

"Holding fast the Faithful Word . . ."



The Word and Work



"Holding forth the Word of Life."

JUNE, 2001

***MONEY
AND
MISSIONS***

54th Annual Kentucky/Indiana Christian Fellowship Week
Aug. 6-9, 2001

Day Sessions: Portland Ave. Church of Christ, Louisville

Night Sessions: Sellersburg, Ind. Church of Christ

THEME: *Signs of the Time*

Monday, Aug. 6:

7:30 p.m. Social and Cultural Signs Orell Overman

Tuesday, Aug. 7: Day's Theme -- *Tolerance*

9:20 a.m. Dealing with Mormons Kevin Bywater

10:20 Dealing with Jehovah's Witnesses K. Bywater

11:20 Dealing with the New Age Mvmt. K. Bywater

1:15 p.m. Goin' Fishing: World Missions-1

2:10 Goin' Fishing: World Missions-2

7:30 p.m. False Prophets Kevin Bywater, Summit Ministries

Wednesday, Aug. 8: Day's Theme -- *In the Last Days*

9:20 a.m. Motivation to Seek Mike Abbott

10:20 Message to Preach Dennis LeDoux

11:20 Method to Use Bennie Hill

1:15 p.m. Goin' Fishing: World Missions-3

2:10 Goin' Fishing: World Missions-4

7:30 p.m. Seeking and Saving the Lost Paul Kitzmiller

Thursday, Aug. 9: Day's Theme -- *The Victor's Crown*

9:20 a.m. Victory in Times of Suffering Alex Wilson

10:20 Victory for the Believer Robt. Brock,

Voice of the Martyrs

11:20 Victory of the Church Tom Mobley,

Louisville Bible College

1:15 p.m. Goin' Fishing: World Missions-5

2:10 Goin' Fishing: World Missions-6

7:30 p.m. The Victorious Church Earl Mullins Jr./ Rbt. Brock

Daily Prayer Times: 9:00 a.m.

Daily Lunch: 11:30 a.m.

Various special dinners/ activities to be announced.

THE WORD AND WORK

"Declare the whole counsel of God"

Alex V. Wilson, Editor

Dennis L. Allen, Missions

Bennie Hill, News & Notes

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EDITORIAL:

American Missionaries Or Native Workers?

Dennis L. Allen

If you do much reading about missions you are likely to confront a line of reasoning which goes something like this: Today it is not good economics to send out American missionaries. Why? They are too expensive. A hundred years ago missionaries were greatly used of God, but today in countries like India and Africa where the church is established, native Christian workers can do much more than the foreigner and at a small fraction of the cost. Sending people abroad is poor stewardship of the Lord's money and is hindering the completion of the "great commission." There are many native workers willing to preach but lack the finances to free them to go. They know the culture; they know the language. The foreigner can never be accepted as they are.

This is a question we need to think seriously about. Sometimes a solution seems so obvious and right but in the end it has serious flaws. I think no one would deny that the Lord has used the thousands of missionaries that have gone forth from England, Europe and North America during the last one hundred years in a way that could not have been imagined at the beginning of the modern missionary movement. Admittedly plenty of mistakes have been made, but think of the tremendous growth of the church in Africa, China, Korea, and South America because of them. There are now many more Evangelical Christians in these countries than there are now in the sending countries. Furthermore, many of these receiving countries are now sending out missionaries to other countries. But does that mean we should now stop sending missionaries and send only money? What of the still unreached peoples who have no part of the Word of God and who have never heard the good news of salvation? The organizations that are raising funds to support native evangelists are concentrating on reaching more of their own people.

To say that the national or indigenous worker is always more effective is not always true. Often there are prejudices and hatreds between peoples and tribes that become real hindrances to receptivity. A messenger from a totally different culture does not bring this baggage. The Lord recognized this when He said, "By men of strange lips and with another tongue will he speak to this people." (Isa. 28:11.)

On the other hand, we need to be sensitive to the Lord's word to us concerning our use of the resources He has given us. (I Jn. 3:17-18; Jas. 2:15-16.) How do we give in such a way that it becomes a blessing to those in need and not a crutch? Can our giving teach new churches to depend on Western resources and blind them to their own

giving potential and the blessing of overcoming obstacles by trusting God?

How money is given is very important. If it is given so that accountability is to the body of Christ within that country is usually better than accountability to some one in the States who is far removed from what is actually going on. When Paul collected money for famine relief for Jerusalem it was given to the church. They would be the ones to distribute it to those in need.

These are difficult questions. It is easy for us to become fuzzy in our thinking with regards to preaching the gospel overseas. There are several important points to consider before we encourage developing churches to seek Western support. Any effective missionaries' strategy should be reproducible. After the missionaries leave, can they carry on and reproduce this model? If so, the missionaries' efforts will be multiplied and they will learn that the further spread of the Gospel does not depend on foreign presence or assistance. If workers are funded by Western churches, the future success of the ministry becomes tied to Western purse strings. If the dollars stop so does the evangelism.

Even the way the Western missionary carries on his work should be carefully considered. A missionary working among a tribal group in Mexico went from village to village by donkey. A well-meaning friend offered to buy him a four-wheel drive vehicle thinking to increase his efficiency. The missionary wisely rejected the offer saying, "If I use such a vehicle the natives will say, 'We can't do evangelism unless we have such a vehicle.'" To reach his long-term objective he was willing to reject a method that promised quicker short-term results.

We have the tendency to feel the spread of the Gospel depends on money. Certainly nationals should be encouraged to give and to give sacrificially, but is the growth of the church dependent on the ability of the church to raise money? During the years in China when the missionaries and all western support were cut off, the church experienced phenomenal growth.

Count Zinzendorf and the Moravians initiated one of the greatest missionary movements in the church's history. They achieved a ratio of one missionary in every twelve members of the home church. How did they do it? By sacrificial giving and the willingness of the missionaries to become tentmakers. Roland Allen has pointed out that the Apostle Paul never took financial support to the churches he started, nor did he govern churches by means of paying workers from foreign sources. That policy can create dependency and stunt giving in na-

tional churches. The largest mission agency in India is the Friends Missionary Prayer Band with about 1,000 missionaries being supported by some of the poorest people in the world. The FMPB will not accept a single cent from abroad. Why? Because they value spiritual discipline more than money. They believe that relying on foreign funds would spiritually damage their 30,000 prayer partners. Poor as they are they are willing to pray all night one night a week and give 20% of their meager income. As with the Macedonian churches their deep poverty has rebounded unto the riches of their liberality.

There is a tendency for a mercenary spirit to develop in churches where evangelists are supported with Western funds. John L. Nevius observed how employing evangelists in China tended to stop the work of volunteer evangelists, who began to resent not being paid, and thus lost their vision for reaching the lost. Sometimes foreign-paid workers are less effective and credible than lay workers. They may be regarded as mercenaries who preach the Gospel only for financial benefits. In China they are called "the white man's running dog." The communists saw the subsidies of Chinese churches and workers as proof that Christianity was a foreign religion and an instrument of Western imperialism. In fact, wherever national Christians fail to support their own workers, the impression is given that Christianity is a foreign religion, and the commitment of its followers is called in question. Even the church members tend to resent a pastor or leader who is not accountable to them, because his salary is paid by a foreign source. On the contrary, when a fellowship of national believers support their own leaders and evangelists it speaks strongly of their love and commitment.

If sending funds is used as a substitute for personally going, there is a great loss for us. As Wade Cogging writes, "If our churches give only their money, and not their sons and daughters, our missionary vision will be dead in a generation or less. We can't substitute money for flesh and blood."

There should never be even an implied division in the body of Christ. For example, an attitude that only Westerners make good missionaries. In Christ, all ethnic groups are on the same level. There are thousands of missionaries from Korea, South America, the Philippines and other countries that have left their own culture and gone to unreached peoples to learn their language and give them the Gospel. We are all responsible to give, to pray, and to go. The first missionaries were not Westerners.

In closing I would like to mention our experience with the church in Hong Kong. When we felt it was necessary for us to leave, we did help the brethren make the down payment on a flat, so they would

have a meeting place. Apart from that we left them completely free from any strings of control. We told them that even though we were leaving, the Lord wasn't. They could trust Him. The leadership was young and lacking in experience and we certainly had concerns for them.

