SFMI

Prayer/News Update

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Saints, Disciples, The Body of Christ

by Dick York

Perhaps, for the sake of some, there is a need to put the work of missionaries into perspective. What is mission all about? Is it supplying medical services or education to deprived populations? Maybe it is giving financial aid or digging wells for people without water. People and organizations that do missionary work may be involved in any or all of these things at one time or another. But if we think that because we are doing these things we are fulfilling the great commission we definitely need a new perspective.

In the New Testament, believers in Jesus Christ are described as "saints," "disciples" and "the body of Christ." Each of these terms is more than just a title. It is a definition. The definition of "saint" is one who is sanctified —i.e. set apart from the world for God's specific purpose. Like the word "church," it is greatly misused and often entirely misunderstood. Church is eklesia, meaning called out [of the world]. A Saint is a member of that church, he is sanctified, set apart [from the world]. A saint, therefore, is no longer at liberty to simply do his own thing. He is separated to God's purpose. He is not his own, he is bought with a price.

A disciple, as the word implies, is disciplined, one who follows his leader. Therefore, to the disciple, instructions mean something—they are to be obeyed. It is difficult for him, therefore, to ignore a command or to treat it as a mere suggestion. If I am His disciple then I am responsive to His words.

The designation "Body of Christ" is of particular significance because it is a physiological description of what God sees the church to be. To us, it may be simply the name of the company so to speak. But to God, it is "the fullness of Him that filleth all in all." Ephesians 1:23 God looks at the church as He looked at the man Christ Jesus. It is the human body through which He reveals Himself to mankind and through which He does His work in the world today. Jesus was very aware of who He was, should not we also be aware of who we are?

Jesus understood what was in His future. Should not we also understand the significance of ours and of the cross He has called us to bear? God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself. Now God is in the body of Christ, working in and through it "both to will and to do of His good pleasure." Phil. 2:12 What then, in general, would be His good pleasure for the body of Christ in the year 2003? Something different, perhaps, from the purpose He had for the body of Christ Jesus in the year thirty-three AD, or from the foundation of the world? I think not. God does not change from day to day or from year to year. He is the same yesterday and today and forever. Heb. 13:8 "I am the Lord, I change not." Mal. 3:6

In Hebrews 10:5 we are made privy to a conversation between the Father and the Son, which took place, apparently, when Jesus came into the world. In this tenth chapter, the writer of Hebrews makes it clear that those who offered year by year the sacrifices prescribed by the law under the Old Testament, could never, by the offering of those sacrifices make themselves perfect. Otherwise "would they not have ceased to be offered? Because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year."

Why?

Because "It is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins!"

> He will do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think…then…
> **He** will reward **us** for what **He does** through us.
> Hallelujah, What a Savior!

For that reason, when Jesus came into the world He said to the Father, "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared me. In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure."

It seems obvious that God was not pleased with offerings made for sins. It was His pleasure that sin should be dealt with once for all, and that these continual sacrifices should be rendered unnecessary. This He would do by making one eternal sacrifice—the one sacrifice that would take away sin forever. This is what is being addressed when Jesus spoke to the Father and acknowledged that He did not want burnt offerings and offerings for sin, and that God took no pleasure in those sacrifices that were offered by the law. "Then said He, 'Lo, I come to do thy will O God.' He taketh away the first [covenant with it's sacrifices] that He may establish the second [covenant, the New Testament]." By the will of God we are sanctified [set apart for God's own purpose] through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

This—the body of Jesus Christ—was the efficacious sacrifice that served the Father's will . What would be the result if God's people, the saints, should make the connection and realize the astounding truth that our salvation has made us part of the body of Christ. That is what "sanctified" means to us. We are set apart to the will of God by being made a part of that body that was sacrificed for the reconciling of the world to God—part of He who said, "I came to do thy will, O God."

The body of Christ Jesus in whom the Word of God was incarnate was the humanity in which God dwelt and walked. It was through that Body that God revealed Himself to mankind. "In Him dwelt all the fullness of the godhead bodily." Col.2:9 When Jesus had walked sinless before man for thirty-three years as a perfect example of every stage of human development from infancy to maturity, He spoke to the Father and said, "I have finished the work that thou gavest me to do. I have manifested thy name to the men that thou gavest me out of the world." Then, as He petitioned the Father to keep all of the believers as they dwell in this world, he said, "And now I am no more in the world, but these are…." John 17:11 The same apostle John who recorded that, also wrote these words, "As He is, so are we in this world." 1 John 4:17

What are we to make of all these things? Is it not apparent from Scripture that God still dwells and walks in the body of Christ? Jesus, who was that body is now the head of the body and all that are in Christ make up His body now. He is no longer physically in the world, but we are. He is no longer the body, we are. He is now the head over all things to the church [His saints], which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all. Eph. 1:23 So now God, according to His promise, **dwells and walks in us**, His church. Remember? "I will dwell in them and walk in them; and I will be their God and they shall be my people. 2 Cor. 6:16

It is a common error among God's people to think that we are responsible to do something for God, and in doing so we must invent the plan, plan the event and produce the result. Having done all this, we then present it to God as our gift to Him. Not so! The apostle Paul wrote to the Ephesians, "Now unto **Him that is able to do** exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory in the church **by Christ Jesus**

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Jim Lucas' Column

The Assyrian, What Kind of Man is He?

