

# THE SABBATH SCOOP

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## Do the Good Really Die Young?

*Did you ever know a 'good' person who died at a young age? Why did it happen? The Bible tells us!*

By Gregory Dullum

Marvin was one of the nicest people you'd ever want to meet. He was humble and friendly with a nice smile on his face and a sparkle in his eyes. He was someone you wanted as a friend.

He was about my age—I was getting close to 30 at the time—and he had a beautiful wife and precious little daughter, just as I had.

Marvin and his family lived about 90 miles away from our home in suburban Minneapolis. For several years, he attended a builder's convention in Minneapolis that lasted several days. Instead of driving back and forth each day, he and his family stayed with us.

In the evenings, we'd share a meal and fellowship into the evening. Marvin was used to working hard all day. After eating a big meal, he'd fall asleep in an easy chair for an hour or so. We didn't mind. We were glad he felt so at home that he could relax in his usual routine. When he woke up, we'd keep on talking.

Then came 1985. My wife, Marie, and I were expecting our second child in January. The due date came and went, and on Feb. 1, Marie gave birth to our stillborn daughter.

That spring, our 4-year-old daughter got whooping cough. Children die from that disease, and Marie and I worried that she, too, would be taken from us.

During those weeks while our daughter coughed uncontrollably, we couldn't take her to church. I attended services in St. Paul in the morning and Marie attended Minneapolis South in the afternoon. That way, both of us could attend church every Sabbath.

On June 15, 1985, I was sitting in the auditorium in Battle Creek Junior High in St. Paul when the pastor, Bill Jahns, announced that Marvin had fallen from a barn roof on June 4, hit his head on the ground below, and had died. I couldn't believe my ears! The announcement was

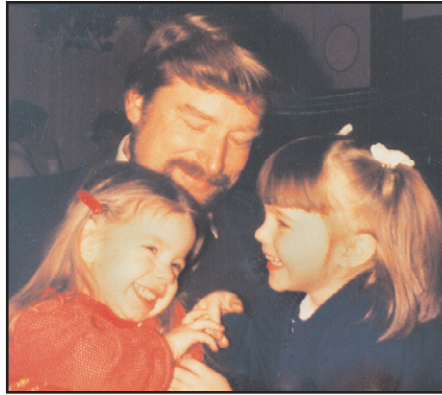


photo by Gregory Dullum

Marvin having a good time with his daughter, left, and ours.

not made in Minneapolis South, so, had I not been in St. Paul, I would not have learned of Marvin's death.

Why did Marvin have to die at such a young age? He seemed to be such a good Christian man! Did he have some horrible secret sin I didn't know about and this was his punishment? Was God's arm shortened so that He couldn't save Marvin's life?

Eight years earlier (1977), Billy Joel sang a popular song that became one of his greatest hits. It included these words:

"They say there's a heaven for those who will wait.

"And some say it's better but I say it ain't.

"I'd rather laugh with the sinners than cry with the saints.

"The sinners are much more fun.

"You know that ONLY THE GOOD DIE YOUNG." Two or three times the mantra is repeated in the chorus: "Only the good die young." What was the song's title? "Only the Good Die Young," of course.

Was Billy Joel right? Do really good people die young? And if so, why does God allow it? Shouldn't good people be blessed with long lives?

God tells us that a long life is a blessing from Him, a reward for loving and obeying Him:

"The LORD says, 'Whoever loves me, I will save. I will protect those who know me.... I will give them a long, full life, and they will see how I can save'" (Ps. 91:14, 16 *New Century Version*).

Does that mean Marvin—and other good people who died young—did NOT love and obey God? No! Satan applied these verses to Jesus Christ when He walked the earth (compare Ps. 91:11-12 to Mat. 4:5-6). Did Jesus live a long physical life? No! He was crucified at age 33. But He was resurrected and now has ETERNAL life—days *without end!*

God is not primarily concerned about giving us long physical lives. He wants us to develop holy, righteous character during our relatively short lives as humans so we can live FOREVER as spirit beings!

