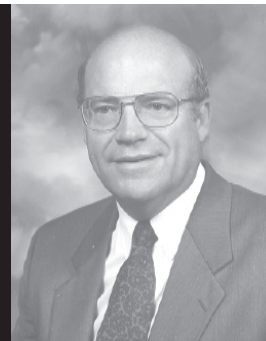




Dr. Fred Schwarz

The Schwarz Report



Dr. David Noebel

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Merry Christmas Happy New Year!

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It Came upon the Midnight Clear



It came upon the midnight clear,
That glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth
To touch their harps of gold.
"Peace on the earth, goodwill to men,
From heav'n's all gracious King."
The world in solemn stillness lay
To hear the angels sing.

Still thro' the cloven skies they come,
With peaceful wings unfurled,
And still their heav'nly music floats
O'er all the weary world.
Above its sad and lowly plains
They bend on hov'ring wing,
And ever o'er its babel sounds
The blessed angels sing.

And ye, beneath life's crushing load,
Whose forms are bending low,
Who toil along the climbing way
With painful step and slow,
Look up! For glad and golden hours
Come swiftly on the wing.
Oh, rest beside the weary road
And hear the angels sing.

For, lo, the days are hast'ning on,
By prophet bards foretold,
When with the ever circling years
Comes round the age of gold;
When peace shall over all the earth
Its ancient splendors fling,
And the whole world give back the song
Which now the angels sing.

—Edmund H. Sears, Richard S. Willis

And do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead expose them. Ephesians 5:11

"Dwell on the past and you'll lose an eye; forget the past and you'll lose both eyes." Old Russian Proverb

The Christmas Story

by Matthew

The birth of Jesus Christ came about this way: After His mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, it was discovered before they came together that she was pregnant by the Holy Spirit. So her husband Joseph, being a righteous man, and not wanting to disgrace her publicly, decided to divorce her secretly.

But after he had considered these things, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, don’t be afraid to take Mary as your wife, because what has been conceived in her is by the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to name Him Jesus, because He will save His people from their sins.”

Now all this took place to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

See, the virgin will become pregnant
and give birth to a son,
and they will name Him Immanuel,
which is translated “God is with us.”

When Joseph got up from sleeping, he did as the Lord’s angel had commanded him. He married her but did not know her intimately until she gave birth to a son. And he named Him Jesus.

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of King Herod, wise men from the east arrived unexpectedly in Jerusalem, saying, “Where is He who has

been born King of the Jews? For we saw His star in the east and have come to worship Him.”

When King Herod heard this, he was deeply disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. So he assembled all the chief priests and scribes of the people and asked them where the Messiah would be born.

“In Bethlehem of Judea,” they told him, “because this is what was written by the prophet:

‘And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the leaders of
Judah: because out of you will come a leader
who will shepherd My people Israel.’”

Then Herod secretly summoned the wise men and asked them the exact time the star appeared. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search carefully for the child. When you find Him, report back to me so that I too can go and worship Him.”

After hearing the king, they went on their way. And there it was—the star they had seen in the east! It led them until it came and stopped above the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed beyond measure. Entering the house, they saw the child with Mary His mother, and falling to their knees, they worshiped Him. Then they opened their treasures and presented Him with gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And being warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their own country by another route.

—Matthew 1:18-2:12

China’s Long March to Global Dominance

by Steven W. Mosher

The Washington foreign policy establishment has adopted a China policy that is, in my view, hopelessly naïve. Its goal is to encourage the Beijing regime to become “a responsible stakeholder in the existing international order.” In pursuit of this chimera we have sacrificed our markets, our capital, our technology and to increasing extent, our security.

I say this policy is naïve not only because China is currently in sharp competition with the U.S. and its allies for power and influence in the world. Any rising power, dictatorship or democracy, would be a strategic competitor and, as such, would pose a challenge to the existing order. Nor do I say that it is naïve because China has

global ambitions. When India and Brazil finally come into their own, these countries, too, will want to have more of a voice in their regions, in international organizations, and in the world at large. But while the existing world order will shift to accommodate them, its fundamental character will remain unchanged.

