



*An Independent Church Journal
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This article was submitted by a missionary's wife working in an Islamic country. Name withheld.

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In 1954, Dr. Lowell Wendt moved to the Lake City area near Fort Lewis and Tacoma, Washington to pastor the *Lake City Community Church*. This move was prompted by his burden to touch the Pacific Northwest with the truth of the Gospel, and to see churches planted and established with a heart for missions...

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I am sure that the Apostle Paul had a plan. He wanted to reach "All Asia" with the Gospel. According to Acts 16: 7-8, when he arrived at Mysia in his travels in Asia Minor, he planned to go northeast to Bithynia "but the Spirit of Jesus" did not permit him. I have always been curious how a very determined man was stopped from carrying out his plan...

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Director of Chaplaincy

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Grand Bahama Isles is my homeland and place of ministry. Located just 55 miles of the east coast of Florida, it is the first in a chain of 15 major Islands and 685 little Cays. It is an independent English-speaking island that attracts visitors for its championship golf courses, vegas-style casinos, pristine white beaches, water sports, and many other cultural means of entertainment...

Mrs. Kathleen Buchanan

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Washington, Illinois is a town of just over 14,000 people located east of Peoria. It is a growing middle to upper-middle class community. The Lord directed seven local families to hold Sunday evening Bible studies early in the year. As time went on...

THE URGENCY OF THE HOUR

Rev. Les Lofquist

Executive Director, IFCA International

Recently I was talking to a friend about his church which has a long and rich heritage of preaching the truth of the Word of God. For good reason, many people look to this church as an example of excellence in ministry.

One recent Sunday a visiting preacher spoke. His message was based squarely on the Bible. It had the right answers. It had the right content with the right doctrine delivered by a preacher with an obviously well-trained mind and a life which evidenced godliness.

"But something was wrong. Something was missing." That was my friend's assessment.

Curious, I spent several minutes trying to understand the problem as he saw it. It then became clear with these words: "I guess what really bothered me was that this preacher just didn't sound very urgent."

How sad. *"This preacher just didn't sound very urgent."*

What a contrast to our previous topic of discussion! We had been talking about the situation in New York City at "Ground Zero" after 9-11. With that still on our minds, we immediately related the urgency of preaching the Gospel to the urgency of a 911 call.

Firemen. Policemen. Paramedics. They urgently and immediately go about their serious missions due to the life-and-death nature of their calling. But aren't there even more compelling reasons for urgency with the Gospel? The fiery judgement that threatens the lost is eternally more serious than any problems encountered by rescue teams. How can we be passive, even apathetic, with the Gospel?

Every person we meet in this life is on a collision course with death and their day to stand before God. Ours is the only message of hope. To fully grasp that eternal truth should lead to such an urgency that we are sometimes considered "mad" (like Christ in Mark 3:21 and John 10:20) or "beside ourselves" (like Paul in Acts 26:24 and 2 Cor. 5:13). Does your sense of urgency ever cause others to question your sanity? Or are you just complacent enough to keep that evaluation far away?

Paul's ministry to the Corinthians seemed beyond the bounds of "normal." Yet he persisted in that kind of fervency, despite the shallow assessment of 2 Corinthians 5:13. In fact, as you continue reading, note Paul's continued urgency:

"For the love of Christ *compels us*, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; and He died for all, that those who live *should no longer live for themselves*, but for Him who died for them and rose again." (2 Cor. 5:14-16)

"We are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were *pleading through us: we implore you* on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God." (2 Cor. 5:20)

Paul brings this impassioned argument to a conclusion in 2 Corinthians 6:1-2. He pleads with those careless Christians "not to receive the grace of God in vain" (v.1). This refers to the sinful indifference of the Corinthians whose lifestyle reflected no urgency with the Gospel. They had better things to pursue than holy zeal. They gossiped. They fought. They sued each other. They committed fornication.

Paul reminded them that a day of judgment was coming for the world. He was insistent that the Corinthians realize it was God's time to save the lost and they were supposed to be ambassadors to help spread the message: "now is the accepted time [to preach]; behold, now is the day of salvation [i.e. a day for proclaiming salvation in a ministry of reconciliation]."

Most apply 2 Cor. 6:2 to unbelievers and urge them to place their faith in Christ today. But the context argues for something else: today is the day to proclaim salvation, not trifle away our lives as Christians. How tragic if those entrusted as ambassadors somehow become cold and lifeless and careless and silent! Today is a day when God no longer listens and responds to sinners who receive by faith the message of reconciliation delivered by His ambassadors. But that day is not this day. Today is the day of salvation.

We can be encouraged to reach our world today by the fervency of modern-day Apostle Pauls. There are men and women who have laid down their lives for the Gospel. We often call them missionaries.

Listen to these missionaries share their passion in this issue of the *VOICE*. Like spiritual paramedics they answer the 911 calls of the souls of our generation. They understand the urgency of the hour. Do we? Or are we like that preacher with something missing, who "just didn't sound very urgent."

May God deliver us from cold, apathetic Christianity.

The Theology of Mission

By Daniel P Fredericks

U.S. Field Director

UIM International

Theology has always been at the heart of mission. God's heart for the world is not an emotional mandate it is theological. God's love for the world (John 3:16) is rooted in the decree of God (Ephesians 1:3-14), for His glory.

When Jesus introduced the concept of the Church to His disciples, it was founded upon the theological fact of the person of "*the Christ, the Son of the living God.*" (emphasis added). Additionally, when Christ declared the "Great Commission," He proclaimed the profound and clear Trinitarian truth that all who come to faith come "in the name of *the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.*" (Matthew 28:19) This is the distinguishing doctrinal truth of Christianity. The Christian faith rooted in the doctrine of Scripture is unequalled and unparalleled with other so-called faiths. It is an exclusive faith!

When our Lord Jesus Christ declared the "Great Commission," He was not proclaiming a study in anthropology, sociology, philosophy or psychology, but a *theological* mandate! A mandate that was worldwide in scope and eternally transforming in its impact.

In the introduction to his book, *The Doctrinal Foundation of World Missions*, A. Lyall Lush makes the following observation:

"All too frequently one finds "missions" relegated to one activity of the Church instead of it being her all-consuming passion. Shallow thinking and inadequate instruction has reduced the missionary program to the level of human reasoning and sentimentality. Too often the missionary appeal is based upon adventure, philanthropic considerations and other human concepts, whereas it is essentially a divinely-conceived program directly from the heart of God, demonstrated by His son, and passed on to His Church to fulfill."

Lush goes on to write,

"To achieve this, one has to become involved in doctrine...when one hears such statements as, 'I'm not concerned with doctrine, I only want to serve Christ,' one becomes convinced that sound doctrine is greatly needed."⁽¹⁾

What caught my attention about Lush's statements is the fact that this was seen to be a concern of his nearly forty years ago, in 1963! I fear that in some respects we may have continued to lose ground on the doctrinal front when it comes to mission.

It is my grand assumption in writing this article that most readers will agree that the centrality and clarity of doctrine are essential to biblical mission. But we are speaking here of more than just a

communication of information. To be effective, a sound theology must also be a demonstrable theology. Robert Calvin Guy has written,

"The basic question about an adequate theology of mission is, does it help mediate the redeeming presence of Christ to the hearer or reader? Does it get him involved with God personally and redemptively? Without this redemptive involvement the very purposes of God are thwarted, and no amount of theology, however skillfully stated, can make up for that loss...Theology must stand the test of being known by its fruit...Theology must drive those who hold it into redemptive activity."⁽²⁾

The Apostle Paul said regarding his ministry among the Thessalonians, "...we were gentle among you, just as a nursing mother cherishes her own children. So, affectionately longing for you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you had become dear to us" (1 Thessalonians 2:7,8 emphasis added). Sound doctrine and sound living must be parallel proclaimants of the gospel message.

A word of concern and caution is warranted as we discuss this important subject of the theology of mission. In relatively recent years there has been a trend in mission of placing an emphasis on cultural/redemptive analogies, often at the expense of theology. While having perhaps some practical illustrative benefit, such cultural corollaries must never eclipse the application of sound exegetical theology. Despite the fact that many cultures around the earth have ancient stories and customs that seem to mirror the biblical record, such practices and related legends should not be assumed to be redemptive. Similarity does not imply sameness, somehow on a par with biblical revelation.

In Acts 17, for example, the apostle Paul, while awaiting the arrival of Silas and Timothy, was provoked in his spirit as he saw that the city was given over to idols. Paul acknowledged that they were "very religious," and even acknowledged a compatible teaching from "some of your own poets," however Paul's response was not one of acceptance and syncretistic accommodation, but declaration of truth and clarity of the doctrine of the gospel. The text is clear that Paul, "preached to them Jesus and the resurrection (17:18)."

A careful reading of Acts 14 and 17, along with other portions of Acts, demonstrates that the Pauline missiological methodology was governed by sound exegetical doctrine. While some in our day would have been thrilled at such a welcome as that initially experienced in Lystra, not so with Barnabas and Paul. On the contrary Barnabas and Paul "tore their clothes" and immediately articulated corrective doctrinal truth regarding the true nature God, though having their message cut short, beaten and dragged out of the city and left for dead, they returned the next day to "preach the gospel" in the cities of Derbe, Lystra, Iconium and Antioch (see Acts 14:8-23).