The Assyrian! What kind of man is he? We are familiar with the image of Saddam Hussein; some dubbed him "Insane Hussein." He was a cruel Dictator, oppressing his own people, dominating them by means of cruelty and fear. He was of the same essence as Stalin and Hitler, famous for their cruel torture tactics. But actually, the Assyrian is very much like me.

Baghdad is situated between the Tigress River (formerly called Hiddekel: see Gen.2:14 &Dan.10:4) and the Euphrates. Both of these rivers were in the Garden of Eden. Look what came out of the Garden, this cesspool of humanity that our Lord Jesus was sent to save. I have to say their goes me if it weren't for the grace of God. We shouldn't let the deeds of a few taint our thoughts for the rest, not all Germans are like Hitler nor all Russians like Stalin, many Assyrians are not any different than we are. The depravity of man is great and every son of Adam is capable of sinking to the lowest and vilest state. In the book of Romans we read about God giving man up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts.... He gave them up unto vile affections... and even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things that are not convenient. (Please read Romans.1: 24-32) Woe to those whom God gives over to a reprobate mind. Was Saddam one of these? It could be.

During the 1980's, we were living in San Cristobal, Chiapas, Mexico, we had a young Tzetal girl staying in our home for awhile, her and her brother had been saved and they loved the Lord Jesus, they could neither read nor write. Esperanza was very sensitive, we had a newspaper lying in the house with a picture of Saddam Hussein on the front page. She didn't know who he was, but when she saw his picture she became very upset and almost in tears she said; " that man is the most evil man in the world".

The love of God is much greater than we can imagine and his forgiveness is complete. His ability to take the vilest sinner and make him a Saint is a wonder to behold. Jonah was a man who knew God. He knew that He was forgiving and forever merciful. Yet Jonah didn't come close to understanding the depth of Gods forgiveness. In this present time, I see the oppression of the many by the few. And I remember the teaching of Jesus that we are to love our enemies and to pray for them who hate us and despitefully use us. I confess I too know very little of the goodness of our Lord Jesus. Jonah was of the tribe of Israel and they had been enemies of the Ninevites. The Ninevites are the Assyrians of today; Nineveh is now called Mosul and its located in the north of Iraq along the Tigress River. Nineveh was known for its wickedness, which included idol worship and extreme cruelty to prisoners of war. This helps us to understand Jonah's refusal to go to Nineveh and preach the word of the Lord, by no means does it excuse him, but I must say I can identify with his reluctance.

Jonah's rebellion did not take him to Tarshish, where he had planned to travel, but he went to Nineveh as God had planned, via the big fish. This was not Jonah's choice of transportation, but our heavenly Father is much wiser and chose what would not only take him there, but bring him in the best frame of mind to do the task at hand. Now Jonah not only believed theoretically in Gods forgiveness and ability to save, but now he knew by experience. I am sure that this enemy of the Ninevites made quite an impression on them with his testimony.

"And the word of the Lord came unto Jonah the second time, saying, arise go to Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee. So Jonah arose, and went unto Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord. He has learned a great deal. And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and he cried and said, yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.

So the people of Nineveh believed God and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even unto the least of them. The King commanded a fast for men and beast and said: " let them turn everyone from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands. And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he said he would do unto them and he did it not.

But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry. And he prayed unto the Lord, and said, I pray thee, O Lord, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled before unto Tarshish: for I knew that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil. Therefore now, O Lord, take, I beseech thee my life from me; for it is better for me to die than to live. Then said the Lord, Doest thou well to be angry?"

What do you think? Should Jonah be angry? It appears that he wanted God to punish the Ninevites even though they had repented of their sin. God is not a respecter of persons; if he could forgive Jonah or us then he must forgive all men who truly believe unto repentance.

A wonderful work of God took place there in Nineveh that still to this day brings forth fruit not only in Assyria but also unto the far regions of the world. In an article written for the ASSIST News Service, Ken Joseph Jr. said, "While the Kurds of north Iraq are well known, for some reason almost completely ignored in the current discussion are 1.2 million ASSYRIAN CHRISTIANS living many in their historic lands of Iraq." (This includes many Catholics who are not born again Christians.)

Ken Joseph Jr. also said, " Currently the Assyrian Christians in Iraq are centered in three main areas- approximately 200,000 in Northern Iraq, approximately 1,000,000 in Central Iraq, mostly in Baghdad and a third smaller group of a few thousand in South Iraq. Another approximately 4 million Assyrian Christians are outside of Iraq, primarily in Iran, Syria, Jordan, Canada, Australia, Europe, and U.S." Joseph added, "under the no fly zone protected by the British and the US military, churches are being rebuilt. And the Assyrians have built 40 schools and nearly 8000 children are being taught Aramaic for the first time in centuries.

