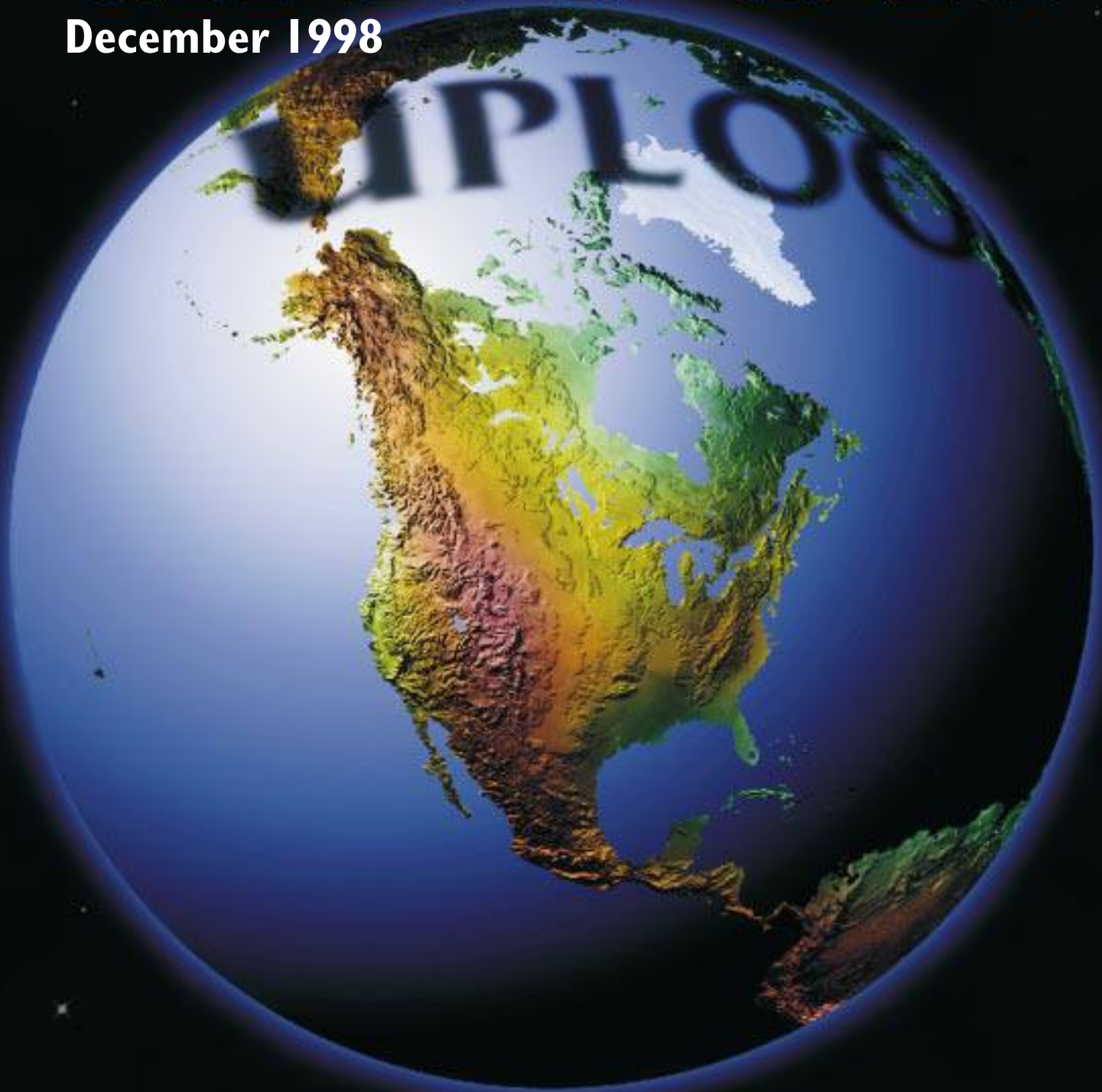


WIPLOOK

December 1998



The Changing Face of Missions
The Need in North America

Born on the Mission Field

BORN ON THE MISSION FIELD

Laboring among the Naidanac and Nacirema tribes

I was born on the mission field. As an MK, I had the opportunity to observe up close the Naidanac (nay-da-nak) tribal group among which my parents serve. Many of them are nomads, foraging for areas with greener grass, which always seem to be at some distance from their homes.

Their tribal dress changes with the seasons, both male and female using often lavish clothing in the mating process. The females rather than the males are known to paint their faces in an attempt to attract the more desirable males, a tactic that is often counterproductive.

Animal skins are utilized for foot wear, belts, and sometimes for outer garments. Other clothes are ingeniously made from secretions from worms, and a fibrous ball from a plant grown in southern climes.

The Naidanac domiciles are something to behold! Not only does the hut contain separate compartments for sleeping (on pads often stuffed with the plumage of domesticated birds), eating, and other living quarters, they also have a separate room for their carriages, including hundreds of horses to pull them!

Their eating habits are eclectic, drawn from many tribes with which the Naidanacs have made contact. This includes Nailati flat bread, wagon-wheel shaped, covered with coagulated milk curd and other thinly spread foods. And many of the tribe travel some distance from their homes to find what they call “red-meat” although it has been cooked by others some time before it is eaten. This “red-meat” is often consumed with thin slivers of tubers which have been fried in oil (a very unhealthy diet). All is washed down with a dark liquid made with a stimulant extract from the kola nut.

Although many of the Naidanacs profess not to worship any god, they secretly keep idols hidden in various caches. Quite often their worship includes acquiring images of their queen engraved on small multi-colored slips of paper. These they use to barter for other idols of various sizes and shapes, one of the most desirable being

made of metal, and crowned with a three-pointed star on its nose. This goddess is called in the native tongue, “Mercedes, the protectress of the journey.”


Their music is a curious blend of weird noises—banging, screeching, and grating sounds, accompanied by native grunts and groans similar to those made by the Naidanacs when in great pain. The verbal noises are supposed to mean something, but we have not been able to decipher enough to make sense of any of it.

We have seen a shocking decline in moral standards among these people in the last few years. For example, unlike even the most primitive groups in jungle settings

far from what we call “civilization,” the Naidanac tribe has for some years been killing their young! Our pleading with them seems to fall on deaf ears. They also imbibe large quantities of stupefying drinks to deaden the pain they obviously feel in their godless condition.

There is a bordering group similar to the Naidanacs, although they are a much larger tribe. I have left my parents’ field of service to serve among these Naciremas (nak-a-ray-ma), as they are called.

How can we reach these people, so different from us? What training can prepare us for work on such a mission field? How can we make them understand the story of the Saviour’s love for them? Some are going to other fields, but who will show compassion to these needy souls? Such questions are vital as the time draws near when we shall give account to the Master for our service.

Perhaps you do not think these tribes are as *backward* as I suggest they are. But anyone familiar with them will agree that most of them desperately need the gospel, presented to them in a way they can understand. It is of little use if we communicate in our *Christianese* dialect. Multitudes are dying in the dark, here on our own shores. Many children are growing up in North America never having held a Bible in their hands. Yes, *this* is the home of the Naidanacs and Naciremas. And everyone here is either a missionary or a mission field. 



by J. B. NICHOLSON, JR.

UPLOOK

Volume 65 December 1998 Number 11

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The changing face of missions

The president of Christian Missions in Many Lands, Inc., an assembly service organization, takes us on an informative tour of world missions today.

SAMUEL E. ROBINSON

The onset of the worldwide missionary outreach of the assemblies began rather unpretentiously on a misty warfside in Gravesend, England, on June 12, 1829. Mr. and Mrs. Anthony Norris Groves and their family sailed for St. Petersburg, Russia, en route to Baghdad. Mr. Groves had been associated with the small group of brethren in Dublin, Ireland, that had recently rediscovered the simple principles of the New Testament Church as set forth in the Scriptures. Severing his connection with the Church Missionary Society, he set off for Baghdad looking to God alone for his support. Mr. Groves has been called the “father of faith missions.”

Mr. Groves was a Bible scholar and a man of great vision. However, I doubt that he realized as the yacht slipped its moorings almost 170 years ago, that he was the vanguard of over 6,000 men and women from the assemblies that have encircled the globe with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

There have been many missionary societies and organizations used of God in world evangelism during the past two centuries, but “no single body perhaps more significantly than the assemblies of brethren...missionaries have gone from these assemblies to practically every area of the world, depending for their support solely upon the faithfulness of God. The impact which has been made has been out of all proportion to their number or to the size and importance

of the assemblies from which they went.”¹

As the assemblies grew and multiplied so did the number of missionaries. For assemblies, missions was never an elective, but an imperative. Hudson Taylor once said, “The commission is not an option to be considered, but a command to be obeyed.” In a film made about “the Brethren” for Ulster Television several years ago, Sir Fred Catherwood, member of the European Parliament, said, “The Brethren are tremendous evangelists.”

On the same film, Harold Rowdon of the London Bible College noted, “From the beginning, the Brethren have seen the world as its parish.”

Generally speaking, the size of individual assemblies is not large; yet with their burning zeal for evangelism, thousands have responded to God’s call to “go ye into all the world and preach the gospel.” Just considering the assemblies in the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom, more than one out of every hundred believers is directly involved in missions today. No other church group can come close to that figure.

Everyday Publications (Toronto) publishes a combined list of missionaries from Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States. The list for this year (1998) has the names of 1,250 missionaries serving the Lord in 100 countries. Add to that number fellow



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laborers from other European countries, South America, Africa, and the Asian Pacific countries and the number is more than 1,500.

Alec Pulleng, former editor of *Echoes*, wrote in his classic exegesis of New Testament missionary principles, *Go Ye Therefore*, about the missionary outreach of assemblies, “The wonderful story of gospel enterprise can never fully be told. It is surely remarkable that it has grown to its present dimensions without any publicity, organization, or appeal either for men or money. Ours is a wonderful heritage. May we of this generation prove ourselves worthy of it, and at least maintain the high standards of godliness and sacrifice which the pioneers showed.”²

CHANGES

The twentieth century has been one of major changes and unparal-



changes have also taken place in missions.

During this century, we have seen location changes in the mission fields. At the beginning of the century, Africa and Asia were the major fields of missionary endeavor. China, once open to the gospel, is now closed. In India, missionaries are no longer welcome, but there is still an open door for professionals. There has been a hemorrhaging of missionaries from Africa and Asia and a dramatic increase of workers in Europe. Just in the last 25 years, the number of missionaries to Africa has dropped 30%, while the Asian numbers have decreased 32%. During the same period, the missionary force in Europe increased by 141% and in Central America by 86%.