Though the book of Acts records the methodology of mission, even there it can be demonstrated that theological truth is at the heart of mission. Paul's missionary pattern was consistently the same. Having been sent out by the Holy Spirit from the context of the local church at Antioch, at the very first stop, "when they arrived in Salamis, they "preached the word of God..." Acts 13:5 (emphasis added). This is the common commitment throughout this missionary manual known as the book of Acts. (See Acts 4:31; 6:2,7; 8:4,14; 11:1; 12:24; 13:5,7, 44,46; 17:13; 18:11.)

It is also important, I believe, to establish the priority of a proper ecclesiology in order for a proper missiology to be achieved. Missiology must be driven by ecclesiology, and not the other way around. In practical terms, mission agencies are not replacements for the local church, but can serve as a practical outgrowth of the mission of the Church. I appreciate what John Fish has written,

"What the church is determines what the church does. Further, the structure of the local church is determined by the nature of the church. Thus, the practical matters of structure and functions of the local church are determined not by pragmatism, what may happen to be effective for a particular community, but by theology, what the church is by nature. The descriptive portions of Scripture which present the organization and practice of the church in the New Testament need to be correlated with the doctrinal sections which present the character of the church itself."⁽³⁾

It is clear from reading Acts and the Epistles that mission became the work of the local church, and the legitimate priority of mission was that of the establishment and development of reproducing local churches.

A careful study of the book of Acts, as well as the Epistles, reveals the indisputable fact that it should be our ecclesiology that oversees our missiology. Too often it has been the reverse or the two have been viewed as almost mutually exclusive. Mission must be the outgrowth of the Church. It was the birth of the Church in Acts 2 that gave first steps to the command of Acts 1:8. It was from the local church at Antioch in Acts 13 that the Holy Spirit gave direction to the ongoing fulfillment of Acts 1:8, "to the uttermost parts of the earth."

In my mind the most compelling testimony of the centrality of theology in mission is the book of Romans. Written by the ultimate model of a church-planting missionary in the context of a missionary journey from a local church-planting context. The apostle Paul reveals the theology of mission in the book of Romans, just as Doctor Luke records Paul's methodology of mission in the book of Acts.

The book of Romans is laid out theologically. A simple two-part rendering of Romans reveals the doctrinal basis of the Gospel in chapters 1-11, then the out working of the Gospel in chapters 12-16. The book of Romans is a great missionary gospel book. As James A. Stifler writes,

"Hence the Scriptures predict the resurrection, and hence, too, the Gospel according to Paul is universal. It is not Jewish, but world-wide, a Gospel for the Gentiles, for by resurrection Jesus transcended all Jewish connections and became the world's Savior, ... Thus Paul, by linking his apostolate with the raised Christ, gives first the character of this epistle, and second its scope. It is the epistle of divine life in Christ Jesus for all nations, on the conditions of faith."⁽⁴⁾

It is of interest to note that of all the New Testament epistles, it is Romans that refers to "gospel" more than any other epistle. The Greek term euangelion (gospel) is used some sixty times in this epistle.⁽⁵⁾ The essence of Paul's letter to the Romans is that there is good news that is truly good.⁽⁶⁾ The letter begins (1:1) and ends (16:25-26) with the good news.⁽⁷⁾ The theology of mission is evident in just the first eighteen verses of the first chapter of Romans. We could outline this theological theme as follows:

Theology Proper - God requires absolute righteousness (the theme of Romans)

"the gospel of God...the righteousness of God...the wrath of God...the righteous judgment of God."(vv.1,17,18,32)

Christology - God's Messiah-Savior

"His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power...the gospel of Christ,...the power of God to salvation."(vv.3,4,16)

Pneumatology - the Spirit of holiness and sanctifier of the grace-saved sinner

"with power according to the Spirit of holiness..."(v.4)

Bibliology - the Holy Scriptures

"...the gospel of God which He promised before through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures..."(v.1; cf. Luke 24:25, 27, 32; John 5:39; Acts 3:18; 7:52; 10:43; 13:32; 26:22, 23; Jer. 31:31-34; Ezek. 36:25-27; cf. Heb. 8:6-13; Is. 9:6, 7; 53:1-12)

Anthropology - man depraved in sin, subject to the wrath of God

"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men,...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."(1:18 cf. Romans 1:18-2:29; 3:23)

Soteriology - the gospel, the power of God to salvation, reconciliation and righteousness

"the gospel of God...the gospel of His Son...For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, 'The just shall live by faith.'" (vv.1,9,16,17)

Missiology - a missionary is a bond-servant, doulos, Romans 1:1. In Galatians 1:11-17, Paul personifies and exemplifies the ideal missionary with a divine quest to reach all ethnic groups worldwide.

"Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ,...Through Him we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations for His name..."(vv.1,5; cf. v.14)

Ecclesiology - the called of Jesus Christ, local and universal.

***"...among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ."*(v.6; cf. vv.7-15)**

There is no psychological reasoning here. There is no socializing of the gospel here. Paul's passion for the lost, including his heart's burden for his zeal-for-God-without-righteousness Jewish brethren, and unsaved Gentiles, is rooted in his theological conviction of their utterly lost state apart from Christ. (Romans 10:1-4)

Amazingly, however, much that takes place in mission today seems to become enamored in self-introspective angst over culture rather than a biblical passion in the proclamation of the truth of Scripture.

Much of mission requires necessary pragmatics, to be sure. Languages must be learned and reduced to writing. Translation work must be done that the word of God may be heard, read and learned in one's natural tongue. The logistics of travel, lodging, financial acquisition and distribution, etc., all practical realities, are not sufficient means whereby we accomplish biblical mission. A thorough knowledge and understanding of the cultural nuances of a people is also vitally important (certainly the apostle Paul understood Jewish, Greek and Roman cultural intimately), but such study must not be our preoccupation at the expense of sound doctrinal study and insight. To this matter William S. Dillon has written,

"New Testament church principles do not give guidelines on making contacts with [native] tribes. They do not deal with the missionary's living quarters, with language, transportation, or health problems, nor do they instruct as to how much culture is to be known before giving the Way of salvation. In this we see the wisdom of the Holy Spirit, for not all geographical areas can be approached in the same manner" And he continues, "The world will be evangelized only under the power and direction of the Holy Spirit, using the Word of God properly interpreted, through obedient believers."⁽⁸⁾

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heology must drive mission - but not just any theology. A disciplined biblical theology must be the driving force of all mission outreach. Too often missionaries, local church mission boards and mission agencies lose sight of the priority of sound theology, while succumbing to more pragmatic concerns. This must be avoided by a conscious commitment to the priority of sound theology.

Romans lays out a clear theology of mission: God's requirement for righteousness... Man's lost condition in sin....The inability of man by works or the Law to achieve acceptable righteousness before God...God's gracious extension of justification based upon the work of Christ...The Holy Spirit's work of effectually drawing and saving man from his lost state, indwelling and empowering for sanctification, perseverance and eventual glorification. God generates in the believer a divinely driven passion for the lost to be saved. Having been saved by God's grace, mission, driven theologically, compels the saved-by-grace believer to live a life full of obedient gratitude and love in light of the magnitude of divine intervention on behalf of a life once disparately lost - now saved by grace!

Sociology, anthropology, psychology, philosophy, et al, can never accomplish in mission what sound biblical theology will and must. May we all be committed to this mission, be we pastor, layman, missionary, college or seminary instructor. May biblical theology drive us in all aspects of the fulfillment of mission for the glory of God.

Summing it Up.

- 1. The Theology of Mission must be thoroughly biblical**
- 2. The Theology of Mission must be an all-consuming passion**
- 3. The Theology of Mission must be both taught and lived**
- 4. The Theology of Mission must be an outgrowth of biblical ecclesiology**
- 5. The Theology of Mission must not be side tracked by pragmatic issues**
- 6. The Theology of Mission must be centered on God's glory**

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1. A. Lyall Lush, The Doctrinal Foundation of World Missions, King's Missionary Training Institute, The King's Press, 1963, Seattle, Washington (Though Lush purports, to my amazement, a position of theistic evolution in an early section of the book, much that he has to say elsewhere has merit.)
2. Robert Calvin Guy, Church Growth and Christian Mission, Theological Foundations, p.43,44, Harper & Row, Publishers (1965)
3. John H. Fish III, Understanding the Church, p.113 (The Life of the Local Church), Loizeau Publisher, Neptune, New Jersey (1999)
4. James A. Stifler, The Epistle to the Romans, p.26, Moody Press, Publisher (1960)
5. John MacArthur, The MacArthur New Testament Commentary, Romans 1-8, p.9, Moody Press (1991)
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8. William S. Dillon, D.D., God's Work in God's Way, p. 6,7, Brown Gold Publications, Sanford, Florida (1987)

"Come over to Macedonia and help us." Acts 16:9

Dr. Gregory Kommendant

President Union of Evangelical Christians-Baptists Ukraine

Ten years ago a similar call came from Evangelical Baptist Fellowship in Ukraine when it was led by a well-known experienced pastor, the President of the Union of Evangelical Christians- Baptists of Ukraine, Dr. Yakov Kuzmich Dukhonchenko.

The help was needed desperately. More than 70 years of atheistic propaganda, persecution and mass repressions, and very limited freedom could not break the will and quench the fire which the Lord once

ignited in the hearts of the simple peasants in Ukraine. These men learned literacy and preaching skills from the Bible, and lived and witnessed with the Bible in their hands.