That was 26 years ago. Through the years the church has been independent of outside control. They are self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating. The church has grown. They are grateful to us for bringing the Gospel to them, but now they belong to the Lord and are no longer tied to us.

Can We Still Afford North American Missionaries?

Wade Coggins

Some people are asking the question, "In light of the growing body of believers around the world, is it time to find alternatives to sending Americans as missionaries?" An avalanche of books and articles is pressing such an argument. Their appeals are emotional and often poorly informed, but they are with us nonetheless.

One of the most common arguments leveled against American missions has to do with money. The argument is that it is now too expensive to send Americans into missionary work: the money should be used to send people from other countries to replace the Americans, because you can send more for your money. We will address this in a moment. First, let me say that we should rejoice that in response to earlier missionary efforts and to the gracious working of the Holy Spirit, millions around the world are now believers. As their ranks have grown, excellent leadership has developed.

Therefore it is indeed time for traditional missions and North American churches to look at appropriate ways to form new partnerships with the family of believers worldwide. It is time to encourage the formation of missionary movements in nations where the church has been established. It is time to seek appropriate and constructive relationships between older and newer missions as they minister together.

The notion, however, that this should be done simply by transferring the money which now supports American missionaries to Christian workers in other nations is erroneous and very dangerous for the Church in North America, as well as for the recipients.

The Cost of American Missionaries

In some of the recent books and articles, one gets the distinct impression that God can no longer afford North American missionaries. Why is this argument made? Because it may now cost as much to support a missionary family as the median income of one American household-\$29,458.00 (New York Times, 7/31/87).

The missionary living allowance (salary) is generally not nearly that amount, but adding in travel and work funds will surpass that amount in some countries. With the weaker dollar, it might even require the cost of two families in some special situations. Thus it could take the tithe of ten or, in an extreme case, even twenty families to support a missionary. This brings the horrified comment:

"It is too expensive to send North Americans into missions!" Is that so? I wonder if the first American missionaries were able to serve on the median income of one or two American households of their day?

A grave concern about this philosophy is its impact on the missionary vision. If the American church begins to give to missions only its money and not its sons and daughters, the missionary vision will be dead in a generation or less. Substituting money for flesh and blood involvement is a failed policy. Some mainline churches tried it a generation ago under the name "moratorium" on missions. Many such churches today do not know what missions signify. They think "missions" is a notion that belongs in the last century.

The fact is, missionary vision is kept alive by biblical teaching strongly reinforced by the network of missionaries and their supporters. Relatives of missionaries, prayer partners, financial supporters, involved churches and others in the network keep the challenge before the North American community of believers. From this reservoir, missionaries and their support arise. It is also here that representatives of overseas enterprises present their needs and find backing for their causes. It is very short-sighted for them to suggest dropping support for these "expensive" North American missionaries in order to support a certain number of "cheaper" workers elsewhere. With the destruction of the missionary vision there would not be support for either.

There is also the matter of obedience. I cannot conceive that God has suddenly decided to exempt young American Christians from the obligation of the Great Commission. If the Great Commission applies to our youth, how can we talk of not supporting them? Such mass disobedience would herald the end of an effective church. Surrogate missionaries will not meet the Scriptural obligation.

It is hard to imagine how impoverished the North American church would be if people decided not to support our youth as missionaries any longer. Sending dollars to substitute missionaries would create a misconception that we can fulfill our obligation to the Great Commission with money alone. This would reinforce a dangerous materialism already present in our society. Perhaps some parents who are concerned about violence, kidnapping, and other hazards would feel relieved to have the missionary obligation lifted. But a leanness of soul would result, and the American church would become more isolated from the world Christian family.

I also believe that failing to send out our youth would be a loss to the world body of believers. American missionaries are serving the world body with many important gifts and skills. Young American Christians will continue to bring to the ministry some outstanding gifts. Certainly, North American Christians should begin to look for opportunities to form partnerships with the growing worldwide Church, but it is self-defeating to propose this be done by withdrawing support from existing missionaries. The argument should be that in addition to maintaining and increasing the missionary effort, appropriate ways should be found to support reliable and effective efforts of emerging missions. In providing this support, donors should exercise the same kind of prudence they would exercise in supporting missionaries and missionary causes from North America. *Accountability.* It is astounding to see people who would require accountability on the part of their own countrymen responding to emotional appeals by persons from overseas without ever receiving assurances of their accountability. To assume that deceit and misrepresentation are limited to North Americans is naive indeed.

Avoid creating dependency. It is easy to forget the deadliness of dependency on the human spirit. Money given in a way that creates dependency will be, in the long run, counter-productive. Arrangements must be made which will not isolate recipients from normal lines of accountability to their peers. Unless care is exercised, a person can become isolated from his own church and natural leaders, hindering his usefulness in his own community. Care must also be exercised that believers in other lands not be made to feel that their contribution to missions are unneeded or insignificant. They too are under the Great Commission, and will be robbed of blessing if they do not participate. Some strong and effective partnerships already exist. Traditional missions have agreements with national church bodies to help in key areas including church planting, missions, medical work, education, and media.

The Missions Commission of the World Evangelical Fellowship is building a worldwide network of missionary connections among tradi-

tional missions and emerging missions. This will provide opportunities to join hands in a great new effort to evangelize the world. Each part of the body has gifts to bring to the task. Those who solicit involvement of North American Christians in the support of Third World missions should argue their case on its merits without calling for diminishing support for existing missionary efforts. In fact, such appeals would do well to reinforce the missionary vision now existing and call for expansion to greater partnership with emerging missions and the church around the world. New arrangements must be developed which create neither new dependency nor paternalism. A common vision of the lost world must bring believers of all nations together in effective new efforts to complete the Great Commission.

This article is reprinted from the April 1988 issue of Mission Frontiers.

What Wesley Practiced and Preached About Money

Charles Edward White

Most of us know that John Wesley was used of God to revive 18th-century England and to start the Methodist Church. We know him as a great preacher and a greater organizer. But few of us realize that Wesley made enormous sums from preaching--the sale of his writings made him one of England's wealthiest men.

In an age when a single man could live comfortably on 30 pounds a year, his annual income reached 1,400. With such an income he had the opportunities to put his ideas on money into practice. What did he say about money? And what did he do with his own?

John Wesley knew grinding poverty as a child. His father, Samuel Wesley, was the Anglican priest in one of England's lowest-paying parishes. He had nine children to support and was rarely out of debt. Once John saw his father being marched off to debtor's prison. So when John followed his father into the ministry, he had no illusions about financial rewards.

It probably came as a surprise to John Wesley that while God had called him to follow his father's vocation, he had not also called him to be poor like his father. Instead of becoming a parish priest, John felt God's direction to teach at Oxford University. There he was elected a fellow of Lincoln College, and his financial status changed dramatically. His position usually paid him at least thirty pounds a year, more than enough money for a single man to live on.

He had just finished paying for some pictures for his room when one of the chambermaids came to his door. It was a cold winter day, and he noticed that she had nothing to protect her except a thin linen gown. He reached into his pocket to give her some money to buy a coat but found he had too little left. Immediately the thought struck him that the Lord was not pleased with the way he had spent his money. He asked himself, Will thy Master say, "Well done, good and faithful steward"? Thou hast adorned thy walls with the money which might have screened this poor creature from the cold! O justice! O mercy! Are not these pictures the blood of this poor maid?

Perhaps as a result of this incident, in 1731 Wesley began to limit his expenses so that he would have more money to give to the poor. He records that one year his income was 30 pounds and his living expenses 28 pounds, so he had 2 pounds to give away. The next year his income doubled, but he still managed to live on 28 pounds, so he had 32 pounds to give to the poor. In the third year, his income jumped to 90 pounds.

Instead of letting his expenses rise with his income, he kept them to 28 pounds and gave away 62 pounds. In the fourth year, he received 120 pounds. As before, his expenses were 28 pounds, so his giving rose to 92 pounds.

Wesley felt that the Christian should not merely tithe but give away all extra income once the family and creditors were taken care of. He believed that with increasing income, what should rise is not the Christian's standard of living but the standard of giving.