There has also been a change of focus on many fields. Years ago on many mission fields, it was necessary to provide medical aid to the local nationals. Lack of education was also a problem and schools had to be organized. In many areas today, the missionary is no longer involved in this type of ministry.

Years ago, living conditions were primitive, but this, too, has seen a vast improvement. As the churches on the mission fields grew, it was obvious that nationals were far more effective in evangelization than expatriate missionaries. Many missionaries are finding they need to encourage, teach, write, and translate. No other language has the wealth and treasury of Christian literature that is found in English. For some missionaries, translation work has become a top priority in order to give nationals the needed helps to “grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”

We have also seen change in methods of operating. Transportation has gone from foot and horse power to Land Rovers, motorbikes, and planes. Years ago, when the Logan girls in Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia) went to school at Sakeji, it was an adventure. It was a 350-mile trip from Chavuma through Angola to the school. They would walk, run, and be carried in hammocks by their guardians. They would negotiate the trip in ten days. Today the same trip by plane takes about an hour-and-a-half. Preaching around the campfire has often been replaced by videos and cassettes.

This century has also witnessed a change in the center of missions outreach. Throughout the nineteenth century and until World War I, the United Kingdom was the

leled developments. Just in the last half of this century we have witnessed great strides in medical research and aerospace and computer technology, just to name a few areas. Inevitably,

center of mission activity. That center shifted to North America after the Great War. If the Lord tarries, that center will shift again to Southeast Asia. Believers in Singapore, Malaysia, the Philippines, Korea, and Japan are even now looking beyond their own borders. It is also a fact that today our Asian brethren are welcome in countries where Westerners are not.

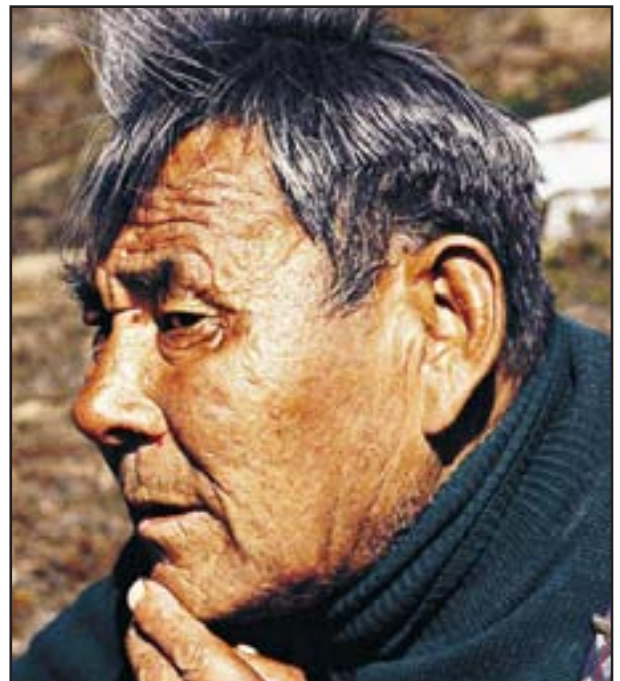
That fact suggests another change: from the conventional missionary to tentmaker. Today there are a number of tentmakers—professionals working in closed countries and carrying on a bright witness for our Lord.

CHALLENGES

There are many challenges facing the missionary outreach today and in the coming years.

There is the challenge of unreached peoples. Throughout North Africa and Asia there are hundreds of millions unreached in closed countries. Bill Bright of Campus Crusade for Christ stated, “We have the technology and the money (to reach the world), but the main stumbling block is the lack of prayerful concern on the part of Christians.”

There is the challenge of urbanization. As we entered the twentieth century, roughly 80% of the people lived in rural areas. Today we find that almost two-thirds of the population are in urban areas. Cities present new problems. The negatives are: they are not easy places to work, they are not always pleasant conditions, and they are often very rough. Cities can be dangerous due to drugs and crime, but the people need the Lord! There are posi-



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MEN'S BIBLE STUDY

A Men's Bible Study seminar will be held, in the will of the Lord, Jan. 11-15, 1999, at Camp Horizon, Leesburg, FL. Bernard Osborne (Wales) is expected to lead an intensive four-day study on the book of Leviticus. The days are long and the sessions enjoyable yet rigorous; they are profitable to those who are serious-minded about God's Word.

The registration fee of \$57 along with a completed registration form (name, address, phone number, and approximate date and time of arrival) should be sent to:

Camp Horizon
7369 Sunnyside Dr.
Leesburg, FL 34748

For more information, contact Larry Price at (352) 735-2729.

SMOKY MOUNTAIN SKI WEEKEND

Camp Living Water (Bryson City, NC) invites you to join them for their First Annual Assembly Ski Weekend Jan. 15-18. There will be four sessions starting Friday night with speaker Jon Glock (TN) and skiing on Saturday from 1PM-10PM at Cataloochee Ski Area (Maggie Valley, NC).

For more information, contact the camp at (828) 488-6012 or e-mail DCLW@juno.com

GREENWOOD HILLS

Greenwood Hills Conference and Camp (Fayetteville, PA) has several retreats planned for the winter and early spring. The following is a list of events that you may plan to attend:

Congress Retreat is scheduled for singles (age 16 and up) on Jan. 8-10) with speaker Barry Kirk (WV).

January Jubilee, for singles (ages 12-16) is planned for Jan. 22-24 with speaker Jim VanDuzer (PA).

Couples' Retreat, a time for cou-

ples to get away for a relaxed weekend with Christian fellowship and ministry from God's Word. \$130 per couple covers the cost of two nights' accommodation and five meals. The invited speaker is Tom Irwin (PA).

Ladies' Missionary Seminar is planned for April 23-25.

For more info. on any of these conferences or to register, write:

Greenwood Hills
7062 Lincoln Way East
Fayetteville, PA 17222

VESSELS OF HONOR 1999

The believers meeting at East Tulsa Bible Chapel (OK) together with other interested believers are planning a young adult conference, *Vessels of Honor*; for Memorial Day weekend 1999. The conference will be held on the campus of Baker University in Baldwin, KS, near Kansas City. The conference is designed for both singles and couples who desire to be used by the Lord. Tentatively confirmed speakers include Craig Rolinger, John Heller, Joe Reese and J. B. Nicholson, Jr. Nancy Rolinger and Bobbie Heller will have sessions with the women. We encourage you to set aside time for this special opportunity. Contact:

Jim Lindamood (918) 663-1121
e-mail: jimlindamood@juno.com

FELLOWSHIP ALONG THE RIO GRANDE

Residents of the Rio Grande Valley and winter Texans who are from New Testament assemblies, and would like to gather in the greater McAllen area, please contact: Glenn Tompkins at (956) 519-6053

e-mail: gtompkins@juno.com

COMMENDATIONS**Bill Bierworth**

The elders at Bancroft Bible Chapel (Bancroft, ON) have regret-

fully withdrawn the commendation of Bill Bierworth. The door of service that he had been pursuing has closed for the time being. After much discussion and prayer, it was felt that Bill should seek further guidance and leading before going any further.

Bill remains in happy fellowship at Bancroft Bible Chapel. Please pray that the Lord will continue to use him and equip him for greater service and for God's glory.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

A group of believers meeting in Montreal, PQ, would like to announce their new address:

Assemblée Chretienne
du Centre-Sud
1415 Beaubien Est
Montreal, PQ H1T 1S5
Correspondent: Yvon Audet
(450) 963-1608

The Breaking of Bread meeting is on the Lord's Day at 9:30 AM.

A WORD OF THANKS

Several months ago, the Southern Gospel Team, USA, placed an announcement in *Uplook* magazine expressing a need for puppets to be used for their ministry. Recently they received a package of lovely puppets which are ideal to be used by the Outreach Team.

Since they weren't sure if they had the correct address of the contributor, they would like to express their thanks to the individual who donated the puppets. They are very much appreciated.

JERRY'S WHEELS DRIVE A SUCCESS

The April 1998 issue of *Uplook* reported that the community of Coldwater, MI, was organizing a fund-raiser to provide a wheel-chair accessible vehicle for Jerry Vercruysse, a man in the assembly

tives, too: urban areas are ideal for mass media, large evangelistic efforts, and easy access to people.

Perhaps the most serious challenge is that of Islam. It is the fastest growing religion in the world today. There are over 1.1 billion Muslims in the world. The majority of Muslims live in South Asia, not in the Middle East. It is estimated that 80% of the Muslims have never heard the gospel.

There have been many changes and there are daunting challenges ahead. Many mission boards and societies are seeing a decrease in the recruitment of missionaries and in the sending of funds abroad. Thankfully, the number of missionaries from North America has not decreased nor has there been a decrease in support for missions worldwide.

But the work is not done and we must avoid the temptation of resting on our oars. Missions is an upstream battle and the minute we relax, we will drift backwards. It appears some have the attitude that the Lord's commis-

sion is "come and hear" not "go and preach." The zeal for evangelism has been one of the hallmarks of the assemblies down through our short history. Let's keep that fire burning brightly.

In our assemblies today we are blessed with many fine, dedicated, concerned young people with a vision, who are looking for involvement. Let us properly equip them for involvement. Let us not be jealous of their youth and the talents God has entrusted to them. Let us thank God for them and, like Paul, or Aquila and Priscilla, let us feed them, lead them, and be an example to them. Let us pass on our enthusiasm for evangelism and missions. Let us use the wonderful resources the Lord has blessed us with. Let us continue to "go out," for if we don't, we will "die out."

ENDNOTES:

1. Cover of *That the World May Know*.
2. *Go Ye Therefore*, p. 12.



**RISE UP &
BUILD '99
CINCINNATI, OH**

DECEMBER 27-30,
LORD WILLING AT THE
HYATT REGENCY CINCINNATI
CINCINNATI, OHIO

WITH A SPECIAL **MISSION EMPHASIS DAY**
HOSTED BY **CMML**

In the will of the Lord, the *Rise Up & Build* committee is planning another Bible conference. For this purpose they have reserved the Hyatt Regency Cincinnati (OH) for December 27 through 30 and invite the Lord's people to prayerfully consider attending.

Some Christians have advised us to cancel plans for the conference due to the unknown results of the so-called Y2K ("millennium bug") problem. However, it was decided to carry on with the conference plans for the following reasons:

1. The effect of the problem is still speculation, with wide ranging views from minor to catastrophic. Even the experts are adjusting their scenarios daily.

2. The hotel has addressed our concerns by removing our financial liability to them if for any reason the conference must be cancelled.

