



hcf heartbeat

Hamilton Christian Fellowship's Monthly Newsletter

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- "Grace" by Robert Cowling
- Profile—Lily Dam
- 'Musings' by Mary Cummings
- Monthly Event & Prayer Calendar

"Grace"

By Robert Cowling

We are living in what is known generally as 'The Day of Grace'. If you Google the term the first definition speaks of it being 'the unique period in world history where the gospel message of divine forgiveness has gone out for all the world to hear and be accepted.'



Scripture warns us however in Mathew 25, in the story of the wise and foolish virgins, to also use this time as we wait for the Lord's return, to press in to Him and insure that our lamps are full of oil.

I had to laugh at the preachers explanation of why the wise virgins didn't share their oil. "Why are they being so stingy? Isn't sharing one of the first things we teach our children?" Then he

drove home the point. The oil is gathered through intimacy with the Lord, where we learn to hear His voice and obey Him; we study His word and live it; where we fellowship with His Spirit and love those He brings into our lives; where we truly 'know Him' and our lives have become full of the oil of

His Spirit. This oil of intimacy and knowing can't just be poured out like some cheap soft drink, the foolish virgins were encouraged to go and develop that intimacy themselves which they then proceeded to do.

I had a dream recently that was like a retelling of this story and I was playing the part of the foolish virgins – minus the bridesmaid dresses! The first point of my dream that astonished me was that while I was focusing on the world falling apart others were already assembled in their wedding attire, in joyful expectation of the return of Jesus. I realized I wasn't dressed for a wedding and im-

Cont'd ...pg. 2

Profile - Lily Dam

By Lisa Sullivan

What a delight!

Lily and I met on a Saturday afternoon at Starbucks in east Hamilton, near her family home. We chatted a bit in the car on the way there and I soon realized what a delightful young lady she is. I have never taken the opportunity to chat with Lily in the past, but I am so pleased I had these couple of hours to begin to get to know her.

Lily was born in Hamilton and has lived in only two houses during her 17 years. Lily, as well as her 4 sisters and 1 brother, were able to

attend school very close to their home. Lily excels at maths and sciences, but also enjoys reading. When she is not working on school

work or with her two best girlfriends she might be found on the tennis, badminton or volleyball courts. Lily is also inter-



Photo by Charles Fournier

ested in History – World Issues and has ambitions to learn a foreign language such as Vietnamese.

In speaking more with Lily I

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Grace ... cont'd from Pg. 1

mediately rushed off to find my wardrobe.

I am a pretty passionate, sometimes too passionate, reader of the world's headlines, and I thought for sure that this time invested focusing on world events would help me know when the Lord would return. Rather than having the satisfaction of knowing when, I believe my time would be better spent concentrating on knowing Who it is that is returning, and in a deeper way.

Both the foolish virgins and I in my dream are fleeing the wedding scene. For both of us, it takes too long. In my dream I enter this large fenced field in the moonlight with a door at the far end that I need to get to. I'm initially impressed with the speed I'm making towards the

far door but notice a pack of wild dogs on my left. I think I can out run them but just as I pass in front of them the ground changes to a pebbly gravel and I can't get any traction. I'm now stuck and afraid.

I believe this changing landscape is what is referred to in Mathew 24:6-8 where it talks about what lies ahead just before the Lord returns for His bride: 'And you will hear of wars and rumours of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all *these things* must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. All these *are* the beginning of sorrows.'

If you're like me, when a

world event like a war or terrible disaster strikes I can be glued to the media, especially if it's affecting me. Either way my soul can be in turmoil and it's not the most conducive time to fill my lamp with oil.

Instead, let us hear the word of the Lord in this Day of Grace, where we can worship the Lord as David does in Psalm 95 but with this admonition in verse 7, 'Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts....' . Press in to God's Word and sit at his feet both privately and corporately. Fill your lamps with oil while we can, so that His wedding day does not come like a shock, but rather we're ready and able to rejoice because we know Him!



"Grace is but glory begun and glory is but grace perfected."

Jonathan Edwards

Profile ... cont'd from pg. 1

came to learn that she is the 5th born of 6 children in the Dam family. I asked her how her place in the family has affected her. Perhaps thinking she would maybe be a bit disgruntled with not being the oldest or even the youngest, but Lily didn't have a negative thing to say about her place in her family. She did say that she thinks she may have a bit more "freedom" than the older kids, but she is always reminded, by mom, to be a good example to her younger sister Jenny. I don't think Lily would ever take advantage of that "freedom" she enjoys.

