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ALFRED EDERSHEIM

Posted on [03/07/2012](#) by [William E. Richardson](#)

Born MARCH 7, 1825

It's noteworthy when someone raised Jewish embraces Christianity. How much more so when that person — a scholarly individual— bridges both religions to bring the Bible to life for his fellow Christians. Alfred Edersheim did that very thing, especially in his monumental work, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*.

EDUCATING MIND AND SPIRIT

Alfred was born into a Jewish home in Vienna, Austria. His father, a wealthy banker, provided well for his four children, the youngest being Alfred. After completing Hebrew school, the promising young Edersheim entered the University of Vienna. Then, his father faced a financial reversal. Alfred had to drop out of the university. He restarted his studies in Hungary at the university in Pest, supporting himself by teaching some of the languages he knew.



Sermon on the Mount by Carl Bloch

Ministers from the Church of Scotland saw Pest as a mission field. One of them gave Alfred a New Testament. He was especially drawn to Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. Reading the New Testament opened Alfred's eyes to the fact that others had wrongly portrayed Christianity to him. Another Scottish missionary, John Duncan, well-informed in the Jewish faith and well-versed in Hebrew, helped Alfred see Jesus as Israel's long-awaited Messiah. Alfred accepted Jesus as his personal savior and was baptized.

The new convert furthered his theological education in Edinburgh and later in Berlin. In 1846, Alfred received ordination into the Presbyterian church.

HANDLING THE WORD OF TRUTH

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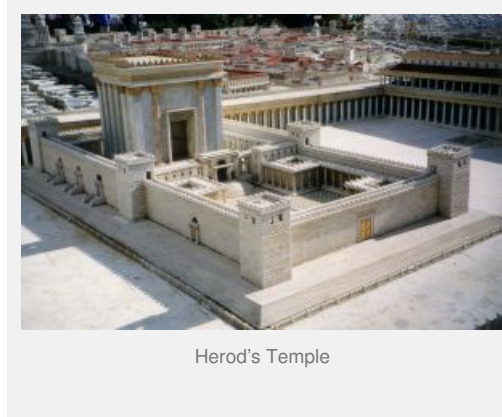
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After a year as a missionary to Jews in Romania, Alfred married. Then he pastored for twelve years in Aberdeen, Scotland. During that time, he used his knowledge of languages to translate theological writings of others from German into English.

Health issues led Alfred to move to Torquay. His first wife died, and he remarried. In 1872, poor health led him to resign from pastoring. All his energies went into writing. Previous publications included not only translations of theological works, but scholarly articles he'd written.

EXPLAINING JEWISH CULTURE

Steeped in the knowledge of his ancestral culture, the rabbinic writings and a command of Hebrew and Greek, Alfred brought the Jewish world of Jesus' day to life. His book, *The Temple: It's Ministry and Services at the Time of Jesus Christ* saw publication in 1874. That was followed two years later by *Sketches of Jewish Social Life in the Days of Christ*. His classic work, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, was published in two volumes in 1883 and later released in a single volume. A series of lectures were compiled into *Old Testament Prophecy and History in Relation to the Messiah* in 1885.



Alfred joined the Church of England in 1875, which proved to be a better fit for him. He served as vicar in a parish in Dorsetshire. Then, he lectured for a few years at Lincoln's Inn in London. In 1884, Alfred received an appointment to preach at Oxford University.

Continuing health problems took him to France where he passed away unexpectedly on March 16, 1889.

L4G _____ L4G _____
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LET ME KNOW: How has Alfred's story informed, encouraged, or otherwise helped you? I welcome your comments.

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- http://www.oxfordchabad.org/templates/articlecco_cdo/print/true/aid/895196/jewish/Alfred-Edersheim.hym.