3. We believe the Lord would have us continue to exhort, encourage, and edify the saints, no matter what the world conditions may be. Our gathering together is important "and so much the more as we see the Day approaching."

We encourage you to pray for us as the arrangements are made, and for a time of the richest blessing, that our lives, our homes, our assemblies, and our world may feel the impact of hearts rekindled in deeper devotion to our Lord. **WATCH FOR MORE DETAILS.**



there who serves as chaplain for the county jail. The goal was \$17,000 for a lift-equipped van.

We are thankful to report that the campaign was more successful than they dreamed. With more than \$44,000 raised, Jerry was able to purchase a brand new van. "Fantastic," said Vercruysse. "Praise the Lord. This surpasses my greatest expectations."

RESTORED HOPE

The situation at Camp Hope (Augusta, GA) was rather bleak after it was destroyed by a tornado a couple of years ago. But the Lord has blessed and the camp has been completely restored—to even better conditions than it was before the storm.

On October 9 and 10, the first ladies' meeting was held at the camp with more than 70 in attendance. Dr. Ruth Schwertfeger (WI) spoke on the importance of the Word of God, emphasizing the centrality of Christ. Below is a snapshot of the camp as it has been rebuilt.



SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES Camp Iroquoina

Camp Iroquoina, located on over 200 acres in northeastern PA, has a ministry opportunity for an individ-

ual or couple in the area of building and grounds maintenance and house-keeping. Camp Iroquoina operates year-round in ministry to children, young people, and families. For more info., contact John MacPherson (Manager) at (717) 967-2577.

Rest Haven Homes

Rest Haven Homes in Grand Rapids, MI, has been serving the Lord's people for nearly 60 years. Opportunities for service are available for people of all ages in a variety of areas. If you are moving to Grand Rapids or would like to be involved in the short-term, please call Brian Wilson at (616) 363-6869 ext. 23.

PASSING INTO LIFE

Bill Hynd

Our beloved brother Bill Hynd was called Home to be with the Lord on November 5. Born in Scotland, Bill was commended to full-time work for the Lord first in Jamaica and later in Buffalo, NY. After marrying his second wife Anne, the two lived in Flint, MI, and spent the winters serving the Lord in the Bahamas. The last years of Bill's life were spent at Rest Haven Homes in Grand Rapids, MI. He is survived by two daughters, Margaret Bonet and Nancy Walter.

Neil Dougal

One of North America's premiere evangelists passed into Life on Nov. 1 after a bout with cancer. Neil Dougal was born May 24, 1923, in Bonnyrigg, Scotland and also born again there in 1937. Many of us thrilled to the stories he told of the Lord's dealings during his stint in the British Navy during World War II.

He and his wife Peggy settled in Worcester, MA, in 1952. Brother Dougal was involved in the construction business while also preaching in local assemblies.

He was commended to the work of the Lord fulltime in 1965 by the

saints at Bethany Gospel Chapel (Worcester) and traveled the continent as well as overseas preaching "the unsearchable riches of Christ."

Mr. Dougal was a frequent contributor to the *Choice Gleanings Calendar* and Gospel Folio Press' Sunday School curriculum. He was also a committee member of *Counsel* magazine. His long-time preaching colleague, Boyd Nicholson, Sr. conducted the funeral.

Please remember his life partner, Peggy, his two children, Junea and Brian, and their families in prayer.

ISRAEL IN MARCH

Lord willing, Jabe Nicholson will be taking a study tour to Israel March 8-17. As in the past, the size of the group will be limited and the tour is only for those interested in a rigorous time of learning historical geography in the land of the Bible. Those who have expressed interest in the past and would like to go this coming year, please contact Jabe or Caroline at the *Uplook* office.

HOMES FOR SALE

Frostproof, Florida

A spacious double-width manufactured home is for sale in Shepherd Christian Community, Frostproof, FL (central Florida). The partly furnished home includes a living room, dining room, three bedrooms, two full bathrooms, a den and other amenities. The price is reasonable. There is an assembly on the grounds.

Call: John and Evelyn Barclay
(941) 635-4840

Boca Raton, Florida

A completely furnished condo in Boca Raton, FL, in a building that is 99% owned by Christians. It contains a living room, dining room, two bedrooms, two bathrooms, a kitchen, balcony and carport. Contact:

Fred and Mary Jane Chitty
(717) 709-0099



Imported China dolls

WARREN HENDERSON

My wife Brenda and I returned from China a few weeks ago with our nine-month-old adopted daughter, Kelsi Lyn. We already have three children of our own, but after learning of the serious situation in China we felt compelled to adopt one of the estimated one million baby girls discarded each year in that country.

Of these abandoned girls, only about 30 percent will live through the abandonment and orphanage experience! Those girls that do live, but are not adopted, will likely become social outcasts of the society and never achieve full participation in the culture. This holocaust of life results from population control laws limiting families to one or two children (if certain criteria are met) and cultural gender preferences. Only male labor-

ers are wanted for the intensive work of farming (approximately 80 percent of China's population are farmers).



We can give witness to the fact that China contains many fascinating and beautiful sights: the Forbidden City, Tian An'men Square, Ming Tombs, the Summer Palace, and the Great Wall. But it is the longing expressions of a people with no hope which continue to come to mind: the haunting words of a weeping Chinese mother as she held out her baby to members of our adoption group, begging, "Take my baby with you; take my baby to America." The hollow countenance of a Chinese laborer, whose livelihood (\$50/month) was earned by washing down others' refuse deposited in cylindrical shaped pits and then handing more fortunate men than himself a paper towel to dry their hands. A host of thin, stunted people gazing at well-fed Americans touring their world of travesty.

China is a land of ethnically rich people that are spiritually bankrupt. The gospel of Jesus Christ may not resolve their overpopulation problems or even feed their 1.3 billion people, but it will give those with no hope a blessed one!

In Nanchang, we picked up our babies. Most were in good health, but small and behind on gross motor development. The whole adoption process of obtaining passports and US visas as well as having medical

exams, went smoothly, taking only five days from start to finish.

Many have asked us, "Why adopt a Chinese baby? Why not have another child?" One couple subtly informed us that this adoption would taint our family image! God used these questions and remarks to help us sort out His will in this very important decision.

I would encourage potential adoptive parents to read Ezekiel 16:1-14, as the prophet likens a newborn baby girl tossed in an open field to the beginning of the nation of Israel. God had pity on her, and took her to Himself as His very own. I believe the Father would have us imitate His actions, as His adopted children.

Romans 5 tells us that we also were ugly in sin and enemies of God. I praise God that He didn't worry about *His* family image, but sought us out that we might be conformed ultimately to His image.

For more information on Chinese adoptions, contact via e-mail:

Warren and Brenda Henderson
whenderson1@Compuserve.com



Brenda Henderson and Kelsi Lyn

ABOUT TIME?

The Vatican assembled a blue-ribbon panel of scholars to examine the Inquisition and declared its readiness to submit the church's darkest institution to the judgment of history. The three-day symposium is part of the Roman Catholic Church's countdown to the year 2000. Pope John Paul II wants the church to begin the new millennium with a clear conscience. During the Inquisition, ecclesiastical "thought police" tried, tortured, and burned people at the stake for heresy and other crimes. The Inquisition began in the 13th century and lasted into the 19th. —USA Today

RUSSIAN CHRISTIAN RADIO

The economic and political problems in Russia aren't helping *Back to the Bible* which began broadcasting in 1995 on the Austentino Radio Network. Now the network has forced their programming off the air. There are between 300-600 radio stations in all 11 time zones. This program and others such as *Focus on the Family* were dropped and right now they are still hoping that they can

somehow negotiate and get back on. All foreign-funded programs were forced off the air by new management. Spokesman Hansen says their alternative won't be as effective.

"If we do not get back on the Austentino Network, we will have to assess whether or not we go back on some small stations located in areas such as St. Petersburg or Moscow or even go back to using short-wave, but it will never be what we had."—MNN

ASIAN EDUCATION CRISIS

Children in Thailand and Indonesia are being forced from school and back into the work force, thanks to the Asian economic crisis. In Thailand, the government says that more than 250,000 students have abandoned school, while 6.1 million in Indonesia are at risk of dropping out, according to the World Bank. The latter figure represents 17 percent of Indonesian children in grades one through nine. The percentage of elementary school children who went to middle school dropped this year from 90 percent to 81 percent. "Large numbers of kids who drop out never

go back to school," says an education specialist for the World Bank. "They're lost forever." —Pulse

PERSECUTION IN LAOS

Protestant leaders in Laos have told the Bible League that the government is persecuting Christians in Luang Prabang in an attempt to protect the province's Buddhist heritage. Luang Prabang was recently named a "World Heritage City" by UNESCO. "Fully armed troops travel from village to village forcing people to sign a document of resignation from Christianity," one leader stated. "Those who refuse to sign are threatened to be chased from their land and separated from their families."

VENEZUELA LAW ON HOLD

Venezuela came close to passing a law prohibiting evangelical ministries among indigenous peoples. If the legislation had passed, observers feared, the Roman Catholic Church would have been given sole oversight of Indians. The national congress voted to postpone consideration of the measure for a year. —Pulse

“MITCH” DEVASTATES HONDURAS

Widespread damage caused by Hurricane Mitch has turned rivers into lakes and small creeks into raging torrents. The storm hovered over the country and then moved south, passing over the capital city, Tegucigalpa, the torrential rains swelling the river which flows through the center of the city to an unbelievable level and carrying away everything in its path. As the waters rose quickly, many people got on to the roofs of their houses to save their lives.

Houses that had been built near the river were quickly undermined and disappeared into the raging waters. Approximately 70-80% of the infrastructure of the country has been devastated. Roads have disappeared; bridges are partly, if not wholly, destroyed; telephone communication is erratic at best; drinking water in the city has dried up due to broken water mains.

All of the assembly missionaries are safe. The Ferrer family is isolated due to landslides that have cut the main highway in two, but are well. They have no phone service but they are ministering to the believers in their part of the country. Stan Hanna was able to travel back to Trujillo as the roof of the new school that was recently inaugurated had been damaged badly. All the children who were resident at the school are safe. David Domiguez along with Charles Wooler have been coordinating the relief program.

At press time, plans were being made to send containers of relief items from both Canada and the US. Also, CMMML and MSC both have disaster funds set up. Any checks sent in should be marked "Disaster Fund—Honduras"

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Midwest report

The author has ranged this land both preaching the gospel and encouraging little groups of saints.

JOHN A. BJORLIE

The buckle on the Bible Belt is feeling the strain in secular America's midriff squeeze, but the buckle has not burst.