This is not true in the case of China. Our current policy is naïve because China, unlike any other country, threatens to completely undermine the current, U.S.-dominated international order. Distracted by a rag-tag band of terrorists, we have lost sight of the fact that China is a semi-terrorist outfit itself, a dictatorial regime that is extending its influence throughout the world by creating

a network of like-minded dictatorships. Pick a tyrant at random, and you will find that his principal foreign backer is a Communist dictatorship that controls 20 percent of the world's population, an increasing share of its industrial capacity, and a rapidly expanding military, not to mention a huge and growing cache of nuclear weapons and the means to deliver them.

Take the Islamic dictatorship that rules the small country of Iran. President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, who has threatened to destroy Israel in a nuclear holocaust, may not be welcome in most Western capitals, but he is feted in Beijing. Not only was he invited to address Chinese, Russian and Central Asian leaders at a June 2006 meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, he was also allowed the rare privilege of addressing the Chinese masses on state television, assuring them that Iran's and China's interest were "identical." Although Ahmadinejad is a radical Islamist, all too ready to bash America and Israel, he maintains a strict silence on the persecution of his fellow Muslims in China's Xinjiang province. In return, China uses its seat on the U.N. Security Council to oppose sanctions against Iran. Even more seriously, Iran is reportedly being used as a conduit for advanced weapons and weapons technology from China that are finding their way into Iraq and being used to kill American soldiers in Iraq.

As this example suggests, China's "global diplomatic initiative," as it is called, is anything but diplomatic. It is aimed at co-opting or corrupting as many governments as possible, bending them to Beijing's purposes. Take the country of Cambodia, for example, which suffered so much from the Maoist-inspired and Beijing-supported predations of the Khmer Rouge. Prime Minister Hun Sen used to call China "the root of all that is evil in Cambodia," report Kelantzick, but now gushes that Phnom Penh's relations with Beijing are "entering into the best stage in history." The Cambodian Prime Minister studiously avoids mentioning contentious issues like China's damming of the upper reaches of the Mekong River, which is causing lakes and rivers across his already impoverished land to dry up and the fish catch—a primary source of protein for his poor countrymen—to plummet.

Why has Hun Sen become a puppet of Beijing money? When the World Bank—a U.S.-dominated institution—threatened to suspend hundreds of millions of dollars worth of assistance because of Phnom Penh's "rampant corruption and its crackdown on civil liberties," China rode to the rescue with an April 2006 offer of \$600 million worth of grants and loans.

Farther afield, China has major inroads into Africa and

Latin America. In Angola, home of the second-largest oil deposits in Africa, the International Monetary Fund tried to force the government "to agree to provisions that would slash graft and improve economic management," as a first step towards moving the country in a democratic direction. Again China stepped in, offering a package of loans and credits worth up to six billion, on condition that Chinese firms carry out the reconstruction of the oil infrastructure. Privileged access to Angola's oil resources may well be another, unpublicized, condition.

Beijing has also aggressively courted Venezuela dictator Hugo Chavez, who has been on several state visits to China. Trade ties between the two countries have been upgraded, and China has aggressively supported Venezuela's bid for a seat on the United Nations Security Council. Emboldened by China's support, which he calls a "Great Wall" against American hegemony, Chavez now claims that Beijing and Caracas have forged a "strategic alliance." He was vowed to reorient his massive oil industry away from America and towards China.

In fact, one can name a corrupt, dictatorial regime anywhere in the world—from Syria and Iran in the Middle East, to Venezuela and Cuba in Latin America—and its closest major ally is invariably the People's Republic of China, all too ready to supply guns, butter, or comradely encouragement to defy the United States.

Beijing is not just embracing fellow dictatorships, however, but developing world democracies, such as Grenada and Dominica in the West Indies. To draw such countries into Beijing's orbit, China deliberately targets them with a potent combination of state-driven investment, trade, arms sales and aid (including bribes to high officials and secret subsidies to political parties), with the aim of cementing the allegiance of governing elites to Beijing. China has embassies with large staffs even in small island nations—like Grenada in the Caribbean—where even the U.S. doesn't maintain an embassy.

In return for football stadiums, public works projects, exchange programs, generous aid packages, leaders in dozens of small countries have cozied up to China. Over time, the corrosive effect of such aid is becoming more and more evident. China's brand of National Socialism and its disdain for human rights has begun to infect local leaders, and anti-American rhetoric is on the rise. In return, China expects privileged access to raw materials, not to mention public support when controversies with the U.S. and U.S.-led international organizations arise.