This was the beginning of Evangelical Baptist movement in Ukraine when in the middle of eighteen hundreds a farmer I. Ryaboshapka, having received the enlightenment of the spiritual eyes of the heart (Eph. 2,18), began witnessing to the people about great hope and glorious inheritance for the saints.

He took his Bible, and went out to the market square. And when activities in the market were slowing down he would get on the wagon and start shouting, "Found, found, found". People would come closer because everybody wanted to see what this man found. And then brother Ryaboshapka would open his Bible and start reading. "I was found by those who sought Me not, I became manifest to those who did not ask for Me."

This was the beginning of evangelical witness in Ukraine. Years passed, and faith was kept although at a very high price. Thousands of ministers died in tsarist prisons and later in Stalin's camps. At one point all Evangelical churches in the country were closed down. But after cold northern winds came long-awaited freedom. And then through Dr. Provost IFCA International churches learned that in Europe there is a country of Ukraine. And there are faithful brothers there who need help.

At that time Dr. Provost already knew Russia, Ukraine and Belarus quite well. During his first visit to these countries he left there a part of his heart with the brothers he got to know there. He saw that they loved the Bible and made sure no strange teaching would get into their churches. Their prayers, their singing were speaking clearly of their faith. To help strengthen the purity of Evangelical teaching in Ukraine Dr. Provost organized several conferences where Dr. John MacArthur came and spoke. Those conferences had great significance for the development, support and strengthening of the pastors who had to carry out their ministry in new conditions of freedom and under the influx of different false teachings. Dr. John MacArthur's books and lectures became a great help for Baptist pastors in Ukraine.

So, these events preceded the decision of Dr. Richard Gregory and other leaders of IFCA International to help support national church planting movement in Ukraine. According to the plan, each church planter would be assigned to plant new churches. So, it was very important to pick the right men. It had to be men with the heart and the spirit of an evangelist. They had to have the kind of love and compassion toward the lost just as the Lord Himself had (Matt. 9, 36).

The search for such missionaries began, and there were first forty men picked up for the support, then twenty more. Then the number reached almost a hundred. And now when IFCA International and SGA work together, they support close to two hundred missionaries across Ukraine. And as result of it is that the Good News about Christ is being preached and churches are being planted.

The missionary work has not always been easy. Those American friends who went to Russia or Ukraine have seen the life conditions of our people, especially in the country side, away from the big cities. People there live a very primitive life, often without basic conveniences. Many church planters do not have cars and they have to travel more than 15 miles to get to their church plant. But even having a car does not guarantee that you will get there, since country roads are so bad. Their ministry is not easy but what a blessing it is to have people come together to hear the Word of God preached and not wanting to leave but asking a preacher to come back. And then some repent, and in a while there is a Bible study group there, and later a new church is born. Those people who are saved can not thank you because they do not know you and they do not know how the missionary was able to come there, but they thank God for the opportunity to hear His Word preached.

Our wonderful Lord loves everybody. A Bulgarian missionary from Moldova is pastoring a church in Ukraine. And he is being supported by a church in America. The Lord is blessing Americans so that they can be involved in salvation of the souls of people in Ukraine.

Supporting national church planters, planting new churches is the most effective way of our partnership with IFCA International and SGA. The church in Ukraine is growing. In last seven years almost 80,000 people repented and were baptized, and by God's grace are in the Lord's army today.

On behalf of the leadership of the Evangelical Christians-Baptists of Ukraine and more than 2,400 churches across the country I want to express our sincere gratitude for your prayers in the past, and for your support of our church planting missionaries now during the time of freedom and special work of the Holy Spirit in our country.

We thank all of those who like Paul heard the voice, saying, "Come over... and help us." You came and are helping in different areas of the ministry.

May the Lord bless you (Col. 4,19).

I want to also say that in these days when America is going through difficult times of grief and sorrow, when September events shook the whole world, we pray for your country and the people who live there, and this brings us even closer together.

Finishing - Second Career People

Jim Schmidt

"Delight yourself in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart." Psalm 37:4 For thirty-six years I have walked with and delighted in the Lord; the desire of my heart was to serve the Lord full time. I thought there were many reasons (excuses) for not doing that, among them being that I had a great job and made more than an average wage. Additionally, we had two sons that needed a college education that would take a lot of money. I did not have a college degree or a degree in Bible. We had a large mortgage. We had a lot of expenses for things we thought we needed. We were serving in our church.

This list of excuses could go on for pages. Isn't it great that we have our excuses but God has His way? We knew a missionary family in the Philippines, Dick and Gerry Walton, whom our church supported. Every four years they came to our town on furlough. We became friends with these folks. I envied their service and commitment, but that was for them. One summer their oldest son spent a couple of months in our town during summer break from college. He asked me to disciple him that summer. This was a real joy, and the next summer his brother did the same thing. When his parents came home, we really had mutual ground to fellowship. Dick asked me many times during the next twenty years to consider serving the Lord with his mission, SEND International. At those times I would go through my list of excuses.

When I was fifty-nine years old, the Lord decided I had used enough excuses. I was doing one of the activities I most enjoyed, playing racquetball, when I fell over backwards and tore the cartilage in my left knee. This required a total knee replacement. For over three years I had a terrible time because my body would not accept the new knee, and I could hardly walk. I had intended to continue my sales position until I was seventy years old, but because of my condition I had to retire. My physical activities were severely curtailed.

At that time the Lord brought Dick and Gerry Walton back into my life. With a big smile and a grin, Dick went to my wife and asked what excuse I would have this year. Just to satisfy Dick, I decided to go to the SEND International office in Farmington, Michigan, but with absolutely no intention of joining the mission. Again the Lord had different plans. After a day of meeting with many people in the SEND International office, I headed home secure in the thought that I had satisfied Dick Walton and also that the Lord could not use me in missions, especially with my knee problems and limited education. During the flight from Detroit to Philadelphia the Lord changed my thinking. He kept bringing to mind the story in the Gospel of John where Jesus asked Peter three times, "Do you love me, feed my sheep."

I heard the words, but I kept saying, "Lord that is what I told the youth group; that's not for me." He let me know it was very much for ME. By the time I arrived home, I was convinced. I told Dot I was sure SEND International could not use us as missionaries, but we had to apply and allow them to turn us down; and I was sure they would when they examined my education and experience. What I had not realized was that missions is now different. Mission boards now look at life experience, not just education. They are more than ever prepared to use "finishers," middle age people who want their second half of life to really count.

Finishers are people who are open to the adventure God may have for their lives outside of normal retirement. For example, agencies use Finishers as staff people to support field missionaries freeing them to focus on planting churches or whatever else they need to do to complete the Great Commission. I made my living in sales; the Lord is using that. I am now in the Church Mobilization Department with Send International.

My job is to call on churches and support their mission efforts. (JSchmidt@send.org) also I try to interest churches that have no direction in missions. Our department ends up wearing many hats; we spend many hours in short-term missions, arranging trips, training teams, and in many cases leading these teams. The Lord has allowed me to lead two construction teams to Russia, as well as vision trips to Japan, China, the Philippines, and Alaska. That sounds pretty active for a person who could hardly walk. Well, the Lord handled that also. My body finally accepted the knee, and I get around fine. I have limits on climbing steps, but that's no big deal. I think of my knee the way Paul thought of his thorn, as a delight. We also are involved in the Donor Relations Department, encouraging others to support missions financially. That is when it is nice to have a sales background. In the sixty-seven years of my life I have enjoyed many different things.

I have to say that I have never had anything that gives me more peace, joy, and the feeling of value than I now have. I know I am making a difference. My job description calls for approximately twenty hours a week; I find that this ends up closer to sixty hours a week, not because I am asked or instructed to do more, but because I enjoy it so very much. The Lord has blessed me with this opportunity to spend the later years of my life serving Him. He has met the desires of my heart, and I would recommend that others look into a second career that would take them from success to significance.

Many people have the desire to serve the Lord but, like me, think they have nothing to offer or that all missionaries are spiritual giants. Both of these ideas are wrong. Missionaries are ordinary people with the goal of reaching others for Christ as their main focus.

As far as nothing to offer, we all have something to give the Lord, and there is a role in missions that can fit everyone. We know people in their 80's that work as storeroom clerks. People in their 70's and 60's doing jobs that release others to plant churches, or save agency money that can be used on the field. Many people in their 40's and 50's are now second career missionaries, using the professional skills they honed in the market place. Never sell yourself short when it comes to service for God. He can use each of us in a way that will satisfy our hearts like nothing else. People in our age bracket are called "finishers." While we want to finish well we are far from finished. I prefer being called a second career missionary who is being blessed far beyond anything I could have imagined.

"But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I may finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God." The Acts 20:24

Jim is presently a Representative for SEND International. He took early retirement from the position of Northeast Regional Representative with Huntington Laboratories which he held for 34 years. He has been involved in youth work teams to Oklahoma, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Bulgaria, and Hard Rock, Arizona. Jim has led 23 short-term mission groups including a trip to Far East Russia and one to Partova, Russia. Jim and his wife, Dorothy live in Beesley's Point, New Jersey. They have two married sons and five grandchildren.