Twenty years ago the wise men from the East and West told the stodgy Midwesterners to get a bit more trendy, upbeat, relevant, and with-it. The smart money whispered, "Get with the program or perish." Some assemblies bought the franchise marketed by the church-growth gurus, but most did not. You can walk into a growing assembly in Iowa and find them singing the hymns of Samuel Trevor Francis out of *Hymns of Truth and Praise*. Those wise men have cause to reflect on why these people have opposed the predictions—and still prosper. If this trend continues, young people will be telling us that their favorite vocal artists are Jeff Erb and Paul Renes.

THE "JESUS PEOPLE"

One factor that the prognosticators did not figure in was the character of the 35- to 45-year-old generation. The ingathering of souls called the "Jesus People Movement" is today paying big dividends in the Midwest. At the end of the Vietnam War, this movement that swept the country was often discounted as a cloud with no rain. But we find that many first generation Christians who professed to be saved in the late sixties and early seventies are today the pillars of assemblies. Obviously, many converts stuck. They are often more con-

servative than their elders. They are coming into assembly fellowship for a reason, and are prepared to pay the hard prices. Whereas instead of cautioning against liberalism, this generation may need to be cautioned about Neo-Galatianism.

THE HOME SCHOOL MOVEMENT

These Christians are the engine room of home educators. Today when you meet a young parent, it is becoming a social convention to ask, "And what curriculum are you using?" The exodus from the public school system shows no slowdown, and a way-station on their journey may be your assembly. The home schooling movement is also in places becoming the Home Church Movement (not to be confused with the Witness Lee movement, or the House Church movement from England). Parents reason that if they can successfully teach their children without the sprawling educational institutions, perhaps they can also function in the church without the sprawling ecclesiastical institutions. For them the home church idea is the next logical step.

Many of these parents have told me that they have a "brethren-style worship." But "home church" may not be a synonym for New Testament church practice. We must be willing to tell the home schooling parents that biblical separation is not isolationism, and that the local assembly is more than a home school support group, where every parent has an equal vote in matters of church government.

But do not discount these parents,



or their children. The observant elder will notice these parents who are on a journey which may wend into the local assembly.

GREAT PAINS ON THE GREAT PLAINS

There is a reason why the saints who labor in the north country are able to fair so well in more austere conditions. For example, thirty years ago, Wally and Marj Block sat down with Paul and Audrey Olson and asked, Should we close up the assembly or hang in there? Perseverance pays. Today a flourishing work in Baudette, MN, has sprung up around them like olive plants around their tables.

Ben and Jean Tuininga, Lewellyn and Florence Tewksbury, can say the same. These couples are the Iditarod champions of assembly workers in the north. Their ministries have an influence far beyond their localities.

In North Dakota, the assembly at Meadow Ridge Bible Chapel in West Fargo eschews the market driven mentality among evangelicals. We surmise that they don't sell George Barna's books in the assembly bookstore. The same should be said of the works in Omaha, NE; and Lawrence and Wichita, KS. They get their advice on church growth out of a little understood book commonly called "The Holy Bible."

The up and coming generation of young people that traverse state lines

in search of serious Bible conferences attest that solemn preaching and sacrificial evangelism is where we need to put our efforts.

Another boost to church life has been the influx of East Indian Christians. Several assemblies in Minneapolis/St. Paul have benefitted from their personal discipline, their gifts, and their stable family structure. The Believer's assembly in suburban Coon Rapids, MN, has an intensive Bible study weekend where the meat and potatoes of the Word are served for hours at a time. The young people haven't been told that they are not supposed to be interested. They car pool from the Iron Range of northern MN and from North Dakota to get there.

If each assembly has its own family character, then Iowa has all the characters that one state can stand. Out of politeness, we will say Iowa moves through the full range from progressive to conservative. Since Emmaus Bible School moved to Dubuque, the efforts of the faculty and students has added yet another color to Iowa's rainbow coalition. The Gospel Halls in northeastern Iowa and southwestern Wisconsin maintain a rigorous conservatism, and do not have much coming and going with other area congregations outside their orbit. Oliver Smith invited many staunch gospelers to help in his work and the past generation made that region a bastion of conservatism. But if you had seen the power in Leonard Deboer's ministry during the reaping seasons, you might have adopted his church policies, too.

Certainly it has proved true that the wind blows where it wills. While some assemblies have dwindled, in other places new works begin. We wish that more of the new assemblies would send in their addresses and schedules to Walterick to put in their *Address Book of Some Assemblies of Christians*. Because of the nature of these local congregations we can only guesstimate on their numbers. We do believe that there has been a steady, determined progress between growth spurts.

The oft repeated lesson to learn is this: where we have a solid, wholesome gospel emphasis, not only will we see converts multiply, but assemblies will be happy and united. Few things will serve to edify and establish believers as much as when they themselves are seeing new converts brought into their homes and assemblies. Stratford, IA, is a good example where several hundred were saved in the 70s, many forming the nucleus of a good work.

THE PRICY PROPOSITION

The cost of carrying on an aggressive, far-seeing camp work should be calculated, not in lumber prices, but in lives laid down. From Turkey Hill Ranch to Storybook Lodge, the blessing has followed the human sacrifices made, more than all the smart craftsmanship.

The current generation realizes that all the careful planning, hard work, and man-hours invested in the various Bible camps, will be a tragic loss without spiritual exercise. Each fall Myron Martinson and William Howell have rallied a few dozen teens for a week of intensive evangelism and training that they call "Teen Challenge." This last August they concentrated their efforts in Grand Forks. Will it be Duluth next year? We gather from these sorts of efforts that the saints are determined to stick to their business.

In years gone by the nay-sayers criticized the Bible camps as evangelical resorts where Christians vacation. But do we find any who are involved with summer camps for the entertainment factor? Not in these efforts in the Midwest. Go ask Don and Vi McClellan or George and Edna Lartz. It appears to me to be a lot of hard work. We grant that, as in the Middle Ages the believers built little retreats, which became the monasteries of Christendom, so today, our various ministries, retreats, and sundry service organizations could go the way of all flesh, unless there is constant renewing. Revive us again, Lord!

Christian Missions Press is now modestly housed in Oklahoma City, at Stan Engle's "Life House." Stan seems to have borrowed William Carey's motto, "Expect great things from God; attempt great things for God."

Those parts have enjoyed waves of refreshing through the years. Ed Tracy of Vancouver created quite a stir there more than a decade ago. Now we need another booming evangelist. For a time it seemed that Oklahoma City was the town that time forgot. Jim Elliot took his linguistic training there and fellowshipped with the South Side assembly in the summer of 1950. His diary entry for October 18 reads, "I leave, God willing, tomorrow for Wheaton, though I cannot now see why. Things are so needy here. The meetings in Oklahoma City require much, much more prayer than we are giving them; visitation must be done. There are several recent contacts on the university campus that should be followed up with personal contacts." On the dust-blown plains of Oklahoma things are still needy. When you next go there you may come upon one of Jim's "several recent contacts." Be sure to tell him about Jim's Saviour.

THE PAST & THE FUTURE

The 1880s was sprouting season with the work of Donald Ross in Chicago, and C. J. Baker of Kansas City. In the next generation, A. N. O'Brien cast his shadow on workers and elders all the way from Oklahoma City to Duluth. Men like Pat McGee, Lloyd Walterick, and Vernon Schlieff joined in the work. Among assemblies in Iowa, Oliver Smith, Lorne McBain, and Paul Elliot will be remembered as men with real power. A. P. Gibbs,

Harold Harper, George Landis, and T. B. Gilbert all strode through the Midwest like a threshing crew in search of big fields.

Today's questions are: why can't we see as many of these kinds of congregations in Minneapolis/St Paul as there are in Chicago? Why shouldn't the work spring up in Mobile, Alabama, the way it did in St. Louis,

Missouri, 60 years ago? Why shouldn't there be another Oliver Smith to range over Arkansas, Utah, or Nevada? Is there something wrong with that student in Dubuque pleading for a double portion of the spirit of A. P. Gibbs? And why can't that businessman in downtown Indianapolis look past the skyline and ask, "Where now is the Lord God of T. B. Gilbert?"



MORE CAMPUS OUTREACH



he university and college towns are really walled cities, waiting for Joshua and his fellow soldiers to arrive. As Jericho was a key city to Canaan, so the college towns are today's strategic cities. They are the Philippi and Athens of our day. It could be argued that we could effectively evangelize entire states if we regularly saturated the universities with gospel preaching. It is vexing to see how many campus towns have small assemblies, or no assembly testimony. You have to believe that the enemy of souls has a vested interest in maintaining his monopoly on the minds of so many million students and faculty. Can we unite to pray for cities like Tuscaloosa, Alabama, (home of the University of Alabama), Fayetteville, Arkansas (home of the University of Arkansas), Muncie, Indiana (home of Ball State University), and West Lafayette, Indiana (home of Purdue University). A small assembly has faithfully functioned in West Lafayette for years, but they have not engineered much of a ministry on campus.

Illinois State in the city of Normal, IL, needs an abnormal effort to reach its 23,000 students. In Kansas, the assembly in Lawrence has made a good effort at Bob Dole's alma mater, the University of Kansas, but what is going on in Manhattan, Kansas, at Kansas State University?

Iowa State University in Ames and the University of Iowa in Iowa City have both been difficult places for assembly work. But recently there are works beginning in both places.

Does anyone know what is happening for God at Eastern Kentucky University in Richmond or at the University of Louisville? In my last count there are almost 24,000 students attending in Louisville.

Would we be willing to ask God to send in some of the shock troops to Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge? No harm in asking.

Michigan's Central Michigan University at Mount Pleasant, the U. of M. at Ann Arbor with 36,000 enrolled, Michigan State University at East Lansing, (boasting more than 43,000 students) and Western Michigan University at Kalamazoo are places that need to hear the loud and long sounding of the priests' trumpet.

The University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg has waited too long. But who will go?

The University of Missouri in Columbia is a typical example of a wide-open campus that needs to have a strong, consistent gospel testimony where wandering sheep may be found and the Lord's lambs nurtured.

Ohio State University in Columbus has the largest student population of any university in the nation (about 59,000). John and Mert Rule have seen a vigorous assembly spring up in Columbus in the last five years. But what more could be done at the University of Akron, Bowling Green State University, Kent State University, and Ohio University in Athens. These have been the Areopagus of open air preachers.

What can be done in Knoxville, home of the University of Tennessee?

The University of Wisconsin in Madison has an ongoing rivalry with Berkeley, California and Ann Arbor, Michigan for the title of "most liberal campus." Madison (especially), Eau Claire, and Oshkosh all need real-time exposure to real-life gospel preaching.

