



Prayer/News Update

July/Aug.
2004

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Gifts of the Spirit have been given by the Lord Jesus to every member of the body, making each susceptible to His leading and direction. This also makes each member accountable to Him for the use of that gift. Obviously, the head does not preside over an assortment of disconnected body parts. This is a body. Each part is related and connected to the other, and each one's function has a direct bearing on that of the others.

Because of this physical as well as spiritual relationship, the Bible teaches us that there are local assemblies of believers. The letters of the apostles were addressed to such churches in various locations, such as the church at Corinth, at Ephesus or Colosse. Paul wrote to the churches in the province of Galatia and to the church at Rome. All of these were local clusters of people who were members of the whole Church. As they met together and obeyed the leading of the Spirit, God coordinated their gifts and they functioned as a unit to accomplish His purpose where they lived. Remember that the redeemed people are the image of God. They are a visible representation of He who is invisible. They are the body of Christ.

The gifts of the Spirit are coordinated as each member obeys the Lord. That presents, from the human perspective, a rather disturbing problem because we know that the probability of disobedience—which must be potential if, in fact, there is obedience—is very real. So the churches may not seamlessly represent the life of the Father, as did the Lord Jesus. That being true, there is a unique problem in the Church that is dealt with extensively in New Testament Scripture.

The problem is addressed in Paul's letter to the Galatians, "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other."¹ Spiritual growth is maturing toward the point of consistently walking according to the leading of the Spirit: if we walk in the Spirit, we shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.²

Within the churches, therefore, there is the problem of spiritual immaturity, for which cause God placed within the ranks of the believers overseers to give guidance and correction. These are not a hierarchy usurping the leading of the Spirit as in the Roman church and in the reformers' effort to reform it, but simply mature examples with authority to guide

Assembling the saints

Part 4 of a six-part series on the Church by Dick York

and correct. (We will have more to say about the oversight of elders later on.)

We have already considered Ephesians 3:20,21, which reads,

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 throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

The context in which these verses are set flows into the next chapter, where Paul's exhortation continues

I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.³

The power that works in us is the Spirit of Christ⁴ who, throughout every age, is the One who is at work in the Church bringing glory to the Father. Ideally, if there were no conflict between the flesh and the Spirit, the exhortation Paul gives in these verses would be unnecessary because the Spirit would be unopposed. However, from the time

we are saved until we see Jesus, there will be the process of maturing, growing up into the fullness of the measure of His stature. We have come from many backgrounds, with varying points of view, many of them religious. And we bring many of our preconceptions with us, sincerely believing, initially, that they are true. Some of them may be;

but if that is not the case, they will be modified by the ministry of the other members. But He has called us with one calling, and placed us together in one body, and that body has one vocation.

The work of the body of Christ is a **vocation**, not a **profession**. The difference in these two words is significant. According to Webster's English Dictionary, a profession is something requiring academic preparation, such as the legal profession or the medical profession, and Webster includes the "religious" profession. Law, medicine and religion are the three main professions he cites.

The calling of the Church is neither a religion nor a profession; it is a vocation, which, according to Webster, is a calling, a work to which one is dedicated. According to the Word of God, the equipping for that calling is by the gift of the Spirit.

Four words in Paul's exhortation stand out: lowliness, meekness, forbearance and longsuffering. The antonyms of lowliness and meekness are pride, arrogance, belligerence, aggressiveness and self-promotion, all of which are contrary to the Spirit of Christ and would hinder, if not prohibit, in individuals possessing these traits, a positive influence by other members of the body.

The need for forbearance and longsuffering would seem to indicate less than perfect agreement among the members of the body. Otherwise there would be no need to exercise forbearance

or patience with one another.

The perfection of the Church is in the Spirit of Christ that inhabits it, not in the vessel of humanity in which He resides. Christ is perfect, but the people that make up the body are fallible, immature and growing to a goal, which is the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, a perfect man, the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.⁵

The goal to grow to is the unity of the faith, the time when, because we shall have all knowledge and understanding, we will agree perfectly. Isaiah prophesied of that future day.