Once we learn what we need to learn and develop the character we need to develop, there is no pressing need for God to keep us alive as human beings. He may bless us with long physical lives, or there is ANOTHER option:

"Those who are right with God may die, but no one pays attention. Good people are taken away, but no one understands. Those who do right are taken away from evil and are given peace. Those who live as God wants find rest in death" (Isa. 57:1-2 *NCV*).

Some people MAY die young because they have finished their race early, and God is giving them peaceful rest—away from evil. They no longer can be tempted. They no longer must struggle against evil. Satan can't get at them.

At their next moment of consciousness, they will rise from their graves to meet Christ in the air! We, who are alive at that time, will join them, if we, like them, overcome sin and succeed in our struggles (1 Thes. 4:13-18).

We must PERSEVERE *until the end!* DON'T EVER give up on our calling! Be there for those who have died in the faith before us!

# THE JERUSALEM CHURCH

*As old-timers are martyred and society becomes dangerous, the church flees Jerusalem and is saved.*

By Gregory Dullum  
Part 7

## A.D. 57—Paul Imprisoned

The Apostle Paul was in trouble! Although Paul had avoided a scourging by telling the soldiers he was an uncondemned Roman citizen, he still spent the night in prison (Acts 22:29-30).

The next day Claudius Lysias had Paul released from his chains. Wanting to know the cause of the previous day's riot, Lysias ordered the Sanhedrin—the Jewish ruling Council—to appear before him. He had Paul brought to face his accusers.

Paul spoke in his own defense. When he realized half the Sanhedrin were Pharisees (who believed in the resurrection) and half were Saducees (who did not believe in a resurrection), he used this to his advantage. He cried out, “Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee; concerning the hope and resurrection of the dead I am being judged!”

The Pharisees jumped to Paul's defense and a great uproar ensued between the two groups of Jews. The Roman commander feared Paul would get pulled apart by the two groups, so he put him back in prison as a form of protective custody (Acts 23:6-10).

That night, as Paul sat in prison, he had a visitor—the resurrected Jesus Christ appeared in his cell. He gave Paul a message of hope. This was not the end of his life. He still had more work to do! “Be of good cheer, Paul,” Christ told him, “for as you have testified for Me in Jerusalem, so you must also bear witness at Rome” (v. 11).

It was Paul—and not Peter—who was sent by Christ to Rome. This is more evidence that Peter was not the first pope.

While Christ encouraged Paul in prison, Satan was busy elsewhere: “some Jews banded together and bound themselves under an oath, saying that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul. Now there were more than 40 who had formed this conspiracy” (vv. 12-13).

What went through the minds of the brethren in Jerusalem as they learned of these *very serious* death threats against the apostle? They realized they lived in dangerous times, and they probably prayed *more fervently* for Paul's protection!

Paul's nephew did more than pray! He took ACTION. When he heard of the plot, he went into the Fortress of Antonia and told Paul. Paul sent him to Claudius

Lysias to repeat the information.

Lysias took no chances with Paul's safety. He ordered two centurions to take Paul to Governor Felix in Caesarea, accompanied by 200 soldiers, 70 horsemen and 200 spearmen (vv. 16-33). They left, not in the middle of the day, but in the third hour of the night (9-10 p.m.).

When church members awoke the next morning, Paul was no longer in the city! They later learned that Paul had been taken to Ceasarea, where he was imprisoned for two years (Acts 24:27). He ended up appealing to Caesar and was sent to Rome in the fall of 59 (Acts 25:11). He was shipwrecked and spent the winter on Malta, arriving in Rome in the spring A.D. 60.

Paul spent two years—A.D. 60-61—under house arrest in Rome (Acts 28:30).

Finally, about A.D. 62, Paul was released from prison. Historians tell us he took a journey to Spain, Britain, France, and back through Greece and Turkey. By 63 or 64, he arrived in Crete. He left Titus in Crete to raise up elders in every town (Titus 1:5). From there, Paul went to Ephesus, where he left Timothy to deal with divisions in the church there (1 Tim. 1:3-4).