The Case of the Missing Mentor

Rev. Paul Seger

I was speaking recently to a pastor who expressed his hesitancy to let missionaries fill his pulpit. He said that at times missionaries had done an inadequate of communicating to a large audience. I asked him why he thought this was the case. His perplexed expression made it clear he did not know where I was going with my question. I pressed further. "Who is to blame?", I asked. "Why are 'missionaries not good preachers'? A missionary should not be excused for lack of passion, but what if he is not a good platform communicator? Whose fault is this?" In the end, I suggested there could be several reasons:

1. A church may have sent a missionary who was not adequately trained.
2. A mission agency may have recruited someone and by passed the local church that knew the missionary was not ready to go.
3. A missionary may be a very effective missionary without being a pulpiteer. Most of his time is spent talking to individuals or small groups. By the time there is a large audience, it is time for him to move on. He may be a very effective missionary on the field without giving that impression when he is out of his element in our churches here in America.
4. There is another possibility. It could be the fault of his pastor that this missionary "can't preach".

Ouch! That one hurts. Could it be that a missionary's incompetence is due to a missing mentor? As we prepare the next generation of missionaries, there are some critical concepts that need to govern our thinking. Some basic presuppositions must form the foundation of our training systems. Here are three of them:

1. Churches Train Missionaries - Most of us would agree that God chose the local church to be the vehicle for accomplishing His business on this planet during this particular period of history. We moved from an Old Testament economy that revolved around the temple into a New Testament era where the local churches are the focus. God obviously designed the church to be His center of operations. It would seem that local churches, then, should take responsibility for equipping future missionaries. While we may out source training to Bible colleges, seminaries, or mission agencies, it is still the responsibility of local churches to ensure the training is adequate. If an institution does not finish the job, it is the local church's job to do so.

Ultimately, it is the church's responsibility to have a complete plan for moving a new believer all the way to vocational ministry. Obviously, not everyone is headed to the mission field. But there are several categories of believers that need training.

- (1) There should be a strategy for helping new believers learn basic Christian disciplines.
- (2) There must be a plan to equip workers to serve in the church.
- (3) There must be a specific process for producing teachers.
- (4) Finally, there should be a way to prepare missionaries and pastors for full-time ministry.

What if a young person came and asked you what he needed to do to prepare for the mission field? Would you have a clear-cut answer? Is the road map specific? Does your church have a proactive approach to producing future missionaries? What is your list of qualifications? What if a 43-year-old came to you and said that ten years from now, he could envision going to a mission field. What would you do in the next decade to prepare him?

Your answer may be to send them off to Bible College or seminary. But what about the workers and teachers in your church that will never move away for training? And what is the next step for those who do go to college--are they on their own? Does your church have a way to maintain an ongoing relationship that will continue the equipping process? Is there some training you should do right there in your church before, during and after seminary?

Perhaps the entire training process could take place without leaving the church. There are many possibilities. For instance, the academic part of the process could be handled by either distance learning, local Bible colleges or college-level courses taught within the church program. Another option might be to import the expertise from Bible Colleges and Seminaries into the life of your church by having professors teach condensed modules. Regardless of the model you choose, it is the local church that God has commissioned to make sure the person is ready to go. If the missionary "can't preach", a local church needs to take responsibility.

2. Leaders Train Leaders - As leaders, two key Scripture passages should determine our stewardship of time:

"And he gave... evangelists, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:" Ephesians 4:11-12

"And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." II Timothy 2:2

We know these verses well. But let's be honest with ourselves. What percentage of our work week is devoted to training leaders? How many hours did you spend doing that this week? One of the main responsibilities of any leader is to train other leaders. This is one job that a leader cannot delegate. Followers do not train leaders, leaders do. A line item in every leader's job description must be his role in training leaders. An evangelist that is not training evangelists is doing only half a job, as is a pastor who is not training people with pastoral skills.

Jack Welch, retired CEO of General Electric, the world's largest company, says that he devotes thirty percent of his time to leadership training. Even though he was running the world's largest private enterprise, he understood the importance of pouring his life into those who were going to be the next generation of leaders within his organization. He merely discovered a principle from Scripture that was around a long time before he got here. But he did something about it. Have we? Perhaps we need to catch that same vision and discipline ourselves with that same level of commitment.

One of the weaknesses in our Western culture is the idea that we must stop working in order to train. The concept of "apprenticeships" is from a by-gone era. Yet that is the model for training exemplified in Jesus, Barnabas and Paul. A carpenter did not stop his work and move into a classroom to train carpenters. He simply brought them into his shop and let the sawdust fly.

Jesus "did" ministry with the disciples looking over his shoulder. Barnabas pulled Paul into the excitement of the work in Antioch. The Apostle Paul trained many men, but it was done "on the fly." He grabbed Timothy, then told him to fasten his seat belt and hang on tight! Timothy learned ministry on the battlefield. During Paul's ministry, there were a total of 41 itinerant workers, many of them "in training." Paul was rarely alone in ministry. Seldom did he have more than two or three of them with him at a time. But he trained these younger men while he did the work. He had two goals:

- (1) evangelize from Jerusalem to Bosnia, and
- (2) to train future leaders.

Another weakness of our Western model is that it focuses on the classroom. While academics is a critical component to education, it is only one third of the process. A strong training model will give

equal time to skills and character development. That means the teacher must budget huge amounts of time with the trainee in ministry and one-on-one discussion outside the classroom. Adding a few classes to our church program will not produce the leaders we want.

Imagine the potential! What if every Christian leader in America took it upon himself to be a mentor to just one other man? Immediately we would raise both the quality and quantity of full-time Christian workers.

3. Leaders Define Outcomes - It is the responsibility of leaders to define what future leaders should look like. Once we have articulated our outcome, we can then develop systems to equip the next generation. If we think a missionary must be good in the pulpit, then our training strategy must be designed to produce public speakers.

Missionaries who apply to BMW are examined in three broad areas. By the time a person applies to a mission agency, it is assumed he will have met certain standards in the following areas:

a. Character - The qualifications for leadership are carefully outlined in passages such as I Timothy 3, 2 Peter 1:5-7, I Peter 3:1-13, Titus 1:5-9, Titus 2:1-10, Galatians 5:22-23, and 2 Timothy 2.

b. Academics - We work with objective Truth. Future missionaries need to know the Word of God, as well as many of the disciplines accompanying the study and ministry of that Word. Through written and oral exams, we help local churches determine the academic preparedness of future missionaries.

c. Skills - A missionary must have certain ministry skills to be effective in service. We have identified fifteen skill sets that we feel today's missionary should have. They are:

- Discipleship
- Evangelism
- Exegetical skills
- People skills
- Counseling
- Administration
- Strategic planning
- Writing
- Communication
- Time-management
- Personal and church finances
- Language aptitude
- Cultural awareness and sensitivity
- Computer skills
- Conflict resolution

These skills will not be developed in the classroom. A mentor must go shoulder-to-shoulder in real-time ministry with a trainee. Perhaps the missionary with inadequate pulpit skills could have been helped if a mentor had listened to him speak fifty times and critiqued each message. This is time-consuming, but it will produce a public speaker. Without this commitment to preparing the next generation, we will continue our reticence to opening our pulpits to missionaries. And we may be sending missionaries to the field who are destined to a life of frustration and possibly failure.

The primary responsibility of a missionary is to reproduce himself. Yet, most of us went to the mission field without ever being discipled. We never had a mentor. We never saw leadership training take place in a local church, so we never experienced the very thing we are supposed to do best. It would greatly enhance the success rate of missionaries if there were churches and pastors who were showing the way.

If you are a Christian leader, you are the answer to the need for competent replacements. You may be the missing mentor.

Paul Seger serves as the General Director of Biblical Ministries Worldwide. He grew up as a missionary child in Nigeria. After graduating from Appalachian Bible College and Faith Baptist Bible College, he served as assistant pastor in Community Baptist Church of Reidsville, North Carolina. In 1975 he was accepted as a missionary with Biblical Ministries Worldwide. In March 1994, he became the General Director of Biblical Ministries Worldwide. They presently live in Atlanta, Georgia. Joan has a ministry to missionary ladies, missionary kids and churches in the United States. The Segers have two children Ryan and Joanna.

Building Partnerships For Global Outreach

Rev. D. Paul Williamson

The opportunities of global missions continue to be a challenge and a privilege for the local church in the new millennium. As the global community seems to become more and more connected through technology and world travel, the paradigm of building international partnerships with national believers for the cause of Christ is becoming a reality for the missions outreach of the Honesdale Gospel Tabernacle of Honesdale, Pennsylvania.

This building of international partnerships for the cause of Christ is a paradigm of global mission outreach that has been developing within our church family over a period of years. The concept was introduced by former pastor Stephen Young and continues to be developed and expanded under the leadership of the current pastor, D. Paul Williamson. Today the Honesdale Gospel Tabernacle has formed church planting and global outreach partnerships with two international fellowships of believers, as well as a partnership for the planting of a daughter church here in northeastern Pennsylvania. We have established a partnership in the country of Ukraine with Vasily Shevelenko, a Ukrainian church planter who currently is planting a third congregation of believers in the region of the Kherson oblast, and more recently with Naw Mai Maru from the country of Myanmar, a "closed country" to traditional missions.

As the task of global missions looms before the church there has been three major paradigms that have shaped the local church's involvement in global outreach.

Supporting Paradigm

The first is the "Supporting Paradigm," or perhaps more commonly known as "traditional missions." This is still the predominate model and normally is traced back to the establishment of "modern missions" and gained predominance following World War II. Within the perspective of this paradigm the role of the local church is understood to be primarily a financial supporting of selected missionaries serving with a chosen mission board or agency. As the local church participates in global outreach, they look to the mission agency for the agenda of global missions. This paradigm will always have a place in the total picture of a local church's global outreach.