Who will rise up to this challenge? Many already are. There are the Joel and Annette Hanson's in Eau Claire, WI, and Bill and Carol Moore in Ames, IA. We don't pray only for a horde of leaflet enthusiasts; the coming decade demands workers, willing to lay down one life at a time.

— J. A. B



RECEIVED INTO FELLOWSHIP

Privilege, responsibility, and submitting to the elders

Recently, on the same day, I had two separate conversations with believers, each unknown to the other. They were from two different assemblies, from two different cities, from two different countries. Yet they observed the same problem in their home assembly. It was, in their view, an apparently careless way in which believers were received into fellowship. Let's consult the New Testament to see what the early church did.

1. *The early church understood that the Lord was adding to their numbers.* Luke makes this observation in Acts 2:47. Later Paul would advise the Corinthians that "God giveth the increase" (1 Cor. 3:6-7). This takes enormous pressure off us if we think our responsibility is to add numbers. Our duty, according to Paul in 1 Corinthians 3, is to plant and water.

2. *Joining a local fellowship was intended to be long-term and in harmony.* Luke uses the word to join or cleave (Acts 5:13; 17:34) describing new believers joining the local church. W. E. Vine tells us that word means "to join fast together, to glue, cement." In the context of the references cited above, Vine goes on to say this means "in the sense of becoming associated with a person so as to company with him, or be on his side."

3. *Fellowship in the local church was considered a privilege and carried associated responsibilities.* In Acts 5, Luke gives the account of judgment on Ananias and Sapphira. He observes in Acts 5:13 that many did not join the believers because of the standards that were set. The local church was not a religious movement to be joined for the time it was popular. Nor was it merely a social gathering where no demands would be made of us. It was understood that while the privileges are enormous, so are the responsibilities. Acts 5 further demonstrates that individuals were either in fellowship or not in fellowship. There was no half-hearted association with the local church. They were either "in or out."

4. *When believers were received into fellowship it was based both on their life and their light.* In 1 John 1:2-3, John tells us our fellowship is based on life. In other words, we cannot have fellowship with an unbeliever. Fellowship means to be sharing in common. If there is no

life, there is no fellowship. But John goes on to say that our fellowship is based on our walking in the light (1 Jn. 1:6-7). This means that if a believer knows a certain truth, but chooses not to walk in accordance with it, then we cannot have fellowship. Paul balances this truth in Romans 14:1 where he exhorts the Romans to receive believers even though they may be weak. A believer may come to us untaught and display their lack of knowledge in spiritual things. But they are not to be excluded from fellowship based on their immaturity. It is what they have done with the light they have that counts.

5. *New prospects for our assembly should be examined.* When believers come to our assembly, elders should arrange a time to interview them, inquiring about their spiritual condition and intentions regarding the assembly. It is vital that the shepherds not only determine the care needed for the believers new to the assembly, but also consider the care of the believers already in the fellowship. Jude gives a solemn warning in verse 4, "For there are certain men crept in unawares." Previously Jude exhorts in verse 3, "that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." In our day there are many who would like to invade a local church with a hidden agenda, carrying error in doctrine and practice with an intent to impose it on an unsuspecting fellowship. If believers unknown to the local saints are subject to a courteous, but intelligent interview by the elders, much good can be done for all.

6. *There should be a communication to the assembly when new believers are added.* God does things in an orderly way, and so should we. When the elders have determined that the Lord has sent new believers to the assembly, it should be communicated to the other believers. This lets everyone know where they stand. It communicates that these believers can be invited to share assembly duties. It gives the new believers a sense of belonging and acceptance, and will give them confidence to exercise their gift and take responsibility. If there is no clear communication, those not in fellowship could end up being asked to take responsibilities by well-meaning saints.

When receiving into fellowship, let's do it right! 

by BRIAN GUNNING

A window of opportunity

Anyone willing to move into this area of the country for Christ? They don't need any more half-hearted, wishy-washy types. The Deep South needs some laborers!

ROBERT R. BROWN

The old Mercury's big engine purred. The tires clicked rhythmically on the tar expansion strips of Interstate 65 as JoAnne and I worked our way south. It was one of those cool, bright December afternoons that we have come to love about the South. We had been on the road for several weeks and were looking forward to sleeping in our own bed, eating at our own table. We were looking forward to the quiet joy of having those familiar little mementos of two well-traveled lives once again gathered around us in our own little house! What a great life the Lord has given us, I thought!

How God has blessed us! How thankful I am to be saved...secure...and serving! What a God—the best of all Fathers!

Into my quiet, private world of reveling over the goodness of the Lord, my eyes drifted off the highway ahead and I realized that we had become surrounded by “Southern Snow,” “King Cotton,” ready for harvest. Another one of the beauties of our Lord, I thought, but they had better get going, or the rain will soon be upon them and they'll lose their window of opportunity to bring in a good crop!

Everywhere I looked, the fields were white already to harvest, but the laborers were few—actually NONE (at least that were obvious to my limited view).

As I feasted my eyes on the splendor of what the Lord had laid out before me, and the obvious spiritual applications, my mind drifted back to another Fall day. It was September 1977. I slowly opened the door of the little brick “house” on the corner of 7th Street and Teddy Avenue in Slidell, LA. My wife, JoAnne, my three children (Tina, age 8; Nita, age 10; and Sonja, age 12) and I cautiously entered. With this seemingly insignificant step, the Lord began for us a new chapter in life. We would never be the same.

The painted metal sign in the side yard read: *Slidell Bible Chapel. “Holding forth the Word of Life” Phil. 2:16.* This too would prove to be somewhat prophetic for our lives. We had no idea what was contained



in this little brick building. JoAnne and I hoped it would be something like the “chapel” in Pennsylvania where we had been saved just two short years earlier. Coming out of two major denominational churches, we weren’t very familiar with these “assemblies” but what we had seen, we liked. As I have told nearly everyone I have met since then, “They had something REAL!”

With our divinely overruled Naval transfer to New Orleans, we hoped that this place would turn out to be a similar meeting. We knew there was such a meeting in Slidell, but didn’t know where. Then, quite by accident, it seemed at the time, four blocks down from our new home, we stumbled on this little building and its sign: “Slidell Bible Chapel.”

That morning as we entered, we doubled the congregation. But as time passed, others came, some left, babies were born, children married, a new building was purchased, a Day Care and Christian School were started, then a Nursing Home ministry, mission work, tract distribution—a great deal of hard work by too few faithful people. Yet at the appointed hour, the harvest came. Souls were saved! My thoughts returned to the cotton fields.

The fields go way beyond this cotton patch, I thought...way beyond what I can see. How like these fields is this whole area. The Deep South, a field white and ready for harvest, but the laborers are so few!

We consider the Deep South to be one of the great Home Mission Fields in existence today. It consists of Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and the Florida Panhandle, and covers approximately 150,000 square miles. It stretches about 350 miles north to south and 550 miles east to west, with a population of about 11.5 million souls (most of whom need the Saviour). This area reaches from what is normally thought of as the heavily Protestant “Bible Belt” on the north, to the predominantly Roman Catholic Gulf Coast and French Louisiana.

There is great spiritual diversity in this region. New Orleans, LA, (with an 85% Catholic population) has a proliferation of Satanism, spiritism, cults, and the occult—about 11% of the population of the greater New Orleans area profess to be “voodoo practitioners”—a few snake handlers in the hill country of Mississippi and Alabama. There are also a few “dead” mainline denominational groups, and some other “oddball” sects, as the locals view them.

But there are also some really vibrant strongholds of biblical Christianity interspersed across the area. All of this results in a great deal of opposition (both physical and spiritual) to the planting and building up of funda-

mental, evangelical New Testament-style local churches.

Yet there has been some good work done in the area over the past 50 years or so. Such pioneers as Vernon Schlieff and T. B. Gilbert and a few others have worked with committed local brethren to see a small number of solid New Testament testimonies established. We are hugely encouraged by these.

Today there are approximately fifteen assemblies with their own buildings (average attendance between 10-100 people), two home meetings (1-5 families), and ten or so serious contacts who show good interest (either already have been involved in meetings that have closed, or show some possibility of becoming a meeting in the future).

There are a few fulltime workers in the area and a couple of these travel among these small meetings with the goal of planting new assemblies as well as encouraging and building up the saints in the existing ones.

We are continually encouraged by the spirit exhibited among these small, typically conservative, true-to-the-Bible groups. They work tirelessly to do the Lord’s work in their local assemblies, and while most are separated by many miles (typically three hours’ drive one way), they are faithful in traveling these distances to encourage and support one another at local Bible conferences and special events. A number of them are working closely together to develop Christian camping in the Deep South and encourage one another in outreach efforts.

While each meeting has its own personality and is quite different from the others, they do have a real desire to maintain a balanced scriptural stand for New Testament principles as they see them. They have a strong and faithful love for the Lord Jesus and His Church, a practical desire to live for Him day by day, and a sincere and enthusiastic vision and understanding of sound, conservative, biblical New Testament principles.

Just like those fields of cotton, the Deep South is ready for harvest, but the laborers are few. Please pray with us that the Lord of the harvest will raise up faithful, committed workers and builders; and that He will hinder the disruptive and divisive influences that have plagued the work in the Deep South in the past.

Much has already been accomplished by faithful men and women. Much more is left to be done! Maybe you are that man or woman, that young person or older, retired person, that God can use to accomplish great things in the Deep South! The Bridegroom stands at the door. The trumpet and the shout may come at any time. Brethren, we have a window of opportunity. We would hate to miss it! Pray for us! For the harvest! For the laborers!

**PLEASE
PRAYERFULLY
CONSIDER JOINING
US IN THE DEEP SOUTH
FOR A WEEK OR TWO.
THE MOBILE OUTREACH
IS PLANNED FOR
JUNE 6-18,
DV.**

The work in Quebec

There is a cross-cultural mission field right on our doorstep. This veteran worker paints in the details.

DONALD COX

Even though *La Belle Province* (The Beautiful Province) is still predominantly French Roman Catholic today, history tells us that French and Swiss Protestantism played a foundational role in Quebec and Canada.

Admiral Gaspard de Coligny was the brother-in-law of Sir Walter Raleigh and the half-brother of another famous sailor, Sir Humphrey Gilbert. He was a binding force for the French Protestant expedition leaders: Roberval, Chauvin and de Monts. He had ties with the royal families of Holland and England. His daughter, Louise, married Guillaume le Silencieux and had a little grandson, William III, who became king of England.