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that sayeth unto Zion, Thy God reigneth! Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion...so shall He sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at Him: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider.⁶

In that day when we shall see eye to eye, we shall agree perfectly because we shall see perfectly. In the meantime, we are to endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit.

Here are more important words. Endeavor means to try, to make an effort, to expend energy to the end that we might keep—not create, but keep—the unity of the Spirit. When we walk in the Spirit, there can only be unity. This is not unity based on agreement or understanding or identical philosophy; this is unity in spite of a possible difference in all of these things. It is the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

And where does the peace come from? Is Christ not the Prince of Peace?⁷ In Him we have peace with God,⁸ and, as a consequence, we enjoy the peace

continued on page 3



His Wonderful Rest

Was Jesus a Sabbath breaker? In John 5:18 it says, *“Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God.”* This was a very grievous accusation. The penalty for breaking of the fourth commandment was death. *“Ye shall keep the Sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you: every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death: that soul shall be cut off from among his people.”* Ex. 31:14

The Jews were under the Law and were quick to put everyone under the burden that they themselves had never been able to carry. Jesus, the Son of God, was the only Man who ever kept the Sabbath without ever breaking it. The Jews circumcised on the Sabbath but wanted to slay Jesus because He healed on the Sabbath day. They were not able to make a righteous judgment because of the hardness of their hearts. (Read John 7:10-24.)

Today we have the same problem among many that profess to believe. They quarrel about which day is the day of rest, and they think they are keeping the Sabbath because they observe one day. It is, of course, a good thing to do. I believe it is important to set aside one day a week to meet with the Lord and His people. We are commanded to not forsake the assembling together; but we are to consider one another, so

much the more as the day (the Lord's return) approaches. There are many reasons why we should have this day, and it is pleasing to God. Nevertheless, this is not the Sabbath that our Father desires for us. It was never intended that we rest just one day a week, it has always been the Father's desire that we enter his rest all seven days of the week.

What is the Sabbath? The word Sabbath means, 'rest from labor.' We first read about it in Gen. 2:2,3, *“On the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.”* Jesus Christ is the Creator and He is Lord of the Sabbath. Jesus rested on the seventh day and He has never broken that rest because all the works were finished. Even before the foundations of the world, He was crucified (Rev.13:8). He knew all things from the beginning. He declared all things from the beginning, and He said His council will stand and He will do His pleasure. (See Is. 46:10) The Sabbath was created for man, not man for the Sabbath. Because of sin, man has no rest; for there is no rest for the wicked. Sin brought the curse, and man had to eat his bread by the sweat of his brow. Jesus came to deliver us from that curse and give us rest. Listen to His precious invitation. *“Come unto*

me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest (not just physical) unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” (Mt.11:28-30)

The Mosaic Law was given as a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, but the Jews and many people today refuse to come to Him for this rest. For the law was a shadow of good things to come. (Heb.10:1) A shadow cannot compare to what it is reflecting. To rest one day a week is good, but to rest in Christ every day is much better. Praise God He has delivered from the curse those who believe and rest in Him. He commands us to seek first the Kingdom of God and everything will be added unto us. (See Mt. 6:33) *“Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.”* Heb. 4:1 *“There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that has entered into his rest, he also has ceased from his own works, as God did from his.”* (Heb. 4:9,10) Jesus demonstrated this rest. He deliberately emptied himself and became weak like us, in order to teach us how to rest in the Father by faith.

