



## Assisting Children's Evangelists Worldwide

### Devotional **SAILING THE FOUR SEAS**

Coming to understand and believe the great truth that God is sovereign and is in complete control of everyone, everything and every circumstance was a life-changing experience for me.

I recently came across the expression "sailing on the seven seas". I discovered that it was first used by sailors in ancient times and referred to the seven seas with which they were then familiar. Could you name them? They were the Mediterranean Sea, the Aegean Sea, the Adriatic Sea, the Black Sea, the Arabian sea, the Persian Gulf, and the Caspian Sea. How many did you know? Sailors still use the term "sailing on the seven seas" although there are many other seas known to-day. It helps to remember the truth of the sovereignty of God if we keep in mind "the four Cs" on which we are sailing. CREATION, CONTROL, CONVERSION and CIRCUMSTANCES.

- God was sovereign when He **CREATED** the world according to His own will and counsel, and for His glory (Revelation 4:11). And He was sovereign when He **CREATED** each of us in our mother's womb just as He wanted us to be. (Isaiah 43:7)
- God is sovereign in His providence, in His protective care for the universe. Through it He **CONTROLS** the universe and our world and keeps it in existence (Hebrews 1:3) and through it He **CONTROLS** all that is in the world (Psalm 135:6), all the forces of nature, all living creatures, all nations, all people and all history. (Psalm 103:19. Daniel 4:35)
- God is sovereign in the **CONVERSION** of sinners (John 6:44,65) Sinners are spiritually dead and unable to take any step towards God unless He convicts them of sin, opens their hearts and draws them to Himself. (Acts 16:14)
- God is sovereign in all the **CIRCUMSTANCES** in a believer's life. Nothing can happen to us unless God **SENDS** it (as He sent the storm and the great fish into Jonah's life) or unless He **ALLOWS** it, (as He allowed the devil to attack Job) There is no other possibility.

The greatest truth you will ever learn (apart from the truth that Jesus Christ died for your sins) is that God is absolutely sovereign and in complete control of everyone, everything and every circumstance. If you really believe this truth, it will enable you to trust God in every situation.



We welcome you this month with these two challenging quotes from Charles Spurgeon the renowned pastor and preacher, with a congregation of 5000 people in 19th century London.

*"The church's Samuels and Solomons are made wise in their youth. The Davids and Josiahs were tender of heart when they were tender in years. Read the lives of the most eminent ministers and you will usually find that their Christian history began early."*

*"Will you be very angry if I say that a boy is more worth saving than a man? It is infinite mercy on God's part to save those who are seventy, for what good can they now do with the fag-end of their lives? When we get to be fifty or sixty, we are almost worn out. But these dear boys and girls—there is something to be made of them. If they now yield themselves to Christ, they may have a long, happy and holy day before them in which they may serve God with their hearts."*

You will have complete **PEACE** in all the circumstances of your everyday life and of your ministry. Your understanding and belief that God is sovereign will ensure that you do not become confused, discouraged or even bitter.

**BE SURE TO READ 1 CHRONICLES 29:11-13 FREQUENTLY AND KEEP SAILING ON THESE FOUR Cs.**

In the last 54 issues of Mini Mag we have had a section, like this one, entitled “Children in the Bible.” In each of these sections we have been learning what the Bible teaches us about children and our ministry to them. In the last four issues we have been studying the book of Proverbs and have found so many of these proverbs or statements which refer to, or seem to refer to, children. Solomon has sought, on the basis of his great wisdom, and as guided by the Holy Spirit, to encourage **ALL** his readers (of every age) to be **WISE** (to have the ability to make the right decision in every situation), and, on the basis of that wisdom, to **FEAR** (to put their trust in) God. But there are times when the context and the words used in a number of these proverbs SEEM to focus on children, and it is these we are looking for. (Please use your Bibles to get the exact wording in each of these proverbs.)