America's idealistic promotion of democracy, the rule of law, economic freedom, and human rights, (along with, it must be said, more unsavory things such as population

control and gender feminism) is being undercut by Beijing everywhere on the globe, not least of all in China itself.

There are still those in Washington who cherish exaggerated expectations where China's democratization is concerned, ever hopeful, for example, that China's economic reforms may one day soon lead to democratic reforms. After two full decades of economic reform, the Chinese Communist Party on August 9, 1999, asked its members to study a new book entitled *Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, Mao Zedong, Deng Xiaoping and Jiang Zemin Discuss Materialism and Atheism*. This does not suggest a regime that is becoming more tolerant of differing religious and cultural ideals. There is not a single known dissident in China who is not in jail or in exile.

Nor is the regime's commitment to maintaining a "socialist market economy," with substantial control over important economic sectors, noticeably on the wane. Fully confident that their concept of economics will ultimately prevail, leading Chinese strategists assert that in years to come it is not China but the United States that will change, in a "transition away from capitalism...toward some type of socialist market economy."

The same China that, driven by its history and its cultural hubris, regards the United States with hostility today will likely be taking an even more critical view of American power in the Pacific ten years from now. China's unspoken goal then, as now, will be to destroy that power. China's ambitions to establish a Pax Sinica, which predate the founding of the United States by a couple of millennia, will remain in place. The only thing that will have changed is China's military capabilities, its economic prowess, and its international relations, all of which will have expanded greatly.

China's ideal world, now and in the future, bears little resemblance to the current global order. Beijing is attempting to create a world which pays tribute to China's preeminence and preferentially sends its raw materials to Chinese ports, a world in which corrupt oligarchies rule and human rights are relegated to the dustbin of history.

Such is the naivete of our current efforts to make China a "responsible stakeholder" in the existing international order.

—Steven Mosher is the President of the Population Research Institute, Front Royal, VA and the author of *Hegemon: China's Plan to Dominate Asia*.

Communist China's Tibet

by Jason Lee Steorts

You can come and go and never notice how damned creepy this town is. I write from a rooftop café in the Barkhor District, the one neighborhood in Lhasa, Tibet that hasn't been bulldozed to make room for modern Chinese aesthetics (square buildings in white tile and blue glass). Western tourists see the new neighborhoods, of course. But they prefer to spend their time here, in this warren of alleyways I'm looking down on, this jumble of fluttering prayer flags and vegetable markets and Tibetan pilgrims who have come a hundred, thousand kilometers to visit the Jokhang Temple, its gilded roof now aflame with sunset. If this is all you see, it's easy to suppose that the Chinese occupation merely added a layer of modernity to a society whose essence went unchanged.

That's because the creepiness is subtle. I first noticed it late last night, when a squad of policemen marched past me, their steps synchronized after a fashion rare in free lands. You see it in the daytime, too, but only if you know what to look for. Visit a monastery and you will not know (unless a Tibetan whispers it to you) that there were ten times as many monks before the Cultural Revolution, that the Chinese government now limits their number, and that many received a paycheck from the Communist Party to act as spies. On your way to Mt. Everest, in your rented Landcruiser, you will pass through villages on the outskirts of Lhasa. But you will not know (unless you read Chinese) that the character spraypainted on every house is *chai*, "demolish"; and you will not know (unless your guide tells you, which, if he has an official guiding license, he will not) that the homeowners received no compensation for their farmland, on which more white tile and blue glass will rise.

It would be wrong to say that Peking is destroying Tibet just for the sake of destroying it, as were the Red Guards who answered Mao's call by smashing temples hither and yon. The boring technocrats who rule China today have no interest in ideological evil. But traditional Tibetan society is disappearing nonetheless, for two reasons. The first is the Chinese govern-

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ment's campaign to sunder the Tibetan people from their clerical and political leaders, most particularly the Dalai Lama. Second, and deeper in consequence, is the Chinese settlement that is slowly overwhelming all but the most inhospitable regions of Tibet.