To abide in Christ is the way to continue living in the rest He has provided for us. We received Him by faith, and that is the way we must walk with Him. If you find the Christian life hard to live and

are frustrated and worried, you are not resting in Him. You are breaking the Sabbath. Anything that is not of faith is sin. *“Without faith it is impossible to please Him. We must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.”* (See Heb.11:6)

Jesus gave us practical instruction for abiding in this rest when He said, *“Take my yoke upon you.”* A yoke is an instrument for labor; it is put on daily to do the mundane things of life. Many fail to enter into the yoke with Jesus in the everyday things of life simply because they don't see their need to do so. They think they can handle it; they only need His yoke when there is a great task before them or an overwhelming decision to make. The daily burdens that we carry alone reveal that we still have pride and rely too much on ourselves. Let us learn to cease from all labor that is not in yoke with Him. (To enter into his yoke, simply accept His invitation, get up daily and pray about all that concerns you.) He said, *Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you shall find rest for your souls.* It's true, and He will be there for us in the daily chores. The one who walks with Him this way learns of Him, His faith is increased, and He is able to believe Him for all things. Enjoy, my friend, this wonderful rest in Him.

continued from page 1

of God,⁹ which creates and preserves the unity that we share in the Spirit. A common error among the saints is to reverse the order of Scripture: that is, to try to create spiritual unity by forcing a unity of the faith. By insisting on adherence to what is sometimes an excessively narrow doctrinal statement, it is thought that we can make or keep our “church” pristine. Sometimes, however, in our efforts to protect the saints from error, we isolate them from truth. And trying to unify them in doctrine we divide them in spirit from the larger body.

A properly functioning assembly of believers is more of an attitude than an order of service. It is how we perceive ourselves in relation to our Head, and how readily we respond individually and collectively to the leading of the Spirit. The local assembly is not the body, it is a part of the body; just as your hand is not your body, it is a part of your body. Whether or not we understand that will govern how we perceive other local assemblies and how we relate to them.

We often hear the expression, “In our body...” meaning in our church or our assembly. That is not correct. It may seem insignificant, but it reveals a misunderstanding of what the Scriptures teach, and may encourage the mistaken view that there is more than one body and thereby foster division and even competition between the members.

There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling. There is one Lord. The apostle Peter made that very clear in his first epistle, when he said that the elders of the assemblies were not lords over God’s heritage. There is one faith. Although there are many views about specifics in the faith, and obviously they cannot all be correct, there is, nevertheless, only one faith. There is one baptism. This has to be a reference to the baptism of the Spirit, which placed us into the body of Christ.

There is only one God. But it seems that even truly born-again believers have different perceptions about God and how He responds to His children. None of these differences, true or false, makes any change in who God is or what He is like. He said of Himself, “I am God, I change not.”¹⁰ But as relates to the Church, He is the Father of all.

He is above all. That is His place of absolute authority over the whole body.

He is through all. Like the string in a priceless pearl necklace, He is the One that makes the members of the body one body. If the string were to break, that pearl necklace would be simply a number of independent beads, rolling under the sofa, lost in the grass, representing a problem to the one that had to find them and gather them up. Together they are a priceless and beautiful ornament to the wearer. Independently they are without function.

And He is in you all. He is the very life of the Church, the power that works in us to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think. “Christ in you,” Paul said, “is your hope of glory.”¹¹ And what’s more, every member of the body is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

The assembly, the local church, is a microcosm of the whole body. If you were to carry an empty bucket to the ocean and immerse it in the deep, the ocean would represent the Church, the body of Christ, and that portion of the ocean that filled your sunken bucket would represent the local assembly.

For those who are not born of the Spirit, the nature of the Church is incomprehensible. In our generation, even many of the saints have difficulty understanding the biblical concept of the Church. They would define the Church as something one attends once or twice a week. Perhaps they would perceive it to be something one would join, or perhaps a building that some might call a house of God. We have already made the point that it is none of these things. As a matter of fact, at the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit was poured out upon all flesh,¹² those who witnessed it were mystified. They heard Galileans, simple country folk, speaking in foreign languages they had never learned, and prophesying of the wonderful works of God. Marvelous things began to happen as literally thousands of people were saved and added to the body of Christ.

As the move of God continued, many signs and wonders were done among the people by the apostles.