The Assyrian, what kind of a man is he? He can be the most evil man in the world or he can be found righteous in Christ Jesus, he can be your worst enemy or your Brother in Christ, he can be a cruel dictator or a humble teacher of children. All depends upon the grace of God that is found when one repents and believes upon the Lord Jesus Christ.

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throughout all ages, world without end. Amen. Eph. 3:20,21 As we have noted in many previous articles, it is He that is able to do, not us. However, He does what He does by His power working in us. What He does, though, is more than we are able even to ask or think. We, the saints who make up His body are simply a habitation of God. Eph. 2:23

It has always been that way. When Jesus walked in His flesh he said, "The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do… I can of mine own self do nothing…" John 5:19,30 This principle must be firmly fixed in our thinking before we launch out to build His house or to plant His church or to fulfill whatever we believe the great commission to be. Some specific things we do consciously. We apply ourselves to them because they are specific commands. The results, however, are His to determine. According to Christ's commission, one of the things we do is preach the Gospel to every creature. Mark 16:15 Another thing we do, according to that commission, is teach all nations, that is, make disciples in every nation, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever He has commanded us. Mat. 28:19 There is nothing in those commands about planting the church because that is His work. That result is far beyond our capacity. We teach disciples. He builds His church.

If man builds a church he may fill it with those who are not disciples. When He builds His own church the living stones that He adds daily to its structure are disciples.

Four things in the scriptures having to do with the responsibility of disciples are notable in the early stages of the visible New Testament church:

First is Jesus' command to **preach the Gospel to every creature.** Mark 16:15 This is the primary responsibility of the church in the world, which entails, not only speaking words, but demonstrating the life our words advertise.

Second, "…**repentance and remission of sins should be preached** in His name among all nations…. Luke 24 47 Jesus put repentance and remission of sins in the same sentence. There is an important connection between the two. There are some that say the message of repentance was only for Israel, but Jesus included all nations. The apostle Paul preached to both Jews and Gentiles "**repentance toward God** and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." Acts 20:21 The good news, though, is **the remission of sins**. The apostle Peter preached to the household of a Roman soldier, "To him [Jesus] give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins. Acts 10:43

Third, Jesus said, "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and **ye shall be witnesses unto me**, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Acts 1:8 That is the work of the church; to be a witness of Christ. Sometimes the many other things we bear witness to diffuse that simple focus. It is well to note that the verb in Acts 1:8 is *to be* not *to do*.

Fourth, **teach *faithful* men.** The apostle Paul's instruction to his co-worker Timothy was, "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. 2 Tim. 2:2

Notice that there is not a fifth item that says **"plant churches."** There doesn't need to be. Local gatherings of believers will result from attention to the things that Jesus told us to do. Preach the Gospel to everyone we meet, preach repentance and emphasize the remission of sins, live as Spirit-filled witnesses of Christ and His resurrection and teach faithful men to teach others also. The result will be strong churches raising up, sometimes, in places we have never been.

Of course, some will point out, there are other things that Jesus has told us to do; and we will do them: but they are all in the context of these basic principles.

If we are athletes and we want to win the championship, we have to concentrate on the fundamentals. There is no formula for winning the championship, but there is a formula for developing the fundamentals, which produce the championship form and ultimately reach the goal.

There is no command to plant churches. There is no command to get results. Those are the Lord's responsibilities.

We must remember **who we are**: —saints—disciples—the body of Christ. He works in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure.

We must remember **the fundamentals**: preach the Gospel to every creature, preach repentance and the remission of sins, be Spirit-filled witnesses of Him, and teach faithful men to teach others also.

Jesus said, "He that believeth on me the works that I do shall he do also, and greater works than these shall ye do because I go unto my Father." John 14:12 He will do exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think, according to **His** power that works in us. Be faithful; leave the results to Him. **He** will reward **us** for what **He does** through us. Hallelujah, What a Savior!

Memorial Day Conference 2003

Thanking God for Fifty Years of Ministry

Some of the old-timers will remember well Mom York. Her prayers were felt by many who went to the field in the early years of this work. The Lord called her home in 1978, and when she left we knew we had lost an intercessor. We are taking this opportunity to acknowledge her ministry, and to let her represent for us the many who, in the past fifty years, having had a part of this particular work, have been promoted to glory. It is the remembrance of lives like Mom's that make us know that the race is not forever: there is a time to cross the finish line and to stand in the presence of the Lord to hear Him say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

"Not to the strong is the battle, not to the swift is the race.
But to the true and the faithful victory is promised by grace."

Every SFMI conference is special, but this one was "especially special" because it marked a half century of enduring and enjoying the trials and blessings that accompany inclusion in God's service. Looking back on fifty years of time is an incredible experience: seeing the successes that have blossomed from many apparent failures; remembering the things that have been forgotten, rejoicing with the people who have been involved and remembering those who have finished their course. We can say, it has been a remarkable journey so far. We can only wonder, with great anticipation, what the next fifty years will bring. Some of us are young enough to contemplate the probability of being around to see it all.

