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### Welcome to our November – December Newsletter

May you be wonderfully blessed and enriched in the spirit and power of God today from the abundance of His grace in glory.

The year is slipping away fast. Department stores are setting up their Christmas decorations. Preparations for end of year and Christmas celebrations are already underway and the opportunity for us to consider how we will impact our community is upon us. While the commercialization of the season does tend to obscure the meaning of Christmas for many, at the same time this same it presents us with a wonderful opportunity to share the real message with our community. There may well be many who have been oblivious to God... but now they are being awakened, by the sales, the song and the message we can bring.

### Vision – More than just a Bible College!

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Our distance education options are so flexible we are able to tailor them to suite your actual ministry needs rather than just fulfill the needs of a curriculum. You do not need to leave home or ministry or your job to be trained, we send the college to you.

With Vision you are enabled to learn from your place at your pace. Your own Pastor is able to speak into your life as he helps to develop your skills with you the local ministry team. From deacon to pastor, children’s ministry, youth worker or evangelist or just a helper, Vision Colleges can be the tool that helps release you into the calling God has for your life.

### Ken Chant Who – what am I?

In his letter to the church in Philippi, Paul uses *teleios* (“perfect”) to describe a person who is aware of his true self; that is, he is not deluded about himself, but is mature and honest in appraising himself. He insists that such a person can make only one sensible decision, and that is to “*press toward the goals God has established*”. This he twice says is the mark of a “perfect” Christian.

This self-knowledge has often been lauded as the quality possessed by a truly mature person – well balanced, scorning self-delusion, serene, a sure purpose, poised and confident. For example, the 2<sup>nd</sup> century Greek travel writer, Pausanias, tells of an inscription that was carved at the entrance to the Temple of Apollo, at the Delphic Oracle, on the heights of Mt Parnassus in central Greece –

In the fore-temple at Delphi are written maxims useful for the life of men, inscribed by those whom the Greeks say were sages ... (who) came to Delphi and dedicated to Apollo the celebrated maxims, “*Know thyself,*” and “*Nothing in excess.*” <sup>(1)</sup>

The idea presumably was that there was little use in seeking to know the gods until one had a fair knowledge of oneself. Delusion about oneself would almost certainly produce delusion about heaven. If I am unwilling truly to know myself, then it will be impossible for me truly to know even another human being let alone God. Paul had much the same idea when he wrote –



Description of Greece, Book X.24.1; tr. by WHS Jones; William Heinemann Ltd., London, 1918.

Do not think about yourself more highly than you ought to think. Think rather with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned you. (*Ro 12:3*)

And I would say it is just as much a sin to think yourself less than you are than to think you are more. We should strive to know just what we are, and what we are not, and to live happily and comfortably within that framework.

Then a companion aphorism was, “*Nothing to excess.*” This too was echoed by Paul –

Let everyone see how moderate you are, for the Lord is near! (*Ph 4:5*)

The idea of moderation as an ideal is very ancient. It goes as far back as the worship of the Sumerian god Enki, some five thousand years ago. By the time it had become a motto engraved upon Apollo’s temple at Delphi (4<sup>th</sup> century B.C.) it had been part of the received wisdom of mankind for two millennia. Three hundred years later, Paul too endorsed it, and made it one of his prescriptions for Christian life, pleasing to God and to the church. The two Delphic sayings belong together. Those who know themselves well will likely behave moderately toward others. And those who are moderate in all things, will be more likely to know themselves well. So, “nothing to excess,” but let a pleasant balance be a rule of the good life in Christ. Screaming fanaticism, frothing hysteria, wild emotions, irresponsible chaos, unrestrained action of any sort – these all violate the rule of moderation and ought to be shunned by right-thinking people.

## We Need Volunteers



Vision Colleges are successful in so many ways. Our distance education teaching of individuals; our church based program that develops the skills of church members, our missions program is taking the word of God to the missionfield around the world, in prisons around Australia our studies are helping to change the lives of prisoners. But the workload is greater than our capacity to do it and we need your help.

Do you have spare time that you would like to use in the service of God? Are you a retired Pastor or elder who would like to mentor younger Christians in their study, help develop their skills? Do you have admin skills and experience but no opportunities to share it? We need you! Are you willing to learn skills that can help you get a job in the workplace? We can help you! Can you spare some time to help us as we take the Whole Word to the Whole World through Vision Colleges? If you think you can help then call us 02 96032077.

## Alison’s Corner

### Conclusion Of Adventures In Faith: Challenged Faith

Victory goes to the bold! It is only in looking back that Ken and I can see the guiding hand of God training us to be strong, firm and steadfast even through apparent, and sometimes very real, setbacks. He does all things well.

*“For you have need of endurance, so that, after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise” (Hebrews 10:38).*

We learn through the hard times to trust God completely and absolutely and to rely totally on him. Let us reach out for God’s best, raising the climate of faith, learning its potential and then persevering until we see God move in healing, delivering power.

**However**, if we cannot break through to healing in this life then remember that we have eternal health to look forward to.

*“Our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Saviour from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body” (Philippians 3:20-21).*



Jesus always looked for faith and when he saw faith he healed. Over and over in the Gospels he said, "According to your faith will it be done to you."

The challenge is for us to believe without wavering. If we can do that we will see the glory of God!