This practice, begun at Oxford, continued throughout his life. Even when his income rose into the thousands of pounds sterling, he lived simply, and he quickly gave away his surplus money.

One year his income was a little over 1400 pounds. He lived on 30 pounds and gave away nearly 1400 pounds. Because he had no family to care for, he had no need for savings. He was afraid of laying up treasures on earth, so the money went out in charity as quickly as it came in. He reports that he never had 100 pounds at any one time.

Wesley limited his expenditures by not purchasing the kinds of things thought essential for a man in his station of life. In 1776 the English tax commissioners inspected his return and wrote him the following: "[We] cannot doubt but you have plate for which you have hitherto neglected to make an entry."

They were saying a man of his prominence certainly must have some silver plate in his house and were accusing him of failing to pay

excise tax on it. Wesley wrote back: "I have two silver spoons at London and two at Bristol. This is all the plate I have at present, and I shall not buy any more while so many round me want bread." John Wesley's teaching on money offered simple, practical guidelines for every believer.

His first rule about money was Gain all you can. Despite its potential for misuse, money in itself is something good. There is no end to the good it can do: "In the hands of (God's) children, it is food for the hungry, drink for the thirsty, raiment for the naked. It gives to the traveler and the stranger where to lay his head. By it we may supply the place of a husband to the widow, and of a father to the fatherless. We may be a defense for the oppressed, a means of health to the sick, of ease to them that are in pain. It may be as eyes to the blind, as feet to the lame: yea, a lifter up from the gates of death!"

Wesley added that in gaining all they can, Christians must be careful not to damage their own souls, minds, or bodies, or the souls, minds or bodies of anyone else. He thus prohibited gaining money through industries that pollute the environment or endanger workers.

Wesley's second rule for the right use of money was Save all you can. He urged his hearers not to spend money merely to gratify the desires of the flesh, the desires of the eye, or the pride of life. He cried out against expensive food, fancy clothes, and elegant furniture: "Despise delicacy and variety and be content with what plain nature requires." Wesley had two reasons for telling Christians to buy only necessities. The obvious one was so they would not waste money. The second was so they would not increase their desires. The old preacher wisely pointed out that when people spend money on things they do not really need, they begin to want more things they do not need. Instead of satisfying their desires, they only increase them.

Wesley's third rule was Give all you can. One's giving should begin with the tithe. He told the one who does not tithe, "Thou dost undoubtedly set thy heart upon thy gold" and warned, "It will eat thy flesh as fire!" But one's giving should not end at the tithe. All of the Christian's money belongs to God, not just the first tenth. Believers must use 100 percent of their income as God directs. And how has God directed Christians to use their incomes? Wesley listed four scriptural principles:

1. Provide things needful for yourself and your family (1 Tim. 5:8). The believer should make sure the family has "a sufficiency of plain, wholesome food to eat, and clean raiment to put on" as well as a place to live and enough to live on if something were to happen to the breadwinner.

2. "Having food and raiment, let us be therewith content" (1 Tim. 6:8). "Whoever has sufficient food to eat, and raiment to put on, with a place to lay his head, and something over, is rich," he said.

3. "Provide things honest in the sight of all men" (Rom. 12: 17) and "Owe no man anything" (Rom. 13:8). Wesley said the next claim on a Christian's money is creditors. He adds that those who are in business for themselves need to have adequate tools, stock, or capital for the carrying on of that business.

4. "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (Gal. 6: 10). After the Christian has provided for the family, his creditors, and the business, the next obligation is to use any money that is left to meet the needs of others.

In giving these four biblical principles, Wesley recognized some situations were not clear-cut. He accordingly offered four questions to help his hearers decide how to spend money:

1. In spending this money, am I acting like I own it, or am I acting like the Lord's trustee?
2. What Scripture requires me to spend this money this way?
3. Can I offer up this purchase as a sacrifice to the Lord?
4. Will God reward me for this expenditure at the resurrection of the just?

In 1744 Wesley wrote, "When I die if I leave behind me ten pounds...you and all mankind can bear witness against me, that I have lived and died a thief and a robber." When he died in 1791, the only money mentioned in his will was the miscellaneous coins to be found in his pockets and dresser drawers. Most of the 30,000 pounds he had earned in his lifetime he had given away. As Wesley said, "I cannot help leaving my books behind me whenever God calls me hence; but in every other respect, my own hands will be my executors."

--This article was adapted from *Leadership* magazine, Winter 1987.

Commitment to a Wartime Lifestyle

Ralph Winter

The Queen Mary, lying in repose in the harbor at Long Beach, California, is a fascinating museum of the past. Used both as a luxury liner in peacetime and a troop transport during the Second World War, its present status as a museum the length of three football fields affords a stunning contrast between the lifestyles appropriate in peace and war.

Brad Gill, my son-in-law, tells me that on one side of a partition you see the dining room reconstructed to depict the peacetime table setting that was appropriate to the wealthy patrons of high culture for whom a dazzling array of knives and forks and spoons held no mysteries. On the other side of the partition the evidences of wartime austerities are in sharp contrast. One metal tray with indentations replaces fifteen plates and saucers. Bunks eight tiers high explain how the peacetime capacity of 3,000 gave way to 15,000 on board in wartime.

How repugnant to the peacetime masters this transformation must have been! To do it took a national emergency, of course. The survival of a nation depended on it. The essence of the Great Commission today is that the survival of many millions of people depends on its fulfillment. But obedience to the Great Commission has more consistently been poisoned by affluence than by anything else. The antidote for affluence is reconsecration. Consecration is by definition the "setting apart of things for holy use." Affluence did not keep Bordon of Yale from giving his life in Egypt. Affluence didn't stop Francis of Assisi from moving against the tide of his time.

Will wartime priorities work?

The missionary tradition has always stressed a practical measure of austerity and simplicity, as well as a parity of level of consumption within its missionary ranks. But the same lifestyle is often seen as impractical among people back home. Widespread reconsecration to a reformed lifestyle with wartime priorities is not likely to be successful among homefront believers:

1. so long as the Great Commission is thought of as impossible to fulfill;
2. so long as we think that the problems of the world are hopeless or that, conversely, they can be solved merely by politics or technology;
3. so long as our home problems loom larger to us than anyone else's;
4. so long as people enamored of western culture do not understand that Chinese and Muslims can become evangelical Christians without abandoning their cultural systems--just as the Greeks did in Paul's day;

5. so long as modern believers, like the ancient Hebrews, think that God's sole concern is the blessing of our nation;
6. so long as well-paid evangelicals, both pastors and people, consider their money a gift from God to spend however they wish on themselves rather than a responsibility from God to help others in spiritual and economic need;
7. so long as we do not understand that he who would seek to save his life shall lose it.

Ours is a save-yourself society if there ever was one. But does it really work? Underdeveloped societies suffer from one set of diseases: tuberculosis, malnutrition, pneumonia, parasites, typhoid, cholera, and so on. Affluent North America has virtually invented a whole new set of diseases: obesity, arteriosclerosis, heart disease, strokes, lung cancer, venereal diseases, cirrhosis of the liver, etc. And we're more than ever plagued with the social diseases of drug addiction, alcoholism, divorce, battered children, suicide and murder.

Take your choice. Our divorce courts, prisons, psychiatric offices and mental institutions are flooded. In saving ourselves, we have nearly lost ourselves. Our annual giving to foreign missions is equal to the amount we spend in a 52-day period on pet food. The comparisons aren't fair, of course, since fewer of our society are giving to the fulfillment of the Great Commission than are buying pet food. But the pattern of our society is clear--we're much like Ezekiel's listeners:

"They come as though they are sincere and sit before you listening. But they have no intention of doing what I tell them to; they talk very sweetly about loving the Lord, but with their hearts they are loving money...

"My sheep wandered through the mountains and hills and over the face of the earth, and there was no one to search for them or care about them...