Some of Alfred's books available today–

- *Bible History: Old Testament*
- *History of the Jewish Nation After the Destruction of Jerusalem Under Titus*
- *Old Testament Prophecy and History in Relation to the Messiah*
- *Practical Truths from Elisha*
- *Sketches of Jewish Social Life in the Days of Christ*
- *The Hebrew Commonwealth*
- *The Temple: It's Ministry and Services at the Time of Jesus Christ*
- *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*,

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LARRY BURKETT

Posted on 03/03/2012 by [William E. Richardson](#)

Born MARCH 3, 1939



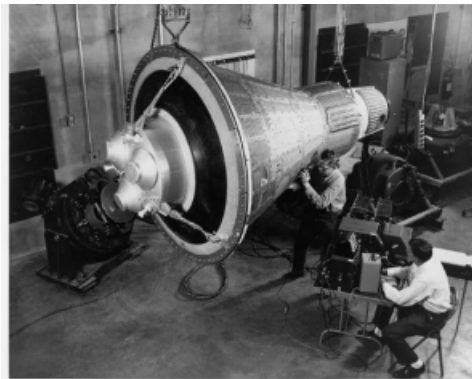
What does the Bible say about money? Plenty! When Larry Burkett did an in-depth study to get the facts, his findings led to an international ministry.

A MIND FOR PRECISION

Larry grew up in Florida, hardly more than an hour from Cape Canaveral. He graduated from high school in Winter Garden. Following a stint with the Air Force he landed a job at the NASA space center. There, he oversaw tests necessary for the safety of the astronauts

in America's initial space programs. In his spare time, Larry pursued degrees in both finance and marketing. He began work in the private sector in 1970.

He'd served his country, earned a solid education and held more than one lucrative job. Although Larry was living well and was respected in his field, something was missing. He filled that void in 1972; he turned his life over to Jesus Christ. Shortly thereafter, he combined his new-found faith with his educational pursuits. He became a financial advisor for Campus Crusade for Christ.



IN-DEMAND SPEAKER AND AUTHOR

In his hunger to learn from God's word, Larry turned part of his Bible study in a specific direction. He searched for scriptural principles about money. He soon found that both Old and New Testaments spoke about budgeting, coveting, giving and saving. He lists 1,000 of those scriptures in his topical commentary, *The Word on Finances* (1994).

He turned the principles he found embedded in God's word into a study he gladly shared with others. Before long, Larry took his findings on the road. He found church groups eager to let scripture guide their financial decisions. Books detailing the principles he taught naturally grew out of his teachings.

RADIO DAYS

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In 1976, Larry took the next step. He created Christian Financial Concepts, to which he devoted himself full-time. He developed a listening audience as well as a reading audience by appearing as a guest on Christian radio. Moody Bible Institute, which would also publish a number of his books, helped Larry launch his own radio program. From then to 2003, he hosted a total of four programs. Their titles are, *Money Matters*, *How to Manage Your Money*, *Money Watch* and *A Money Minute*. In 2000, Christian Financial Concepts and Crown Ministries merged to form Crown Financial Ministries.

DIGGING DEEPER

Almost 20 years after founding Christian Financial Concepts, something happened that greatly affected Larry. His doctor told him he had cancer. Larry forged ahead, continuing to write and speak. He didn't die when the doctor said he should. To help others with the disease, he wrote books about facing cancer and he established the Larry Burkett Cancer Research Foundation.

Larry discovered an ability prior to his diagnoses that propelled him another new direction as a writer. During a ten-year period, he wrote four novels. *The Illuminati*, *The Thor Conspiracy*, *Solar Flare*, and *Kingdom Come* (with T. Davis Bunn).

Larry's career ended when a heart attack took him on July 4, 2003.

RICHER LIVES

Thousands of families today are better off financially because they applied the Biblical principles Larry promoted. He went beyond general applications. Among the 70 books bearing his name, there are those giving specific financial guidance to children, teens, college students, newly-weds and individuals over 50.



Larry pioneered a field that flourishes today with other voices and personalities. Even as their speaking engagements, books, radio and TV programs keep expanding, Larry's name continues to be a trusted source. The man who once played a role in advancing our space program played a very significant role in advancing God's principles for handling money.