To witness the Chinese attack on the Dalai Lama, all you must do is talk to a pilgrim who has tried to visit him at Dharamsala, India, the seat of his government in exile. That government puts the number of such pilgrims at 2,000 to 3,000 annually. The Chinese authorities refuse to authorize their travel, so they must sneak into India illegally. This often means a dangerous multi-week foot journey over extremely high and remote mountain passes. I met one pilgrim on his way back from Dharamsala when he stumbled past my tent in the foothills of the Himalayas. He had been walking for 23 days, carrying nothing but his clothes, traveling mainly at night to avoid the police.

He was of course lucky. On a bus in a traditionally Tibetan area of Gansu Province, I met a monk who had been arrested near the Indian border while attempting such a pilgrimage. He spent the next six months in prison. There he was beaten severely (a fellow inmate had his leg broken by the guards), forced to do hard labor, and fed only meager servings of tsampa, a dough made from raw barley meal and yak butter. Even this man had it luckier than some. The Chinese army has been known to use Tibetan pilgrims for target practice. One such case was reported in the West last year, after a party of mountain climbers caught it on film.

The Chinese try to stamp out loyalty to the Dalai Lama in other ways, too. Near Tingri, a town three days' walk from Mt. Everest, I heard rumors that the Chinese were entering homes at random and arresting their owners if a photograph of the Dalai Lama was on display. These rumors are impossible to confirm, but the Tibetans believe them: It is the sort of thing they are used to. I have been shown, in a Tibetan home in Sichuan Province, a room whose sole purpose is to house a photo of the Dalai Lama where the authorities cannot find it.

The mere existence of this room suggests that Tibetan loyalties to the Dalai Lama are largely intact, despite Chinese calumny against him. A new Chinese law forbidding any of Tibet's hundreds of "living Buddhas" from reincarnating without government permission may prove more destructive. Already more destructive has been the Chinese colonization of Tibet. It is impossible to get accurate information on the composition

of populations in traditionally Tibetan areas, as the Chinese government uses a highly tendentious census methodology. What is indisputable is that Tibetans are fast becoming a minority in their ancestral lands. The Dharamsala government estimates that Chinese outnumber Tibetans in Lhasa by a margin of three to one. I cannot verify that number, but no visitor who sees a wide swath of Lhasa would deny that its population and general character are predominately Chinese.

This is very much an engineered phenomenon. In areas such as Eastern Turkestan and Inner Mongolia, the Peking government has subdued autochthonous populations by flooding them with Chinese migrants. It has long sought the same outcome in Tibet. For decades, Chinese settlers were given economic incentives to move to Tibetan cities such as Lhasa and Shigatse, even as rural Tibetans were denied the same opportunity. Today, the population transfer continues with a momentum of its own, greatly aided by the opening last year of a rail link to Lhasa. The authorities cover their motives with the barest of fig leaves. Even as they claim that Tibet is underpopulated, they enforce their family-planning policy among Tibetans with ever-greater stringency.

At the same time, they have used the schools to ensure that each generation of Tibetans is more Sinicized than the last. Because professional success requires working through the Chinese system, it is rare to meet a city-dwelling Tibetan under the age of 30 who does not speak Mandarin and dress as though he were Chinese. The government jealously bars any instruction whose curriculum is not subject to Chinese oversight. One Tibetan I know—a tour guide who is unlicensed, and therefore honest—wanted to open an elementary school in his hometown. But the officials forbade this enterprise as soon as they learned of it. In any case, he would have struggled to find teaching materials: "We cannot buy good books about Tibet or Buddhism here." (They are banned.) "We have to get what we can from Nepal or the West."

The attitude of Tibetans toward these changes is not monolithic. Some benefit from Chinese occupation: There are those spying monks, to begin with, and many other Tibetans on the government payroll, from police officers to senior Party officials. My guide friend thinks that the Tibetans are the worst of all: "The Chinese are often quite reasonable. I would much rather deal with them than with the Tibetan police." It would also be a mistake, he says, to romanticize life in Tibet prior

to the Chinese conquest. He tells me the story of his grandfather, who, though already married and a father, fell in love with the daughter of a Tibetan cabinet minister. The minister showed his disapproval by having the unwanted suitor tied to a stake in the countryside, where he was eaten by wild dogs.

Whether or not such things were common in Old Tibet, there can be little doubt as to the injustice of its political structures. The traditional agrarian system—in which peasants toiled on monastery land—could probably not have survived the 20th century, even if it had escaped China's special brand of political murder-as-land reform. And the forces of commerce and modernization would have been enough in their own right to make Lhasa and Shigatse less "Tibetan" than the pre-modern nomadic areas. It is even possible that this change would have happened faster without Communism, as Tibet would have been more open to the outside world.