## A.D. 64—Rome Burns

In the year 64, Fire broke out in Rome and the finger of suspicion pointed to Roman Emperor Nero. He needed a scapegoat, so he blamed the Christians. Persecution against Christians now began with greater intensity. Against this backdrop of persecution, Peter wrote his epistles which speak of “fiery trials” (1 Peter 4:12).

The Roman procurator in Jerusalem at this time was Florus. He had a *terrible* lust for WEALTH. Bribes and extortion were frequent. In 66, he raided the temple treasury and took 17 talents, claiming they were needed for imperial service. This was the *straw that broke the camel's back* for the Jews who lived in Jerusalem. A spirit of INSURRECTION spread *rapidly* among them.

## A.D. 66—A Time of Martyrdom

In 66, Peter and Paul were martyred in Rome. Two big pillars of the church were *suddenly* GONE! But that's not all.

Others martyred at this time were Erastus, Aristarchus, Trophimus, Joseph (Barsabas) and Ananias.

Not long after he wrote his epistle of

Jude, this half-brother of Jesus was martyred. So were James, Philip, Mark, Matthias, Bartholomew, Thomas and Luke.

What went through the minds of the people in the Jerusalem Church as these *PIL-LARS* of the church were *martyred* and society *around them* became *more dangerous*?

## Armies Approach Jerusalem

In September 67, Jewish insurgents seized the Fortress of Antonia and *wiped out* the Roman garrison that was there.

Two months later, in November 67, Celsus Gallus marched south from Syria to Jerusalem with a Roman legion in an attempt to regain Roman control of the situation. A legion was 4,000-6,000 soldiers. He occupied a northern suburb of Jerusalem but then retreated.

Do you think the Church at Jerusalem was *worried* when a Roman army camped in the northern suburb of the city? Do you think they believed the *END WAS NEAR*?

When the army retreated, the church must have breathed a collective sigh of relief. They knew the end was *not yet!* But the relief didn't last long.

## Invasion of 68

Emperor Nero sent the Roman commander-in-chief Vespasian to put down the revolt in the spring of 68.

“When Vespasian arrived the following spring to take charge of operations, he steadily reduced Galilee, Paraea, western Judea and Idumaea, but when he was

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ready to besiege Jerusalem itself, news came of the death of Nero (June 9, 68) and the civil war that followed, Vespaian suspended operations for a year to see how events would turn out” (*New Testament History* by F.F. Bruce, 1972, p. 381).

Vespaian left the army at Jerusalem to his son, and went back to Rome to become emperor. The army outside of Jerusalem again temporarily withdrew.

## Pentecost 69

We now come to Pentecost A.D. 69. Jerusalem was about to be attacked by a Roman army. And the church was *smack dab in the middle of things!*

Church members may have remembered Jesus’ words in the Olivet prophecy: “But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near. Then let those in Judea flee to the mountains, let those who are in the midst of her depart, and let not those who are in the country enter her” (Luke 21:20-21).

Christ also had told them, “Let him who is on the housetop not come down to take anything out of his house. And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes” (Mat. 24:19-20).

Those in the Jerusalem Church may have wondered, “*Is it time to flee?*”

Some may have believed they were SAFE; that it *wasn’t* time to flee. They had *seen it all before*. The army came, the army retreated. Once again, the army had come, but now it had retreated again.

Notice what happened on Pentecost A.D. 69: “But God’s headquarters Church was still in danger—in the doomed and besieged city!... And in Jerusalem, as God’s people were gathered for the Feast of Pentecost, there was an earthquake, accompanied with a great noise, and a supernatural voice was heard to say in the Temple: ‘*Let us remove hence!*’

“God’s people did ‘remove hence!’ The church fled to the mountains, and on to Pella, a small town just beyond the river Jordan. Behind them the Roman armies closed in rapidly on Jerusalem” (*Ambassador College Correspondence Course*, Lesson 49, 1968, page 11).