L4G _____ L4G _____
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LET ME KNOW: How has Larry's story informed, encouraged, or otherwise helped you? I welcome your comments.

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- <http://www.amazon.com/Larry-Burkett/e/B0030F50BG>

- <http://www.christianbook.com/html/authors/85.html>
- <http://www.crown.org/larry/>.

Some of Larry's books on finances——

- *Business by the Book*
- *Debt-Free Living*
- *Family Financial Workbook*
- *Giving and Tithing*
- *More than Finances*
- *The Burkett & Blue Definitive Guide to Securing Wealth to Last*
- *Your Career in Changing Times*

Larry's books about living with cancer——

- *Damaged, but Not Broken*
- *Hope When it Hurts*
- *Nothing to Fear*

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——Images of Larry Burkett provided by Crown Financial Ministries.——

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IRA STANPHILL

Posted on [02/14/2012](#) by [William E. Richardson](#)

Born FEBRUARY 14, 1914

Ira Stanphill was one of Christian music's most outstanding talents of the 20th Century. During his life, he traveled throughout the United States and in 40 countries, preaching and singing the songs he'd written. Many of his songs have been published in other languages. The depth of his lyrics continue to reverberate in people's hearts around the world.

FIRST NOTES

Ira grew up in a musical family. By his 10th birthday, he played not only piano and organ, but also the accordion and ukulele. He made his parents' faith his own at age 12. Ira composed his first Christian song as a teenager. He began singing on the local radio station. Other doors opened.

Ira got a taste for ministry on the road when a traveling evangelist tapped his talents. His ability to minister increased further when Ira sensed a call to preach as well as sing the gospel. He became credentialed with the Assemblies of God.





In 1936, Ira launched his own revival campaign. It concluded in Springfield, Missouri, where he agreed to pastor a congregation. In Springfield, he met Zelma Lawson. She too had musical skills. They married in 1939. Together, they wrote the song “Room at the Cross for You,” which they sang as a duet. Their voices rang out together on the chorus, “Tho’ millions have come, there’s still room for one. Yes, there’s room at the cross for you.”

However, Zelma began drifting away from the cross. She started attending nightclubs and seeing other men. She eventually filed for divorce. Zelma remarried and began singing in the nightclubs. Ira eventually gained custody of their son, Raymond. In 1951, a car accident took Zelma’s life.

Between the divorce and Zelma’s death, Ira reached a personal low in his life. Some criticized him for continuing to preach after his divorce. The voices inside Ira’s head and heart were equally severe. He pondered the direction of his future.

One day, driving to the church he served at the time, Ira poured out his feelings to God. By the time he reached the church, God had birthed a new song in his heart. The experience didn’t give Ira all the answers he wanted, but it gave him the total trust in God he needed. In the decades since, many have experienced fresh faith for the future upon singing or hearing the song, “I Know Who Holds Tomorrow.” The song’s essence is in the words, “Many things about tomorrow, I don’t seem to understand; but I know who holds tomorrow, and I know who holds my hand.”

A NEW SONG

After Zelma’s death, Ira married Gloria Holloway. Their union was a happy one. In the second half of his life, Ira pastored, traveled as an evangelist and continued writing songs. He also wrote his autobiography, *This Side of Heaven*, which was published in 1983 (search for it on Amazon and eBay). In the last few years of his life, Ira and Gloria appeared on some of Bill Gaither’s Homecoming videos.



In December of 1993, a few weeks short of his 80th birthday, Ira suffered a sudden heart attack that ended his life. Ira reached his “mansion over the hilltop.”



NEVER-ENDING MUSIC

In all, Ira wrote over 500 songs that were published. Christian Copyright Licensing International (CCLI) lists information for 80 of them in their database. A number of Ira’s songs have appeared in different denominational hymnals. Some have been recorded on gospel albums by well-known singers.