In the past fifty years we have been able to watch the unfolding of prophetic fulfillment. The nation of Israel has grown from a ragged group of refugees struggling against overwhelming odds against many surrounding Muslim nations determined to keep them from possessing the land to which God has given them title, to a modern nation. 36 years ago, they possessed their city of Jerusalem from which they had been dispossessed and had prayed for and longed for for nearly two thousand years. We are seeing that city become a burdensome stone to all nations.

We have seen the breaking down of family and marriage, which has led to moral decadence; a sign of the times. New diseases continue to appear and spread as epidemics around the world. Islam has become a major religion in once Christian America. Sovereign nations are surrendering their autonomy to world government. Bible translations have accelerated in their proliferation since 1950, undermining confidence in the authority of God's Word. Light is called darkness, and darkness light. The weeds are growing exponentially.

And no wonder; these are the last days and the latter rain is falling. Everything is growing, not only the weeds. God's harvest is growing as well. In 1970 it was estimated that there were some 17,500 unreached people groups in the world. In North Africa and other Muslim areas, the number of Christian congregations was negligible, in some cases non-existent. That is no longer the case. Even in the face of extreme hostility the Gospel has made inroads. While there are Muslim nations where Christianity is illegal and Christians are punished by death, even there the Gospel of Jesus Christ is bearing fruit. Today the estimate of unreached people groups is more like 3,500. Churches are proliferating in such hostile countries as China. The former Communist nations of Eastern Europe are now producing missionaries. The rain is falling; everything is growing. When this Gospel of the kingdom has been preached in all the world for a witness to all nations, then shall the end come. Matthew 24:14

Would we say that the end will come in the next fifty years? No. Would we say that the end *could* come in the next fifty years? Yes. That's what this conference was all about. Looking back, reminiscing and rejoicing in the goodness of our Lord. And looking ahead anticipating the things to come: the advance of the Gospel to every nation, the trials as the anti-Christ spirit that is in the world seeks to prohibit it, and the glorious victories that will result. And perhaps … just perhaps, the coming of the Lord Jesus to rule and reign in righteousness.

Looking back we know that trials accompanied the blessings. It will be no different in the future. The trials may be even more challenging, but the promised victory is the ultimate one.

"Jesus will reign where ere the sun
doth his successive journeys run."

Look up, look ahead. The next fifty years, coming right up!

Dick Kelso

It was, to say the least, a tremendous time of fellowship with the Lord and with each other. All that attended would certainly agree. Dick Kelso, who has ministered the Word for many years, was around in the beginning of this work and is presently on the board of directors of SFMI, was one of the keynote speakers. We were much encouraged as he pointed us to the example of the apostle Paul in his character and his work.

Orin Kidd

Orin Kidd, who for over twenty years was a missionary in Irian Jaya, was the second keynote speaker. The subject of his message was the whole armour of God. All of the keynotes were challenging, informative and helpful. Tapes of the conference are available and can be ordered from the SFMI office.

Larry and Peggy Gallegos

Larry and Peggy have been on the mission field of Mexico for about thirty years. They both went to the field as single people through SFMI and later esxtablished a Mexican mission targeting Muslim nations. Larry, with the help of Mike Sheets from Spokane, Washington, created a presentation of the fifty-years of ministry of SFMI. It was a moving presentation indeed.

Twin Rocks 2003

Some of the missionary families were able to be with us for the Conference at Twin Rocks this year, and it was a delight to hear from them concerning the work on the fields to which they have ministered.

Encouraging reports came from **Mexico**, especially from the highlands of Jalisco State, which for years was a target of prayer. Now there are some churches blossoming through the blanket of opposition that prevailed so long.

Reports from Romania, North Africa, Nigeria, Kenya and Tanzania are also encouraging.

The Twin Rocks Conference Center was filled to capacity and there was much interest, even excitement generated for future conferences and for the training program that is conducted on a regular annual basis in Bend, Oregon.

Children's meetings were also held and the children were fascinated by what they learned from the scriptures and also from the information they received about the great commission and the fields that still await the coming of the Godpel. We want to thank the teachers who took time to prepare and to teach these children who are the future of the church—tomorrow's missionaries, teachers, businessmen, housewives and witnesses of the Lord Jesus. Also the many other workers who, behind the scenes, do the work that facilitates the work of the conferences. What a marvelous time of remembering fifty years of God's faithfulness to us.

There were also the many who, during the free times, went out on the streets to share the good news of the Gospel with the hourds of vacationers and revelers who crowd to the beautiful Oregon Coast for the Memorial Day weekend.

Many of the saints also took some time to enjoy the sun and the sand and the salt sea air. It is difficult to take your family to the coast without taking some time to play on the beach and frolic in the surf. We praise God for a well-rounded weekend of praise, prayer, worship, fellowship, evangelism, exercise and edification. We look forward to continuing in His service and His fellowship until we come together again next year to report on the first year of the next fifty. There is no greater joy than to see our children walking in the truth.

Afri

Jerry Skiles

Wars, famine, pestilence, and death are spoken of in Chapter 6 of Revelation. These divine pronouncements have their purpose in the end times. Our newspapers report that these things are currently plaguing Africa and other parts of the world. I do not believe it is God's purpose to judge Africa's people uniquely at this time while leaving other continents and nations living in peace and prosperity.