As a leader of the French Huguenots, de Coligny presented to Henry II a project for the founding of a great Protestant French empire in America, which would permit religious freedom for persecuted Reformists. King Henry approved the idea at first, then abandoned it. Even certain French-Canadian historians admit the great loss to France to have succumbed to the hatred, passions and tyrannic furor of the day. The historian Eugène Réveillaud writes of the ruined possibilities of the rich heritage and capacities of the Huguenots in a promised land. De Coligny was killed in the massacre of St. Bartholomy, August 24, 1572.

Henry IV, a Protestant who turned Catholic to become King of France,

shared Coligny's vision. He named Chauvin, a Huguenot from Dieppe, as Lieutenant-Governor of Canada and gave him a 10-year monopoly on the fur trade with orders to build a house and establish colonies. Another Huguenot, de Monts, the first "colonizer" of Canada, became Lieutenant Governor of Acadia in 1604. He played a historic role that was "more important, but too little known, than even Champlain." Champlain (with his biblical first name Samuel—common in Protestant families) turned Catholic in 1598, so as to be able to participate in an expedition to the West Indies with the Spaniards and also to continue colonization in New France (Quebec).

Much of this colorful past history has been reduced to pale shadows by the Jesuit oppression and imprisonment of those who would dare write about it. The assassination of Henry IV in 1610 was a turning point in the history of New France.

Little by little, French Protestants and Huguenots were eliminated, especially by Richelieu who favored the Jesuits and prevented the entry of Huguenots into Canada. He founded the Company of One Hundred, a fur-trading enterprise limited to Roman Catholics.

Champlain was obliged to surrender to Kirke, whose mother was Huguenot, in 1629, and Canada was given back to France by the Treaty

of St-Germain in 1632. At that time the Huguenot, Emery de Caen, was charged with the responsibility of taking possession of Quebec and Canada in the name of France. In 1633, a century of Huguenot colonization efforts ceased. It can nevertheless be said that if it hadn't been for Huguenots like Roberval, Chauvin, and de Monts, called by some the "first founders of Canada," the French presence would not have been established.

A Catholic writer, Salone, states: "Up until 1628, it would seem that the Calvinist Huguenot element played a central role. Even though Champlain and others converted to the Roman Church, most of the commercial associates and agents were Protestant." Even the Quebec flag, the "Fleur-de-lis" has its origins in the white Huguenot flag that Frontenac, a Huguenot, raised at



THE WORK IN QUEBEC

Cataraqui (near Kingston, ON) before gathered Iroquois Indians.

Protestantism is not new in Quebec. The Huguenots were very much a presence, and in many cases quite evangelical. From the 10,000 immigrants to New France came descendants of more than six million Canadians and a few million Franco-Americans. Ten percent of the original number were from an evangelical background. With time and persecution, the Roman Church succeeded in all but eliminating their influence for many years.

A DIRE NEED FOR THE GOSPEL

Quebec is still in dire need of the gospel—not Catholicism nor Protestantism! Less than one half of one percent (0.42%) of Quebecers profess evangelical faith. It is still one of the neediest mission fields in the world. The present generation, with little knowledge of God, is struggling with changing morals, like all other provinces and countries. Rome still presents her own gospel, *speaking* of salvation by faith but *presenting* the grace of God as being attainable through the sacraments, good works, prayers, etc. New birth is still by infant or adult baptism. The Mass is still based on the false doctrine of transubstantiation—that the body and blood of Christ enters literally into the wafer and the cup through the blessing of the priest.

A recently saved young couple discussed plans with their priest for their marriage in 10 days. They stated they could not in good conscience partake of the Mass. They were told that it is through the wafer that Christ can enter their hearts. The young lady replied that Christ was already in her heart and that she was born again. He agreed to marry them without the sacrament of the Mass, but suggested that they could continue living in common law, since over half the marriages here end in divorce. They refused that option and insisted on marriage. He accepted and showed them a long list of acceptable reasons for future annulment. What turmoil for the young lady who will probably be rejected for some time by her family, as is true in many cases.

MORE RECENT HISTORY

Let's go back again in history. Protestant evangelical works seem to have been influential from 1840 until the beginning of the 1900's. Courageous efforts by French, Swiss, and Canadian missionaries (including the Quebec converted priest Charles Chiniquy, 1809-1899), were blessed by the salvation of souls. In 1915, there were about 60 evangelical denominational churches. However, by 1945 this number was reduced to half, probably due to the anglicization of the children, doctrinal changes and divisions within some groups. The continuing pressure of



the Roman Church incited many French-Canadian believers to live and learn in the more relaxed atmosphere of English schools and churches.

In the 30's and 40's, there was a renewed advance of the gospel. Souls were saved and many local churches formed. The quiet political revolution of the 60's and 70's radically changed Quebec from a mainly religious society to a more secular, intellectual, and political one. Children can now be educated in a linguistic rather than a confessional school system. However, the gospel still cannot be spread without meeting the open or covert resistance of Rome, and the added confusion of numerous cults.

HISTORY OF ASSEMBLIES IN QUEBEC

The Judgment Seat of Christ will no doubt reveal the unknown sacrifices of faithful servants from various groups. Among these is the story of the beginnings of assemblies who desire to meet in the Saviour's name alone. On the evening of March 18, 1933, two young men—John Spreeman (see *Uplook*, Jan. 1998) and Noah Gratton—arrived, after a long tiring journey from Montreal, at the little station of Albanel, a little remote town on the north shore of Lake St. John. They were taken by cutter eight miles farther, with nearly frozen ears, to the remote lumberjack village of Girardville.

What "special" circumstances led to this missionary endeavor? Through the faithful ministry of Toronto tract bands, an invitation was received from parishoners in Girardville to send them a Protestant minister. Behind this "bizarre" request was a boiling battle between members of the local Catholic church and their parish priest. They wanted a new church to be built near them in the country. The priest wanted it in the nearby village. This squabble led to the preaching of the gospel the next Lord's Day (in broken French) in the still-standing combined Catholic church and school building.

About 40 parishoners and some dumb statues "listened" for the first time to the sweet sound of the gospel. After a few visits in homes, the Lord saved the mayor's wife, Mrs. Pierre Doucet. Her husband also turned to

Christ, with the help of his own boys, deep in the bush, after much resistance to the gospel.

The Lord continued to work in hearts and the devil started working in gangs who, under the leadership of the priest, and to the consternation of the weak legal authorities, began their campaign of kidnapping and death threats. Others were saved and baptized, in spite of violent resistance. The first French-Canadian assembly began meeting under these circumstances in 1934, and continues today with the help of the grandson of that first couple. Others were established in various areas in the following years, often with violent demonstrations and police intervention. We learned that even the bishop in Toronto, responsible for Quebec, was so upset by these events that he forwarded funds to help cover damages incurred by violence and riots.

Rome very rarely resists in such a violent manner in present-day Quebec. New believers often have to pay the price of losing friends and family for a time, but then are usually able to reestablish contact and even have the joy of leading some to Christ.

QUEBEC TODAY

There are presently about 46 New Testament assemblies in Quebec, to our knowledge. The struggles are still real, whether in large centers or isolated villages and rural areas. A few meetings have closed their doors in the past few years. A few full-time workers have returned to



secular work, while remaining active for the Lord. Others are experiencing blessing which is evident by worship at the Lord's Supper and the salvation of souls. The gospel goes out faithfully via transformed lives, vigorous assembly outreach, radio, television, and three assembly camps. Many believers have the opportunity for good Bible teaching. Good Christian literature, although quite expensive, plays a very important role in Quebec assemblies.

As in other periods and areas, there always seems to be a hunger for change. Some of this seems needful and beneficial but some seems to lead to divisions, an ever-

present danger. The greatest need remains: devoted men and women who are willing to follow the example of the early pioneers. God no doubt uses worthy projects to do His work, but He is still looking for Pauls, Barnabases and Timothys to plant, water and shepherd His flock (1 Cor. 3:6; Acts 20:28; 1 Tim. 4:11-16).

Assemblies in Quebec and elsewhere need young Spirit-filled men and women who are willing to be devoted servants (before they become leaders). They need to be passionate about to the Person of Christ, His Church, and the gospel. Young French-Canadians are gradually responding to this need. There is still an open door for missionaries from other areas to come and help in this still needy field. An honest effort is necessary to learn the language and "convert" to the national French-Canadian culture, not only in the ministry but in the home.

Danger always lurks in the shadows: 1) feverish activity hinders the Spirit's activities; 2) negligence hinders diligence in the study and teaching of God's Word; 3) "sharing"—a biblical activity in its place—tends to replace remembrance at the Lord's Supper; 4) professionalizing of public ministry threatens the valuable work of the humblest and simplest believer; 5) personal ambitions lead to protectionism and rivalry.

In spite of human weaknesses, New Testament principles and practices are still successful today. Paul's methods, although difficult, are still God's methods.

ARE YOU CALLED TO A MISSION FIELD?

There is one in your own backyard, on your own continent. What should you do?

1. Speak to your elders. Are you a missionary where you are? Learn at home to be a servant of the Lord.
2. Know your Bible. Are you personally disciplined to study and teach God's Word?
3. Be convinced and gracious concerning New Testament principles and practices.
4. Be diligent in your education and secular vocation. It will be useful in Quebec.
5. Can you learn and live another language and culture? Do you adapt well to others?
6. With the cooperation of your local assembly, contact a worker, an assembly, or a service committee to make contact with those already involved in mission work. One helpful address:

Conseils et Services Missionnaires
4026, des Outardes
Jonqui re, QC G7X 9B4
Phone: 418-542-5092
Fax: 418-542-4577
E-mail: dcox@netrover.com



Witnessing to Catholics

Mike and Anne-Marie Attwood have been serving the Lord for some years in Kilkenny, Ireland. They are presently in the US for an extended stay.

MIKE ATTWOOD

To reach Roman Catholics, they must be personally convinced they are lost. Sadly, in Evangelical circles there is a growing trend to accept Catholicism as a viable Christian church. Key evangelical leaders write with sympathy and respect of the Vatican and current pope. Was the Reformation a mistake? Has the Catholic church changed in its basic doctrine since then?

As a former Roman Catholic and a missionary to Catholic people in Ireland, I can answer those questions with a resounding, No! Catholicism teaches a false gospel, another gospel, and is under the curse of God. *“But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed”* (Gal. 1:8).

Many Catholics remind me of Cornelius, as described in Acts 10:2, *“A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway.”* They can be very sincere religious people, but, like Cornelius, they need a Peter to come along who *“shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved”* (Acts 11:14).