Why do his songs remain popular? While often writing from personal experience, Ira called forth expressions of faith felt by Christians the world over. We relate to his recurring themes, which celebrate the cross, declare complete trust in God and anticipate Heaven.

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LET ME KNOW: How has Ira’s story informed, encouraged, or otherwise helped you? I welcome your comments.

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- Glenn Gohr, “This Side of Heaven,” *A/G Heritage*, Summer 1994, accessed February 1, 2012, http://ifphc.org/pdf//Heritage/1994_02.pdf.
- Osbeck, Kenneth. *101 More Hymn Stories*. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1985.

You can listen to some of Ira’s best songs on YouTube———If you type in his name, you’ll find versions of the following songs among others he wrote:

* *Follow Me* * *Happiness is the Lord* * *He Washed My Eyes with Tears* *
I Know Who Holds Tomorrow * *Mansion Over the Hilltop* * *Room at the Cross* *
Supper time * *Unworthy* * *We’ll Talk it Over*
and a novelty number titled * *The Senior Citizen’s Shuffle*.

Posted in [Evangelist](#), [Hymn writer](#) | [7 Comments](#)

HANNAH WHITALL SMITH

Posted on [02/07/2012](#) by [William E. Richardson](#)

Born FEBRUARY 7, 1832

It’s true: the woman who wrote the book *The Christian’s Secret of a Happy Life* (1875) lived through plenty of disappointment, difficulty and sorrow. Hannah Whitall (White-hall) Smith’s secret? Draw closer to God in both sunshine and storm.

THE POTTER TAKES THE CLAY*

Raised in a Philadelphia, Quaker home, Hannah grew increasingly dissatisfied with her spiritual training. In 1851, she married Robert Pearsall Smith, who also rejected his Quaker upbringing. Both experienced a conversion in the Plymouth Brethren church.

They moved to New Jersey. In a new spiritual climate, they grew quickly in their faith. Robert and Hannah began witnessing and preaching. They travelled the United States, ministering as part of the holiness movement. Their family grew. But not all was perfect.



Image in public domain

THE WILDERNESS OF CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

Robert became a well-known preacher. Hannah, always introspective, suffered bouts of loneliness. She questioned the scriptural basis for some of the beliefs and practices she heard and saw around her. Along the way, they lost a child to bronchitis. Hannah spent a lot of time seeking God for strength.

In 1874, the Smiths traveled to England. They shared their insights of “higher Christian life” with thousands of pastors. The Keswick Convention, in Keswick, England, grew out of those meetings. Robert arranged with the Revell Publishing Company (United States) to put some of Hannah’s writings into book form. When they released *The Christian’s Secret of a Happy Life*, it became a best seller. The Smiths remained in England, teaching and preaching. Perhaps longer than they should have.

One day, someone found Robert in another woman’s bedroom. That ended his ministry in England. Upon returning to America, the defamed Robert fell into depression. He got so low, he eventually forsook the faith. Instead of turning her back on God, Hannah ran to Him. She expressed her faith in phrases like, “No difficulties in your case can baffle Him.”

By that time, two of their five children had died from illness. Although their speaking ministry dried up, Hannah continued writing. In her darkest moments, she clung to statements like “Nothing can separate you from God’s love, absolutely nothing. God is enough for time, God is enough for eternity. God is enough!” Another deep cut came when one of their daughters married renowned atheist, Bertrand Russell. Still, Hannah could say, “Your part is simply to rest. His part is to sustain you, and He cannot fail.”

OTHER SOURCES

Hannah did change in one way. She described a surprising turn in her 1903 autobiography. In that book, *The Unselfishness of God and How I Discovered It*, she expressed her belief in Universalism (think Rob Bell’s 2011 book, *Love Wins*). However, like many influential Christians since, that turn in the road for Hannah doesn’t negate any of the truths she previously promoted.