**SOLOMON BELIEVES IT IS POSSIBLE FOR A CHILD TO BE WISE AND, ON THE BASIS OF THAT WISDOM, TO FEAR (TRUST) GOD.**

- ▶ He believes that children can be wise. (1:4, 2:1,2, 4:1-6, 13:1, 15:20)
- ▶ He believes that they can fear God (14:26,27)
- ▶ He believes that they can show that wisdom and trust by their deeds (20:11) and by their obedience. (13:1)

**SOLOMON BELIEVES AND TEACHES US, HOWEVER, THAT THE CHILDREN WILL ONLY BE WISE AND TRUST GOD IF THEY LISTEN TO, AND OBEY, WHAT THEY ARE TAUGHT.**

- ▶ He emphasises, in many proverbs, the importance of teaching children these truths (1:8, 4:1-6, 6:20, 21, 7:1-4, 8:32,33) Is there a lesson here for us to learn?

- ▶ He promises that the children will be richly blessed if they listen and learn. (2:1-8, 3:1-2, 4:1-6)
- ▶ He promises that their parents and teachers will be blessed if the children obey God’s commands. (10:1, 15: 20)
- ▶ He promises that grandparents will be blessed through the obedience of their grandchildren. (17:6a)
- ▶ He believes that children will be most blessed and most helped by the integrity and godly life of their parents and teachers. Their good example will be the most effective teaching principle of all. (17:6b, 20:7)

**WE BELIEVE THAT WE CAN, AS TEACHERS, LEARN MUCH FROM SOLOMON’S PROVERBS.**

- 1) That we should be confident that children, even little children, can, as enabled by the Holy Spirit, be wise and make the decision to trust the Lord Jesus as their Saviour.
- 2) That we should be thankful for the privilege of being called by God to teach children and that He uses our teaching to help children be wise and fear Him.
- 3) That the goal of our teaching should be that our children be wise and make the right decisions—especially the decision to trust the Lord Jesus.
- 4) That it is our responsibility to make our teaching interesting and attractive so that they will listen and learn. We cannot command them to do so, but we can encourage them to do so.
- 5) That we will experience joy as we see God working in the hearts of the children.



**KEY QUESTIONS ASKED**

**BY CHILDREN’S WORKERS**

**Question:** Should we encourage children in our club to memorise scripture? If so, what is the best way to do it?

**Answer:** God uses His word to convict unsaved children of their need to be saved; and He uses His word as spiritual food for saved children and to help them to grow. It is therefore essential that we bring our children into as much contact and understanding of God’s word as possible.

■ **THERE ARE THREE THINGS** we want our children to do with the Word of God.

- 1) **We want them to read it.** Make sure they all have a Bible and give them a reading plan.
- 2) **We want them to understand it.** You will help them do this through your teaching of the Bible lesson each week.
- 3) **We want them to remember verses** they have heard. These verses sink into their life, and the Holy Spirit can call them to mind at times of need. Many adults have testified that God has brought Scriptures, memorised in childhood, to their mind and helped them make right decisions. It is also good to remember that the years from six to nine are, it is said, the years of greatest memory in a person’s whole life; and we want to take advantage of that by encouraging them to memorize verses from the Word of God.

**THERE ARE THREE STEPS** you need to take as you prepare for their memorization of verses.

- 1) **You need to choose** beforehand a Bible verse which is related to the central truth you will teach that day. This will strengthen the teaching of your Bible lesson.

- 2) **You need to choose** a verse which is related to the life and needs of the children. That is more interesting and more helpful for the children.

- 3) **You need to choose** a verse which is simple and easy for the children to understand and repeat.

■ **THERE ARE THREE RULES** to remember and follow in your introduction and presentation.

- 1) **Make sure the children understand the verse.** During the repetition time, you could also add a few words of explanation or application or tell a story from the Bible or modern life which illustrates it.

- 2) **Have the children repeat the verse** and its reference over and over at least ten or fifteen times. That is how they memorize. The children enjoy doing this.

- 3) **Be sure to make the repetition interesting** and challenging. There are many ways to do this. You could purchase visualized verses from CEF, or you could put the words on a black or white board, and then delete a word each time they repeat the verse, until all the words are gone. You could divide the children into two groups and ask one group to repeat the first half and the other the second half. You could ask one child to say the first word of the verse, and the rest to follow one at a time. You could have all of them repeat it softly. You could use actions or motions to illustrate the verse. There are endless possibilities. One last word! Don’t forget to revise the memorised verses from week to week.

