



Summer 2010

AT A GLANCE

Letter p. 1, 3

Article p. 2, 3

L'Abri Prayer Calendar p. 4

**UPCOMING
LECTURE TOPICS**

Same Sex Attraction

Discernment

Prayer

The Crusades

The Picture Perfect Life

**Power, Authority, and
Abuse: Should Christ
Divorce the Church?**

Friendship

**L'Abri Canada
2010 Terms**

**September 2-November 22
February 17-April 18, 2011
May 26-August 8, 2011
September 8-November 22,
2011**

Dear L'Abri Friends and Family,

July 12, 2010

It is a beautiful and blustery day here at Canadian L'Abri. We are so thankful that summer is finally upon us after what seemed like a never ending rather cool and damp spring. We are now able to hang our laundry on the line and expect it to dry, watch things grow from our garden, and brave the cold waters of the "sunshine coast". It really is a gorgeous time of year and it's wonderful to have so many students here to share it with.

We have reached our maximum capacity here on Bowen Island with 21 for lunch today. We've had such a mix of numbers, ages, families and couples from all over the world this term. We are hosting our first family (parents with their 18 month old daughter) from Switzerland and we are so thankful. The students as well as little Samuel Scheibe and Gabriel Adams are happy to have another companion to run (or crawl) around with. Having these little ones around us really does add so much to the already dynamic community. What a joy it is to watch them grow up surrounded by so much culture, diversity, love, and creativity. Although students come and go, it really does feel like they've (for a brief time) entered into our family.

Having so many new people from around the globe at our lunch tables brings up many new questions and ideas to be discussed. It's been encouraging to see people listen, debate and try to understand truth and how it applies to us all regardless of our backgrounds. We were so fortunate to have Iain Proven (Marshall Sheppard Professor of Biblical Studies Old Testament at Regent College) come lecture on "Genesis 1-2: Let there be light... and darkness" last Friday as well as many others. We are also looking forward to John Hare (Noah Porter Professor of Philosophical Theology at Yale Divinity) who will be coming to lecture on "The Christian Faith and Religious Pluralism" later this week. We've also

(continued on page three)

If you'd like to apply as a student please visit our website for more information about our branch and a broader treatment of what to be mindful of as you consider joining us on the island. Alternatively you may call or email us, but keep in mind that as we are often engaged outside of the office, email is usually the more effective form of communication.

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NOTES FROM OUR RECENT PANEL DISCUSSION ON THE FIVE THEMES OF L'ABRI: LORDSHIP OF CHRIST OVER ALL CREATION

This is a relatively easy theme to understand cognitively, but much harder to live into, which is probably why it became an emphasis at L'abri. The Schaeffer's saw this as a real area of need in the Church and the wider culture when they began L'abri in the 1950's, and if anything, the need is even greater now as our culture and we as persons are constantly pressed and pulled into more disconnected and fragmented ways of living. Abraham Kuyper put it pretty clearly when he said, "In the total expanse of human life there is not a single square inch of which the Christ, who alone is sovereign over all, does not declare, That is mine!"

The Lordship of Christ is a theme found throughout the NT, and as we begin reading about it, we realize that in making this claim the bible was directly denying a claim that the surrounding culture was taking for granted – they all just assumed it was right. In the Roman world of the first Century Caesar was Lord – end of story. Caesar had the right to rule all things and he essentially owned everything; Caesar got to say what would happen and what wouldn't, what was real and what wasn't; Caesar held the power of life and death. Caesar was Lord.

Along comes a little group of people who say, actually Caesar isn't Lord, Jesus, the Christ, is Lord. He is the one who designed everything and knows how it works best. He is the one that came to redeem all things that have been lost through sin and brokenness. He is the one whom you crucified but God rose from the dead and is now alive. He is the one who will return one day to set all things finally and completely to rights. He is the one who ultimately rules all things – he is the owner of the universe if you will; he is the one who ultimately determines what happens and what is real; and he is the one who ultimately holds the power of life and death. And because he has come, everything is different. The birth, life, death, and resurrection of Christ answer the question, "What would it look like if God were actually in charge?" The answer requires that we live differently, we treat people differently, we value different things, and we live in the light of a different identity and hope than that which Caesar has to offer. As you might imagine, and as history has shown, this changed the world.