In her later years, Hannah suffered from arthritis and was bound to a wheelchair. She died in 1911. The century since her death has witnessed the continuation of the spiritual-growth meetings in Keswick, England. The United States version flourishes in New Jersey at a modern facility that hosts spiritual resources year-round. Hannah’s writings still inspire. Many Christians, some well-known, have grown in their faith and received comfort from the influence of Hannah’s insights for a steadfast relationship with Jesus Christ.

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L4G

LET ME KNOW: How has Hannah’s story informed, encouraged, or otherwise helped you?
I welcome your comments.

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- Kooiman Hoosier, Helen. *100 Christian Women Who Changed the 20th Century*. Grand Rapids MI: Fleming H. Revell, 2000.
- Hazard, David. *Safe Within Your Love: A 40-Day Journey in the Company of Hannah W. Smith*. Minneapolis MN: Bethany House Publishers, 1992.

Here are three other titles written by Hannah, still available today _____

- *Everyday Religion*
- *God of All Comfort*
- *God’s Love for You*

_____ *Subtitles for this article were taken from phrases used in *The Christian’s Secret of a Happy Life*. _____

Posted in [Author](#) | [1 Comment](#)

Dietrich Bonhoeffer understood taking up your cross to follow Jesus (Matthew 10:38). In his book *The Cost of Discipleship*, he stated, “When Christ calls a man, He bids him come and die.” The Lutheran pastor and author understood and lived that surrendered life. He died at age 39 for living it in Nazi Germany.

REFUSING TO SERVE TWO MASTERS

When Adolf Hitler became Chancellor of Germany in 1933, he began taking charge of all institutions, including the church. He believed pastors, like the rest of Germany, wanted strong leadership that would restore their country’s fortunes. Hitler expected pastors to rally as his political allies. He didn’t expect a backlash.

The problem: Hitler wanted his ideas, not God’s, to guide the church. Some Lutheran pastors who were true to church doctrine formed The Confessing Church, pledging reliance on historic confessions of faith. The dissenting pastors, including Dietrich Bonhoeffer, drew up their statement of purpose — The Barman Declaration— in May of 1934.



THE TWO GREATEST COMMANDMENTS

Hitler grew increasingly venomous toward Germany’s Jewish population. He ordered their businesses boycotted, made it illegal for Jews to hold public office and cancelled their citizenship. In 1938, he bore his fangs by unleashing his fury on numerous businesses and synagogues. That destructive night gained the name “Crystal Night” because of all the broken glass littering the streets. Hitler’s next step— deporting Jews to concentration camps.

The Confessing Church continued loving God and their fellow humans of all races. They found ways to oppose Hitler’s tyranny. Bonhoeffer taught religious classes not approved by the government to young, German pastors. He often quoted Proverbs 31:8— “who will speak up for those who are voiceless?” Hitler became wise to their resistance.



DRINKING FROM JESUS’ CUP

The Nazi regime declared Dietrich an “enemy of the state.” In 1940, Hitler censored him from speaking in public while demanding that he report to the Gestapo on a regular basis. By 1941, Dietrich had written three books that were published since Hitler’s rise to power. That year, he was ordered to stop publishing “subversive” writings.

Dietrich had joined the resistance arm of Germany’s military intelligence. They’d hatched a plot against Hitler. Assuming the conspirators removed Hitler from power, Dietrich was to learn what terms of surrender the Allies would expect from Germany.

In April 1943, the Gestapo came for Dietrich. They charged him with, among other activities, helping Jews escape Germany. He had. They sent him to a military prison in Berlin. The following year, he was indicted in a plot to wipe out Hitler. In early 1945, they moved him to Buchenwald. In April, Dietrich and others were transported to an extermination camp in Flossenburg, Germany.

His final act of taking up his cross to follow Jesus came the morning of April 9, 1945. That morning, Dietrich said one final prayer, ascended the steps to the gallows and was hanged for his resistance against Hitler's madness.

L4G _____L4G _____
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LET ME KNOW: How has Dietrich's story informed, encouraged, or otherwise helped you? I welcome your comments.