None of this excuses the evils of Chinese rule, of course: the political murders, the torture, the prisons, the famine, the desecration of holy sites. Nor are these evils excused by any benefit attributable to the Chinese (such as better infrastructure and health care). In all likelihood, the 21st century will see the death of traditional Tibet. This may accompany, paradoxically, an easing of political tensions: for there will soon be no one and nothing left to resist the Chinese. The Dalai Lama, knowing that Peking will try to replace him with a congenial puppet, has hinted that he will be the last in his line. The monasteries are shattered beyond repair. And the population increasingly must choose between ghettoization and assimilation into modern Chinese life.

Tibetan Buddhism will survive as a system of belief, even as the society it gave rise to vanishes. Tibetans will then go the way of China's sundry other minority groups, tamed natives who don their colorful costumes for the amusement of clucking tourists, most of them Chinese, most of these well-intentioned and able to ask, without irony, the questions a Cantonese man once put to me: "Didn't you see all those pilgrims at the Jokhang? Didn't you see the monks? How can you say Tibetans aren't free?"

—*National Review*, August 27, 2007, p. 24, 25

Cancer's Unexpected Blessings

by Tony Snow

Blessings arrive in unexpected packages—in my case, cancer. Those of us with potentially fatal diseases and there are millions in America today—find ourselves in the odd position of coping with our mortality while trying to fathom God's will. Although it would be the height of presumption to declare with confidence "What It All Means," Scripture provides powerful hints and consolations.

The first is that we shouldn't spend too much time trying to answer the "why" questions: *Why me? Why must people suffer? Why can't someone else get sick?* We can't answer such things, and the questions themselves often are designed more to express our anguish than to solicit an answer.

I don't know why I have cancer, and I don't much care. It is what it is—a plain and indisputable fact. Yet even while staring into a mirror darkly, great and stunning truths begin to take shape. Our maladies define a central feature of our existence: We are fallen. We are imperfect. Our bodies give out.

But despite this—or because of it—God offers the possibility of salvation and grace. We don't know how the narrative of our lives will end, but we get to choose how to use the interval between now and the moment we meet our Creator face-to-face.

Second, we need to get past the anxiety. The mere thought of dying can send adrenaline flooding through your system. A dizzy, unfocused panic seizes you. Your heart thumps; your head swims. You think of nothingness and swoon. You fear partings; you worry about the impact on family and friends. You fidget and get nowhere.

To regain footing, remember that we were born not into death, but into life, and that the journey continues after we have finished our days on this earth. We accept this on faith, but that faith is nourished by a conviction that stirs even within many nonbelieving hearts—an intuition that the gift of life, once given, cannot be taken away. Those who have been stricken enjoy the special privilege of being able to fight with their might, main, and faith to live—fully, richly, exuberantly—no matter how their days may be numbered.

Third, we can open our eyes and hearts. God relishes surprise. We want lives of simple, predictable ease—smooth, even trails as far as the eye can see, but God likes to go off-

road. He provokes us with twists and turns. He places us in predicaments that seem to defy our endurance and comprehension—and yet don't. By His love and grace, we persevere. The challenges that make our hearts leap and stomachs churn invariably strengthen our faith and grant measures of wisdom and joy we would not experience otherwise.

Picture yourself in a hospital bed. The fog of anesthesia has begun to wear away. A doctor stands at your feet, a loved one holds your hand at the side. "It's cancer," the healer announces.

The natural reaction is to turn to God and ask him to serve as a cosmic Santa. "Dear God, make it all go away. Make everything simpler." But another voice whispers: "You have been called." Your quandary has drawn you closer to God, closer to those you love, closer to the issues that matter—and has dragged into insignificance the banal concerns that occupy our "normal time."

There's another kind of response, although usually short-lived—an inexplicable shudder of excitement, as if a clarifying moment of calamity has swept away everything trivial and tiny, and placed before us the challenge of important questions.