*And they (the believers) were all of one accord in Solomon’s porch (a public square attached to the temple), and of the rest dared no man join himself to them: but the people magnified them. And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.*¹³

No one joined this church—in fact,

we are told that no one would dare join himself to them—but people were added to the Lord. That is the only way one can “join” the church. When one is saved, he becomes a member of the body of Christ. He is baptized by the Spirit into the body.¹⁴ Only when we are added to the Lord are we added to the Church.

As you may imagine, the days immediately following the feast of Pentecost must have been both exciting and chaotic. The tiny band of Jesus’ disciples had suddenly become an animated throng of thousands. Three thousand had been saved the first day, and within a few more days five thousand more were added to their number. Some of those who made up that growing contingent of new believers were needy people. There were the poor and the widowed. As well as the noble, there were those in poverty. The realization of these existing needs was immediate among these newly Spirit-filled converts. The compassionate reaction of those who had wealth and property was immediate.

And all that believed were together, and had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.

*¹⁵ And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common. And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all. Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the apostles’ feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need. And Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas, (which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation) a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus, having land, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the apostles’ feet.*¹⁶

Suddenly there were administrative responsibilities. People were giving of their possessions to meet the needs of those who were without. Unforeseen obligations lay, literally, at the feet of the apostles. It became necessary to organize the chaos so that the material

blessings were distributed in an even and orderly manner. The time had come for some organization and the distribution of responsibilities. But it is important to note that the Church did not become an organization.

Within the congregation of saints there was a need to organize in the same sense that it is necessary to organize a family gathering at Thanksgiving time, simply for the sake of decorum. But in so doing, we do not transform the family into an organization. So it was in the Church, organization was introduced when it became necessary to serve the well-being of the body.¹⁷ But the Church was not subservient to organization. (More about this later.)

In the world great importance is attached to rank. In almost every facet of society, there is a discernable hierarchy. In the military, it flows from the Commander-in-Chief down through the generals, the commissioned officers, the NCOs, the specialists to the enlisted men. The integrity of the system is maintained by the conferring of titles, which designate the level of authority ascribed to each individual. The authority resides in the title, not necessarily in the caliber of the man that bears it. This is equally true in the religious world.

However, it is not true in the Church because Jesus, who is the Head of the body, forbade it. This is a much-ignored fact because to acknowledge it would fly in the face of seventeen centuries of religious tradition. But Jesus commanded his disciples,

“But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called master: for one is your Master, even Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant.”¹⁸

As we continue, in future articles, to pursue the matter of organization and authority within the local church assembly, we will consider what first Jesus, and then the apostles, taught us.

Endnotes

- ¹ Galatians 5:17
- ² Galatians 5:16
- ³ Ephesians 4:1-7
- ⁴ Colossians 1:27
- ⁵ Ephesians 4:13
- ⁶ Isaiah 52:7,8,15
- ⁷ Isaiah 9:6
- ⁸ Romans 8:1
- ⁹ Philippians 4:7

- ¹⁰ Malachi 3:6
- ¹¹ Colossians 1:27
- ¹² Acts 2:1-21
- ¹³ Acts 5:12-14
- ¹⁴ I Corinthians 12:13
- ¹⁵ Acts 2:44,45
- ¹⁶ Acts 4:32-37
- ¹⁷ Acts 6:1-4
- ¹⁸ Matthew 23:8-11

In the late 1970's, Wycliffe missionaries began working with the Loron tribe. Two other tribes also were in the area, the Loma and Nadee. The task of learning

Back to Basics
by Jerry Skiles

the unwritten Loron language and culture began and the two remaining tribes were forced to wait for the Gospel. In the mid 1980's, New Tribes Mission joined the effort to establish churches in the Loron tribe. In 1995, working with SFMI, we moved from the Loron tribe to the Loma tribe.

Despite the many setbacks encountered the first couple of years, the Lord opened a great door and we saw many Loma saved. Hovare, the Loron man who taught me his language, a tremendous brother in the Lord, continued to minister alongside of me, laboring in translation, lesson preparation and discipleship both with the Loron and Loma languages.