" 'As I live,' says the Lord God ' ...you were no real shepherds at all, for you didn't search for them [my flock]. You fed yourselves and let them starve...Therefore,' the Lord God says: 'I will surely judge between these fat shepherds and their scrawny sheep...and I will notice which is plump and which is thin, and why!' "--Ezekiel 33:31; 34:36; 34:8,20,22b

God is speaking here of more than just food for the hungry; our whole lives may be "plump" while others' are "scrawny." We must learn that Jesus meant it when He said, "Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required." I believe that God cannot expect less from us in our Christian duty to save other nations than we in wartime require of ourselves to save our own nation. This means that we must be willing to adopt a wartime lifestyle if we are to play fair

with the clear intent of Scripture that the people who sit in darkness shall see a great light. Otherwise, as Isaiah said, "I faint when I hear what God is planning" (Isaiah 21:3).

What do we do?

The essential tactic in adopting a wartime lifestyle is to build on pioneer mission perspective by a very simple and dramatic method. Those who are awakened from the groggy stupor of our times can, of course, go as missionaries. **But they can also stay home and deliberately and decisively adopt a missionary support level as their standard of living and their basis of lifestyle regardless of income.**

This will free up an unbelievable amount of money--so much so that if a million average Presbyterian households, for example, were to live within the average Presbyterian minister's salary, it would create at least two billion dollars annually. What a mighty gift to the nations if carefully spent on developmental missions!

To reconsecrate ourselves to a wartime lifestyle will involve a mammoth upheaval for a significant minority. But with ends as noble as the Great Commission, a wartime lifestyle is an idea whose time has come.

THE FIRST PRIORITY

Daniel W. Bacon

Local churches are busy places. The average evangelical pastor is certainly not concerned about finding enough things to keep him occupied in a given week. Rather the constant tension is to sort out which of many possible tasks should be done and in what order. The average Christian in the pew has the same dilemma--how to prioritize all the activities, demands, needs, and opportunities in the church calendar. In addition to the usual Bible studies and worship services, a plethora of special activities, retreats, programs and potlucks claim his time. As I said, the local church is a busy place.

But at this very point I am concerned. In the midst of all the activities to help a person grow and go as a Christian, are we missing a basic priority? When the Apostle Paul wrote to Pastor Timothy of the First Church of Ephesus, he had some concerns as well about the church's activity calendar. Paul was seeking to help Timothy guide the church so that he would "...know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth" (1 Tim. 3:15). Paul then outlines various areas of need--but it is instructive and sobering to see also

what the apostle stresses first in the church's program: "I urge, then first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession, and thanksgiving be made for everyone..." (1 Tim. 2:1). Of all the many things Paul could have mentioned, how amazing that he begins by urging prayer in behalf of the world as the top priority activity in the local church calendar. The apostle was calling the church in Ephesus to an intelligent, responsible prayer life as a vital part of their worship and conduct--a prayer life that embraces the world and sees the critical connection between the progress of the Gospel worldwide and the earnest intercession of God's people.

Although most of us give lip-service to the priority of prayer, including prayer for missions, yet a long, honest look at our actual performance, both corporately in churches and as individuals, tells a different story. A survey last year by the Association of Church Missions Committees revealed that the typical North American evangelical church spends an average of only five minutes per week in corporate prayer for missions!

Why is it that large crowds will turn out for seminars, potlucks, concerts, and everything else at church, but only a faithful few show up for prayer meetings? Why does the prayer list in the church bulletin look more like a medical report than a battle plan for strategic missionary advances. Why is it that week after week goes by with no prayer vigils, let alone pastoral prayers that cry out to God for the lost, reflecting on the Lebanons, El Savadors, Philippines, and other critical hotspots of the world? Are we so naive that we miss completely the close connection Paul stresses between the welfare of the nations of this world, the progress of the Gospel, and the spiritual welfare of the saints?

Perhaps part of our problem is that deep down we are not convinced that prayer makes that much difference. And, frankly, the layman in the pew can't be totally blamed for not taking prayer seriously at home when he doesn't see it being taken seriously at church. But the Word of God challenges us to pray both for blessing in our own circles and in loving concern for all men. Why? Paul asserts in 1 Timothy 2:2-8 that prayer for all does affect the progress of the Gospel and the welfare of the Christian community (v. 2). Paul wants us to pray for all because that is consistent with the very plan of God, who desires all men to be saved. There is ultimately only one mediator for all (v. 5), one ransom for all (v. 6), and one message for all (v. 7). Based on these tremendous truths, the apostle pleads, "I want men everywhere to lift up holy hands in prayer, without anger or disputing" (v. 8).

The whole history of missions shows the inextricable link between prayer and the progress of the Gospel. The events of the China Inland Mission/Overseas Missionary Fellowship over the past century give testimony to the same truth. But for spiritual progress to be seen, prayer must become the first priority. In the words of the missionary statesman, Robert E. Speer: "The evangelization of the world in this generation depends first of all upon a revival of prayer. Deeper than the need for men, deeper than the need for money; deep down at the bottom of our spiritless life is the need for the forgotten secret of prevailing, worldwide prayer." The revival of prayer will have to begin in pastoral staffs, elders and deacon boards, and right throughout the local church. There is no greater work, no greater priority, than the work of the church on her knees.

--From *East Asia Missions*

VOICES From The FIELDS

Robert & Joy Garrett
April, 2001

Rockwood Bible Camp

Epworth: As soon as we finish up some things here at Rockwood I hope to get the brickwork started. We purchased 40,000 brick for the Epworth meeting house. They had made and fired some brick on the church site but the quality was not good enough. They might be strong enough for a shanty but not for an auditorium. We can sell those to people who build small houses and recover our costs and will use some for small outbuildings if necessary.

Rain, Rain, Rain. We cannot remember a summer with so much rain. For weeks on end it rained every day. We received almost double the yearly average. Some low-lying areas of Zimbabwe were flooded and poor Mozambique again experienced disastrous floods.

Outdoor Kitchen: Most of the cooking here at camp is done over an open wood fire. Works OK except when it pours. I have now built an outdoor kitchen. Metal poles supporting a metal roof, a concrete floor, and brick walls up to four feet high to act as a windbreak. Also installed two concrete sinks. It was first put to use for our Easter Camp. The ladies who do the cooking were delighted.

Easter Camp: 135 on the mountain top. We were almost overwhelmed. In previous years the largest number was 85. This year the number swelled to 135. Otherwise known as "School-Leavers Camp," this four-day camp is for youth who have finished high school and are

not yet married. Fortunately, the new boy's bunkhouse was ready for occupation so we had no difficulty in accommodating this large number. Add to that number six women (5 cooks and one chaperone for the girl's bunkhouse); seven teachers who were there all the time plus five others who gave only one lesson and the total comes to 153.

Lessons given were on Marriage, Courtship, the Holy Spirit, Giving, Budgeting, Health, AIDS, Demons, Career Guidance, Prayer and fasting, and the New Covenant. It was a mountain-top experience for most of them. Over 55 (we lost count) came forward on the last night for confession, rededication, renewal, and counseling. Two young men came to confess the Lord and be baptized.

More Camps: As I write this, we are only three days away from a week of Junior Camp to be followed by a week of Senior Camp. We will give you details in our next newsletter. We do appreciate your interest and prayers. The fuel shortage is a real problem, but the Lord has enabled us to have enough to keep operating.

Mark and Candy Garrett
March 12, 2001

Senegal, West Africa

Workshops: Every culture has its own music and Senegal is no exception. Because of this we have tried to encourage the writing of songs in Wolof in local styles (versus importing Western tunes) for worship and evangelism. In this way believers can sing from their hearts. This is the vision of a music committee that we are a part of, made up of missionaries and local believers interested in the Wolof.

This past year the committee started a series of songwriting workshops for Wolof speaking believers. April 2000 saw 30 national believers participating in small composition groups. Some new songs were created and recorded for teaching to others. One song was exceptional, using the text where Jesus says "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life" (John 14). It is accompanied by a Kora, a Senegalese harp. When local people hear this song they snap their fingers. This is "them."

In October we held a seminar on the Wolof music style and invited a local music group to perform songs they use for important life events. Songs about baby-naming, circumcision, marriage, etc. were recorded for study. With the help of a WEC missionary and a Wycliffe ethnomusicologist, we now have a better understanding of Wolof music.