Sending Paradigm

A second is the "Sending Paradigm." In this model of global outreach the local church takes on a more aggressive involvement in the missionary's life and direction of a ministry. Instead of maintaining a supporting role, many churches in the 1980's increasingly began to assume a sending role in world missions. This model has opened a way in which local churches have moved from a dependent mode to an independent one in their relationship with mission agencies and boards. This model is often limited to large congregations who can assume the responsibilities that a mission agency often fulfills on behalf of the local church. Because of the demands of the "Sending Paradigm" upon the local church this model of

global outreach is often beyond the means of smaller congregations as they develop their total strategy of global outreach involvement.

Partnership Paradigm

The third major paradigm is what we refer to as the "Partnership Paradigm." In this model "partnership congregations" are believers who build a partner relationship with others and combine their efforts to produce greater effectiveness than either party could accomplish independently. This partnership model assumes an "interdependent" perspective.

This paradigm might be defined as "a working relationship between two or more autonomous bodies whereby each contributes, by mutual agreement, some of its resources, according to mutually established and clearly defined expectations, toward the accomplishment of a common goal." There are several important areas of consideration in this working definition. First, the word "autonomous" for it declares that neither party is seeking to build a dependent relationship with the other, and each stands independently from the other. Second, the expression, "each contributes, by mutual agreement, . . ." The mutual agreement is related first to a doctrinal position of fundamental Christian faith, and secondly to the contribution that each will make to the partnership. Third, "a common goal" there is a definitive objective that defines the reason for the development of the partnership. This working relationship enables both the local church in America, and the local national church or worker to exchange on an equal basis of working together. This equality is not defined by economic equality, but by mutual resources committed to the partnership. Our partnership with both Vasily and Naw Mai engage us as a local church with countries where economic hardship exists. However, in each of these partnership relationships there is a major contribution that Vasily and Naw Mai make that enhance the Honesdale Gospel Tabernacle's global outreach to be far more effective than if we only used the "supporting paradigm" of traditional missions as the sum total of our missionary global involvement.

A study of the use of the preposition "with" ("with") as combined with other terms in the New Testament to create a compound word, will demonstrate that in this structure it denotes the proper relationship which should exist between individual believers, believers in a local church context, and local churches. Each compound term should be a manifestation of the Body of Christ on both a local and a global level. It must be noted that the basis of this unity must be true doctrine and biblical practice. When the study of these compound terms is coupled with the teachings of I Corinthians 12:13-27 and Ephesians 4:11-16 there are a number of principles that support the partnership paradigm as a biblical model of global outreach.

First, it is God's design for local churches of like faith to be actively involved in fellowship and mutual support with one another regardless of the geographical location.

Second, the image of the Body in I Corinthians 12 and Ephesians 4 represents relationships that should exist on all levels of Christianity. The local church is not an end to itself, but a part of the whole Body of Christ.

Third, it is God's design for believers in a particular local church, for local churches in an area, for local churches in a region, for local churches in a country, and for local churches of like faith on a global scale to be actively involved in fellowship and mutual support within global outreach.

These principles have driven the vision of the Honesdale Gospel Tabernacle in our partnership with Naw Mai Maru of Myanmar. The "common goal" is the translation of the Ryrie Study Bible into the Kachin Language to enhance the believers and churches of Myanmar in their understanding of God's Word. Through the Pastor Williamson's studies in the Doctor of Ministry program an acquaintance and friendship with Naw Mai developed. As Naw Mai spoke at our church on several occasions our congregation desired to shape a relationship of helping to assist in this "common goal, of translation work. The Kachin believers have established a Bible College, and are reaching northeastern Myanmar,

and also into China and India. Through our partnership with Naw Mai the Honesdale Gospel Tabernacle will have a fellowship and relationship with the Kachin believers and their work in these countries. If we were solely dependent upon a "supporting role" of traditional missions, we would never be involved in Myanmar. Traditional missionaries are not allowed into the country. However, through the partnership paradigm the Honesdale Gospel Tabernacle church family is building a relationship with believers in Myanmar and through that relationship are able to participate in the work of God there. That is the joy, potential, and excitement of this paradigm of global outreach. It is not the only paradigm we will use in the development of our strategy for missions, but it has become a part of our strategy and it has brought renewed vision and excitement to our church family. For that we praise the Lord and trust His grace to lead us as we "flesh out" the paradigm in our church's global outreach.

Rev. D. Paul Williamson is the pastor of the Honesdale Gospel Tabernacle of Honesdale, PA. He and his wife, Helen have four children and one granddaughter. Paul is currently completing studies in the Doctor of Ministry Program at Baptist Bible Seminary of Clarks Summit, PA.

THE CHALLENGE OF REACHING NORTH INDIA

Rev. A. L. Subramanian.

The great commission of our Lord is to make disciples of all nations. India with a population over one billion offers notable opportunities for evangelism and church planting. The Church in India has a rich and very long history. In fact, India is where the era of modern missionary effort began two hundred years ago with the arrival of William Carey, called by many the father of modern missions. But historically most of the growth of the India church has been concentrated in the southern and northeastern parts of the country. The northern part of the country often called the Hindi Belt has remained unevangelized until recently. The urgency of the mission in North India is heightened by the fact that even amidst persecution in several states the people in general are responding to the Gospel.

This area stretches across North and central India and covers 12 states. The downtrodden and untouchable people in India, when they found love care and hope for life embraced Christian faith. The majority community could not accept this fact. As a result hostility towards Christian Missions gained momentum and reached such alarming proportions in the killing of Australian Missionary Graham Stewart Staines and his two sons. Several militant groups emerged and their activism is a hindrance to the ministry. But the great commission of the Lord is to GO even in hostile circumstances.

Why North India is Important?

- **It is a major population center:** This Indo-Gangetic river belt contains one of the most heavily populated regions of the world. Over forty percent of the total population of India lives in this region.
- **It is the Political Center of India.** New Delhi is the capital and center of political power in India. Practically everything flows from this area.
- **It is the most socially deprived area of India.** Recent worldwide surveys indicate that a country's literacy rate-especially the female literacy rate- is the key indicator of quality of life. The literacy rate has a direct connection to both life expectancy and infant mortality. This is borne out in the North India Hindi Belt. While 60% of the entire India population is considered functionally literate, the figure in North is just 30%, but infant mortality rate is double that of the national average. This area is truly the most socially deprived area of India.
- **It is the religious hub of India.** North India is known as the heartland of Hinduism, a religion that claims millions of gods. It is also the birthplace of Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism. Some of the most revered Hindu and Buddhist shrines and places of pilgrimage are in this region. Muslims also have a strong presence in this area with some of their important learning centers and worship places.

• **It has the smallest Christian Presence.** The national average for Christianity is 31/6. But in North India is less than 0.5%. North India Hindi Belt needs to be the focus of our attention.

HOPE FOR INDIA was founded with the vision to reach North India with the Gospel. Evangelism leading to church Planting is the primary goal of the mission. God has enabled the ministry to reach thousands of souls with life changing Gospel Message in the past four years of its existence. Hope For India has planted 52 village Churches in four states of North India through 34 church planters. It was only possible because God's people prayed and participated in giving.

I Thank the Lord for the privilege to participate in the IFCA annual convention held in St. Petersburg FL. I have enjoyed every moment and it was a blessing to me. My sincere thanks to all the participants, I felt at home. I did have opportunity to visit many churches and present the ministry. Thank you for allowing me to come and partake in the blessing. I have appealed every one to uphold the ministry of Hope For India in your prayers.

Reaching North India is a task and we can accomplish this only by the prayers and participation of God's people around the globe. The adversary is active in preventing God's program. He is using our sincere and loving non-Christian friends to create trouble. Our fight is not against the flesh and blood but against the principalities and powers of darkness.

Our co-laborers are often threatened of their life and physically assaulted by the radicals. They burn our worship places and literatures. We can go to the throne of grace. We urge our prayer partners to continue praying for us.

One of the main reasons for the persecution on Indian Church is peoples' love for darkness. The power of the Gospel liberates a person's soul from bondage of sin as he receives Christ. He is also socially reformed and stands against the superstition and social evil. The ones who control the society are afraid of losing the power. So the only way to keep people under the power is to prevent preaching the Gospel.

But we need to go forward and continue to preach until the last person hears the Gospel. What will happen to us is not important but what changes Christ can bring into the lives of millions are important here.

Please continue to pray for those who minister in adverse circumstances.
In His Bonds

Rev. A.L. Subramanian is director of Hope for India, a mission organization registered in India. Hope for India operates here in the United States under the umbrella of Serving Other Servants (SOS) Ministries, of which, in addition to my pastoral responsibilities, I currently serve as executive director. Many in our fellowship remember Pastor Subramanian's testimony at the IFCA National Convention. In the months following the convention, he also spoke in a number of IFCA churches. He shared with me how warmly he was received at our convention and in our congregations. I take this moment to thank each one who welcomed our brother Subramanian. Hope for India is currently planting almost 50 churches. Pastor Subramanian is responsible for raising support for each of the church planters (\$50/month) serving under Hope for India. They also conduct a slum development project for the children of the untouchables in the slums of Delhi. It only costs \$5/month to sponsor a child through this program.

Possibly as you read this article, you will feel led to sponsor one or more children throughout this coming year. Hope for India will send you pictures and information as well as updates throughout the year. Pray for Pastor Subramanian and Hope for India.

