



## A Publication of the Winnetka Ave. Church of Christ

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## AWAITING WORD

# THE BULWARK

Gilligan's Island, that paragon of quality television, which ran on CBS from 1964 to 1967 (and still lives on in reruns), in one episode dealt with a Japanese sailor who hadn't learned that WWII was over. That episode could be said to have been a harbinger of what happened about ten years later. Hiroo Onoda, was a Japanese military man who didn't surrender from WWII until March 10, 1974, and that only after his former commanding officer, Major Yoshimi Taniguchi, who after he had been located, was then flown to the remote Philippine island of Lubang where Onoda had been since 1944 and ordered him to surrender. The war was over, and had been for nearly thirty years!

Lieutenant Onoda was doing exactly as he had been ordered. He had been given specific orders that under no circumstances was he to surrender to the enemy nor to take his own life. He thought the leaflets that had been dropped saying the war was over, was propaganda by the enemy. He was in dire need of hearing the good news and being reassured that it was indeed true.

There are so many with whom we come in contact each and every day that are at war with God. They are in dire need of knowing about the good news of Jesus Christ and that God has provided terms of peace, through Christ (see Romans 5:6-10). There can be the full assurance that the message being given to them is absolutely true. "Sanctify them in the truth; Thy word is truth." (John 17:17) Factor that in with what Jesus stated as seen in John 8:32, "And you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free."

"How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher?" (Romans 10:14)



Just like Mr. Onoda, who didn't believe the leaflets poured out to inform him and other stragglers that the war was over; there are those today who for whatever reason are skeptical with respect to Jesus. Remember it took nearly thirty years before Onoda accepted. The same is true with respect to us reaching out to those who continue to wage war against God. Paul, in writing to the young evangelist, Timothy noted, "...be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction." (2Timothy 4:2) The necessity to adopt a mind set of patience and tenacity is paramount.

In the first chapter of 2Timothy, Paul wrote the following as found in verses nine and ten. "Who saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was granted to us in Christ Jesus from all eternity, but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." There are far and away too many who live a defeated life, metaphorically living alone in a self imposed jungle; they refuse to surrender. Stealing from self, life and peace.

It is beyond amazing what is afforded to mankind by the victory of Christ over sin and death. He provided what was necessary for life and peace. "But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgression, made us alive together with Christ..." (Ephesians 2:4-5) Thinking back to the example of Hiroo Onoda, can you imagine how he must have felt when finally coming to understand the battle was over. Oh, what a wonderful sense of freedom that washes over the individual who comes to realize Christ has won the battle for us; if only one surrenders to the will of God.

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