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- "Dietrich Bonhoeffer." *Christian History*. Vol. 10. No. 4, 1991.
- Colson, Charles. "Roots of War (Part II)". Chapter 11 in *Kingdom's in Conflict*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Books, 1989.

Learn more about Dietrich Bonhoeffer from these resources, among others _____

DVDs-

- Dietrich Bonhoeffer: Memories and Perspectives. Directed by Gregory Cummins. Vision Video. 2006. DVD.
- Bonhoeffer, Agent of Grace. Directed by Eric Till. Vision Video. 2000. DVD.
- Hanged on a Twisted Cross. Directed by T. N. Mohan. Vision Video. 1996. DVD.

Books about Dietrich-

- Metaxes, Eric. *Dietrich Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2011.
- *I Want to Live These Days with You: A Year of Daily Devotions* Westminster: John Knox Press, 2007.

Books by Dietrich include-

- *Ethics*
- *The Cost of Discipleship*
- *Letter and Papers from Prison*
- Plus, various anthologies of his writings.

Posted in [Author](#), [Martyr](#) | [5 Comments](#)

WILLIAM COLGATE

Posted on 01/25/2012 by [William E. Richardson](#)

Born January 25, 1783

By William Colgate's 37th birthday in 1820, it seemed that God blessed everything the businessman touched. But that same year, some dubbed William's latest venture "Colgate's

Folly.” That’s the year he moved his soap manufacturing operations from New York to New Jersey. He built a factory there and started producing starch as filler for his hand soaps.

PROVEN BUSINESS LEADER

William first saw America as a teenager when his family left England to settle in Maryland. When the young adult William moved to New York, he gained an apprenticeship with a soap-maker. He learned well, soon starting his own business. It prospered.

William’s innovative practices are credited with bringing America’s soap-making business out of the dark ages. Traditionally, soap on this side of the ocean didn’t even smell good. He introduced perfumed soaps to the United States. He made individual bars of soap available. He offered home delivery service. What some considered his folly in 1820 proved to be one more wise business decision. The starch additive reduced his costs, which lowered prices for the buying public.



A PACT WITH GOD

Why did God continue blessing William Colgate? Because William’s Christian faith advised all parts of his life. He committed his family to God (William and his wife Mary raised their sons in the faith); he served as a wise steward of God’s money (not only tithing but giving generously to missions and other Christian causes); he led his business with a servant’s heart, constantly improving his products for the public.

He wanted others to benefit as he had from God’s word. The devout Christian, fondly known as Deacon Colgate, helped launch the American Bible Society and, later, the American and Foreign Bible Society. Along with sponsoring Bible distribution, he was personally involved in and heavily supported New York’s Hamilton Literary and Theological Institution.

WELL REMEMBER

He didn’t create the toothpaste bearing his name. That came later. William Colgate did reinvent the world of soap for America. Although he died on March 25, 1857, his influence lives on through his company’s products, through the distribution of God’s word by the American Bible Society and through the university to which he donated so much. In 1890, the governing board renamed the institution Colgate University. William Colgate also left a great example for all Christians in business.



Colgate University chapel

L4G—————L4G—————L4G

LET ME KNOW: How has William’s story informed, encouraged, or otherwise helped you? I welcome your comments.

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Learn more about William Colgate and the results of his Christian influence from the following resources among others

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- Brackney, William. *The Baptists*. New York: Geenfield Press, 1988.
- Hardin, Shields, T. *The Colgate Story*. New York: Vantage Press, 1959.

Posted in [Bible Distribution](#), [Business Leader](#) | [4 Comments](#)

ERIC LIDDELL

Posted on [01/16/2012](#) by [William E. Richardson](#)

Born JANUARY 16, 1902

The gun went off. The runners launched forward on the track. Someone tripped Scotland's favorite sprinter. Eric Liddell lunged onto the grass.