Eusebius describes this event: “The whole body, however, of the church at Jerusalem, having been commanded by a divine revelation, given to men of approved piety there before the war, removed from the city, and dwelt at a certain town beyond the Jordan, called Pella” (*The Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius Pamphilus*, 1969, Book III, Ch. V, p. 89)

In *A History of the Church* (undated), George Waddington adds, “A short time before the Roman invasion, we are informed that the Christian Church seceded

from a spot which prophecy had taught to hold devoted [Jerusalem], and retired to Pella, beyond the Jordan” (p. 50).

Ellen G. White, in *The Great Controversy* (1950), writes, “Not one Christian perished in the destruction of Jerusalem.... Upon the retreat of Cestius, the Jews, sallying from Jerusalem, pursued after his retiring army; and while both forces were fully engaged, the Christians had an opportunity to leave the city. At this time the country also had been cleared of enemies who might have endeavored to intercept them. At the time of the siege, the Jews were assembled at Jerusalem to keep the Feast... and thus the Christians throughout the land were able to make their escape unmolested. Without delay they fled to a place of safety—the city of Pella, in the land of Perea, beyond Jordan” (pp. 30-31).

In *Caesar and Christ* (1944), Will Durant writes: “In 62 James the Just was himself put to death. Four years later the Jews revolted against Rome. The Jerusalem Christians, too convinced of the coming ‘end of the world’ to care about politics, left the city and established themselves in pagan and pro-Roman Pella, on the farther bank of the Jordan. From that hour Judaism and Christianity parted. The Jews accused the Christians of treason and cowardice, and the Christians hailed the destruction of the Temple by Titus as a fulfillment of Christ’s prophecy” (p. 577).

## A.D. 70—Jerusalem Besieged

Eusebius claims that after the Church fled to Pella, God punished the Jews in Jerusalem for their mistreatment of Jesus and his apostles: “Furthermore, the members of the Jerusalem church, by means of an oracle given by revelation to acceptable persons there, were ordered to leave the City before the war began and settle in a town in Paraea called Pella. To Pella those who believed in Christ migrated from Jerusalem; and as if holy men had utterly abandoned the royal metropolis of the Jews and the entire Jewish land, the judgment of God at last overtook them for their abominable crimes against Christ and his apostles, completely blotting out that wicked generation from among men” (*The History of the Church from Christ to Constantine* by Eusebius, 1965, p. 111).

“Titus began the siege of Jerusalem in April, 70. The defenders held out desperately for five months, but by the end of August the Temple area was occupied and the holy house burned down, and by the end of September all resistance in the city had come to an end” (Bruce, p. 382).

The historian Josephus describes terrible times during the siege, including one woman who roasted her baby and ate it because of the severe famine. It is said that 1,100,000 Jews perished in the siege of Jerusalem but the church escaped the horrors of the siege by following Christ’s commands in Matthew 24 and fleeing to Pella, a town in the mountains beyond the Jordan (*A History of True Religion* by A.N. Dugger and C.O. Dodd, 1972, p. 41). Church members escaped because they obeyed those supernatural words spoken on Pentecost A.D. 69: “*Let us remove hence!*”

## Two Lessons for Us Today

What lessons can we learn from the last days of the Jerusalem Church?

**1. The church escaped the worst part of the siege.** Although the church was in Jerusalem for the beginning of the Jewish revolt and during the first siege, and they saw their world getting more dangerous around them, they ESCAPED before the WORST things happened in Jerusalem. God did NOT allow Jerusalem to be conquered by the Roman army until the church was *safely out of there!*

A time is coming when the Church of God must AGAIN *flee to safety* (Rev. 12:13-14). I believe God will take his church to safety BEFORE He allows this nation to be CONQUERED by an *invading army*. We may go through some trying times, but we’ll miss the WORST part of what’s to come (Rev. 3:10).

**2. We must be counted worthy to escape.** Eusebius wrote that the voice that was heard on Pentecost, A.D. 69, which said, “Let us remove hence” was heard by ONLY *certain people*. Who were those people? Read it again: “a divine revelation, given to *men of approved piety*” Must we, too, be people of *approved PIETY*, to escape the evil to come?