We need wisdom to believe God's word, to search out the healing promise and to grasp it for ourselves. Let us reach out for God's best for ourselves and for others. I leave you with a challenge to pray and believe for great things! Alison Chant.

## Student Honour Roll

Since our last newsletter, we have issued 153 awards in total from the various options available through Vision Colleges. These awards range from; *Certificate in Biblical Studies; Associate in Biblical Studies; Diploma of Christian Ministry and Theology; a Certificate III in General Education; Certificate IV in Science*; Add to this, in co-operation with ISOM with have issued 146 *Diploma's of Christian Ministry and Theology* to students in China. We heartily congratulate them all, and encourage every student to continue in study, continue to be equipped, and to know the blessing of the word and its building, cleansing, redeeming power in our lives. Well done one and all; we appreciate you and your commitment to the study of the Word. We pray the Lord will use you and release you into the ministry within the Kingdom of God.

Stuart	Miller	Statement of Attainment	Epping	NSW
Nancy	Gates	Certificate in Biblical Studies	Balaclava	NSW
Bronwyn	Gilfillan	Certificate in Biblical Studies	Cranebrook	NSW
Geraldine	Johnson	Certificate in Biblical Studies	Cranebrook	NSW
Clinton	Rintoull	Certificate in Biblical Studies	Ararat	Vic
Dean	Waterman	Associate in Biblical Studies	Thornton Col.	USA
Caitlyn	Weal	Certificate III Gen Ed,	Eatons Hill	Qld
Caitlyn	Weal	Certificate IV LibArts	Eatons Hill	Qld
146	Assorted	Diploma Christian Ministry and Theology	ISOM	China

## Missions

During the month of October I had the opportunity to minister in Pagadian on the island of Mindanao in the Philippines, I have been going there for some years now. Late last year the Senior Pastor Robert Paghasian died and his wife rose to the challenge of taking over the ministry of the Church. There are good and remarkable changes happening. The church is seeing growth in its numbers while at the same time they have embraced the rebuilding program. What is happening is amazing! Their church is an old warehouse and timber mill and does not always keep the all of the weather out so they are rebuilding – but not relocating while they do. They are building the new church over the old church and when the new walls are up and the new roof in place they will take down the old roof and the old walls and the church will be about 25% larger than the existing building with new offices as well. It is stunning what God can do when we give him the opportunity to do so.

During the same trip I went to Iloilo and spoke at the new campus we have there. They have 20 students, but they had to address the cost of the material. We can and do supply our subjects to the mission field electronically but every student needs a copy of the material, usually printed out for them. That is costly, for us a book costs around \$17.00 in raw materials alone. They could not afford this cost, so they decided to look for another way and found a tablet they can afford and now all of the students buy a tablet and receive the study material electronically. Well done to them, it is a good idea and more colleges and students should think of this as an option.

In January next year I will be off to Pakistan to start a college in that nation. I would appreciate your prayers for them. I know it is a Muslim country and I am sticking my neck out a bit but it does seem right in the Lord to do so. We go to Lahore and a couple of other places on this trip. We hear of the spread of Islam worldwide but we need to be aware that Christians have been rising up in their faith in muslim

nations also and the number of Christians is rapidly increasing. The church in Pakistan is growing and needs teaching and teachers and we are proud to be a part of this.

In Belize the college has formally started and they have 9 students all at various levels, it is exciting to see the work growing in this way, the work is all in English and some are doing the accredited studies. By all accounts things are working very well for them.

## Corn Corner

**Standing at the gates of heaven:** At the end of the age when all the believers were standing in line waiting to get into heaven, the angel Gabriel appeared and said, "I want all the men to form two lines. One line will be for the men who were the true heads of their households. The other will be for the men who were dominated by their wives."

Gabriel continued, "And now we need all of the women to report to Mary and Martha on the other side of the gate."

The women left while the men hurriedly formed two lines. The line of men who were dominated by their wives was seemingly unending. The line of men who were the true head of their household had just one man standing in it.

Gabriel said to the first line, "You men ought to be ashamed of yourselves. You were appointed to be the heads of your households and you have not fulfilled your purpose. Of all of you, there is only one man who obeyed."

Then Gabriel turned to the lone man and asked, "How did you come to be in this line?"

Sheepishly he replied, "My wife told me to stand here."



### The Last Word – Why Should I Study the Bible?

I doubt that there is a scripture more pertinent to this issue than this:

*All Scripture is God-breathed, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfected, thoroughly furnished to every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16-17)*

Why should we study the Word? Here are 4 points to consider.

1. It comes to you from the heart of God, - it is *God breathed* and he only knows how to do good things – His word is good.
2. *It is profitable for you*, quite simply it the word of god is good in every way for all of us collectively and for each one of us individually, we are corrected, reproofed and instructed in the matters and issues God wants us to understand.
3. It will perfect us into his likeness, the purpose of the word is to perfect the men and women of God in our journey through life, without it, we cannot be perfected,
4. It equips us to do the good works, every good work, that God has called us to, without the word of God you cannot be enabled to do his work, no matter how effective we might be, we will be more so by the study of His word.

From new convert to ageing elder the command has never changed, never moved, never altered – study to show yourself approved unto God. There is still room for growth and development, still opportunity to do something, the option to know Him and His word, and in all of history there has never been more a more important or a greater imperative than this one is today.

## Contact Vision

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