Up to that moment in 1923, the Triangular International Contests (featuring England, Ireland and Scotland) had proved a winning venue for Eric. He served as Scotland's champion in the 110 -meter and 220-meter races. Then he landed on the ground in the 440 race. Seconds passed. He caught his breath and sprang back onto the track. In nothing short of a miraculous recovery, Eric passed the other runners, breaking the finish line tape. He'd fallen to the ground, gasping for air, but he still won the race.

BUDDING ATHLETE

Eric was born in China to missionaries from Scotland. When he was five, they took Eric and his brother (a year older) back to Scotland to begin their formal education. Both graduated from the school for sons of missionaries, then enrolled in Edinburgh University. It soon became evident that Eric had the heart of a Christian and the body of an athlete. He excelled at two sports– rugby and track. He eventually dropped rugby.



Image: courtesy of The Eric Liddell

Centre- <http://www.ericliddell.org/>.

OLYMPICS CANDIDATE



Eric had become a fast runner. Even with his awkward style —chin in the air and arms swinging— he kept winning.

His overall performance that day at the International Contests helped gain him a spot on Great Britain's Olympic track team

for the 1924 Paris Olympics. Expectations were high for him to earn his country a gold medal in the 100-meter race. Eric was ready to win it until he saw the schedule for the qualifying heats. They were on a Sunday. His religious convictions wouldn't let him compete on Sunday, a day set aside to rest and worship God.

When he made it known, Eric faced an onslaught of ridicule. What about national pride? He was called a traitor. Then, the door opened for him to compete in the 400-meter race instead.

The runners lined up on the track on a very hot July 11th. Earlier that day, the masseur for Great Britain's track team handed Eric a note. In a reference to I Samuel 2:30, he wrote, "In the old book it says, 'He that honors me, I will honor.'" At the sound of the pistol, Eric sprinted the 400 meters in a record time of 47.6 seconds. The "traitor" became a national hero. God had indeed honored him. (Check the YouTube resources below for the race from the movie *Chariots of Fire* and the actual 1924 Olympics race.)

A CHAMPION IN A BIGGER STADIUM

A year after winning Olympic gold, Eric returned to China. Like his parents before him, he served as a missionary. He eventually married the daughter of missionaries from Canada. When the Japanese began occupying China, Eric sent his family to Canada for safety. In 1943, Eric and other missionaries who'd remained in China were sent to an internment camp. In the camp, Eric's Christianity touched other lives in many ways. He taught lessons to the children, lead Bible studies and gave counseling. Most of all, his words, actions and reactions represented Jesus to those around him.



Eric in Xiaochang, China. Image: courtesy of The Eric Liddell Centre- <http://www.ericliddell.org/>

Eric's health declined. Physical exhaustion worsened his condition. His athletic body grew increasingly weaker. On February 21, 1945, Eric crossed life's finish line, having run the race, finished the course and kept the faith.

L4G—————L4G—————L4G

LET ME KNOW: How has Eric's story informed, encouraged, or otherwise helped you? I welcome your comments.

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Learn more about Eric Liddell's life from the following resources, among others—————

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HELEN CADBURY

Posted on 01/10/2012 by [William E. Richardson](#)

Born JANUARY 10 1877

The heiress to a family of chocolate manufacturers would normally devote her life to promoting the confection. Helen Cadbury chose a different cause.

SCHOOL GIRL ENTHUSIASM

When she was 12, Helen attended a Sunday evening church service with her father. At the end of the service, she responded to the altar call, surrendering her life to Jesus. She started carrying a Bible to school, reading portions of it to her female classmates. They too became Christians. They decided on a unique way to carry their Bibles.



They sewed pockets into their dresses to hold the small Testaments. That earned them the nickname “The Pocket Testament League.” Helen’s experience as (by then) a 13-year-old set the course for her adult life.

MARRIAGE AND MINISTRY PARTNER

In her 20’s, after receiving a university education, Helen met Charles M. Alexander. Charles traveled as a gospel singer with evangelist [R. A. Torrey](#). Charles and Helen realized they shared a zeal to get God’s word into people’s hearts. They married in 1904.