The first requirement in being an effective witness to Catholics is being convinced that, without Christ as their one and only hope of salvation, they are lost. Along those lines, I would add a note of caution: do not be fooled by shared terminology.

My mother-in-law is a very devout Catholic, but if you were to ask her if she believes that Jesus died on the cross to pay for her sins, she would answer with an emphatic, Yes!

Does this mean she is saved? After all, she believes in the death of Christ. However, the gospel is faith alone in Christ *alone*. I always follow up my initial question, with a supplementary one, “What if you never went to mass again. Would you still go to heaven when you die?” To this my mother-in-law would reply in the negative. So is she trusting in the finished work of Christ for salvation or by attending Mass? Don’t be fooled by initial answers; probe deeper.

We should recognize that there are various types of Roman Catholics, each requiring a different approach. First, you have the traditional Catholic, entirely committed to the Roman Church and its teaching. Many of these would attend Mass on a daily basis. They are often the most difficult to reach, as they are very defensive and wary of people from other religious backgrounds. This person will require time to build their trust, and needs much prayer on how to approach biblical subjects.

One of the key questions I am often asked by traditional Catholics is: What do you think of the blessed virgin Mary? I always try to be positive in answering, and would say that



I believe everything the Bible says about her. At this point, if you were to criticize the Catholic view of Mary you could lose your contact.

The second group are nominal Catholics, attending Mass less frequently—sometimes only at Christmas and Easter. But they would still have their children baptized as Catholics, get them confirmed, married, and buried in the Church. If you were to knock at their door, the first statement they would make would be, “I am a Catholic”; in other words, leave me alone.

I usually answer by saying truthfully, that I am a Catholic, too. This often will take the person at the door by surprise and allow further conversation. I explain that I belong to the Universal Church of Jesus Christ as does everyone that trusts alone in Him for salvation.

Incidentally, I personally avoid identifying myself as a Protestant. This can be quite an offensive term to Catholics, especially in Ireland. After all, Protestant is not a biblical term, so why cling to it? We are simply believers in the Lord Jesus.

The third group, often the most open, are the Catholic Charismatics,

a growing segment of the Catholic Church. These often have an interest in the Bible and are open to getting involved in home Bible studies. We have had several who had many questions concerning Charismatic teachings and are open to study 1 Corinthians 12–14, verse by verse, with us. This has proved very fruitful and has resulted in a rejection of Charismatic error and an interest in the marvelous gospel of the grace of God.

Key elements to emphasize while witnessing to Catholics: your personal testimony and assurance of salvation—two concepts foreign to the Catholic. Tell them your personal experience, how you became convicted of sin and how you were brought to see your inability to save yourself. Finally, tell them about the finished work of Christ, how He died as your substitute and took the punishment you deserved.

As I have witnessed to Catholics in Ireland (and produced a gospel magazine there), I have been amazed at how fascinated Catholics are by personal testimonies. The Roman system does not emphasize this personal encounter; it is a system of dead ritual.

Assurance of salvation is also foreign to Catholics because their salvation is based on the formula: Faith + Works = Justification. The problem is—how many works are enough? Not even the pope knows if he has done enough. The biblical formula is: Faith = Justification + Works. We believe we are justified by God's grace, and this saving grace also motivates us to live for Him. Our good works are the fruit, not the means, of this gift of life. Tell Catholic friends that you know where you are going when you die, not because you are a good person, but because you have a great Saviour.

Is there some helpful literature to use with Catholics? Of course, the most useful literature is the Bible itself. For years the Catholic church has kept the Scriptures from its people because it knows that, when the Bible and Catholicism are compared, you can only come to one conclusion: one or the other is wrong—and it isn't the Bible! Personally I was saved through reading the Bible for the first time at age 21, and then by asking questions to a Christian at work. Encourage Catholics to read the Word, remembering that *"the Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart"* (Heb. 4:12).

One booklet with which we have been delighted is a written by Jim McCarthy and published by Everyday Publications, called *The Mass: from Mystery to Meaning*. It again uses the personal testimony of a Catholic's search for meaning in the Mass. We like it because it is

written in a gracious tone. When witnessing, we must always remember that the Lord Jesus was *"full of grace and truth."* Sadly, some Christians are full of truth, but lack characteristic grace when witnessing.

We have seen Catholics read this tract and then pass it on to relatives and friends. One man, while on a train to Dublin, began to read the tract, and a lady in the compartment asked if she could read it, too.

A further help is knowing how to answer Catholic proof texts, especially Matthew 16:18. Their logic is that the Church is to be built on the Rock, which in Catholic thinking is Peter—the first in a long line of popes. I have heard all kinds of answers to this text, mainly about the difference in meaning between two Greek renderings of the same root word. To the average Catholic this is not an impressive argument. Most of them do not understand Greek, nor do they desire to. So how do you answer this key Catholic verse?

A simpler answer is, by the context. The passage has its theme introduced in verse 13, *"When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?"* So the question that is to be determined in the passage is, who is Jesus, not who is Peter. Various answers are given concerning who people think Jesus is. The Lord then asks His disciples, *"Who do you say I am?"* Peter answers with a wonderful statement, *"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."* The Lord commends Peter and tells him that his understanding came from God. Then He makes the statement concerning the Rock. Upon this Rock, the fact that Jesus is both the Messiah—the Anointed One promised in the Old Testament—and the Son of God, He will build His assembly. He will call out from the world those that acknowledge Him for who He really is.

In summary, the passage is to determine the identity of Jesus of Nazareth, not Peter. Jesus is none other than the Messiah, the Son of God, and because of who He is, the Church will be built *by* Him and *on* Him.

I have just mentioned a few tips concerning witnessing to Roman Catholics. It is not meant to be exhaustive. Let me, however, encourage you to pray for, and reach out to, the many Catholic people in the world, who, like Cornelius, need to hear words by which they can be saved. Why not ask the Lord to use you, as He used Peter, to bring the wonderful words of life to some Cornelius in your neighborhood?

Mike and Anne-Marie Attwood
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4020 58th Avenue North #3977
St. Petersburg, FL 33714

A look at the west

The West and Deep South are two areas of North America that have seen the least of our efforts.

DONALD L. NORBIE

Asssembly work along New Testament lines is not strong in much of the west. Population in many areas is sparse and distances between cities can be great. The work in California has been the strongest in years past. Here is a brief survey of the area:

We start in the south in El Paso, TX where an assembly has met for many years at Grace Chapel. It has had

TEXAS

The Walterick Address Book lists 36 assemblies in Texas. The relatively new Lewisville assembly is just finishing their new building. We hope to have a report soon. There is also a new work getting started in Hico, an hour's drive from Waco. There are some recent encouragements in Golden and Longview.

its ups and downs but the work is continuing. This assembly works with others in New Mexico and Arizona in sponsoring a Bible camp near Silver City, NM.

Fairly close to the Texas border is Las Cruces, NM, where there is another fellowship that began about thirty years ago and has seen growth and blessing. They are called Bethel Bible Fellowship. At Clovis there is Clovis Gospel Chapel with a small Spanish assembly, begun years ago by David Metler.

Further north at Albuquerque there is a Gospel Hall and the

Garfield Gospel Chapel. Both of these are older works but are not strong numerically. On the outskirts of Albuquerque is a new work at Rio Rancho, called Rio Rancho Bible Chapel. North of Albuquerque is a small assembly in rented quarters in Los Alamos, famous because of its nuclear research.

Colorado has a Spanish work in Pueblo and a vigorous assembly in Alamosa which has seen real blessing. Colorado Springs has four assemblies, the Southside Bible Chapel being the oldest, although not strong now. Harvest Bible Fellowship is the newest work in the area.

In the Denver area the work in Littleton is the largest. In Denver there are three assemblies, none very large.

Denver is a huge metropolitan area and could use much more work. East of Denver about 75 miles is Limon, a small, ranching community where the Farmers have labored faithfully for years. In Boulder there are two assemblies, one quite small. The work in Longmont has died, as well as the assembly in Fort Collins, which is a real loss. To the west in Grand Junction is a healthy work called Clifton Bible Chapel, pioneered by brother Rich Bishop.

In Northern Colorado at Greeley is Fellowship Chapel, an assembly which started ten years ago and is growing. A previous assembly there died because of strife over the role of women. The new assembly has a vigorous jail ministry as well as a community outreach. Some years ago a group of believers from Greeley moved to Laramie, WY, and started an assembly there. It is meeting in a home and could use a more public facility. More recently an assembly has begun in Powell, WY, and is now renting a room for meetings at the local college. They are a happy, growing group.

Montana has a chapel in Missoula, called Mountain View Chapel. Missoula has a university and is an important city in Montana. Stevensville is a small community south of Missoula but has the most vigorous

assembly in the state. There are two or three other smaller works but there is not much in Montana as far as assemblies go. Billings, the largest city, has none.

Idaho has a strong work in Boise with a beautiful, new chapel. Coeur D'Alene in the north has a small assembly. Idaho could use more workers.



COLORADO

The Walterick Book lists 18 assemblies in Colorado. A new effort is presently being made in Pueblo among the English population. The Westside assembly in Colorado Springs has a very fruitful work among the Air Force cadets, with several being saved each year. Many are real assets in the areas where they are stationed.

EMPTY STATES

There was a small effort in Sioux Falls, SD, but nothing that we know of now in the whole state. As noted, Nevada has one small work outside of Reno. Three couples have started meeting in Salt Lake City and could use some encouragement. Wyoming and Idaho also could use help. Any couples willing?

was begun in 1937 by T. B. Gilbert and has carried on faithfully since. They have a strong jail ministry as well as their community outreach. Phoenix has a Gospel Hall and the Palms Bible Chapel. The Chapel has had its struggles but recent reports are encouraging. There are other small assemblies scattered around the state; some may have died, others need encouragement.

California is a big state with a huge population of over thirty million. In many areas assembly work is struggling. San Diego has several assemblies. Laurel Bible Chapel used to be a very strong work but has gone through some difficult times. El Cajon has a newer work that seems to be growing.

The Los Angeles area has a number of assemblies. Some are barely surviving. Others, like Claremont are keeping pace. Fullerton in times past had one of the most vigorous works in the area but it has lost many. As one

In Utah years ago there was a small assembly with an attractive chapel in Salt Lake City. But that work died and there is no work along these lines in the state of Utah today. It is a shame; surely this Mormon state needs the gospel. In Nevada there is a small work in Sparks but nothing else. All would agree that Las Vegas and Reno could use more work in the gospel.

In Arizona, the strongest assembly is the Tucson Bible Chapel in Tucson. This work

goes north the assemblies in Thousand Oaks and Santa Barbara no longer exist, a real loss. Further north Atascadero still seems to have a vigorous work.