You may contact him in India at the address found in your IFCA directory or here in the States c/o SOS Ministries, 7163 Georgetown Avenue, Hudsonville, MI 49426.

Thank you.

**Dr. Richard J. McCarrell
Senior Pastor - Jenison Bible Church
Executive Director - SOS Ministries**

Church Team Missionaries

Many foreign mission boards emphasize missionary teams as an effective means of evangelism and church planting. How can we do the same in America? It is difficult to raise support for one pastor. How could we manage a team?

John and Judy Wagner served as support missionaries at a camp in Alaska when they applied to Northwest Independent Church Extension (NICE) in 1995. Upon acceptance they considered several ministry opportunities - communities that needed a church and small churches that needed a missionary pastor. But they did not sense God's direction to any of these. What was God doing? Had He led them to an mission that had no ministry for them?

Forks, Washington, a small, coastal community, was once a thriving logging town. But as timber supplies dwindled and much of what remained was reserved for spotted owl habitat, the community experienced difficult times. Forks Bible Church, once a thriving ministry with a Christian day school, now struggled to survive. Its pastor, George Williams, served on the Board of NICE. One day as the Board discussed ministry opportunities for the Wagners, Pastor Williams commented that he would love to have such a couple assisting in rebuilding the church in Forks. Forks Bible Church is not a church plant nor is Pastor Williams a NICE Missionary pastor. It would be somewhat unusual for NICE to send a missionary there. However, as mission leaders prayed together, they concluded this was a needed ministry that God was directing them toward.

John and Judy moved to Forks using the financial resources of early retirement, partial missionary support, and willingness to work part time or temporary jobs if necessary. They purchased a home and become part of the community. The significance of this is, however, that they are there with a purpose. They did not come to Forks to retire, or to enjoy the coastal community, or to get away from the rat race. They came to be missionaries. They initiate and lead church ministries, pray for and encourage the Pastor and his wife, and seize every opportunity to reach the community with the gospel.

"I just can't tell you how much we appreciate the Wagners," Pastor Williams says. "They are so willing, so encouraging, and always involved in ministry. We can't imagine how we would carry on this ministry without them."

That was the impetus for what NICE now terms *Church Team Missionaries*. **Two or more couples working together, bringing differing ministry abilities, striving to establish an autonomous church, provide strength of ministry that a lone missionary cannot.**

Seeing the impact of this ministry, we began to pray for other *Church Team Missionaries*. Last year we asked Bob and Judi Allen to consider using their resources of partial missionary support and secular employment in such a ministry at Hobart Community Church. Missionaries Rob and Ruth Morris welcomed Bob and Judi as part of the team, and God is bringing growth. This year we added Jim and Christy Edgell who now serve as *Church Team Missionaries* with Pastor Larry Larson at Berean Bible Fellowship in Everett, Washington.

Team ministry is a biblical pattern that foreign missions rediscovered - and we've discovered that it works well in America too.

Earl Brubaker serves as Executive Director of Northwest Independent Church Extension of Tacoma, Washington.

"TUCK YOURSELF INTO GOD"

Most of our lives both my husband and I have felt God calling us to the mission field. By his grace we are currently in the midst of our first term in an Islamic country and are adjusting to the three major cultures and languages that mingle here. A year and a half ago our family of 4, including our two boys who were 3 and 5 at the time, completed a period of support raising and left our home in the Midwest. We had spent two years traveling across America, sharing with people about the Lord's call on our lives. In the midst of the potluck dinners, missions conferences and training at our missions' headquarters, many people graciously gave us words of advice regarding the years of adjustment that faced us. Now that we are halfway through our first term on the field, I've had the chance to reflect on the counsel we were given and how much of it has proven true for our family.

Many of the comments we received centered around our kids. One wise man at our mission's orientation told us that all members of the family, no matter what age, would experience culture shock in their own way. We certainly found this to be true. We did not expect our youngest son, who is normally happy-go-lucky and flexible, to have many problems adjusting. In the beginning of our time in language school, he ended up being the one with the most difficulties. His whole world had been turned upside-down, and he had a personality change for a few weeks. Suddenly our "Mr. Sunshine" became the bully of the playground. He became very possessive and regularly got into fights with kids twice his size.

Others who counseled us spoke of the ease with which they expected our children to adjust. They told us, "Your kids are so young that they will adjust quickly. You will find that they will be speaking the language fluently in a few months and will be correcting your pronunciation. They may have some small adjustment problems at the beginning, but after about 6 months they will be fine."

This held true for our youngest son for the most part. After 2 or 3 months, he was happy at school and adjusting well. But for our six year old, things proved to be more complicated. In fact, we found that his adjustment problems have actually compounded over time. He is not as outgoing socially and has had a difficult time making friends across the language divide. Without friends with whom he felt safe exploring the language, it has taken much longer for him to begin speaking it. So the social problems and the language barriers have worked into a vicious cycle that became more and more difficult to break out of. We began to see patterns of fear and stress that concerned us to the point that we finally decided to home school him for the time being. We have been amazed to see how differently our children have reacted to these transitional years. Some of the adjustments were predictable, but many were not. We work hard to stay involved in their world and spend a lot of time talking and listening to them.

Someone else during our orientation said that all of the "garbage" in our lives would come to the surface during our initial years of cultural adjustment. For me, the stress of learning new languages, adjusting to new ways of shopping and dealing with people have certainly shown me just how self-seeking I can be. I have had to fight bouts of anger as well as days when I just want to shut the bedroom door and not come out. These are "normal" reactions to culture shock, but I have found I have to deal with them before the Lord as they happen or they fester in my spirit.

I have also found it true that missionaries must learn to feed themselves spiritually. We have lived in places where I could understand little of what was going on in church, had no group Bible studies in my language, and no Christian radio or TV. One of the most valuable aspects of my training before we

moved overseas was learning how to dig into the Bible for myself. It is impossible to float along on someone else's spirituality where we now live.

For me, one statement has proven very true: "Your life as a missionary is more about what God is doing in you than what He is doing through you." It seems that when we hear about missions in our churches, the focus is on what God is doing through the missionary: their work in evangelism, discipleship, teaching. And these are the most visible aspects of a missionary's life. But God's work in my heart to break away the sin that is deeply rooted in me and to make me more like Christ has to be the primary focus of my life. Because my work for Christ done apart from Christ and without love will come to nothing (I Corinthians 13), and if Christ is not seen in me, my words about Him will have no validity. Therefore, no matter what our work for Him may be or where we are carrying out His will for us, what God is doing in us is at the center of it all.

The key promise for me during these early years as a missionary comes with the command of Jesus to go into all the nations: "Surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age" (Matthew 28:20). The knowledge of God's continual presence is bringing us through language school, hurting with our children as they adjust, spiritual struggles, and the loneliness of separation from people we love. If I were to give advice to someone leaving for the mission field for the first time, it would be a phrase from Amy Carmichael that was also given to us by a godly woman at our mission's headquarters: "Tuck yourself into God." Stay close to him and He will carry you through whatever lies before you.

This article was submitted by a missionary's wife working in an Islamic country. Name withheld.

MISSIONARY NEWS

Sergei, a 75-year-old communist, was shot down and injured during W.W.II by the Nazis. As a communist, he does not have a belief in God, and is a man who needs Christ. His lives on a pension of around \$17 per month.

Sergei is our neighbor, and the missionaries who lived in our apartment before us established a relationship with him. We have continued that relationship upon moving here to Kiev, Ukraine. While moving in, Sergei asked me for any cardboard boxes we were throwing away so he could sell them for recycling to earn money.

Sergei recently went into the hospital (for the thirtieth time) for three weeks, due to heart trouble and injuries incurred in the war. During his stay I made two visits to see him -- one with our pastor and others from our church. Our pastor and one elder witnessed to him, the people of the church sang to him and the other patients in his very meager room. Sergei is now open to the existence of God. Consistent kindness and concern shown to this atheist over the past two years who had said, "There is no God," has opened the door for sharing the truth with him. He said to those with me on my second visit to the hospital, "There must be a God, because He brought you to me." Please pray for Sergei's salvation.

Rev. Randy Hillebrand

Missionary with UFM International

Kiev, Ukraine

Benito is a man who was saved (in the providence of God, accidentally in humans terms) in El Camino Bible Church here in Chihuahua, Mexico. In the Spring of 2001 our church was doing evangelism door to door using the survey method, mainly as a means to look for people who might be interested in an evangelistic Bible study in their home. A man named Juan, who lived at Benito's address, expressed interest in spiritual things when a man from our church visited him. I went back to follow up the contact and discovered that Juan had moved and was nowhere to be found. Benito had answered the door and was telling me this. I asked him if possibly he was interested in a Bible study and he said yes. A few weeks later he was saved and as of 4 months later had only missed 2 days of not reading in his Bible daily. He is also a construction foreman and God has already used him in some building construction at

the church. We thank the Lord for what He has done in Benito's life and look forward to the salvation of his wife and other family members.

From Steve Kallhoff, Missionary in Mexico

Praise the Lord for open hearts on the public bus in our round trip this weekend to Guadalajara. On entering the bus we handed out our ABC Gospel tract to everyone then seated in the front seats near the driver. We asked the driver to do us a favor by showing our "Left Behind" Gospel video in Spanish during the two hour trip. He very politely said he would be happy to play it. This was a relief because the usual videos that this bus line uses are full of foul language. At the end of the video an invitation was given for anyone to pray to trust Christ. We could hear several praying out loud calling on the Name of the Lord for salvation. The exciting thing about this we were able to repeat this on the return trip.