Jesus Christ tells us, “But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come upon you unexpectedly. For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man” (Luke 21:34-36). Yes, we must be counted WORTHY *to escape!*

How will we know when it’s time to flee? In A.D. 69, the church heard a *supernatural voice* on a holy day. It *could* happen that way again. Or it may come as an announcement at services or a hotline message by phone. No matter how God tells us to flee, the question we must ask ourselves is, *will we be READY?*

# College Letters:

## Lessons of Life Learned at Ambassador College

*One purpose for A.C. was to train young adults to serve in church congregations and in the world.*

Saturday Night, Nov. 1, 1975 7:25

### Part 2

Tonight I'm going to valet park again. That should mean another \$5. And I should get my check from work soon, so I'm slowly saving for next year.

By the way, I've come up with tentative plans for the next year. I don't think I'll come home next summer. I can save \$200 by not doing so. I hope to move off campus with some guys (Steve already said he'd move in with me) because it's cheaper living off campus, and would really be a maturing experience. Because so many students leave over the summer, I could probably work 40 hours/wk on campus and make more money than at Farrell's. And maybe I would take one summer class, to get ahead on my academics (classes are cheaper in the summer). I have to average 16 credits a semester to meet grad. requirements. I lack one right now. By taking 3 credits this summer, I could get a jump, and maybe by my senior year only have to take 12 credits (approx. 4 classes).

Then, because I do want to see you again, I would come home next Feast. This way I can come home and cost nothing [paid out of second tithes instead of personal funds]. Or, if you're transferring Feast sites, I could do that too.

This is a total reversal from my plans I had at the Feast [when I was home with Mom]. Then I was going to come home in summer and not for the Feast.

But, these are only tentative plans. However, they sound good to me. I think it would be exciting to live off campus for a summer. I'd move back on in the fall, though.

Well, this letter is too long already, and I've told you everything. So take care, and have a good week.

Love,  
Greg

**[Editor's note:** I received the following letter from Marie Backfisch (my future wife) which she wrote to make up for not replying to a letter I had written to her that summer, when I was home in Minnesota. The envelope was addressed to my Mom's home in Bloomington, Minn., but Marie had placed it in my mailbox at college. At that time, anyone could slip notes into any student's mail slot.]

Oct. 28, 1975

Dear Greg,

Hello! This is for the letter I didn't write you this summer.

How's your summer going? Sounds like Minnesota is getting *more* beautiful everytime you describe it, so I'll have to visit it sometime soon.

Thank you so much for your letter. I was really glad to hear from you and I am very sorry that I didn't reply speedily.

My summer is getting better. Worked around fifteen to sixteen hrs. a day plus getting in trouble with the girls I was staying with. You can not imagine the things that were going on. Thank 'Him' that Emogene will be here in a few weeks.

My rundown for the week. Sunday morning to myself. The other nights except for Fri. I worked at Kabakians [an Armenian restaurant] and I get up at 6 to work at 7:00 at school [in the housekeeping department]. I forgot to tell you, Mrs. Robb, my lead woman, just took off to see her mother, who's in the hospital, without any notice she was leaving. Marie was x-boss for 4-5 days. Had to get 360 [a building of dormitories] done and get into 390 before school starts. This is my summer, briefly.

Now, to get back to the letter.

How's Farrell's? Tell your family I said *Hi!* and everyone else that I know. I got baptized May 28. (My birthday this week for 5 mos.)

Anyway, it was a great experience. Being away from my parents and Patrice too. The summer was dragging by so slow until I got the job in June on campus. Work 40 hours a week [on campus] and about 20+ at Kabakians. Quit Kabakians around August.

But the summer was a boost in the right lane. The Feast was even better.

My Dad's super and more loveable but yet he has a great authority about him which I love dearly and so is Mom. She's super. She gave me the best example of helping and serving God's people and I love them dearly. I took pictures of them and I'll show them to you. I love them dearly—my whole family—Cape Girardeau. They all said they were behind me more now than ever. I have a huge family and I miss them terribly. I am out

here to be sent back and help them & the community later but I have to be taught first, too. That's the way of life, though.

I am glad you enjoy your plane rides. I was going to fly at the Feast [on a small plane ride] but we went to Pizza Barn instead.