Handing out Bibles was a common practice in the meetings in which Charles ministered. He challenged those attending the services to carry a New Testament in their pocket and to read at least one chapter per day. Helen recalled her school days and the title “The Pocket Testament League.” They chose that name for their Bible distribution plan.

The league became officially organized in 1908, the year the Alexanders began a

worldwide evangelistic tour with Wilbur J. Chapman. They created a pledge card for those willing to carry a Testament and read it every day. People in nations around the world have signed the cards.

MANY AVENUES

Through the decades, The Pocket Testament League has touched millions of lives. In WWI, military chaplains used the pocket-sized Testaments. During the Great Depression, the Testaments showed up in YMCAs and at CCC camps.



Colorful New Testament covers

More recently, the league has distributed Bibles at numerous Olympics, in the wake of Hurricane Katrina and offered special editions for various other occasions.

The most celebrated testimony is that of Mitsuo Fuchida, the Japanese pilot who led the attack on Pearl Harbor. In 1950 he received a gospel tract at a Pocket Testament League service in Tokyo, which eventually led to his salvation.

LEGACY

Helen died in 1969. The idea God gave her and Charles continues reaching around the world. So far, The Pocket Testament League has distributed over 110 million Testaments. The organization's short statement of purpose says their desire is for believers to "read, carry and share" God's word.

L4G—————L4G—————L4G

LET ME KNOW: How has Helen's story informed, encouraged, or otherwise helped you? I welcome your comments.



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—Images: courtesy of The Pocket Testament League—

MILLARD FULLER

Posted on 01/03/2012 by William E. Richardson

Born JANUARY 3, 1935

Jesus told a wealthy, young man of His day that to gain eternal life he should sell his possessions and divide the money among the poor (Matthew 19:21). That young man refused to give up his temporary riches even if it meant not gaining God's eternal kingdom. He left that conversation sorrowful (verse 22). In the centuries since, some have willingly surrendered their wealth to God's service. One such person– a self-made millionaire from Alabama named Millard Fuller.

MONEYMAKER



From childhood, Millard knew how to turn things around him into cash. Later, in law school, he and fellow classmate, Morris Dees, engaged in some lucrative business ventures. After graduation, they started a marketing firm. At age 29, Millard became a millionaire. But life wasn't everything he'd dreamed. His drive to create wealth failed to bring total happiness to his family.

NEW GOALS

His wife, Linda, felt left out. She took their two children to New York. That shock opened Millard's eyes. To save their marriage, he followed her. He also renewed his faith. In New York he told Linda a radical idea he had– for them to give away their wealth. She agreed.

They returned to Georgia where they joined a Christian community known as Koinonia Farm. There they grew in their faith and their desire to express it. In 1973, the Fuller family relocated to Zaire, Africa to build homes. Three years later they returned to America and began Habitat for Humanity.

PARTNERSHIP

Habitat's mission: provide affordable homes for the needy via the "economics of Jesus." They don't give homes away, nor do they sell them for profit. Each person a house is built for is a "partner." During the building process, a partner is expected to contribute a set number of hours of sweat equity. When finished, the partner makes a down payment and monthly payments thereafter. Following God's command in Exodus 22:25, Habitat for Humanity refuses to charge interest.

The organization shares Jesus' love for the needy by involving the community. They rely on financial donations (including corporate sponsorship), work with locally donated material and a voluntary labor force.

LASTING WEALTH



Those attending the organizational meeting for Habitat for Humanity in 1976 set a goal to build one million homes for those who needed them. That mission was accomplished in 2005. That same year, Millard resigned from Habitat over policy issues. He then began the Fuller Center for Housing. He remained at the helm until his death in 2009. Millard Fuller, the onetime millionaire, shined brightly for Jesus by investing the last 36 years of his life making

sure others had decent, affordable housing.

L4G ————— L4G ————— L4G

LET ME KNOW: How has Millard's story informed, encouraged, or otherwise helped you? I welcome your comments.

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—Images from SmugMug—

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