## Your Ministry to Children:

## OTHERS NEED THE LORD JESUS

We have been studying in a number of recent issues of Mini Mag how we can best help saved children in their new lives. We have dealt with their use of the Bible, assurance of salvation, the reality of sin and victory over it, letting their light shine, a changed life, obedience to God and parents, and "watch your words." One last subject remains. Tell the children a story about the famous preacher (General William Booth, the founder of the Salvation Army) who sent a message to be read at the International conference of the S.A. He did so but his message had only one word... OTHERS. What did he mean? His life and his work were based on HELPING OTHERS who needed the Lord Jesus as their Saviour.

Your children need to be taught that there are many millions of boys and girls around the world who have never heard of the Lord Jesus, and that they can be saved and receive eternal life through Him. But someone needs to tell them the good news. God has called a number of men and women, who have trusted the Lord Jesus, to leave their homes and countries and go to lands where there are many boys and girls (and grownups) who have never heard the good news that Jesus Christ can forgive their sins, change their lives, and give them eternal life. They are called missionaries. You could, in your Good News Club, use visualised stories of missionaries and their work to show the children what these missionaries do. Children find these visualised stories very interesting. Tell them that God might call

some of them to be missionaries one day. (You can purchase visualised stories of Hudson Taylor, Gladys Aylward and Amy Carmichael and many others from CEF.)

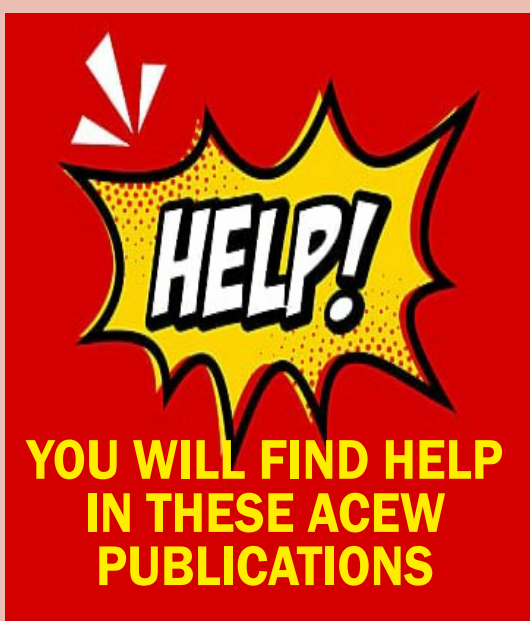
Your children need to be taught that they can play an important part NOW in reaching boys and girls around the world with the good news:

1) **By praying** for the missionaries who go to reach the children. It would be good for your GNC or Sunday School class to adopt a missionary or missionary family and encourage the children to pray for them and their work. You could let the missionary know that your children are praying for them and ask if they could send their prayer letter to you so you could read it to the children. It may even be possible for your adopted missionary to visit your Good News Club or Sunday School class. Or they could send some pictures or a short video.

2) **By giving** a little money to help in their work. It does not need to be very much, and it is best if they take it from their own pocket money. You could have a little box where children could put their gifts.

3) **By becoming** a missionary yourself one day if God should call you.

4) **By becoming** a missionary NOW by telling your friends about the Lord Jesus and how He wants to save boys and girls; or you can invite them to come to Good News Club. Children are the best missionaries to children!!!



Would you like to have a book with over 200 pages about children, about how to teach and evangelise them, and how to help them grow spiritually, a book which will answer your questions about the evangelism of children, a book which will give you ideas and illustrations to help you teach effectively, and a book which will give you lessons to learn and mistakes to avoid in your ministry. And the good news is that this book is FREE. I received a letter from a children's worker in the West Indies who downloads and reads the Mini Mag each month, and she has decided to download ALL the Mini Mags we have produced and put them together in one big file (or two) to provide her with this very helpful book.



Why not follow her example and create such a book for you and your ministry?



## AN ILLUSTRATION FOR CHILDREN

We have seen on page 2 how the book of Proverbs teaches the importance of wisdom, (which is "the ability to make the right decision in every circumstance") and how Solomon encourages his readers including the children to seek wisdom as their priority. We need to teach our children to be wise, and here is an illustration from the book of Proverbs which will help us do so.