Then, early in December, we held another songwriting workshop. Six new Christmas songs were created with much more of a local style

evident. We saw great progress over the first workshop. It is exciting to see the believers involved in expressing their faith in their own music even though none of them are professional musicians!

This Spring we plan to conduct music workshops in smaller cities around Senegal. Pray for us as we help local believers write new songs in a local style. Read on to see how we've already put the new Christmas songs to good use.

Christmas Courtyard Celebration: Many of our Muslim friends invite us to their feasts during the year, so Christmas is an occasion for us to return the favor. Of course at the same time we seize the opportunity to communicate the Gospel. This is what we did this past Christmas in the big courtyard of one of our co-workers.

Each couple on our team invited key friends that they wanted to hear the Gospel. We even printed up individual invitations (which is the rage here when local people put on a party). About 100 friends came, majority Muslims. We think that many of our Muslim friends felt more at ease coming to someone's house rather than to our ministry center.

This party happened after dark Christmas Day. Our friends were still observing the fast of Ramadan where they don't eat or drink during daylight hours, so it would have been impolite to offer them something during the day. We put on a program of music, scripture reading, and children's drama. The children of the team acted out the Christmas story while a local believer narrated in Wolof.

We sang several Christmas songs in Wolof. You would recognize some of them, like "Joy to the World" and "Hark, the Herald Angels Sing." However, the songs the people loved best were the new Christmas songs that had been composed in the workshop only two weeks before! Titles like "Come, believe this miracle of God" and "Listen, everyone, What's happening is a Miracle."

To close the program the narrator challenged everyone to follow Christ and we sang an evangelistic song in Wolof, "Who is your King?" Then we served up hundreds of Christmas cookies and refreshments which were devoured in no time.

Our friends have been thanking us for the invitation for a long time afterward so we know it was greatly appreciated. Some of our neighbor children are still singing those new songs as they play. Who knows what God may do? May God use His Word in their hearts to bring some to faith!

From Lake Wobegone: Candy's latest bread recipe is so-oooo delicious that it makes us want to eat like horses. When we found out the secret ingredient we knew why! In her search for bran to round out our diet, Candy found that the horse feed available here is the bran left from milling wheat, etc. That's why we gallop to the table and jockey for position when she whips out her bread. Ha! Maybe we should call it "Thorough-Bread!?"

Kathryn is looking forward to May, but not because of summer vacation. We "spilled the beans" to her that we are expecting a new little Garrett. Now her dream for a little sister might come true. Stay tuned for more news near the end of May.

Michiya and Tomoko Nakahara Shizuoka City, Japan
April, 2001

I would like to update you on a couple of most recent events from Shizuoka City, Japan. First of all, eleven months after our mother, Teruko Nakahara, was called home to be with the Lord (March 1, 2000), we finally received her ashes from the university hospital in Tokyo. It was her wish to donate her body for medical science to help find cures for cancer.

On February 4, 2001, we held a memorial service for our Mother. A special cabinet was purchased to store the boxes of ashes as we do not bury Christians in Buddhist cemeteries. In Japan, events such as funerals and memorials are a most ideal occasion to witness for our Lord. Annette, Stephanie, and I were all able to be together for this memorial. The message was delivered by Brother Obata of the Ochanomizu Church in Tokyo. He gave a great witness of Christ to those who did not know the Lord, and it gave those of us believers encouragement.

Our parents returned to Japan in January of 1961 to begin their mission work for the Lord. Forty years later their ashes were brought together in the very church which they helped to establish. We remember again your faithful prayers and support for the work being carried on here in Shizuoka City for the past 40 years. We are deeply grateful. Tomoko and I are pleased to follow in my parents' footsteps as we serve the Lord in this place. We continue to ask you to remember us before the Lord.

Secondly, we were able to finally purchase the other half of the alley which leads to our church building. Half of the alley belonged to the church and the other half belonged to our uncle. When he passed away recently, his family offered to sell the remaining half to us. It was his will to sell the property for half the market value and as a re-

sult we were able to purchase the property for \$29,000.00 (US). This will give us limited, but much needed parking space. However, our fundamental problem of property will not be resolved unless the corner lot facing the main street can be purchased. In order to purchase the other half of the alley, we used all the funds we had saved, so we begin our savings again for the corner lot and trust the Lord to work another miracle.

During our visit with many of you last summer, we shared our immediate need and hope to purchase the adjacent property and alley. Immediately after returning from the U.S. last summer, the offer to sell this alley to us was made. We believe many of you were indeed praying for us in this very matter and God has faithfully answered prayer and provided us with the alley for access to our building. Would you continue to pray about the corner lot so that it might become available for a good price?

The Bryantsville Hunger Relief Project [Formerly known as The Corn Project]

Yes, that is a new and a bit more formal name. It is still the same mission, unchanged in purpose and direction, served by a host of dedicated servants. However, a few changes have taken place over the past three months. We wish to take this opportunity to briefly explain some changes, the reasons they came about, and the advantages they provide.

With the 1999 passing of Ila Sherwood and the loss of Edward Sherwood in 2000, along with the speech difficulties experienced by Hollace Sherwood following a stroke, the Sherwood heirs recognized a need for some change. While the heirs pledge their support, they also have family and job obligations and none of them presently reside in the immediate vicinity of the farm from where the Corn Project operates. The challenges facing them made it logical to seek a more structured organization with local individuals serving in a more clearly defined way the day-to-day operations.

On November 25, 2000, meeting was held at the request of the Sherwood family with people who had remained interested and involved in the Corn Project. At that time a commitment was made to form a nonprofit organization under the name of Bryantsville Hunger Relief Project, Inc. and a five-member board of directors was elected. In the near future the board hopes to form a number of committees for such areas as volunteer coordination, publicity, operations, fundraising, etc.

A part of Ila Sherwood's vision for this hunger relief project was that eventually sufficient funds would be available to supply the corn free of cost to the distributing organization, with them providing only the funding for transportation of the bagged corn. That goal has not been attained; however, the vision is still with us. We desire your continued support and urge you to encourage other individuals, your church or other organizations to become involved. He will honor our efforts as we honor Him with our best.

In the Service of our Lord and Savior,
The Board of Directors
W. Eugene Roberts, President, 812-849-2045
Calvin Tincher, Treasurer
P.O.Box 1023
Bedford, IN 47421

Stephen Saito Missions Intern in Japan with the Nomuras
June 16, 2001

I am learning so much from [Moto and Yoriko Nomura]. I am being humbled, blessed, and lifted up all at the same time. It has been quite a ride. They remind me a lot of my grandparents. My grandfather passed away when I was in 9th grade. Mr. Nomura is just like him. They even sing alike. It is a nice reminder of childhood memories. Brother Moto has been a great teacher. I am learning so much from him.

Well, today was a beautiful day in the Mountains! I went jogging this morning and could see Mt. Fuji clearly from the hill. It was really nice. Usually there are too many clouds to see Mt. Fuji. But today the sun was bright, the skies were blue, and the birds were all singing. A classic day.

Tomorrow I will be traveling to Tokyo. Hopefully I will be able to teach some English there. There is an English teaching program going at a church in Tachikawa with brother Fukushima. I would like to sit and talk with some new Japanese people. So far I've been tutoring three junior high students. I have two girls named Nao and Asuka, and one guy named Nobu. They are great kids and I am learning more from them than they are from me.

Tim and Dawn Yates Charlestown, NSW, Australia
June 25, 2001

Once a month we have been having a "family night" for Sunday evening service. We have had a very good response at these meetings.

We try to do something totally different every time to keep the curiosity flowing. We decided to start the family nights so we could have something for the young families in the area to come to and feel comfortable bringing their kids along. We try to involve the kids as much as the adults.

Last night we decided to have an indoor camp out. Being winter here now, it was quite fitting. Everyone brought their camping chairs and blankets. We didn't use any electricity or indoor lighting, just camping equipment. We had a tent set up and a fake camp fire in the middle of the room. After the singing and devotional, we had grilled damper (Aussie bread made at campfires) and marshmallows for everyone. It went really well and we had our best attendance so far. I think Tim and I got a tinge of homesickness and were thinking of hot-dogs and s'mores, but we enjoyed the damper just as well.

