual journey of the western world. One student spoke up and said that he believed that in this scientific age, we had outgrown the need for God, religion, or the Bible. This student commented that we had so outgrown the Bible that we didn't even need to read it to find out if it had any relevance. Most interestingly, the class largely disagreed with this student, saying that he needed to be more open-minded. By the end of the class, this same student came up to me and sincerely thanked me for coming. He concluded by saying: "I want to learn more." The Bible says that only God is able to make us more open-minded. We cannot just "pull ourselves up by our own bootstraps." Blaise Pascal, the famous mathematician, said:

*human knowledge must be understood to be believed, but divine knowledge must be believed to be understood.*³

The Bible will always remain a closed book to the closed-minded.

Luke 24:45 tells us that Jesus "opened their minds so that they could understand the scriptures." Only those who admit their closed-mindedness are fully able to receive the gift of open-mindedness. Much of Canada has closed its mind to the good news of Jesus Christ. To be prejudiced simply means to *pre-judge* before analyzing the evidence, to close one's mind before checking out the facts. May God give the emerging Timothy's new keys to cracking open the hearts and minds of young Canadians, many of whom have been poisoned and prejudiced against

examining the evidence.

Footnotes:

1 “The Importance of Being Open-Minded”, The Rev Ed Hird, July 1994 *Deep Cove Crier*,
http://www3.telus.net/st_simons/cr9407.htm

2 <http://www.tc.umn.edu/~cab/quotes.html>

3 http://www.quotationspage.com/quotes/Blaise_Pascal/

Answer the following based on your reading

1. Is God interested in those who are closed-minded? What did God do to show us this interest?
2. What suggestions does Ed give us to guide those who say they are open-minded but haven't really checked out the Bible?
3. What do you think of the quote by Blaise Pascal, who said:

Human knowledge must be understood to be believed, but divine knowledge must be believed to be understood.

Do you agree? Why or why not?

Points to Ponder

1. What does it mean to be closed-minded? Check with a dictionary, as well as giving your own thoughts.
2. Besides the Bible, what other books have you read that have helped you in your journey with Christ?
3. Do you ever recall being closed-minded? If so, can you remember what was blocking you from understanding Christ? What did you do to help to get rid of this blockage?

Thoughts to Consider

*In this age of TV changers, many of us are well-skilled at switching things off. (“The Importance of Being Open-Minded”, Rev. Ed Hird, July 1994, *Deep Cove Crier*.)*

1. When you greet someone and ask, “How are you?” are you genuinely interested in their well-being? Why or why not? If you are interested, how could you extend this question to make sure you engage in more than a superficial conversation?
2. Have you ever met anyone with negative fixed views about the Bible and Christianity? Have these people opened or studied the Bible? If they haven't, what could you do to challenge their thinking or beliefs?

Delve Deeper into the Bible

Read: Jeremiah 31:31-33

“The time is coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will make a new covenant with

*the house of Israel and with the house of Judah.
It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by
the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I
was a husband to them,” declares the LORD.*

*“This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time,” declares the
LORD. “I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be
their God, and they will be my people.”*

God says that He will open up His peoples’ minds.

1. From this Scripture we know we are to read the Bible to help us learn more about God. This Scripture talks about the New Covenant that we find in Jesus. In the New Testament we know that Jesus came to help us understand God in a personal way. How are you learning Scripture so that it will be written on your heart?

Read: 1 Chronicles 28:9

*And you, my son Solomon, acknowledge the God of your father, and serve him with
wholehearted devotion and with a willing mind, for the LORD searches every heart and
understands every motive behind the thoughts. If you seek him, he will be found by you; but if
you forsake him, he will reject you forever.*

1. How does David tell Solomon to find the LORD?
2. Because we can’t *make* people come to know Jesus, summarize how we can encourage them?