I believe that many of their problems are due to them making bad decisions. Aids is rampant in Africa, but the spread of aids can be stopped with some good decisions on their part. Hunger is a widespread problem while much of Africa's lands are capable of crops but remain uncultivated. Therefore hunger is epidemic.

I like to think that if the youth of Africa could see that a better future can be made for them with a plow rather than a gun, wars would diminish. How we perceive things moves us to action.

Since I believe that Africans making good choices can solve these problems, it moves me to want to help expose them to some solutions. The Lord has given me opportunity to journey to Togo, West Africa, and help an organization that teaches Africans better methods in food production. I will be working with rural farmers and local extension agents for three weeks in June.

It appears the decline in Ivory Coast has stopped and some positive initiatives have started. The neighboring countries are discussing how to reopen the borders so people and goods can resume movement. Security for those who will be working in the rebel-controlled areas continues to be a major concern. The young men, who now hold authority in these areas, are reluctant to give up power without some sort of gain for themselves.

Cherry and I are tentatively planning to return to Ivory Coast this September. In May we received word that our house in the tribe was ransacked by the rebels. There remain many unanswered questions for us in Ivory Coast, but we feel that to find the answers means getting there. We sure enjoyed our time there.

Aug.7 - 26 Dick York, Steve and Nate Montgomery will be in Nigeria for the "Come ye Apart" Conferences, with a three-day stop in Germany.

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Nigeria

In 1980 a team from SFMI went to Nigeria. In 1981 three Nigerian men came to the SFMI Training program in Bend, Oregon. Those three men began training Nigerians.

Here are some excerpts from e-mails from Ethnos, The Nigerian training program. You will recognize the name of Moses Osho from his recent article in the SFMI Update.

Announcing

"Come Ye Apart" in Ibadan Aug. 12 - 16, Ogbomosho Aug. 21 - 23. In between, they will bring in some leaders for four days in Ibadan so that Dick York may share his wide experience in leadership & work of ministry with them.

From Nat Abimbola:

I just came back from an outreach to Ayougou/Agonin which lasted about a month. It was a success by the grace of God, though we had to cut it short a bit due to the registration going on in Nigeria. Please pray for us that the work will continue to progress and that the new Christians in Ayogou and the two brothers that are there will continue to wax strong in the Lord.

From Moses Osho:

To the glory of God, we opened a new field in the republic of Benin this February (see Nat above.) Idolatry and witchcraft are very strong there. Because of fear, people who wish to accept Christ could not openly confess or declare their faith. After a month of tough but successful evangelistic outreach, which produced a few believers, two missionaries that were called of God to work among the tribe have been stationed there. Please join us in prayer to break the power of idols and occultism, that God may grant boldness to the believers, for protection upon our missionaries and that God would continue to confirm His words with signs following in Jesus' name.

From Samuel Oladele Deji:

Our Training Programme in Togo is taking good shape now after many years of prayer and work of faith. We opened another mission field this year, in the middle belt of Republic of Benin among the Ayogo-Agonin tribe. They were ninety-five percent idol worshippers. We sent two missionaries--Kossi Dansula and Olusoji Oyelola. Please do pray for them.

Mexico

Well, the Gallegos brood certainly had an interesting trip north. Peggy,Joel, Jonathan, Joshua and I left Tonala in order to make the Shield of Faith Memorial Day Conference in Oregon.Loren stayed behind. He has a job and will join us later in the summer for some well deserved vacation time.

On the trip north, Joshie started to vomit everything when we got to Texas. The next day while traveling through New Mexico we took him into the emergency room in Espanola and a few hours later he was under the knife.The good doctor removed his appendix and we ended up staying a few extra days in New Mexico. We were in the middle of nowhere so decided to continue our trek. It was a bit slow, we had to stop often and let Josh out so he wouldn't build up blood clots. We made it to the Conference and had a wonderful time of fellowship and ministry. The Lord had laid on our hearts a few months before to do a music and multi-media presentation to honor the Lord's faithfulness through the ministry of the Shield of Faith over the last 50 years. It was so good to spend time with dear saints and God blessed. But Sunday evening it became clear that Joshie's operation had become internally infected and we rushed Josh to the Tillamook hospital where he ended up staying another three nights. The Lord graciously provided for a room at a local motel and on Thursday Josh was released.

We drove up to Kennewick where my sister and brother-in-law live and are here till Josh recuperates. We know many of you have been praying for this situation. We thank God for his help and care during these trials. Peggy spent nights in the hospital with Josh and helped me move him around. She now is in bed with some neck and back pains that have also been very difficult for her. Please continue to pray for this situation. Also Please continue to pray for the Tonala church as they begin a new phase of growth. We expect to be able to take some time off but will continue to be quite involved in ministry projects.

Continue to pray for Jose Luis and July in Morocco. They also had an emergency appendectomy experience with their son Luis.

Heartfelt thanks;

Peggy and I wish to extend our heartfelt thanks and appreciation to all of you who showed such kindness and concern for our family during Josh's ordeal. After the conference Josh was in the hospital until Wednesday fighting a severe infection. Since his discharge he has been healing normally.