George Galanis

Piraeus, Greece

March 2001

Here is an official report from the field of Greece where I have been serving for 36 years and I am willing to continue until the Lord will take me home. However, now I feel that a younger missionary is needed to cooperate with me. I have been praying to the Lord to raise such a suitable man for several years. Finally, He has answered my prayer, and it seems that He has raised such a man who looks to be prepared from the Lord.

Here are his qualifications: He is 47 years old and he has a great and holy zeal serving the Lord, with great enthusiasm. God blesses his efforts evangelizing people in Crete. His name is Nick Tsagarakis and he is a resident of Crete. He lives now in the largest city of the island named Iraklion. He is married with four children.

I know Nick for ten years now and the Lord has used me to lead him to the Lord and we have become intimate friends in Christ. Nick feels that the Lord wants him to retire from his present job and to work for Him full time as a missionary. The Lord has given him the gift of an evangelist and he is planning to serve Him as a travelling evangelist and Church planter. There are four small congregations in Crete where Nick will be serving. Souls there need to be cultivated and established in the Lord.

Genocide Accelerates in Sudan

It was a harrowing landing as we swooped into the small strip in the oil field region of Sudan. In order to reach the area, our Russian pilot had to avoid three government army bases. Then from a high altitude, he twisted his craft down at a dizzying speed, straightening out right above our landing strip. After this, we still had to walk for hours, with a number of porters carrying the relief goods on their heads. It was sweltering. On the way, we passed deserted and destroyed villages.

Then we came upon the ruins of a once-thriving school, which had been bombed just a few days before. Fourteen school children and a teacher died in the attack; 18 were injured or crippled for the rest of their lives. The school was not hit by mistake. It was completely isolated, 150 yards from the nearest buildings. Two days before the attack, a reconnaissance helicopter had flown directly overhead. A ghastly silence hung over the school. Everywhere, books and pieces of blackboards were strewn on the ground between bits of shrapnel. Three bomb craters could be seen, and outside the school was an unexploded bomb. A number of children were sitting quietly among the debris. There was no mention of teaching anymore. We first visited the wounded children. With amazement and indignation, we looked at them: What had they done to deserve this?

Multiplied Tragedies

Stories began to pour out. One mother, Salawa, and her four children had gotten up at 5:30 on the morning of the attack. Her son of nine was not feeling well. Thinking it might be malaria, Salawa allowed him to stay home and told his twin sister Mimra that she could stay home too. But she wanted to go to school, half an hour's walk away. At 9:00 that morning, when she was in English class, Mimra's short life came to an abrupt end. This was the second tragedy in Salawa's life; three years earlier, her husband had been killed in a government army attack.

Loving Kindness

Our trip to Sudan was part of the Open Doors Sudan Emergency Aid project, which was launched in 1998 after students failed to attend our training course because they were too weak from hunger and the students who did arrive were too weak to study. This convinced us that if we did not give them physical food, they would soon not need spiritual food either, because they would no longer be alive.

The worldwide supporters of Open Doors responded so generously to this project that within a few months we had collected enough

money to send in relief flights through May of this year. As the project comes to completion, 80 flights have been sent in and nearly 70 tons of food and medicines have been distributed. We are restricting ourselves to the areas where no other aid organizations are working. Most of our aid has gone to areas that are in the hands of the resistance, which means that the government in Khartoum regards it as an act of war. As a result, we have had to navigate between anti-aircraft guns and sometimes deliver in the rainy season, when there is no dry landing strip to be found. Few charter companies were willing to risk their planes and pilots on such dangerous undertakings.

Continuing Genocide

In the three years that our co-worker Caleb has been visiting Southern Sudan, he had never seen as much misery as this trip. The government has driven tens of thousands of people out of the area, and still the villages are being pillaged by combat groups from neighboring Arab tribes, who set the houses on fire and carry off the cattle and children as spoils of war.

Attacks have increased greatly since March, with the arrival of heavy military equipment such as tanks and the dreaded combat helicopters. It seems as if the government wants to depopulate once and for all the oil region and the Nuba Mountains through which the pipeline runs. Every kind of building is being bombed, including churches, clinics and schools. Many people are living under trees because their houses are targets for air attacks. Since they can no longer plant their fields, they are eating wild plants and the leaves of trees.

Praising God

On this trip, our team was able to hand out relief goods immediately to the people at the landing strip, because they are living there under the trees. It is an immensely depressing sight to find a family under a tree, with their scant possessions spread out on the ground and hanging from the branches. Caleb himself had a taste of this on the hike from the landing strip, as he spent the night under the open sky. During a heavy thunderstorm, a tree was his only shelter. "Everything got wet," he says, "our clothes, our packages, everything. Amid the noise of the thunder claps and the flashes of lightning, I comforted myself with the thought that in a few days I would be home again, in my own dry bed. But these people have nothing else." Yet it is amazing to see that the church is growing so much under the oppression. "The closer we came to the front lines," said Caleb, "the stronger the Christians were. They were praising God in their sickness, need and misery. They thanked Him for the little that they had, and did not ask for more!"

But this does not apply to everyone. Many people have lost heart and moved to government-controlled towns. "There Islam is forced upon them all," Caleb explains. "They're given Islamic names, have to go to the mosque, and both men and women are circumcised. Those who are not trusted are given a 'trip down the Nile.' Mutilated and bound by hands and feet, they are put into sacks and thrown into the river." Faced with a choice of immense suffering or renouncing their Christian faith, the people of southern Sudan are the targets of some of the worst religious persecution in the world. Please pray for them and for the Open Doors team as we minister with food, training and Bibles.

Nowhere to Relax

As an Open Doors co-worker, I recently traveled to the Nuba mountains in Southern Sudan. The best way for me to describe it is "HELL ON EARTH."

I think church ministers should be sent there for endurance training, because it's TOUGH! That is something that we can definitely learn from these people. Their endurance and perseverance are really remarkable.

We sometimes say God has forgotten us, but these people wear tattered clothes and have nothing, yet they can still afford a smile. And it is not just skin deep.

Reaching the Nuba Mountains includes hours and hours of walking over hills and rocks in the deadly sun. There are no vehicles to pick you up if your shoes give out, like mine did. The risk of dehydration is also great. Although they have a strong will to live, they sometimes reach a point of hopelessness because of the displacements due to civil war. But they don't look that hopeless and they don't complain about the many hours of walking. What encourages them are relationships. What encouraged me on my visit was the idea of helping a person to live another day. I realized that the Open Doors relief aid efforts are worthwhile, even though it takes up a lot of our spiritual training time. Still, the need for spiritual training is immense. Many people are nominal Christians, simply because they identify with the church. The heart and the hard work in the heat of the war and the scorching sun are the beauty of these people. But unless one visits the Nuba mountains, one would never be able to grasp its beauty and hardship.

--From *Open Doors Newsbrief*

Growing Cuban Church Meets in Pastor's Apartment

Mackie Landers

Pastor Tito Granada's two-bedroom apartment on the third floor of a sprawling project compound isn't big enough for him, his wife and three children under five, much less a church. On Sundays some 150 worshipers cram into the living room and children's bedroom, transforming it into the New Jerusalem Church, or at least, a third of the church. At last count, Granada said, total membership hovered around 500, divided among three apartments in the projects, including his. It's a big change from the small group he started with nine years ago. Such growth is common in Cuban churches, with the state's quiet easing of some long-held anti-Christian policies, coupled with decades of believers' prayers and perseverance.

Granada launched New Jerusalem as a cell group in the same apartment, a risky endeavor almost a decade ago. Now he makes no attempt to hide his home's other function. The apartment's front door bears a bumper sticker with an empty cross and the words, "Jesus lives."

"Until about four years ago, we were harassed by the state, but we kept meeting. Nothing happened," Granada said.

Technically, no laws are on the books banning such meetings. But since much of what governs the island nation depends on the whims of its leader, Fidel Castro, Christian meetings have long been viewed with suspicion. Churches springing up in homes have been especially suspect.

Still, Granada opened his home and the people came--more and more of them. When the crowd filled his home, he and his wife Maria worked out a way to accommodate them.