My brother's really cool. I understand why he dates this girl who's out of the church because he knows there's not one at Cape for him. Mom doesn't like it, neither does Dad, but in helping I explain to them that it's his life and God will take care of him as long as he's listening. Gilbert's the best brother.

Anyway, getting back to you. How's life & college treating you? For me, it gets rough when you know you have four hours of work to put in that day and I know I have to study constantly to grasp what's going on.

Have you heard from your Mom lately? How is the family?

Well Greg—I just wanted to write you a letter saying I am very sorry about not writing this summer and I want to let you know that a lot of us (& in the field) are for you all the way.

You could call this an encouraging letter, which I hope you take it as. 'Keep on Truckin.' You're doing great. You know what happened to your beloved Dad. Greg, we love you, too. Keep your head up.

Love,  
Marie

Smile & Bear it...

You still coming to my champagne brunch?

Did not mean to bring your dad up. I really want the best for you. Keep the good work up.

*Have a Great Week!*

### Undated

Dearest Greg,

So glad you could make it to my champagne brunch. Have a beautiful day and week!

'Keep on Smilin'

Love,

Marie Lucy [Backfisch]

You're one of the best to be;

Then invited over for a cup of tea,

Telling yourself that you're *just* my

friend;

But I would die if it's not to the end.  
Ha!

[Editor's note: I received the following card, which said on the front, "A little note for you today..." and inside, "To thank you in a special way!"

### Undated

Dearest Greg,

I hope you enjoyed yourself because I did. Every second.

Have a Great Day.

Love ya bunches,

Marie

How could an elephant get into a tree?

'Keep on Truckin!'

### Nov. 9, 1975

Dear Greg,

Your letter had 9¢ postage due on it but it was worth every penny of it. Last week was a good week. I got letters from all three of you kids.

Gary is busy taking some kind of correspondence course. Will have to find out what kind. He is getting the new car bug too so I suppose he'll get a new one some day.

Sounds like Linda may move now that her rent is raised. Anyhow it was good hearing from all you kids.

I still think you are just doing too much and losing too much sleep. It probably would be a good idea to take some classes during the summer if you can work too.

I'm still going to Weight Watchers. I've lost 20 lbs. so far. I can see it on my clothes and I sure feel better already. Hope I can lose another 20 in the next month. Brad says Hi!

We have had such a beautiful fall. The temp has been 65 to 70 for weeks but would you believe it's snowing tonight. Imagine it's kinda icy because it rained all afternoon.

Our front door knob broke so had to get a new one. Hang onto your key because it still opens the back door. Imagine your Dad will be surprised when he comes down and can't walk right in.

We had Mr. McMichael speak to us a week ago in Church and yesterday we had Mr. Burk McNair and Mr. Waterhouse. Almost like the Feast with all the guest speakers. It has been good for the people though. Even so I heard eight families left [the church] and I suppose there will be more. We haven't heard who will take Mr. Prunkard's place. Suppose they don't have anyone available.

I'm going to look for carpeting this next week. I hope to get the living room done by bridge Dec. 1st. Will have to hurry though.

We are invited over to Pruszinski's for

Thanksgiving. Am glad we are doing something.

Tammy's leg is getting a little better. She steps on it a little but when she runs she doesn't use it. Can't imagine what she [had] ever done to it.

Not much else going on here so that's it for this time.

Love,

Mom

### Sat., Nov. 22, 1975, 10:57 p.m.

Dear Mom and Brad,

I really enjoyed your last letters. I got my mid-term grades too. They look like this: Math: C, Old Testament Survey: A, Broadcast Production: A, Speech: B, Softball: B, and I think I got an A in Public Affairs Reporting. The teacher didn't turn in the grades on time, but I got an A on every article.

Sunday, Nov. 23, 1975, 12:35 p.m.

I may be coming home winter break. I talked with Dan Aldrich one Sabbath, and he said he wanted to drive home. But he wanted to fly back. Not me. If I come home, I want to do it the cheapest way possible. So I said off the cuff to Glen Williams once, "Hey, how would you like to go to Mpls. for winter break?" Glen is the guy from Trinidad who was in my dorm last year. I was half-way kidding. But later he came up to me and asked if that offer were still open. I said sure. We made some tentative plans, but now he's decided not to go.