The moment you enter the Valley of the Shadow of Death, things change. You discover that Christianity is not something doughy, passive, pious, and soft. Faith may be the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. But it also draws you into a world shorn of fearful caution. The life of belief teems with thrills, boldness, danger, shocks, reversals, triumphs, and epiphanies. Think of Paul, traipsing through the known world and contemplating trips to what must have seemed the antipodes (Spain), shaking the dust from his sandals, worrying not about the morrow, but only about the moment.

There's nothing wilder than a life of humble virtue—for it is through selflessness and service that God wrings from our bodies and spirits the most we ever could give, the most we ever could offer, and the most we ever could do.

Finally, we can let love change everything. When Jesus was faced with the prospect of crucifixion, he grieved not for himself, but for us. He cried for Jerusalem before entering the holy city. From the Cross, he took on the cumulative burden of human sin and weakness, and begged for forgiveness on our behalf.

We get repeated chances to learn that life is not about us—that we acquire purpose and satisfaction by sharing in God's love for others. Sickness gets us part way there. It reminds us of our limitations and dependence. But it also gives us a chance to serve the healthy. A minister friend of mine observes that people suffering grave afflictions often acquire the faith of two people, while loved ones accept the

burden of two peoples' worries and fears.

Most of us have watched friends as they drifted toward God's arms, not with resignation, but with peace and hope. In so doing, they have taught us not how to die, but how to live. They have emulated Christ by transmitting the power and authority of love.

I sat by my best friend's bedside a few years ago as a wasting cancer took him away. He kept at his table a worn Bible and a 1928 edition of the Book of Common Prayer. A shattering grief disabled his family, many of his old friends, and at least one priest. Here was an humble and very good guy, someone who apologized when he winced with pain because he thought it made his guest uncomfortable. He retained his equanimity and good humor literally until his last conscious moment. "I'm going to try to beat [this cancer]," he told me several months before he died. "But if I don't, I'll see you on the other side."

His gift was to remind everyone around him that even though God doesn't promise us tomorrow, he does promise us eternity—filled with life and love we cannot comprehend—and that one can in the throes of sickness point the rest of us toward timeless truths that will help us weather future storms.

Through such trials, God bids us to choose: Do we believe, or do we not? Will we be bold enough to love, daring enough to serve, humble enough to submit, and strong enough to acknowledge our limitations? Can we surrender our concern in things that don't matter so that we might devote our remaining days to things that do?

When our faith flags, he throws reminders in our way. Think of the prayer warriors in our midst. They change things, and those of us who have been on the receiving end of their petitions and intercessions know it. It is hard to describe, but there are times when suddenly the hairs on the back of your neck stand up, and you feel a surge of the Spirit. Somehow you just know: Others have chosen, when talking to the Author of all creation, to lift us up—to speak of us!

This is love of a very special order. But so is the ability to sit back and appreciate the wonder of every created thing. The mere thought of death somehow makes every blessing vivid, every happiness more luminous and intense. We may not know how our contest with sickness will end, but we have felt the ineluctable touch of God.

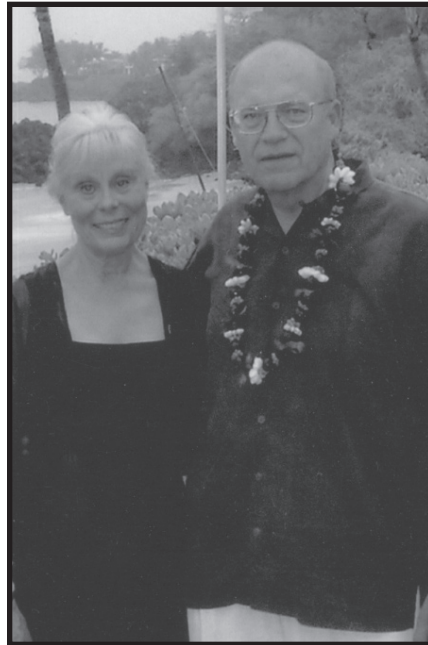
What is man that Thou art mindful of him? We don't know much, but we know this: No matter where we are, no matter what we do, no matter how bleak or frightening our prospects, each and every one of us who believe, each and every day, lies in the same safe and impregnable place, in the hollow of God's hand.

—*Christianity Today*, July 20, 2007



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from the Schwarz and Noebel Families

Thanking each and every one for your continuing
interest and support throughout 2007.



David and Alice Noebel



Dr. and Mrs. Fred Schwarz