The two bustled around their apartment as they demonstrated the routine to us:

The couch goes to the children's room, in front of their baby's crib along with the television and VCR; that's where children watch Christian videos or listen to a Sunday school lesson while Granada preaches in the next room. Two chairs are stacked seat-to-seat and pushed into the kitchen, along with the dining table, chairs and the cabinet where the television sits. From the balcony, Granada brings in a simple, unpainted pulpit and a short, narrow stand for the keyboard. Next is a single-plank bench about five feet long. It's the church's sole pew, reserved for the

pregnant and elderly. All others must stand for the service, which lasts about two hours.

"An apartment isn't for assembling so many people," Granada said, "but we do it anyway. We clap and sing." To hold down noise, the church doesn't use an audio system, which means that Granada has to practically scream to be heard over outside noise and the children in the bedroom. "I have to strain my voice. It drains me, but it's worth it."

Not a House Church

While New Jerusalem is a church in a house, it isn't a house church, Granada explains. "We try not to use the term house church, because it causes problems with the government," said Maria. "They have a phobia about house churches, so we call them cell groups."

Granada has a big vision. He foresees 10,000 people coming to Christ through New Jerusalem's growing ministry and wants to see half of his city convert to Christianity.

Fortunately, the Granada family has good neighbors. It's not like 150 people can slink up and down three flights of stairs in an apartment project and go unnoticed. It's annoying to the neighbors, but so far, they have made few complaints, which could shut down the church.

The situation isn't so good concerning the other two-thirds of New Jerusalem, located in two other apartments in the project: Granada said the government is trying to prevent meetings in one apartment. "The government says it's illegal to meet, but there's no law against it," he said. "They're just trying to make us afraid."

Hope for a Building

Granada would love nothing more than to unite his three-part church in its own building. "I've been asking the government for five years to give us a piece of land to build a church, but they won't let us," Granada said. "We don't know why. The message is that in order to meet, you've got to have permission--the same permission the government almost never gives."

Although in recent years the state has allowed some new church construction, the first since Castro's 1959 revolution, most sites are not in larger urban areas. One denominational leader said that in some areas where churches have applied for permission to build, the government refused, instead proposing that several congregations share a single building. It's frustrating for pastors like Granada, who just want freedom for their churches to grow.

"There's no right to do anything," he said. "We can't complain to anybody. Nobody speaks for us. In the government's eyes, we're illegal because we don't have a building, and we don't have a building because they won't let us have one. We're always praying for this."

Meanwhile, Granada and New Jerusalem's members are counting their blessings. "Thank God we have good neighbors," he said. "They aren't Christian, but they sympathize with the Christian life, where neighbors elsewhere often complain."

--From *Open Doors Newsbrief*

Counselor's Column

My Friend The Pharisee

Dennis Kaufman

Question: I have a friend whose spiritual walk appears pretentious. He is quick to offer advice on listening, praying and following God's will and will chastise others for their sinful behavior. He is active in church and regularly listens to Christian music. However, his personal life is cluttered with destructive behaviors that have caused tremendous pain for him. When confronted he denies, justifies, and straight-out lies about his sin. How can I, as a Christian friend, love and help him in spite of his double-standard life without giving him the impression that I accept his behavior as "OK" or making him think he is being even further rejected by those he loves? How does one's heart become so hardened and one's spirit so blinded to the truth?

Answer: I appreciate your gallant attempt to stay in friendship with a Pharisee. You have accepted a significant challenge. The Pharisees were a group of religious leaders in Jesus' day who became known for their legalism and hypocrisy. Jesus referred to them as "whitewashed tombs" (Matthew 23:27) because they created an image of purity, but inwardly were full of corruption. The Pharisees also had a knack for emphasizing unimportant details of the law to the neglect of the spiritually essential. Jesus said they "strained out gnats and swallowed camels" (Matthew 23:24).

Once you understand this "Pharisaic personality disorder," the relational patterns which they exhibit become more predictable. The seeds of Pharisaism lie in an unwillingness to squarely face one's faults and blemishes. This is likely due to powerful feelings of shame and inferiority at the core of the soul. Thus, to truly examine one's self as the Bible teaches, is a very frightening consideration for the Phari-

see. Rather than accepting the courageous challenge of brutal honesty about oneself, one can opt for defensive maneuvering to try to protect the fragile ego. However, once you start down this path of hiding from your sin, you are forced to use self-deception to construct a belief system that ends up making you look good.

The Pharisee stays in denial about his/her own sin and projects bad traits onto others, and then tends to judge them harshly. Because the balance of all this self-deception is so fragile, the Pharisee generally becomes very controlling and resists change as a way of trying to maintain the false security.

Jesus attempted numerous strategies to pry the Pharisees out of their bondage. A few of them responded to His message of truth and grace, but more often these blind guides had a defensive reaction and added one more layer of callous to their already hardened hearts.

Your friend's best hope is to see the embodiment of Christ's truth and grace in people like yourself. Saturating the relationship with gracious, unconditional love can sometimes allow the emotionally skittish person to feel safe enough to break out of denial and admit a fault. If this happens, it provides a ripe opportunity to move in with encouragement and affirmation. Most of us have no idea how huge a step that is for the Pharisee.

The other key factor involves key timing of targeted confrontations. Every once in a while, there is a window of opportunity in the life of the Pharisee where the shields are down, and they are able to hear the truth spoken in love. Pray for such windows and the discernment to use them wisely. A great example of this principle is found in Jesus' encounter with Nicodemus (John 3:1ff).

Hang in there; but be careful of the risks. There is no rage quite like the rage of a defensive Pharisee.

Personal Expressions

A FRIEND PROVIDES PERSPECTIVE

Joyce Broyles

My college roommate came down to visit her mother this week and called about sharing lunch Monday. I was delighted and looked forward to the date.

But first came Sunday. Disappointments swirled about me until I was caught in the vortex of abject misery. By the time I reached the

booth at Denny's, depression had reared its ugly head. I was really into my pity party.

After my diatribe about all the things gone wrong and why I was in such a foul mood, Donnie pleasantly asked, "And just what is it that gives you joy? I see that you use it as your signature!"

(When I send email, I sign with the first three letters of my name in capitals. I add a verse below that, "God has done great things for us and we are filled with JOY!" (Psalm 126:3) Again, I capitalize the word joy.)

After Donnie's question, I swallowed. I blushed. I swallowed again. Then I began to tell her that driving to school and seeing the wild trees along the highway bursting with white flowers after the long gray winter made me smile. My job, my writing, and my sewing gave me pleasure. What I realized at that moment was that while my joy is constant in the Lord, sometimes I am not very happy.

Donnie asked other questions and had me telling her about other things that I enjoy doing. After a while, she told me that just as we have a different physical DNA, each of us has a unique spiritual DNA. Probably because of my surprised look, she went on to explain. Each of us has been "gifted" by God with special abilities, and no two of us are alike.

Giving a home for a dozen or more foreign exchange students or housing nearly twenty college students for a weekend would be work and a sacrifice to some people, but for me, it was not. I learned so much from them and received so much more than the cost of an extra shower every day or another load of laundry. Donnie said that because it came naturally to me and was no sacrifice, hospitality was surely a gift I had.

Writing stories about things I recall and telling what they mean to me is not work. The teacher in me enjoys painting scenes with words and teaching a moral. For some, putting words on paper is drudgery. Because it flows naturally for me, it is a gift.

Categorizing, organizing, and planning come naturally to one who has been a librarian for more than three decades. I hate to be in front of a crowd, but I do enjoy planning events, writing scripts, and organizing programs. Since it is fun for me, that must be a gift also.

Donnie let me bask in those compliments for a short time, then she let go her zinger. Other people have been gifted to do other

things, and perhaps I would be happier if I quit trying to do those things and let others do them.

Because Donnie is several things to me--cousin, friend, Christian sister, and now, a mentor, I cherish the relationship I have with her. Our time together was beautiful. I felt as though she had helped remove blinders from my eyes. My pity party was over!

It is wonderful to have friends who can be objective and help us through the hard days. "A friend loves at all times," and "sticks closer than a brother," Solomon wrote in Proverbs 17:17 and 18:24.