Cherry and I saw that church development, and community development, work side by side. Christianity without literate people and without the translated Word would be vulnerable to error. Hungry and sick Christians would have trouble focusing on what the Lord wanted. For a strong church, the tribal community needed development. This meant becoming involved with starting schools, preventive and curative medicines, and village sanitation (wells and latrines). We taught them new ways to farm so that they would have the finances to buy food, medicines and school supplies for themselves and their children. We were encouraged with the work.

In September 2002, a faction of the



Ivorian army tried to remove the President. They failed to remove him, but the President failed to crush the rebellion, leaving the country divided and in a stalemate. Many international efforts have been made to break the deadlock. Many prayers have been said, hoping that the country would stabilize and we could minister again; but, today, if anything, the opposing factions are more deeply entrenched, and there is little optimism for a solution. The best news is that UN and French troops stationed in Ivory Coast, prepared to intervene against either side that acts aggressively, discourages any threat of military action.

The leaders of both sides spend most of their efforts soliciting help and support. These well-fed and dressed men and women vie for leadership while the citizens suffer from lack of governance.

The economy of the country has been trashed. In larger cities, efforts have been made to open schools and hospitals; but in the rebel countryside, they remain closed. The original rebel soldiers had some discipline, but they emptied the prisons to enlarge their ranks and have given guns to apparent twelve-year-olds.

Although there are some gifted people among the rebels, few know how to govern a land. Their background is military. I have traveled several times into the rebel area, and have seen firsthand the desperate needs there. We have done what we could to meet some of the needs, but we have been frustrated that we could not do more.

We are constantly praying and thinking how best to serve the Lord. We felt that being patient and waiting for change to come and doors to open was best. We have been blessed and encouraged in many ways during the past two years; but as we look to the future, we do not feel that we can continue to hope for things to get better. Today we are evaluating the needs in Ivory Coast, and how can we be used of God to meet them.

Ministry Update

The needs are great

The Nadee people have yet to hear the Gospel in their language.

The Loma church is struggling without a translation, literate people, and medical



help. The Loron church struggles with many of the same problems. The Gospel is preached in the Loron and Loma languages, but there still remain whole villages that have never heard the Gospel once. Hand pumps on wells are failing, vaccination programs are failing, schools are closed, and medicines scarce. But the greatest need is that there is no *vision*.

Cherry and I want to help these three tribes. We accept that things are not changing in Ivory Coast, which means that we must change how we try to help. We are now looking with freshness at old problems. The needs remain, but there are solutions to those needs and opportunities to meet them.

We want to help the communities in the rebel-controlled area to get a vision for what they can do for themselves concerning schooling. We already are encouraged with the ministry Hovare has, but we believe we can help him more. We envision some medical personnel and building teams to help villages get their children back to school and vaccinated against childhood diseases. I do not see us living in the rebel-controlled area due to instability, but the tribal area we work in is close to the Burkina Faso and Ghana borders, both of which have stable governments. I believe God has some unfinished work in Ivory Coast, and despite the difficulties, wants us to be doing what we can. We need your prayers for the Lord's mind, and also His provision.

Twenty-five minutes from Atotonilco is Ayotlan, a city of 35,500 inhabitants. It is a city known for the manufacture of clothing. Many small factories make clothing sold in the US, or produce brand-name clothing under contract for US companies.

Nestled on the edge of the Jalisco Highlands, it is also known for its active participation in the Cristero wars of the 1920s, a Catholic uprising that sought to replace the existing government with one more favorable to Rome. Ayotlan is one of the Highland's desolate cities: there is no evangelical church or outreach here. Pray for a small outreach in a village on the outskirts of the city, where a couple of families have made professions of faith, and pray for Hector Gerardo, the man opening that work.