Since the terrible tragedy of September 11, 2001 in New York, the Mexican public have had a fresh interest in our Gospel literature and ask questions about the Bible and eternity. Believers here in Mexico continue to pray for the salvation of many in Afghanistan.

Pray for Alejandro the cab driver that drove us from the bus station to our home in La Piedad. After presenting the plan of salvation to him, I asked him if he would like to receive Christ at this moment or think it over for another occasion. He said, "I will trust Christ right now." Pray for the salvation of his entire family.

Art Mikesell, missionary with CAM International serving in Mexico.

BORN WITH A MISSIONARY HEART

In 1954, *Dr. Lowell Wendt* moved to the Lake City area near Fort Lewis and Tacoma, Washington to pastor the *Lake City Community Church*. This move was prompted by his burden to touch the Pacific Northwest with the truth of the Gospel, and to see churches planted and established with a heart for missions. He envisioned this church as one which could have a significant impact for the glory of the Lord. As Pastor, he began to teach, preach and model missionary outreach. Soon there were several couples who had responded to the call of God to prepare for missionary service.

After four years, not only had these men and women been moved toward world-wide outreach, but also through the work of the Pacific Northwest Regional of IFCA International, the organization of the *Northwest Independent Church Extension* had begun to take place. Pastor Wendt, as Regional President, was being used of God to strongly influence many other pastors with a heart for missions. And the Lake City church provided the first Director (Henry Boyd) and the first Treasurer (Joe Kempston) for the fledgling mission.

In 1970, the *Lake City Community Church*, heard of an opportunity to purchase a 7 acre fruit orchard, with the farm house and other buildings in the University Place area 7 miles to the north. By faith, they seized the opportunity, and took steps to begin a daughter church at this location. Not only were the funds raised, but also several key couples were invested in the beginning of the church. There is no question, but that *Sunset Bible Church of University Place* was born with a missionary heart.

The farm house was remodeled to use for Sunday school classrooms, and the packing shed to use as the building for Church services. Then the very first thing the new church did was to plan and conduct a Missions Conference. Since that time this has become an annual event, and the "high-point" of the church's year!

- Sunset's first Pastor, *W.D. and Pat Page*, responded to God's call to also serve with HCJB as Mission Representative for the West Coast.
- The first Pastor's son, *Dick and Kathy Page*, following flight training at *Moody Bible Institute*, have served in Alaska with *SOAR International*, transporting personnel and Bibles throughout Alaska and Far East Russia.
- One of the church's elders, *Lennert and Cozene Wikstrom*, also serve in Alaska as Director of MARC -- *Missionary Aviation Repair Center* -- serving Mission organizations with transportation throughout Alaska.
- One of the church's youth leaders, *Jim and KathyJo Estes*, are now in Ecuador serving as Administrator of *Hospital Vozandes del Oriente*.
- In 1980, *Sunset Bible Church* gave half an acre of land to *Northwest Independent Church Extension* on which the mission's headquarters building was built and out from which its ministry has been used to plant and establish scores of churches.
- Two of the church's Sunday school teachers, *Dan and Brandy Davenport*, now serve with *Voice For Christ Ministries* in its radio outreach throughout Alaska.
- *Bruce and Karla Ekkelboom* served as Pastoral Interns at Sunset prior to their present ministry as Pastor of *Lynnwood Baptist Church*. *Shawn and Michelle Hull* also served as Pastoral Interns prior to accepting a call to the staff of *Grace Baptist Church of Redding*.
- The church's former pastor, *Earl and Shirley Brubaker*, is now being used of God as the Executive Director of *Northwest Independent Church Extension* in its outreach in the Pacific Northwest.
- The facilities of *Sunset Bible Church* are presently used by *Logos Korean Church* in its commitment to establish a Bible-centered ministry to the Korean Community of the area.
- Indeed, many people have gone out from Sunset, but throughout the years elders, teachers, workers, musicians and committed people have maintained the ministry of the church, and supported its missionary outreach.
- Though a building project is "in the works," the congregation views people, outreach, and missions as a higher priority. The church, numbering less than 100 people, has a part in the financial and prayer support of 12 couples and organizations serving in missions around the world.
- One of the primary things about *Sunset Bible Church* that influenced present Pastor *Jay and Kathy Mosser* to come to University Place was the church's heart for missions. Their first summer of ministry saw the planning of a Youth summer missions trip, led by Pastoral Intern *Kevin Brubaker*. The 5 teen-agers and the church's youth leaders were used to conduct VBS and evangelistic outreach in Eastern Washington. Again next summer, youth missions trips are being planned.

All of these ministries of outreach spring from the conviction that God has called the church to spiritual reproduction. Thus, the truth expressed in 2 Timothy 2:2, "*And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also*" is seen as a mandate for the church.

Is the emphasis on sending missionaries only? Not at all! As Pastor Mosser recently urged the congregation, *"Thank God for all that He's allowed Sunset Bible Church to do in response to the beat of our missionary heart. With this, let's always remember that missions is next door, at school, at work, across the street, and around the world. God help us to have a world view that begins in University Place. "* And God has been glorified!

Is Missions a Program or a Passion?

Dr. Richard Gregory
Managing Editor, VOICE

I am sure that the Apostle Paul had a plan. He wanted to reach "All Asia" with the Gospel. According to Acts 16: 7-8, when he arrived at Mysia in his travels in Asia Minor, he planned to go northeast to Bithynia "but the Spirit of Jesus" did not permit him. I have always been curious how a very determined man was stopped from carrying out his plan. It had to be that his passion to please the Lord over ruled his plans. The result was one of the most important decisions ever made with respect to the history of the western world. Instead of going east into Asia, Paul responded to the Macedonian Call and went west into Europe. I am sure that Paul had considered all of the important data before determining to go into Bithynia, but God had something else in mind. How often we go about the Lord's work based upon our analysis of how to do missions best and forget that missions must never be just a plan, it must be the product of a passionate walk with the Lord.

We live in unique times. The dangers of secularism, materialism, hedonism, humanism and the subtleties of the occult assault the minds and hearts of the societies of the world and even have invaded the minds of professed believers. These are dangerous times for the truth and those that seek to win and disciple men to Christ. Yet these are also very opportune times since technology has made available so many different avenues to reach men. Communication and travel that used to be such challenges to those involved in evangelism and world missions have now become agents of assistance. The Internet has afforded us opportunity to reach people in both a "turned off generation" and in countries closed to missionaries. I know of one church whose Internet ministry has reached several in Iran and has had inquiries from other "closed" countries. Discipleship programs are often enhanced by specialized videos. Missionaries can plead for prayer for their ministries via instantaneous e-mail thus incorporating an army of prayer assistance. All these opportunities are available, but unless those involved are passionate about their walk with the Lord and passionate about the ministries pursued, activity is substituted for the effectual work of the Holy Spirit and the Lord's work becomes mere profession.

Paul was so passionate that he shared with the elders at Ephesus that "I do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself, in order that I may finish my course, and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify solemnly of the gospel of the grace of God." He shared with the Philippian believers "For me to live is Christ and to die is gain" and explained that "my earnest expectation and hope, that I shall not be put to shame about anything, but that with all boldness, Christ shall even now, as always, be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death." He plead with the Ephesians to "pray on my behalf that utterance may be given to me in opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains, that in proclaiming it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak." He never complained or worried about the consequences of his calling. He suffered greatly both physically and emotionally. He was shipwrecked, beaten, stoned, imprisoned, falsely accused, reviled and rejected both by the world and some of his fellow believers. Yet he did not quit and go home to Tarsus. Why? Because he was passionate about his walk with the Lord and the ministry he had been given.

But missions must not only be the passion of missionaries. It must be the passion of the pastor and his church. It must be the passion of their prayers in response to what Jesus shared that true disciples plead with the Lord of the Harvest that He would compel laborers into the harvest. It must be the passion of

their training in response to the example of the Apostle Paul who mentored Timothy, Titus, Silas and others and who instructed Timothy "The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witness, these entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also." It must be the passion of their giving both of their sons and daughters and their material resources. A pastor and a church that is immersed in the passion for missions will be a growing and spiritually vibrant church whose light reaches around the corner and across the world.

These are urgent times. The call of God sounds across His church to respond with a passion for Him and His work. We must not allow circumstances to rob us of the joy of obedience.

CHAPLAINS DIARY

ADVENTURES IN THE MISSIONARY MINISTRY OF CHAPLAINCY

Following are accounts of God's blessing in lives through the ministries of your missionaries in Chaplaincy ministry...

LOCAL CHURCH IS FIRED UP THROUGH FIRE DEPARTMENT EVANGELISM

Rev. Dan Nave, pastor of Huggard Bible Church in Sand Lake, Michigan is a chaplain for the local Volunteer Fire Department.

About a year ago, God opened the door for me to serve as chaplain of our local volunteer fire department. It's a small department (about 20 people), and has been an awesome experience. They have accepted my ministry with open arms. We had a special outreach event at the church in April, and about 1/2 of the department attended. One couple, Eric and Tracie, continued attending. Last night, my wife Cheryl and I had the privilege of praying with them, at their kitchen table, as they BOTH accepted God's forgiveness through Jesus Christ. They have almost no knowledge of the Bible and are very eager to begin learning. Another fire department member, who is a member of our church, told me afterward that Eric and Tracie would have been among those he least expected to come to Christ. Our God Is a Powerful God!!! God is bringing revival to our church one person at a time.