Because of my friend Donnie, instead of being discouraged, I could complete the day with cheerful personal expressions.

NEWS and NOTES

Edited by Bennie Hill

In Much Sympathy We are very sorry to announce the "going home" of our dear brother Demus H. Friend on June 1, 2001, but we praise the Lord that he is with Him whom he served nearly all of his 87 years. He was a dear "friend" and brother to everyone he knew and preached in several churches from time to time.

Your writer was very close to Bro. Demus and gratefully thanks him for persuading me to begin preaching in 1951 at the Buechel congregation.

We extend our great sympathy to his wife, sister Maxine Friend and her family, who also is very dear to us. May our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ bless each one in this hour of sorrow and separation (for a while).
--T. Y. Clark

Jackie Gill's new book made its debut on May 28, 2001. "Declaring

His Power to the Next Generation" has been copyrighted and published. The whole book of Revelation is illustrated for children. Also included are twelve lessons, self interpretations, and other helps along with life applications. This beautifully bound 8-1/2 X 11, 60 page book is a valuable teaching aid not only for children but for adults as well. A \$10 donation is appreciated.

Contact Jackie at 3103 Lowell Ave. Louisville, KY 40205, (502) 459-4031. E-mail: jackiegill@juno.com

From Dan Wilson, Goin' Fishing Ministries: It is time once again for our annual Russian summer camp evangelistic ministry in St. Petersburg--aptly named Project Friendship. This summer the Lord is sending through us around ninety people on nine teams. These good folk will probably be representing

Christ in 6-7 different camps which, all told, will likely contain 2500-3000 campers between the ages of 7 and 15. They will also touch the lives of hundreds of the adult Russian counselors and staff of these camps. Please pray for them and for me and my assistant Masha as we seek to make the teams' stay smooth and relatively uneventful. As you can tell not all of the plans have been solidified, which is standard fare for ministry in Russia but which also calls for continuous prayer for God's wisdom and intervention. I ask you to keep us on your prayer list.

"A Gallatin Welcome to BILL THOMAS!!! Bill Thomas has accepted the position of Associate Minister. He will be working closely with our families; and will become our senior minister when Brother Julius Hovan retires at the end of June 2002. Bill, his wife Rhonda, and daughter Brandi will arrive in Gallatin this week."

21st Century Lord's Prayer Mother was teaching her 3-year old the Lord's Prayer. After several evenings saying it together the child was ready to solo. Mother was pleased with the carefully enunciated words, right up to the end. "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us some e-mail. Amen." — from Gallatin's *Lamplighter*

Have You Evaluated Your Church's Missionary Budget Lately? Periodically churches need to examine their budget, and missionaries' financial statements also, as one congregation did recently. Their June 5 bulletin has this challenge: "Robert and Joy Garrett have been serving the Lord in Zimbabwe for 40 years. There are now 12 congregations in their area and 9 have their own buildings. They support 3

full-time ministers and each congregation has several men who ably fill the pulpit. The support given by [this church] to the Garretts in Zimbabwe makes up less than 1% of their budget. Can we, should we, do more?"

Tell City: Creation vs. Evolution Seminar is being planned by the Tell City, Lilly Dale, & Troy churches for October 5 & 6, 2001 at the Tell City High School Auditorium. "Answers in Genesis" will be the focus and speakers include: Geoff Stevens, Buddy Davis, and Stacia Byers. The seminar will be open to the community.

School of Biblical Studies has completed the fall schedule:

Mon. 9-12 am Apologetics

Mike Abbott

Mon. 1-3 pm Methods of Bible Study - Jerry Carmichael

Mon. 1-4 pm Christian Ethics
Bennie Hill

Mon. 6:30/9:30 pm Christian Growth & Development

Alex Wilson

Tue. 9-11 am Work of Church
Bud Ridgeway

Tues. 6:30/9:30 pm Sightseeing & Songleading - James Embree

Take advantage of these opportunities to better prepare for Christian service. Contact PCS at (502)778-6114 for information and registration.

SBS Booster Dinner is being planned for Tuesday, Aug. 7th at 5:30 p.m. in the Sellersburg Activity Building. The KFC catered meal is \$5 (5 year olds and younger are free) Program will concern updates about the school. New SBS catalogs should be available. Take advantage of this during the KY-IN Fellowship Week.

Maple Manor Adult Division is beginning a "retire-the-mortgage" program. There will be a kick-off with an open house (3:30-4:45 p.m.) and Bar-B-Que Dinner (4:45-6:30 p.m.) during the Fellowship Week on Wednesday, August 8th. Contact Charlie Stewart or Ray Naugle at 643 W.Utica St., Sellersburg, IN 47172 for information regarding "tickets."

Belmont concluded a 4-day revival meeting with evangelist Sam Marsh (former SBS student). Sam presented a good "expository" sermon on 2 Peter 1:3-11 emphasizing "His Divine Power..." It's always a blessing to hear the Word of God in preaching and teaching as it is the source of edification.

Cherry St. revival was held the last week of June with evangelist Mark Yarbrough. He is the grandson of Bruce Chowning and did an excellent job in proclaiming the Word of God each night from the Book of Ruth. It's always refreshing to hear Bible Exposition and the challenges taken literally from the Word.

Salem announces their revival meeting with Terry Morrison July 23-29 at 7:00 each night. He will be speaking on the book of Ephesians with a focus on the church. Then, on Wed. Aug. 15th at 7:00 p.m. Salem will be hosting an accapella group from Barbados named Ask

God. This group was met by some on recent mission groups and they are great! (Chester McCauley)

Arsenio & Pat Eniego Filipinos who worked in Manila and Mindoro for many years, have resided in Pasadena California for the past three years across from Fuller Theological Seminary. Pat works as a care-giver and Arsenio works in the Seminary Post Office as mail clerk. Beth is a relief R.N. in a county hospital and Joey, her husband, is laboratory technician. Arsenio leads several outreach Bible classes. Their burden is to "reach out to people in the neighborhood - that we increase in numbers and grow into spiritual maturity." For additional information on them and their work contact:

Church of Christ Worldwide
P.O. Box 54842
Lexington, KY. 40555

Cramer & Hanover. A monthly financial statement is provided through the ongoing efforts of Miss Carla Potter and Mrs. Peggy Carter. This is a tremendous undertaking by these dedicated ladies who receive, receipt, compute, and forward funds to various areas of the Lord's work. Their "work of faith" and "labor of love" is greatly appreciated. If you would like to receive this monthly report please contact us at the address given above or check it out on the web at www.cramercoc.org.

Timothy S. Yates
Charlestown, NSW, Australia

June 2001

Our Permanent Residency Papers Came Through!

Thanks for praying so diligently for our visas to come through. It has been almost a year since we first filed with immigration for permanent residency. After mounds and mounds of paperwork and hassle, the Lord saw to it that we received permission to stay in Australia.

It was definitely the Lord, too. Last week we received a call from an Immigration official. We have NEVER received a call from them and have never known any one to receive a call from them. On top of that, it was 6:30 pm, well after hours. The woman introduced herself and explained that our case worker (the one who had taken a year to this point) was sent out on special assignment and she had been assigned all of her cases! She called us at home and verified some information with us, and less than a week later we had our documents!

The Lord is GOOD! Join us in thanking Him for His goodness and care!

* * * *

BOUND VOLUMES of WORD & WORK: The last year we made a bound volume available was in 1994, @ \$22. The cost of materials & labor had skyrocketed. When it went even higher in '95 we didn't order any. But now we've found a cheaper bookbinder. Perhaps (for he is still tentative) we can sell copies @ \$18. This contains 11 magazines but not the SS quarterly. And maybe (this too is uncertain at present) we can put 2 years together ('95-6, '97-8, '99-00) for a price lower than 2 volumes bound separately.

Some readers have full sets of bound volumes through '94. This bookbinder does good work, but can't guarantee how soon he can finish the work. (It's his sparetime hobby.) And he can't get the color (burgundy) used in previous years; he has black.

If you are either definitely or possibly interested in getting a volume(s), let us know, then we can firm up the details. Call Louise Wells, 502-775-8243, or Alex Wilson, 502-897-2831.