However, Dan Aldrich told me of someone else who wants to drive home to Mpls. Rick Stodola (he flew out here with me) wants to go too. So maybe if we can get a drive-through car, we'll come home. But then again, something else may come up. If we did drive home, we would take the southern route.

If all else fails, Don Carlson told me Loren [Matson] and Steve Carlson may drive out here winter break. If that happens, we'll all take off for Mexico.

Last night after I started writing this letter, I went down to Steven Brooks' room. I was hungry. Eventually we all went to the Parasol [Restaurant]. We stayed up and talked until 5 a.m. this morning. But it was worth it. It was an encouraging discussion.

At 11:45 and later, they got a phone call. Nobody answered, so I did. Some girl said they were doing a poll, and wanted to know if I thought girls were intelligent. Later they called and asked Steve, and Wes, his roommate, if they thought girls at AC were as feminine as girls in the world.

## Fun Fact



Drawing and Fun Fact are courtesy of NAPS

The English word *alphabet* can be traced back through the Greek to the Phoenician-Hebrew words for ox (aleph) and house (beth).

## Witerature

*Wit and wisdom to complement the truths of the Holy Bible can be found in secular writings.*

*Wild Men, Wild Alaska* by Rocky McElveen, 2006, Thomas Nelson, pp. 141, 144, 147, 148

### Where There Is Hope

"I was in complete shock. My lodge, the eleven cabins, and all the outbuildings were on fire. And I was thousands of miles away and helpless to stop it! My life, my business, my world, all going *up in smoke!*

"What could I do? I had no fire insurance on any of the property. I had spent every spare nickel and then some to rebuild my dream lodge. And I already had people booked for the following season. How could I hunt or fish with them now?..."

"I remembered a loner sourdough and his wife who lived in a home-made cabin eight miles up the river....

"The next morning I became the new owner of their land and cabins....

It has been rough making a comeback after such a huge setback. I faced the death of my business. But at least there is hope. Where there is hope, there is will, and where there is will, there is almost always a way."

**Job 11:18, Ps. 16:1, 71:14, Lam. 3:26, Rom. 8:24, Heb. 6:19**

## Quotable Quote

"We only fear when we forget who walks beside us." —**Hans Wilhelm**, *The Book of Courage*

## Memory Scripture

The 10 Commandments.

—**Exodus 20, Deuteronomy 5**

## College Letters

Continued from Page 5

When we told Ted this later, he was upset. He said he would have told them off. We figured they must be doing this because of Thanx [Thanksgiving] Dance coming up. Anyway, so at 3:30, Ted called one of the phones in each of the four girls dorms, and got somebody out of bed. In a cheerful voice, he said, "Hi, we're doing a poll, and we were wondering just how many girls in your dorm would be willing to go out with a guy at 3:30 in the morning... None of them? Okay, thank you. Good-bye." Wes, Steve, and I were rolling on the floor in hysterics. That's how we spend our Saturday nights at AC.

1:36 p.m. Monday

The biggest news right now is the huge forest (brush) fire burning to the northwest of college. 40,000 acres have been burned, and the sky is filled with ash and smoke. When I got up this morning, I looked out the window. Everything was orange! I guess the sun came up blood-red, I was told. I didn't see it. Right now it is a hazy orange ball. When I walk around campus, I've been watching the sidewalks, and noticing all the ash particles. The air smells like wood smoke. In OTS (Old Testament Survey) Dr. Dorothy said that Mr. Meredith's and Dr. Hoeh's homes are threatened [by the fire].

Last night we could see a huge glowing red cloud over the mountains. I haven't seen any flames yet. But I guess 40 homes have been burned, and it is still out of control.

Mr. Garner Ted Armstrong is growing a mustache. It takes a little getting used to. Did you know he will be appearing on "Hee Haw" early in '76?