We were truly blessed by your prayers and tangible manifestations of love for Josh and our family. Special thanks for the generous offering taken at the conference and for the gracious provision for our stay in Tillamook. In His Care,
Larry Gallegos for the family

Little Karina, 7 years old, climbed into her dad's lap and gave him a hug. "Daddy, I'm so happy that we're Christians! Jesus is the greatest thing I have! He's my treasure!" Then with the same clear, confident tones, with disgust in her voice, she added, "But I hate the devil! He's just a liar and bad to everyone! I'd like to just kick him!"

Out of the mouth of babes!

As we made preparation for the Family Conference in May, I couldn't help but reflect. This year, 28 people (including 6 under 5 years old) were registered from here. Last year, many of these people weren't saved. Several had just started meeting with us, recoiling from the machinations of a false brother who had swindled them in the name of Christ. Their families were in shambles and their commitment to Christ was trembling on the precipice of disillusion. Their little children were rascals that gave new meaning to total depravity and brought to mind Paris Reidhead's phrase "monsters of iniquity". Karina, of whom I spoke above, was such a terror among the children I wondered if families might not be staying away from the meetings to avoid her.

Though I can't say all things are fully transformed, it is hard to believe this is the same group. There are many battles still being fought, but the Word is doing its work.

Here are some people we would like you to pray for:

Enrique: He is reading the New Testament and studying the Bible with us enthusiastically. This week, when we finished the study, I no sooner finished praying than Enrique began! "Thank You, Lord, for this study and for the things we're learning. Thank You because, well, I let go of the reins of my life and You sure picked them up!" Imagine how elated Ed and I were as we drove away! Enrique's mom and two sisters are also open and on more than one occasion have been moved to tears while listening to the Bible study. The father, Panchito, is friendly but has never joined the study. They have over ½ million agave plants stretched out over 60 acres and have their own private tequila label. Panchito is a candidate for federal representative here on the socialist party ticket. What changes will the Gospel bring to this family as it transforms hearts and lives?

Joel and Tere: This family of believers has made some drastic moves. They sold their home at a favorable price and were able to get themselves out of debt. They now want to buy a small piece of property upon which to build. They are also about to buy a bulldozer! Joel is a heavy-equipment operator and hopes to build up his own business. He is adept at heavy machinery but neither he nor his wife are skilled at money management, so they will have plenty to learn if they are going to be successful in business. Pray for all the details of these changes.

Claudia: This young woman came to Christ about a month ago. The Gospel is penetrating her family. Her brothers Armando and Ivan have come to the Sunday meeting and to the youth meetings and seem to be listening. Her mom recently, after some reluctance, gave Claudia permission to attend the conference. Pray for the advance of the Gospel in this entire family.

Juan and Margarita: This entire family seems poised on the brink of conversion. Mom and dad enjoy the message of the Bible, their teen-agers come to youth group, ask questions and regularly seek out the other believers for advice or clarity on what the Bible says about some subject.

Thank you for standing with us to see a foothold made in this largely unreached territory.

In Christ

Steve, Linda and Josh

SFMI Training Program

Teaching Mission, Training Disciples

The initial 2003 Training session will end July 19. After a brief break, some of the participants will return for further study and practical application. On January 12, 2004, Lord willing, we will begin again. If God has directed you to participate, please request an application as soon as possible by writing, calling or emailing SFMI. The numbers are on the banner of the Update.

Following are brief testimonies from five of this year's students.

David Kangni

Midway through the training course, David Kangni, a participant from Germany, having visa problems, struggled over his inability to prolong his stay in the U.S. After two weeks of frustration of trying and failing, he was compelled to return to Germany. He sent us this brief testimony upon his arrival at his home.

"The foreseeing care and guardianship of God over His saints is incredibly awesome. I arrived in Germany on May 19 and on Sunday May 25, we received news from Ghana that my wife Marian's junior sister passed away on Saturday May 24. She was 41 years old. In a small way, I now do understand the divine care of God and why I should be back to Germany at this time.

My ticket was re-issued without a charge, I passed through all check-in points without any interruption. I witnessed the gospel to an old lady from Holland and wrote down John 3:1-16 on a piece of paper and gave it to her shortly before we landed in Amsterdam.

I greatly rejoice and again thank the Lord to be able to be by Marian and minister to her. Through all these happenings, I could see that my self-will needs to be dealt with. I pray the Lord search the depth of my heart, and consume this self-nature through His righteousness, thereby recognizing His decisions and simply obey.

The entire household is doing pretty well and we are learning to give thanks to the Lord in every circumstance. PRAISE THE LORD!"

Elisa Rice

Looking back on my Christian walk prior to the training program is astounding for me; I was living such a selfish, lukewarm Christian life. My relationship with God was all about me instead of all about Him. Not to say I am not at all selfish anymore, because I know I am—but that's the point! Now I'm aware!

One of the most encouraging things the Lord has been doing in me is taking all the head knowledge I had about Him and putting it in my heart. He has made it real.