As Hector, Ed and I watched, fourteen adults were baptized in a swimming pool in Aguascalientes. All of them were from Loreto, Zacatecas, and all of them were the fruit of Marcial. This man has been making the two-hour bus trip back and forth to Loreto three times a week for a couple of years now. One day a week he teaches studies in homes. Another day he sings and preaches in the Plaza. Still another day, he visits contacts and then joins the believers there for a regular church meeting. Now a congregation of some thirty adults meets on a regular basis. All of this is made even more amazing, of course, by the fact that Marcial is blind. Smiling and joyous, he told us of the time a bucket of water was poured on his head from an upstairs window, of the time a family loosed their fierce dogs on him as he waited at their gate. He wasn't glorying in the difficulties or boasting, though. He was rejoicing that now, with a church raised up, he can "see" that it was worth the effort!

Let me share just a couple of things from Atotonilco and Arandas:

1. **Opportunities:**

In June a choir from North Carolina visited to sing and announce the Good News in Arandas. In late June, a team of young people from Maryland joined us for outreach through children's classes, puppets and drama, two weeks in Atotonilco, two in Arandas. In August, Operation Mobilization will send teams

The Circle Steve and Montg Atotonilco, Ja

out to Arandas and Atotonilco for one day, doing literature distribution and evening outdoor meetings. All of these efforts are additional, like frosting on the cake, to the daily outreach and contacts the believers here make. Pray that these “magna-events” will be fruitful without distracting us from the day-to-day routine of declaring and demonstrating the Gospel to those around us.

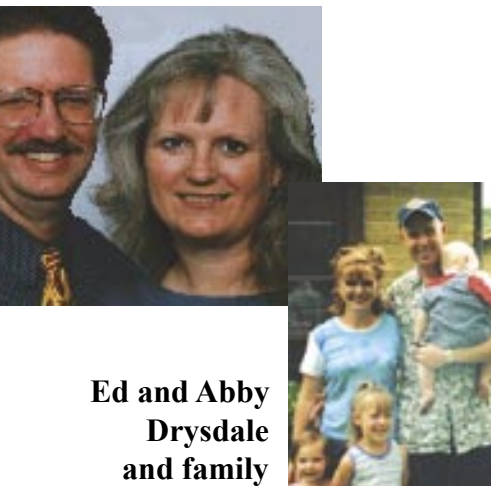
2. Battles:

Two years ago, a false brother robbed many here, borrowing large sums from the brethren and purchasing goods on credit with the brethren as co-signers, then skipping town. With a shamelessness that would choke most of us, this man is back in town, visiting the Christians and declaring his intent to move back here and start a church. Hector and I confronted him regarding his sin. He declared himself to be guiltless, stating that what may have happened to others after he left meant nothing to him and that our obligation, in any case, was to forgive him. This has made church discipline necessary, an act sometimes hard to understand among new believers. Pray for the testimony of Christ in this region. Pray that if this man is not going to repent, his plans to move to this area would be thwarted.

3. Growth:

New families are being drawn to Christ, new families added to the church, a fresh enthusiasm for prayer is evident everywhere. Thank you for praying for this work. Don't stop.

ve and Linda Montgomery



Ed and Abby Drysdale and family

For many years SFMI has conducted training sessions with the view of equipping the saints for service in the work of missions and evangelism at home and abroad. In the beginning it was meant to be a training of missionaries who felt a call to work on foreign mission fields. As time went by, it seemed that it was essential to prepare believers also for the everyday objective of being effective disciples of the Lord Jesus whether on foreign fields or right here at home in a nation that seems to be more and more “post Christian.” So we stopped calling it a Missionary training program, and began referring to it as simply a training program.

For many years, we have had the pleasure of teaching annually a handful of eager believers in biblical truths and practical application of those truths, that they might be disciples and teach others also. We believe this is the essence of spreading the Gospel at home and abroad. This year, 2004, however, the several that had indicated their intention to participate in the training session did not come. The small number that was available made it impractical to proceed with a formal training session, so it was cancelled. Now we are looking ahead to 2005.