Read: 2 Corinthians 4:1-6

*Therefore, since through God’s mercy we have this ministry, we do not lose heart. Rather,
we have renounced secret and shameful ways; we do not use deception, nor do we distort the
word of God. On the contrary, by setting forth the truth plainly we commend ourselves to
every man’s conscience in the sight of God. And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to
those who are perishing. The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that
they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For
what we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for
Jesus’ sake. For God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” made his light shine in
our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God’s glory displayed in the face of Christ.*

1. We are told not to lose heart. What should we do instead?
2. Who is the god of this age?

Brainstorming

1. “The Bible will always remain a closed book to the closed-minded.”
2. In what ways can you help others to be more open-minded to God’s Word?
3. Has God ever used you to bring someone to believing in Jesus? Share your story with the group.

Section Six Do This in Remembrance of Me

Read: 1 Timothy 4:6

If you point these things out to the brothers, you will be a good minister of Christ Jesus, brought up in the truths of the faith and of the good teaching that you have followed.

Read the following excerpt – “Do this in Remembrance of Me” from *Battle for the Soul of Canada* by Ed Hird. (pages 53-55)

The false teachers in Ephesus had an amazing ability to rob people of their capacity for memory, almost like a spiritual lobotomy. Timothy was Paul’s No. 1 troubleshooter for memory recovery: “For this reason I am sending to you Timothy...he will remind you of my way of life in Christ Jesus.”¹ No matter how nasty the “hard-drive crash”, Timothy had the knack for reformatting the core Christian memory banks.

Paul said to Timothy: “If you point these things out (in remembrance of these things KJV) to the brothers, you will be a good minister of Christ Jesus, brought up in the truths of the faith and of the good teaching that you have followed.”² Paul knew as a good Jewish Rabbi that memory and remembrance are at the heart of a vital prayerful faith: “...night and day I constantly remember you in my prayers” (2 Timothy 1:3).

An old Chinese proverb says:

*To forget one’s ancestors is to be a brook without a source, a tree without a root.*³

Paul was reminded (called to remembrance KJV) of the sincere faith, which first lived in Timothy’s grandmother Lois, his mother Eunice, as well as in Timothy (2 Timothy 1:5).

So Paul reminded Timothy (put thee into remembrance: KJV) to stir up the gift of God within him by the laying on of hands. (2 Timothy 1:6)

One of my own father’s gifts to me has been his fascination with history. My father loves to read, research, and learn. “Like Father, like Son” is true in so many unexpected ways. My father was first a writer and then the editor of the Telecom Advisor⁴ for over 15 years.⁵

Whenever our family gathers for holidays or birthdays, my father always brings out his video camera! In the early days, video cameras required painfully bright backdrop lights. We would groan when the bright lights came out, but later be thrilled by the immortalized visual memories. Memory, according to the Apostle Paul, is an irreplaceable gift. I appreciate my father and family more and more as I become older. Family for me is inextricably connected with thousands of unforgettable and often hilarious memories. It is also connected with times of great sorrow and loss, great joy and celebration. Family is birthdays, weddings, funerals, baptisms, anniversaries, graduations, Christmas, Easter, Mother’s Day, and yes, Father’s Day. My life would be much less rich without the gift of my family and my father.

One of my father’s most memorable projects has been his family memoirs.⁶ The term

“memoir” comes from the French *memoire* for memory. My dad often comments how he wished that he had listened more closely as a teenager when his now deceased aunts and uncles would talk about family history.

So far my Dad has written twenty-one chapters totaling 233 pages, covering from his birth up to 1993. This only gives him thirteen more years to go in order to catch up to the year 2006! Just like the famous Afro-American *Roots* Book and TV—mini-series,⁷ my father’s memoirs are helping me understand better who I am and where I have come from.

Psalm 102:18 says: “Let this be written for a future generation, that a people not yet created may praise the LORD.” By my father’s writing down his memoirs, I will be able to pass this gift of history onto my children and future grandchildren. They too will be able to learn the exploits of their grandfather being raised in a coal-mining town outside of Edmonton, helping his blacksmith father shoe horses, serving as an Air Force WWII wireless radio mechanic in the Queen Charlotte Islands, becoming an electrical Engineer at UBC, becoming President of Lenkurt Electric, before becoming a hi-tech communications consultant. The Good Book says: “We will not hide them from their children; we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD, his power, and the wonders he has done” (Psalm 78:4)