As we continued to talk I was not surprised to find that I was meeting with a young lady who was wise beyond her years. Lily seems to "live at the

speed of life". She doesn't seem to have many regrets from the past or anxiety about her future. When I asked her about her hopes and dreams for the future she said, "I don't look too far ahead because I want to trust God with it. I don't want to worry about it now. I want to be in my teenage years, spend time with friends and not worry." As I further chatted with Lily it seemed she has a grace for people and even herself, which was refreshing. Lily admits she is not perfect. She is human like everyone else and can slip up, but she was quick to remind me that your past does not have to define you. You can change. Anyone can.

When I asked Lily what her passion was, she thought for a moment then said, "To help people." When I asked her

how, she said something that surprised me. She said "In whatever way they need." Lily is interested in people's stories. She said she tries to hear the person first, and then tries to give them what they need, whether it is a listening ear or a word of advice.

I see strength in Lily...a strength that is surrounded in a delicate package. Almost like a beautiful, gold chain. Lily knows what her responsibilities are and certainly tries her best to fulfill them. She doesn't seem to be driven to do more than is on her heart to do, yet at the same time she is not letting herself off the hook. She says, "It is our job to serve God as well as others. We have a role to give back to people and the church."

Speaking of the church, I asked Lily how her experiences

“Misings”

By Mary Cummings

Thinking about GRACE – “the free mercy of God, or the enjoyment of His favour” Ezra talks about the grace of God in preserving a remnant of the Israelites, [Ezra 9:8] and Esther speaks of grace from the king. [Esther 2:17]

But, I think the best definition of GRACE known to me is “Unmerited favour”. Seems like a good description. I wonder how different it is from MERCY? I think, perhaps, mercy is what we receive when we have broken the law and deserve punishment. The fact that you and I are chosen is amazing! I deserve nothing, but His love has purchased mercy for me, and washed away my sin. That is huge!!

Somehow, grace seems a bit different from that...something I'm not really looking for, an unexpected blessing. There have been many blessings in my life, ones I didn't even ask for. That seems like His grace to me. Saved from early death, rescued from drowning, from car accidents – they are probably innumerable. Hitting black ice on the QEW at 6p.m., and suffering no

worse than a smashed car, bruised knee and cracked rib. I remember a couple of close encounters with tanker trucks, moving into my lane unannounced. I also came through 5 ½ years of war in one piece. The blessing of living in this land, the gift of family, blessings all mine and ten thousand besides.

The years of my husband's illness – grace for each and every day. Like Paul said, “when I am weak, then I am strong for His grace is made perfect in my weakness.” [2 Cor.12:10]

It is hard to separate His goodness out – His love, His mercy, His peace, His joy, His kindness – it's all grace! It seems that His love is synonymous with grace., that the Father and the Son decided to rescue us from our “lostness” – “through grace we have been saved, through faith”

Each of us is given a measure, a gift of grace. “From the fullness of His grace we have all received one blessing after another” [John 1:16]

Grace and truth came through Jesus – He is the

TRUTH – but we cannot handle truth, especially about ourselves, without His grace. [And, we're told to speak the truth in love.]

When my husband and I were struggling thro' the trials of his illness, my friend gave me a poem – perhaps it may bring comfort and help to you as it did for me, so long ago.

He giveth more grace when the burdens grow greater,
He sendeth more strength when the labours increase,
To addeth affliction He addeth His mercies,
To multiplied trials, His multiplied peace.

When we have exhausted our store of endurance,
When our strength has failed 'ere the day is half done,
When we reach the end of our hoarded resources,
Our Father's full giving is only begun. [Annie Johnson Flint]

Somehow, defining GRACE is like trying to define the HOLY Spirit, an impossible task. I feel it's all about the Father and Son's unconditional love, streaming toward us from their huge hearts of love.



“Lord, I crawled across the barrenness to You with my empty cup uncertain in asking any small drop of refreshment. If only I had known Your grace better I would have come running with a bucket.”

Nancy Spiegelberg

Profile ... cont'd from pg. 2

have been here at HCF. Lily has been coming to HCF since she has been about 4 years old. She says it is like a second home to her. When I asked her what she would say to the Leadership of HCF if she had a chance, she said, “I would tell them, that even though you may not realize it, you have major effect on people.” Lily likes how our church adapts and reaches out to the community. She likes that HCF is an active church.