EVANGELISM AND DISCIPLING IN THE DMZ

Chaplain, Captain Steve Peck was assigned to ministry in the Joint Security Area, of the Demilitarized Zone on the North/South border of Korea. Always a tense area, with North and South Korea soldiers facing one another, Steve, a former line officer in the U.S. Army Rangers was personally selected by the Chief of Chaplains staff for this assignment. He has since been reassigned to the Special Forces Group at Ft. Lewis, Washington. Following my visit with his ministry in the JSA he shared the following...

I've got a couple of new soldiers of interest in the JSA who are getting involved since you left. There is a soldier named Jay, who arrived talking about how he believed God had chosen him to be on this mission field, and then pretty quickly got overwhelmed with bad influences, a pity party about being separated from his family and self destructed spiritually.

The other is a highly motivated soldier, who can tell you all about the events in the last revival, but couldn't Biblically explain a key doctrine if his life depended on it.

The common denominator with both is that they have never learned to use their minds in relation to God. They just repeat things they have heard pastors say, and depend on emotional feelings.

For the latter, I intend to gingerly challenge him to start justifying his positions with Scripture. For the former, I'm planning a firm, spiritual "kick in the rear end" to shake him.

If there were any one thing I'd emphasize, though it would be the need for patience in this military environment and to focus on Christ, where He is taking someone, and His timing in not seeking to conform to our precise ideas or definitions.

Captain John, a young Roman Catholic officer, continues to be my best student. He's starting to ask questions about differences between Catholic and Protestant churches and about their doctrines, and about why I decided to "switch". [Chaplain Peck was raised in the Catholic Church]. In the Holy Spirit's timing, God will use his hunger to know the Scripture to lead him into the truth and into a biblical church relationship.

John's life, devotion, high interest in Scripture, and frequent comments about faith and grace, all show me he is in the process of making the heart decision to trust Christ alone for his salvation. Also, the other thing I'd emphasize is that I know all this about John, not because I cornered him about the status of his eternal salvation, but because we've shared our lives the past year, all the successes, failures, disappointments, and confusing things for both of us. We've taken short trips/adventures around the Korean peninsula, gone on combat patrol in the DMZ, run together, and hung out talking about the military, politics, God, and other "truly important" subjects. My evangelism tool with him is my life.

Isn't God fun with the different challenges He gives us? Well that's all the news from the frontier.

GOD IS CHANGING LIVES IN PRISON

Chaplain Steve Francis is one of your missionaries in Centinella State Prison, California. The following account came in his prayer and praise email report.

This has been a challenging week at the prison as we said goodbye to a popular officer that died of cancer at the age of 44. He was Roman Catholic and I was never able to get into a conversation with him about his faith. I did get to speak to several staff members about Christ this week though and am praying that they would trust in Christ.

Two weeks ago a young Mormon inmate came to me with some questions on the deity of Christ. We spoke for over an hour. It was frustrating because he was redefining words so that he could say that he believed in the Trinity and that Christ was God. Yesterday he spoke with Chaplain Huff who is the yard pastor on his yard. He voiced concerns about how his family would react if he converted to Christianity. They have been involved in the church for many years. This morning one of the inmate leaders on his yard whispered to me during the early part of the service that the individual trusted Christ last night in his cell. I almost shouted I was so filled with joy at the news. Your prayers are reaping a harvest.

One of the leaders on another yard share with me about his crime and the results yesterday. He was a popular and very good high school teacher that got involved with a student. It was not an extended situation but it devastated him. He was a Christian and very active in his church and had thought that he was a "rock" that could not be moved. For about three years following he would wake up each morning and vomit.

Then he began to deal with his sin before the Lord and it finally culminated in a church service with a guest speaker. The speaker said that in thirty years of preaching he had never given a title to a message.

However, as he had prepared to preach on the betrayal of Joseph and its outcome the Lord had impressed upon him the title, "Don't Quit in the Pit." He was sure that there was someone there that the Lord would deal with that night.

Well, the teacher was dealt with that night and he repented of his sin. The next morning there was a loud knock at the door and the order, "Police, open up." He was led away in handcuffs and said that he felt a great release when the cuffs were placed on his wrists. He did not try to defend himself though they charged him with a more serious crime than he had committed. He said that he would accept any fair

sentence that they gave him. A white man charge with a lesser but similar crime was given eight years. On the same day this black man was given twenty-three years with a possible parole date in fifteen. That would get him out in time for his sons (twins) graduation. When he arrived at the reception center they said that it would be nineteen years. That was changed to seventeen and that is where it stands now.

Each time he gets discouraged he remembers, "Don't quit in the pit" and the Lord encourages him. He has a powerful ministry at the prison and is one that I can always rely on to pray for me and encourage me.

Pray for these men and many more like them as they are confronted with Christ, salvation, purification, sanctification and eventually glorification.

Please pray for all your chaplains who are missionaries to the military, fire fighting, law enforcement, prison, and hospital worlds or ministry as they face spiritual challenges and opportunities like those shared by Chaplains Nave, Peck and Francis.

Rev. Warren Dane, Director of Chaplaincy

God's Call: My Ministry

Mrs. Kathleen Buchanan

Grand Bahama Isles is my homeland and place of ministry. Located just 55 miles of the east coast of Florida, it is the first in a chain of 15 major Islands and 685 little Cays. It is an independent English-speaking island that attracts visitors for its championship golf courses, vegas-style casinos, pristine white beaches, water sports, and many other cultural means of entertainment.

In the midst of all the fun and excitement, the more than 300,000 people in need of God's relevant message of salvation are many times overlooked. While religious education and prayer are still allowed within the public/private schools, approximately 61% of the people are religious only in head knowledge of God, without any personal relationship with Jesus. About 38% attend church regularly, but less than 6% of Bahamian men attend church. The absence of men leading their families to the house of God has not only opened the door for an aggressive campaign to unchurched men, but also for an opportunity for an immediate and necessary women's ministry.

Five years after trusting Jesus as my Savior, I sensed the call of God to vocational ministry in either teaching or nursing. I enrolled in Bible school and obtained a solid biblical foundation. Through prayer and godly counsel I pursued my passion for teaching.

Currently I am employed at an inter-racial Christian school with just under 700 students. I have enjoyed nurturing the minds and hearts of many children for more than 20 years. I am also a very involved pastor's wife, and President of the Women's Ministry at Lucayan Bible Church, where my husband, Ed is the pastor. Some of the ministries I'm involved in are:

- Visiting women who are sick and shut in
- Encouraging women who are newcomers to the church/community
- Help develop the spiritual life of girls/women within the church
- Assist the pastor with female candidates at baptism
- Arrange for care of women and/or visiting young girls and female guest speakers
- Encourage evangelism and Christian growth among women

It is my belief that small group women's ministries are key to church growth. As Christian women we should encourage and disciple other women to confront challenges in life's arenas with godly attitudes and actions that are in line with God's Word, and beneficial to the growth of His kingdom.

All women, regardless of their geographic location, educational background, marital or employment status should realize that God has given us numerous opportunities for service, and we can utilize each occasion and privilege to minister and provide guidance and direction for many. My role as a pastor's wife is not to be a passive bystander, but a helpful and mature encourager, meeting the challenges of the home and call to ministry while "growing in the grace, and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." (2 Peter 3:18) Submissively ministering under the authority of my husband, who is the head of our home, and under shepherd under Christ, I can serve joyfully while encouraging women within the Bahamas to grow and learn who they are in Christ. Serving with my husband throughout the years has brought the satisfaction of being a team player. I encourage you to also joyfully serve the Lord in the area He has called you to with Philippians 4:13 as your focus - "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

Kathleen became a believer at a VBS sponsored by Missionaries to the Bahamas. She attended Bluewater Bible College, St Thomas US Virgin Island, Pensacola Christian College and International University of Missouri, Kansas City. She holds a Teacher's Certification, Diploma of Theology, and BA in Elementary Education. Her husband, Ed is a new member of IFCA International.

Church Extension Illinois Bible Church Mission

The Illinois Bible Church Mission rejoices in the beginning of a new church planting project. Community Bible Church of Washington, IL officially began conducting church services on September 9, 2001. Since then, the church has averaged over 50 on Sunday mornings, and the Lord's hand has been evident.

Washington, Illinois is a town of just over 14,000 people located east of Peoria. It is a growing middle to upper-middle class community. The Lord directed seven local families to hold Sunday evening Bible studies early in the year. As time went on, they felt that the Lord wanted them to establish their own church. On the counsel of area IFCA International pastors, the group contacted IBCM, and soon plans were underway to begin holding services.

The local Methodist church had recently sold their facility to an adult day care center. The center did not find it feasible to use the sanctuary of the church, so they chose instead to lease to CBC. The new church was able to move right into a "ready made" furnished facility. IBCM Director, Henry Vosburgh, has been serving in the pulpit, with the help of other Central Illinois Regional IFCA International pastors and missionaries.

A constitution was drafted by the steering committee, and on October 28, 2001 the church officially chartered its membership with 13 committing to join the church. Other attenders have recently indicated interest in joining the fellowship as well, so more growth is expected soon.

At the present time a search is being conducted by Illinois Bible Church Mission to recruit a missionary pastor for this work. The church and mission board are praying for the Lord's man to be raised up and lead this new and exciting ministry to become a graduated and self-supported IFCA International church.