➤ **"Do you know what it means to be wise?** A wise person is someone who knows how to make the right decision in every situation he finds himself. Do you remember me saying "God wants you to be wise and to make the right decisions." Wisdom is one of the greatest things God wants you to have. But how can you be wise when you are not big and strong like grown-ups. God gives you a picture in His Word to show you how to be wise. He compares you to an ant. Do you know what an ant is? An ant is a tiny black insect, and we see thousands of them scuttling around the ground in the summer, especially when you are having a picnic. They have eight legs, 2 antennas

jutting from their heads and sharp jaws. The bible tells us that these little black insects are wise and that we can become wise like them by studying them in the two sections of the Bible where they appear, and by following their example. (Proverbs 6:6-11, 30:24,25)

➤ **The Bible says** that they are small and not strong just like you. You can learn from them that you don't have to be big strong and grown up to be wise.

➤ **The Bible says** that they don't sit and do nothing. They are very active and busy but there is no-one bossing them and leading them in the wrong direction. They need, like you, to make their own decisions. Like them you will never be wise if you sit and do nothing. You have a wonderful Saviour, the Lord Jesus who will lead you in the path of wisdom, but you need to listen to Him and obey Him.

➤ **The Bible says** in two places that ants spend the summer preparing and gathering their food for the winter because it will be scarce then. They prepare for their future. This is probably the main display of their wisdom, and the example you should most imitate if you are to be wise. The most important display of wisdom for you and everyone else is to prepare for your future NOW, to prepare for that day when your time on earth closes. and you will be ready to die and to go to Heaven.

**Are you wise? Are you ready to die? Have you trusted the Lord Jesus as your Saviour? If you have, you are wise. If you have not you are not wise."**

## 75 Years and Still Learning:

*The author's experience and the lesson he learned*

I trusted Jesus Christ as my Saviour at 2 a.m. on November 30, 1949. This was the beginning of a new life for me. I believed that the Bible was the Word of God and completely true; but my knowledge and understanding of it was very limited. I had a hunger to know more about God, about Jesus Christ, about the Holy Spirit and about the Bible. I started to go to a good evangelical church and appreciated the teaching I got there. But I was GREATLY helped and encouraged when a dear brother heard about my conversion and advised me to study the great DOCTRINES of the Bible; and he gave me a book entitled "In Understanding Be Men" by T.C. Hammond. It was a book of SYSTEMATIC DOCTRINE. I devoured this book for years, and, more and more, I came to understand what the Bible taught concerning God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, Sin, Salvation and Spiritual growth. This book not only taught me doctrine, but it taught me SYSTEMATIC doctrine and showed me how all these great doctrines of God's Word fit together and logically form "the FAITH once delivered to the

## THE DELIGHTS OF DOCTRINE

saints." (Jude:3, Galatians 1:23, Ephesians 4:5, Philippians 1:27, 1 Timothy 4:1) An understanding of these doctrines and this faith has been the bulwark and basis of my spiritual growth and my ministry. When problems come, I remember that God is SOVEREIGN. When something happens, which I don't understand, I remember that God is WISE. When I am disappointed, I remember that God is FAITHFUL. When I am depressed, I remember that JESUS CHRIST is with me. When I feel weak, I remember that the HOLY SPIRIT lives in me.

**Make it your goal to study and understand the great doctrines of the Bible and you will be greatly blessed in your life and ministry. These doctrines will be a special help and blessing if you study and apply them logically and systematically. And what a challenge and blessing it will be to introduce and teach SYSTEMATIC DOCTRINE to your children. They need it too. ACEW can help you do this. We have written a book entitled "How to Teach Doctrine to Children." It is available to you free of charge on our website at [www.cefbookministry.com](http://www.cefbookministry.com).**

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All of them have occupied leadership positions for many years in the worldwide ministry of Child Evangelism Fellowship®. The contents of each Mini-Mag are based upon the author's 75 years of experience working with Child Evangelism Fellowship, successively as national director of Irish CEF, as European CEF regional director and as founder of the CEF Specialised Book Ministry. Contact can be made at [www.CEFBookMinistry.com](http://www.CEFBookMinistry.com).

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