Lily came to know Jesus in her early teens when she joined the youth group and attended conferences and rallies. She

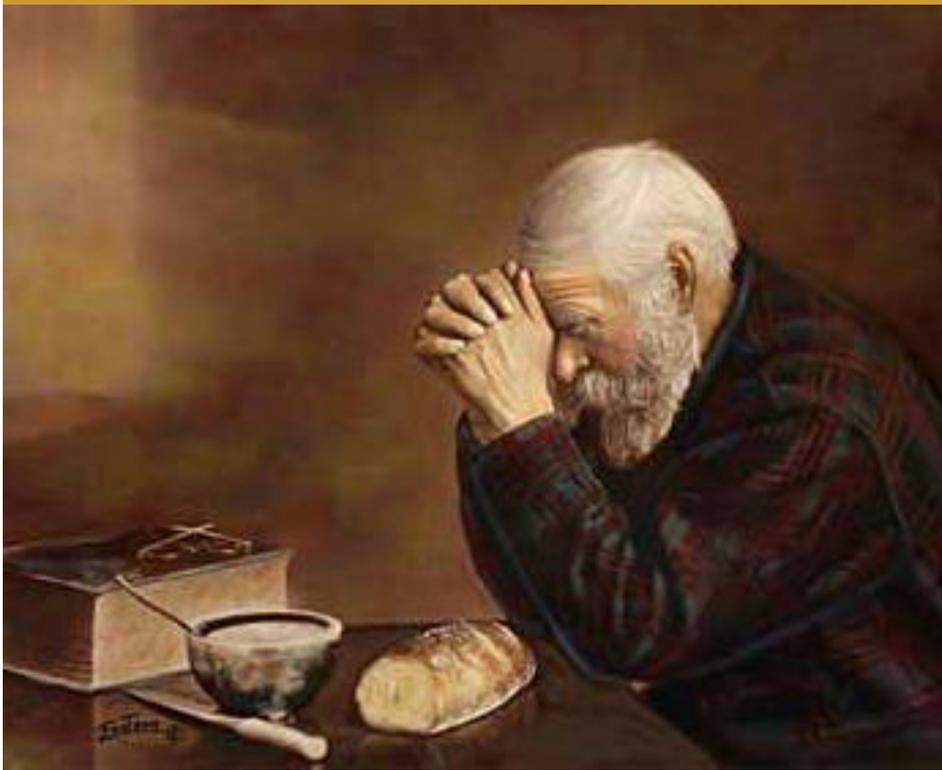
said probably the highlight for her was the Starburst Girls Club. At its peak there were upwards of 20 young ladies, sharing, experiencing, learning and growing together. Lily remembered that they were a tight knit group. That season has come to a close in Lily's life, but God has brought two very special friends into her life. She giggled as she told me her friends' names, along with her own... April, Summer and Lily (what a pretty trio). She said people sometimes don't believe them when they say their names.

Lily shared that if she could tell you one thing about herself it would be that she is

interested in knowing more about you. She tries not to judge you and loves that everyone has a different story. Everyone deserves a second chance.

As I mentioned earlier, Lily is fifth in a family of six children. Five is the number of grace in the kingdom of God. Like that gold chain winding through people's lives and becoming part of their stories, I see grace shining through Lily's young life that perhaps some of us more seasoned believers could glean from. Way to go Lily! I know that prophetic minister was right when he said “God has great plans for you!”





“GRACE” By Eric Enstrom

In 1918 a peddler (Charles Wilden) with foot scrapers to sell came knocking on Enstrom’s door only to become the humble subject of this well-known photograph.



It is said that we call our mealtime prayers “grace” because it is by God’s grace we sit before another meal at all.

October 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<div style="background-color: #006400; color: white; padding: 5px;"> NOTE: All prayer watches are held in the Prayer Room EXCEPT for Thurs. a.m. corporate Prayer (main sanctuary) </div>					1 Devotional Prayer 6:30—8:30 pm	2
3 Community Sunday Service 10 a.m. Pray for Jerusalem	4	5 Israel Prayer Watch 6:30 - 8:30 pm	6 Corporate Prayer 6:30pm	7 Nehemiah Prayer at HCF 11:30am Band of Brothers 7pm (fellowship rm)	8 Night Watch 10 p.m. - 6 a.m.	9
10 Service 10 a.m. (Jacob Cowling)	11	12 Israel Prayer Watch 6:30 - 8:30 pm Young Adults 7 pm (sanctuary)	13 Corporate Prayer 6:30pm	14 9:30 am—Corp. prayer Intercession Boot Camp 7 pm	15 Devotional Prayer 6:30—8:30 pm	16
17 Service 10 a.m.	18	19 Israel Prayer Watch 6:30 - 8:30 pm Young Adults 7 pm (sanctuary)	20 Corporate Prayer 6:30pm	21 9:30 am—Corp. prayer Band of Brothers 7pm (fellowship rm) <div style="border: 1px solid #FFD700; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">TACF Mountain Movers Conference</div>	22 Night Watch 10 p.m. - 6 a.m.	23
24 Service 10 a.m.	25	26 Israel Prayer Watch 6:30 - 8:30 pm Young Adults 7 pm (sanctuary)	27 Corporate Prayer 6:30pm	28 9:30 am—Corp. prayer Intercession Boot Camp 7 pm	29 Devotional Prayer 6:30—8:30 pm	30
31 Service 10 a.m.						