The Lord has opened my eyes to the importance of evangelism. This is such a major part of being a disciple of Jesus, and yet it is a part I never exercised before in my Christian walk. I still have to pray daily, "Lord, please change my heart that I might truly desire to reach the lost." Because, let's face it, we don't always feel like spreading the good news. However, to do so is a commandment from our Lord Jesus.

God has also been showing me the importance of quiet time. Before the training program, quiet time was a chore for me. One of our teachers recently shared with us that having quiet time should be a never-ending adventure full of excitement. He said that during our quiet times we should be getting such an outpouring of blessing that we don't know what to do with it all. So now I am making my quiet time one of relationship with God instead of just reading to be reading. It truly is a blessing. I encourage you all to do the same.

Amber Hotrum

As a student in the training program, I have been motivated to seriously seek the Lord, and to study His Word. I am daily amazed at the truths He gave plainly in the Bible. He openly gave us His written Word that we may seek and know Him.

During the past five months there have been a few scriptures the Lord has been teaching me. Through Matthew 11: 28-30 I've seen how taking His yoke on myself is more than giving Him my burdens. It is asking Him to lead me; it is denying myself an humbly following Him wherever He will lead.

He has also been teaching me, through 2 Timothy 2:11,12 and Romans 6: 11, the need to be committed to Him and dying to myself. If I am alive to Him, I am not serving myself, I can only serve Him.

Most importantly, I have been learning to take following Him seriously: to know His will, to trust Him completely and to love Him like Peter in Matthew 14: 23-32. When my Lord says to me "Come," I must jump on the water expecting to land as I would on the ground. I can walk in His bidding, knowing that He will hold me up and through me accomplish what is impossible for me.

If I do get distracted by the storms around me and begin to sink, I can walk again if I cry out to Jesus, saying, "Lord, save me."

John Blank

I felt the Lord leading me to overseas missions. Several friends told me how the Shield of Faith training was a life-changing experience for them and how important it would be for someone called to missions.

In January I entered the Training Program. I have gained a new respect for the Bible as the Living Word of God and the importance of consistently staying in it every day. Before the training program I would not have considered myself proud. But the Lord has revealed to me my pride and how dangerous pride is. I have begun to realize how it hinders our doing the Lord's will.

I have also learned the importance of unceasing prayer so that we can be sensitive to the leading of the Spirit and learn to focus more on God's will and less on the flesh, and worry less about things that God has already promised to take care of.

The importance of being a faithful man has become evident to me through the lives of the men who teach us and through the testimonies at the Missions Conference. 2 Timothy 2:2 is key "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."

It is important to be faithful whether or not a thing seems important to me, it's important to God. It is important also to preach the gospel to every person, and when the Lord entrusts a faithful man to us, we teach him everything that the Lord has taught us and encourage him to do the same. It is simple, and that is how the Lord intends it.

Please pray for the Lord's direction as several trainees consider the second part of the training program, August 19 and the trip to Kenya, Africa in November.

Sheila Wolf

Because, in the training program, we are required to read the whole Bible in six months, I have been in the Word more in the last five months than I ever have in my life. As a result, the Lord has given me a love for it that I never knew I could have. I'm fascinated by the prophecies, in awe of God's love, patience and wisdom, and I never cease to be amazed at what Jesus did for the world. The more I read it, the more my desire to read it grows.

Also, from being in the Word so much, my view of Jesus has become a little clearer; and the clearer it gets, the stronger my love for Him grows. This training program has taught me so much, but learning to be in the Word for myself has been the most wonderful thing for me.

About The Washington LaborDay Weekend Conference

Labor Day 2003 will be the fourth annual Conference in Northeast Washington State. Each of the previous years has been a blessing, with an increased number in attendance. We are looking forward to another good time in the presence of the Lord as our families enjoy the pleasant atmosphere on the shores of Deer Lake.

Camp Gifford belongs to the Salvation Army and is somewhat more rustic than last years venue at Pinelow Conference and Retreat Center, but it's availability for the long Labor day weekend made it a desirable choice.

There is no charge for the conference, but of course there are expenses. We trust the Lord to meet them through. free will offerings, which is the policy of SFMI. Come prepared to give according to your ability.

To reach Camp Gifford, from Spokane, WA. proceed north on U.S. Highway 395 approximately 30 miles to Deer Lake Rd. Turn right and travel east about 3.5 miles to Pinelow Conference and Retreat Center (the location of last year's conference), Continue through Pinelow on North Deer Lake Road a short distance to Camp Gifford.

Please complete the accompanying yellow form and mail it to:

Brian Martell
2142 Addy Gifford Road #C
Addy, Washington, 99101

Please mail the pre-registration form as early as possible. Please read it carefully. If you have special needs please state them in the space provided.