One of the New Testament Greek words for “memory” is *anamnesei*, which speaks of being reminded, to be recalled and returned to one’s mind. To be re-minded is to actually come back to one’s mind. One of the reasons we celebrate the Lord’s Supper/Eucharist as Christians is to recover our Christian memory, as we “do this in memory” of Jesus.⁸ Jesus taught that the gift of the Holy Spirit is for the revival of our dormant memories: “(The Holy Spirit) will remind you of everything I have said to you.” (John 14:26) Paul taught the Ephesian leaders that memory was their best protection against apostasy: “So be on your guard! Remember that for three years I never stopped warning each of you night and day with tears.” (Acts 20:31) Many years later, the beloved disciple John connected loss of memory to a loss of the Ephesians’ first love for Jesus.⁹

Canada desperately needs to recover its mind, its memory, its first love for Jesus. Like the Prodigal Son in Jesus’ most famous parable, we as Canadians need to “come to our senses”¹⁰ and return to our Father. A profound amnesia has come over our nation in such a short period. Many of our Canadian youth, unlike their own parents and grandparents, have never even seen the Ten Commandments¹¹ or the Lord’s Prayer,¹² both of which are cornerstones of our Judeo-Christian ethos in Canada. Sunday School has been largely abandoned by our sports-crazed, “shopaholic” Canadian culture. As the Rev Charles Alexander, our first Renewal Mission speaker, reminded me, Canada has become like the people in the days of the Judges:

*After that whole generation had been gathered to their fathers, another generation grew up, who knew neither the LORD nor what he had done for Israel.*¹³

The heart of our amnesia is a loss of our Canadian focus upon the person of Jesus Christ. The same thing had happened to the Ephesian community who had turned away from Jesus and returned to mother-goddess worship. That is why Paul clearly reminded his disciple Timothy: “Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, descended from David. This is my gospel...” (2 Timothy 2:8-9) In season and out of season, Timothy was to “keep reminding them of these things.” (2 Timothy 2:14)¹⁴

As my wife and I recently travelled throughout all of the four Maritime provinces, we made

use of a PT Cruiser with Quebec license plates *Je Me Souviens* (I remember). Courage comes from memory: *Je Me Souviens*. If we forget God's works and wonder, we will turn back in the day of battle, despite being fully armed! (Psalm 78:9-11)¹⁵ May we as Canadians remember our spiritual heritage and not turn back in the battle for the very soul of Canada!

Footnotes:

1 1 Corinthians 4:17; also see 1 Thessalonians 3:6

2 1 Timothy 4:6: *New International Version Bible*

3 Fanny-Maude Evans, *Changing Memories into Memoirs*, Harper Row, 1984, p.8

4 <http://www.tmcadvisor.com/tmc/people/ted/root.html>

5 Following in my father's footsteps, since 1988, I have been privileged over the past 19 years to write over 200 articles for the *Deep Cove Crier*, and for the past seven years, to co-ordinate and write for the "Spiritually Speaking" column for the *North Shore News* <http://www.nsnews.com>

6 "My Father the Family Historian", The Rev Ed Hird, June 2003 *Deep Cove Crier*, http://www3.telus.net/st_simons/cr0306.htm

7 <http://www.movietome.com/movietome/servlet/MovieMain/movieid-1590>

8 Luke 22:19, Corinthians 11:24 The term "in memory of" (anamnesis) in the Greek has been the subject of endless scholarly studies as referred to in http://moses.creighton.edu/harmless/bibliographies_for_theology/Sacraments_4.htm

9 Revelation 2:4-5, *New International Version Bible*: "Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken your first love. Remember the height from which you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place."

10 Luke 15: 17-18: *New International Version Bible*: "When he came to his senses, he said,

"How many of my father's hired men have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you."