In the Bay area, Fairhaven Bible Chapel in San Leandro is the largest, most vigorous work. They are constantly seeing souls saved and added to the fellowship. Calvary Bible Chapel in San Leandro is an offshoot of Fairhaven and is doing quite well. Cupertino seems to be thriving and Parkside in San Francisco is being revived.


There are other smaller assemblies also that are growing.

In Oregon there are some smaller assemblies scattered around the state but Portland has the largest concentration. Some that were vigorous are not growing. Washington has a number of smaller assemblies but again the greatest concentration is in the Seattle area. Some older assemblies are declining in numbers.

This, of necessity, is a rather superficial survey and the writer is more familiar with some areas than others. But a few general observations are in order. In some areas assembly testimony is weaker than it was twenty years ago. What is the problem? Often there has been a decline in spiritual zeal and in the drive to evangelize. In other cases there has been a change of the character of the work. Some assemblies have become enamored with a charismatic type service with "contemporary" music, getting rid of their hymn books and using mainly choruses. In some cases they have hired a "pastor" and attempted to become more like another independent church. In most cases it has been a failure. They have lost their distinctive identity and now must compete with all the large churches.

For growth and stability God's people need to renew their vision of New Testament church principles and get convictions about what God wants His people to do. A group that waffles and is wishy-washy will not attract serious Christians. We have nothing to be ashamed of when we stand on God's Word. Teaching on the church is called the "Lord's commandment" (1 Cor. 14:37). It is a mistake to minimize the importance of teaching and the Lord's Supper. If people want short, fifteen-minute messages and much entertainment, let them go elsewhere. Let us be among those who desire to obey the Word.

And there must always be the drive to evangelize. Unless a group is reproducing, it will in time die out. Rachel cried, "Give me children or else I die!" (Gen. 30:1). Aggressive evangelism is as much a church truth as having the Lord's Supper.

God keep us from a defeatist mentality. The Word is the same; the Holy Spirit is the same. May the Lord give His people a sweeping vision and the faith to see His work prosper and spread. 

NORTHWEST

The Walterick Book lists 24 assemblies in the state of Washington and another 13 in Oregon. Recently a Northwest Workers' Conference has been an encouragement to the laborers in that area, held each year at Lakeside Bible Camp on Whidbey Island. The Gospel Halls have had some blessing with gospel tent work.

CALIFORNIA

The Walterick Address Book lists 54 assemblies in California. There is an evangelistic effort being made in San Jose, and some have a burden for the tri-city area of Modesto, Stockton, and Tracy City. The Hispanic work is vigorous, and there are concerted efforts among South East Asian people groups.



Compassion for the Lost

Sudden, before my inward, open vision,
Millions of faces crowded up to view—
Sad eyes that said, “For us is no provision,
Give us your Saviour, too.”

Sorrowful faces, hungry, yearning,
Wild with despair, or dark with sin and dread,
Worn with long weeping for the unreturning,
Hopeless, uncomforted.

“Give us,” they cry, “your cup of consolation,
Never to our outstretched hands is passed;
We long for the Desire of every nation,
And, oh, we die so fast.”

“Does He not love us, too, this gracious Master?
'Tis from your hand alone we can receive
The bounty of His grace; oh, send it faster
That we may take and live.”

“Master,” I said, as from a dream awaking,
“Is this the service Thou dost show to me?
Dost Thou to me entrust Thy Bread for breaking
To those who cry for Thee?”

“Dear heart of love, canst Thou forgive the blindness
That let Thy child sit selfish and at ease
By the full table of Thy lovingkindness,
And take no thought for these?”

“As Thou hast loved me let me love, returning
To those dark souls the grace Thou givest me;
And, oh, to me impart Thy deathless yearning,
To draw the lost to Thee.” —*Author Unknown*

The Uniqueness of Christ

A review of Christ Among Other Gods: A Defense of Christ in an Age of Tolerance, by Erwin W. Lutzer. Hardback and softcover, 207 pages, Moody Press.

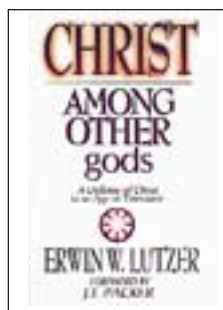
MICHAEL FITZHUGH

In 1 Corinthians 8:4-7, in reference to idols, the Apostle Paul wrote: “Therefore concerning the eating of things offered to idols, we know that *an idol is nothing* in the world, and that there is *no other God but one*. For even if there are *so-called gods*, whether in heaven or on earth (as there are many gods and many lords), yet for us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we for Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and through whom we live. However, *there is not in everyone that knowledge...*” (1 Cor. 8:4-7a, emphasis mine).

This fact, that “there is not in everyone that knowledge” in our world today, is brought out forcefully and with precision in Erwin Lutzer’s timely book, *Christ Among Other Gods: A Defense of Christ in an Age of Tolerance*.

This book, written against the backdrop of the Parliament of the World’s Religions (which met in Chicago in 1993), shows how our culture demands toleration of the myriad of beliefs about God. We are told that in this age of tolerance, we are to accept anyone and everyone, no matter what their belief system, with the notable exception of those who happen to believe that there is only one true God, only one exclusive way to God, that being the Lord Jesus Christ.

Lutzer’s book is highly definitive as to the issues and concepts of pluralism, relativism, and biblical



Christianity. It effectively and accurately speaks to the mindset and belief system of our contemporary culture, revealing why and where the world system is headed. In the face of our increasingly pluralistic society, this book is a refreshing and effective defense of Christ and the gospel.


Mr. Lutzer shows that throughout the world there is a grandiose movement, a “religious tidal wave,” which has as its purpose to bring together all beliefs, all gods, and all peoples. This pseudo-spiritual storm surge is to break down the barriers which divide, resulting in the unifying of all, for the common good. According to the promoters of the movement, those who don’t catch this wave of global religious unity, will drown. He then shows how the Lord Jesus Christ, who said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life” (Jn. 14:6), does not significantly figure into the equation.

In contrast to this grand flood of pluralistic relativism, the author presents a clear, uncompromising presentation of the preeminence and exclusivity of Jesus Christ and the gospel of grace.

After briefly outlining the historical and philosophical development of uncritical tolerance of any and all beliefs, in no uncertain terms Christ is presented as the *one and only Way to God*, and as *the one and only God*. The book gives clear focus and a strong emphasis to the Person and

work of Christ and the saving gospel, systematically discussing His virgin birth, His sinless life, and His unmitigated authority. The death, burial, resurrection, ascension, and second coming of Christ are all masterfully delineated in a way that leaves no doubt as to His exclusiveness and uniqueness. Christ and the Christian faith do indeed stand alone.

Clear and concise, Lutzer’s book is not laden with highly technical, theological jargon, yet it is presented intelligently, with credible scholarship and thorough preparation. It presents Christ and His work clearly and effectively, as revealed in Scripture. Is Jesus Christ just one among many gods, or is He Someone special—the one and only unique Son of God (Jn. 1:18; 3:16; etc.)? Lutzer makes it clear that He is indeed Lord and God, the divine Word made flesh. He shows why Jesus Christ is far different from all other gods, and why neither He nor the Christian faith can be amalgamated with other religions.

This is an excellent book to use with non-Christians who have a sincere desire to know God, and who are willing to investigate the uniqueness of the Person and work of Christ. It can also be a valuable tool for believers who seek to “be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks...a reason for the hope that is in [them]” (1 Pet. 3:15). When we are asked why we believe that Christ is God, and the only way to God, this book provides biblical answers. This book, as one old sage used to say, “is no brag, just fact,” presenting *the one and only Lord Jesus Christ*. 

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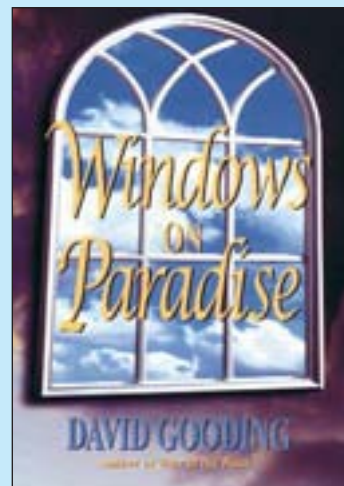
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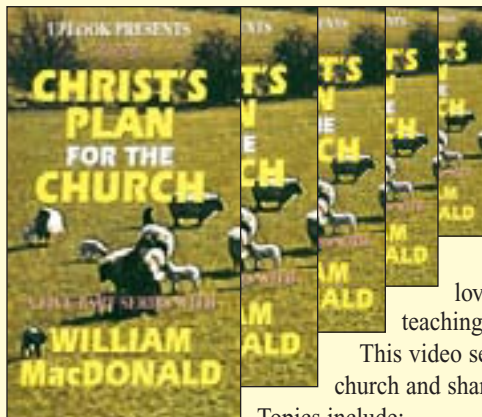
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NOBODY'S INTERESTED

Are They?

"There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God" (Rom. 3:11).

"But if from thence thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find Him, if thou seek Him with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Deut. 4:29).

Who were those wise men that traversed the road to Bethlehem two thousand years ago? We do not know. We only know that they came seeking the King, and that they have kindred souls today. Some take the words of the Psalmist (14 & 53) quoted by Paul in Romans 3:11 as the only word on the subject of seeking, and conclude that God must do all the seeking or men will never be saved. But the Bible is more than one verse, even though the verse is quoted twice.

Five hundred years before David, the Lord prophesied Israel's future to them, and spoke of a time five hundred years beyond David when the tribes would at last turn again to the Lord in their distress. Scattered among the Gentiles, serving gods that are the work of men's hands, at last they would cry to Him and discover that "the Lord thy God is a merciful God." If they then would whole-heartedly seek Him, they would find Him.

Is a promise like this only for Jews in *diaspora*? Hardly. In Acts 15:16-17, Peter quoted Amos 9:11-12 to convince his brethren that the restoration of Israel was intended to stimulate the Gentiles to seek the Lord, too. And in Acts 17, Paul preaches to the Athenians that God uses the events of history to stir "all nations of men... That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him, and find Him, though He be not far from every one of us" (vv. 26-27).

Of course God must take the initiative. But He has! Whether by beneficence (Rom. 2:4) or by tragedies (Ps. 107), through creation (Rom. 1:20) or providence (Acts 17:28), by a star in the sky or the witness of a friend, God is agitating, stimulating people to seek Him. And if wholehearted in their search, He promises that they will find the One who all along has been seeking them. —J. B. N.