So what about today? Our culture has done the Christian thing and in many ways is moving on because on the popular level it didn't really seem that different from anything else, and many of the differences now seemed ignorant, oppressive, or untenable. Not only that, but in the West we don't really have any Caesar. Certainly no one takes Presidents or Prime Ministers as seriously as a Caesar. If we claimed Christ was the real President or Prime Minister, no one would care... it probably wouldn't mean that anything in my life actually changed. If I see very little tangible connection between what Washington or Ottawa does and my daily life, why would I care? So what does Christ's claim of Lordship mean in our culture or in our lives today? Why is this still a theme at L'Abri? For an answer, let me give you a quote from G.K. Chesterton, "It isn't that Christianity was tried and found wanting, but that it was found difficult and left untried."

Far from being a meaningless claim, the belief that Christ is Lord over all creation is still as radically different today as it was in the first century and every century since then. Although we no longer have a Caesar, we now have almost 7 billion Caesars. Our culture now assumes that each individual has an almost ultimate claim to their own life and happiness, to shape their own reality and identity, and to fulfill their own hopes and dreams in their own way as long as it doesn't really bother anyone else's rights to do the same thing. For most modern North Americans, this makes perfect sense – like the first centuries Romans with Caesar, we moderns just assume our version is right. However, this cultural belief is as much at odds with Christ's claim to be Lord as the first century's cultural belief in Caesar as Lord. Nor does it matter if we stick the adjective "Christian" on the front of it; if I'm primarily living for myself, I can call it Christian all day long, but it is still in very real danger of being a denial of Christ's Lordship.

(continued on page three)

continued from page 1

We've also had more than usual turn out from the Bowen Community as of late, which is always a joy for us. The discussions have truly been lively and have hopefully led to some real inner questioning and challenges for all who come.

The other part to living/studying at L'Abri is the work we do together. The property is looking better than ever. The orchard (which was a project tackled in the fall term) has blossomed and is now bearing tiny pears, apples, and hazelnuts. They will hopefully be in full bounty by this coming fall. We were also gifted with 50 baby chicks who are making themselves at home in the chicken coop built inside the already existing barn. We have three heirloom varieties one of which lays the pale green and blue coloured eggs! They have been such a delight and have provided entertainment as we both watch them explore and as we learn to care for them. Soon they will be big enough to wander freely around the garden which is now in full swing. Our hard working helpers have been up early every morning watering both it as well as the green house which is overflowing with eggplants, cucumbers, tomato plants and so much more. It is not often that we get to see so much new life all at one time. What a season it is!

As for the rest of the property, much work has been done on the cabin's bathroom (which included gutting and rebuilding it in it's entirety, including electrical and plumbing). It is my new home so I in particular am so thankful for the generosity of both the students as well as a great friend from the island who has offered to take on the entire project. It is such a gift to have the cabin in use again and to have another home to welcome students into. It was the setting for our Fourth of July festivities and hopefully many more celebrations to come.

We are so grateful to be a part of the work God is doing at L'Abri. Daily we, along with the students are challenged and continue to grow. With that growth we are reminded to put our hope in him who gives us strength. "Come to me, all who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." Matthew 11:28-30.

Blessings,
Jessica Bell

continued from page 2

If I claim that Christ is Lord, my life is supposed to be a living answer to the question, "What would it look like if God were in Charge?" This includes every square inch of life. This means I can't say Christ has saved my soul, and everything else is secular so I'm not going to worry about it. Nor can I say, going to work at releasing the politically poor and socially oppressed is good, but ideas of sin and salvation are simply outdated and ignorant so they don't matter. Lordship is a claim that means every square inch of life matters. I know what it looks like when I am Caesar, when I am in charge. But what if things were different? What would it look like if God were in charge of my money, my politics, my free time, my vocation, my identity, my sexuality, my relationships, and my property? What if God has something to say about hospitality, service, laying down our lives, the poor, the orphan, the widow, as well as my soul and forgiveness, restoration and my view of morality? What if Christ was actually Lord of all, and he had an end in mind, a purpose, a goal, a kingdom that we are moving towards? What if I lived my life by the words of the Lord's Prayer, "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." What would be important to me, how would I treat other people, where would my hope lie, how would I know, what changes if any would be necessary if I wanted to participate in this, how would I change and what if I didn't want to? What would this kind of life look like? Although some of the answers might surprise us, learning and living the answers to these questions is what the Lordship of Christ over all creation is about. That is why it is one of the five themes at L'abri.