If you have questions please call Brian at **(509) 935-6456** or the SFMI office at **(541) 382-7081.**

RM *#.* *Office Use Only* *FT/PT* *Office Use Only* *Rec'd*

Labor Day Believers Conference 2003
Shield of Faith Mission International

Registrar: Brian Martell *Mailing Address: 2142 Addy Gifford Road #C Addy, WA 99101-9719* *Phone or Fax: 1-509-935-6456 Call first before faxing!*

Camp Gifford, 3846 N Deer Lake Road, Deer Lake, Washington
August 29 – Sept. 1, 2003

How it Works: Arrivals begin at 4:00 p.m. Friday, Aug. 29. The first meeting begins at 7:00 p.m. There will be no meal served Friday night. Please feel free to bring snacks. Saturday morning is our first meal and Monday lunch is our last meal. There are family cabins and lodging for others. We have spaces available for tents and RVs. Bring your own bedding. Bedding can be provided for those in need, if we know in advance. Camp Gifford is a **non-smoking** facility. Pets are **not** allowed. Copy as many forms as you need. Mail or Fax completed forms to Brian Martell. We look forward to seeing you this year. **Register Early!**

Family Registration:

Last Name: _____ First: _____ Home Phone: _____-____-_____

Address: _____ Work Phone: _____-____-_____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ E-mail _____@_____

Spouse: _____ *Please include infants.*

Child: _____ ***Age:*** _____ ***Child:*** _____ ***Age:*** _____
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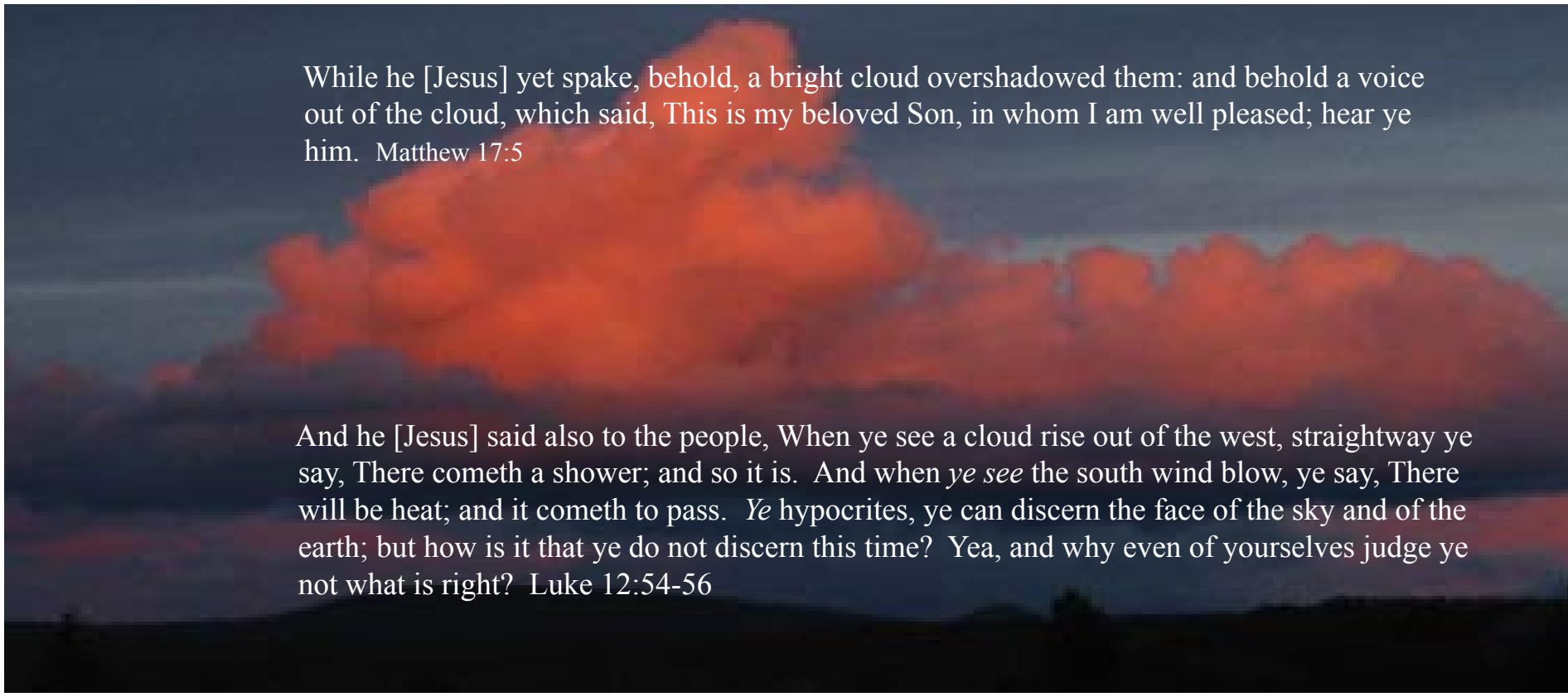
Circle Choices:

Nights staying over:	Friday Night	Saturday Night	Sunday Night
Sleeping Arrangements Needed:	Cabin	Tent	RV
Meals:	Saturday Breakfast	Sunday Breakfast	Monday Breakfast
	Saturday Lunch	Sunday Lunch	Monday Lunch
	Saturday Dinner	Sunday Dinner	

Special Requests or Needs:

Please mail or fax completed form to Brian Martell

Isaiah 44:22 I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee.



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