11 Exodus 20:1-17; Deuteronomy 5:6-22

12 Regulation 262 Section 28 of the *Ontario Education Act*, enacted in 1855, states: "A public school shall be opened or closed each school day with religious exercises consisting of the reading of the Scriptures or other suitable readings and the repeating of the "Lord's Prayer" or other suitable prayers." http://archives.cbc.ca/IDC-1-69-97-793/life_society/religion_classroom/clip5

13 Judges 2:10, *New International Version Bible*

14 Another example of the value of memory is Hebrews 10:32: "Remember those earlier days after you had received the light, when you stood your ground in a great contest in the face of suffering." (*New International Version Bible*)

15 Psalm 78:9-11 *New International Version Bible*: "The men of Ephraim, though armed with bows, turned back on the day of battle; they did not keep God's covenant and refused to live by his law. They forgot what he had done, the wonders he had shown them."

Answer the following based on your reading

Ed says, "Timothy was Paul's No.1 troubleshooter for memory recovery."

1. What is the New Testament Greek word for "memory"? What does it mean?

Read Psalm 102:18 out loud.

*Let this be written for a future generation,
That a people not yet created may praise the LORD.*

1. How does Ed suggest that we help our next generations to remember? Have you written anything that will be left for future generations?
1. "A profound amnesia has come over our nation in such a short period." Explain what has

happened in Canada to our memory of Jesus.

2. What is one of the reasons we celebrate the Lord's Supper/Eucharist as Christians? In what other ways can we remind ourselves and others of our spiritual heritage?

Points to Ponder

1. What are some of your earliest memories of being loved, cared for or wanted? How did your family show affection? How did or do they remember past times?
2. How do you celebrate special times with your family?
3. How does your church celebrate special events?

Thoughts to Consider

Read: Exodus 18:7-12

So Moses went out to meet his father-in-law and bowed down and kissed him. They greeted each other and then went into the tent. ⁸Moses told his father-in-law about everything the Lord had done to Pharaoh and the Egyptians for Israel's sake and about all the hardships they had met along the way and how the Lord had saved them. ⁹Jethro was delighted to hear about all the good things the Lord had done for Israel in rescuing them from the hand of the Egyptians. ¹⁰He said, "Praise be to the Lord, who rescued you from the hand of the Egyptians and of Pharaoh, and who rescued the people from the hand of the Egyptians. ¹¹Now I know that the Lord is greater than all other gods, for he did this to those who had treated Israel arrogantly." ¹²Then Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, brought a burnt offering and other sacrifices to God, and Aaron came with all the elders of Israel to eat a meal with Moses' father-in-law in the presence of God.

Just as Moses reminded Jethro (his father-in-law) that God had brought the Israelites out of slavery and away from the Egyptians, our Bible is a reminder of God's work in people's lives.

1. Recall three specific instances where God has made an impact in your life.
2. Have you told others about these times? Why or why not?
3. Does your church service include testimonies? If yes, how do you feel when you hear someone else expressing God's work in their lives? If no, have you heard testimonies given in others places? How did that make you feel? How do testimonies help us in our spiritual growth?

Delve Deeper into the Bible

Read: 1 Corinthians 4: 14-17

I am not writing this to shame you, but to warn you, as my dear children. Even though you have ten thousand guardians in Christ, you do not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel. Therefore I urge you to imitate me. For this reason I am sending to you Timothy, my son whom I love, who is faithful in the Lord. He will remind you of my way of life in Christ Jesus, which agrees with what I teach everywhere in every church.

1. By laying a foundation, Paul became a father of the gospel, through Christ. Timothy reminds

his followers of how Paul's life was one of "being Christ". Do you have someone that can "reformat your Christian memory banks"? If so, describe that person and give an example of a time that your friend helped you to return to Jesus. Have you been that person in the life of someone else? How can you remind her to keep her focus on Jesus?

Read: John 14:26

But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

and Luke 22:19

And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, 'This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me.'

1. Ed says, "Communion is the 'revival of our dormant memories'". How do you think celebrating communion can reinforce our memories?

Brainstorming

1. Name some things that can draw us away from Christ's message.
2. What are some ways we can keep our spiritual memories alive for Christ?
3. Fifty years ago, what signs of Christ might you have seen in our society. Are those signs still there? What has changed? What can you do to counteract some of these changes?

May the Lord bless you as you continue to live for Him and as you listen to Him when He calls you forth to become Timothys and Timotheas.

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