A week ago I had a "Bubble Gum Special" on KBAC. I played "bubble gum music" and gave away bubble gum to people who called in with the right answers to my questions. It was fun. Last week I invited Mickey Mole on my show. It was fun. This week I hope to have Mickey back on, and with the use of an echo chamber, I'll do one from "the Grand Canyon."

A week ago Sunday I went bowling with a date, and Santana and his date. I did lousy, but what could I expect when I haven't bowled in almost 2 years? I even hit myself in the ankle with the ball. My third game I finally broke 100 and got 126. But it was fun.

How are you doing on Weight Watchers, Mom?

Have a great Thanksgiving!

Love,  
Greg



### China Gets Stronger

"China's military expansion and assertive trade policies have set off jitters across Asia, prompting many of its neighbors to rekindle old alliances and cultivate new ones to better defend their interests against the rising superpower...."

"The deals and alliances are not intended to contain China...."

"Most Asian countries, even as they argue that China will inevitably replace the United States as the top regional power, have grown concerned at how quickly that shift is occurring, and what the China superpower may look like."

"Today the problem is a rising China that is not democratic and is challenging the No. 1 position in the world" ("China's Fast Rise Leads Neighbors to Join Forces" by Mark Landler, Jim Yardley and Michael Wines, *The New York Times* reprints, Oct. 30, 2010, pp. 1-3).

An army of 200 million will come out of the East just before Christ returns (Rev. 9:13-17). It will cross the Euphrates River and prepare to engage an army from Europe near Jerusalem (Rev. 16:12-16). Before these two armies can battle each other, Christ will return (Mat. 24:21-22). They will turn their focus from each other to battling Christ but they will be defeated as Christ brings the kingdom of God to earth and ushers in a time of growing peace (Rev. 17:14, Dan. 2:44 and Isa. 10:6-7).

China appears to be moving into a leadership position among the "kings from the east" (Rev. 16:12) who are behind the army of 200 million men.

### Indonesia Hit by Quake

"Indonesia struggled to aid survivors on Wednesday [Oct. 27] after an earthquake, a tsunami and volcanic eruptions struck separate parts of the country, killing hundreds and driving thousands from their homes."

"In the worst hit region of the Mentawai Islands, health and rescue workers were still trying to reach some isolated areas nearly two days after a 7.7-magnitude quake sent a tsunami more than 10 feet high crashing into

coastal villages" ("Death Toll Rises After Indonesia Disasters" by Aubrey Belford, *The New York Times* reprints, Oct. 37, 2010, p. 1).

When asked what would be the sign of his coming and the end of this age, Jesus Christ replied, in part, "Earthquakes in various places" (Mat. 24:3, 7).

### Label Upsets Witch

"Ms. [Vicki] Noble, who is famous in the pagan and Wiccan communities for her astrology readings, shamanic healing and writings about goddess spirituality, says she discovered Witch's Wit last week...."

"But one does not have to agree with Ms. Noble... to share her offense at a picture on the label of Witch's Wit, a limited edition pale ale...."

"It was a painting of a witch being burned at the stake."

"Ms. Noble went home and wrote to her e-mail list. 'Can we stop this brewer from their hate imagery?' read the subject line, in all capitals."

"'Can you imagine them showing a black person being lynched or a Jewish person going into the oven?' she wrote. 'Such images are simply not tolerated in our society anymore... and this one should not be either'" ("Witches Say Beer's O.K., but Lose the Fire and Stake" by Mark Oppenheimer, *The New York Times* reprints, Oct. 22, 2010, p. 1).

This witch's complaint is ILLOGICAL. Blacks are born black and Jews are born Jews (with the exception of those who convert to Judaism). Being black or Jewish is not a sin! But witchcraft is an *evil SIN condemned in the Bible* (Ex. 22:18; Deut. 18:10, Lev. 19:26, 31; 20:6, 27).

Rather than striving to be tolerant of witches, our nation should strive to obey God! It is disobedience to God that will cause our nation to lose its blessings and go into national captivity (See Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28). It was partly because of witches that God drove out the inhabitants of the Promised Land and gave it to the Israelites. If our nation practices the same sins, He will drive us out of our land as well (Deut. 18:9-14)!