As we travel in many parts of the world, we are amazed at the contrast between the USA and the many other nations in which the rest of the Church exists. The availability of the Scriptures here contrasts sharply with the scarcity of Bibles in many places where the saints hunger for a copy of God's Word. In some places, Christians wait for the first translation into their own language.

In the U.S. we have access to Bible teaching from literally multitudes of gifted Bible teachers, some famous, some unrecognized. Most congregations—even small ones—have within their numbers able teachers and expositors of the Word that are never called upon to minister and are unaware of the many opportunities that exist. At the same time, numbers of churches in nations that are not as privileged as we, have only the ministry of men who themselves have never had a Bible to read, can only preach from their own limited experience, and teach only what they have heard. One church elder in Tanzania, East Africa, told Jim Lucas, “The church in Kenya is like Lake Victoria, it is very wide, but oh, so shallow. We need to be taught.”

We know that we cannot recruit whom God has not called, and we cannot send whom God has not commanded to go. But we can be available to help teach them that

Announcing the 2005 SFMI Training Program

God is calling, and we can help equip those whom God is sending. That is the objective of the training program. It is probable that God speaks to more than will listen; He calls to more than will respond; He would send more than are willing to go. We

would like to help you hear what God is saying, respond if God is calling and go if God is sending.

- **There is no tuition** charge for the training program. However,
- **everyone who attends** is responsible for his or her own sustenance and lodging.
- **There is also a one time (\$100.00) one-hundred-dollar charge** for materials and incidentals.
- **The initial segment** of the training is six months long, with an extended period for those with specific targets.
- **The teaching** is by able and experienced men who are presently active in their areas of ministry.
- **There will be both classroom teaching and practical training.**
- **The initial training segment** will begin January 12, 2005 and continue through mid-July.

Because of the uncertainty experienced this year, we are setting a deadline for applications for admission to the 2005 training session.

All applications must be completed by December 1, 2004. Please contact the SFMI office by telephone at (541) 382-7081, or by e-mail at sfmi@sfmiusa.org, or write to Shield of Faith Mission International, P.O. Box 144, Bend, Oregon, 97709. We look forward to hearing from you. Please do not wait to apply if you have the mind of the Lord. It will be helpful to us to hear from you as early as possible.

The weather on the Oregon Coast is always unpredictable. During this year's Memorial Day Conference, it was especially cool and rainy; so when the skies cleared briefly on Sunday afternoon, many people elected to use their free time to visit the beach. Among them were Katie and Mary Gillogley and their friend, Katelyn Alexander. While Katie was content to walk along the beach

looking for shells, Katelyn really wanted to swim in the ocean, and Mary decided to join her.

Back in the recreation hall on the campgrounds, a number of young men were enjoying a very competitive and vigorous basketball game. The players

included Daniel Gillogley, Wade Johnson, Austin Ball and Philip Bywater. After Wade was hit in the eye, the game was abandoned, and the young men decided to visit the beach. Also that afternoon, brothers Daniel and Travis Garner

made a trip into town to purchase boogie boards in order to better enjoy the waves. Along with so many others, they made their way to the beach.

After being in the very cold water for a while, Mary was ready to get out and dry off, and began trying to convince Katelyn to get out of the water. But Katelyn was having a lot of fun and wanted to continue swimming. Mary was unwilling to leave Katelyn in the water alone, so she remained in place, watching her friend.

"I was up to my shoulders in the icy water, and telling Katelyn that we needed to go back. She was about a hundred yards away from me when I saw two tall waves coming together – and her in the middle of them. That was when she yelled for help. Just as I heard her scream, a wave washed over my head and my feet could no longer touch the bottom. When I got my head up I yelled for Katelyn again and again, choking down salty water and breathing it through my nose as I did so

"Then I cried out to Jesus, and a verse I'd read that morning came to my mind. 'Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow: for what is your life? It is even a vapor, that appears for a little time, and then vanishes away.' (James 4: 14) Peace poured over me, and I stopped swallowing the water. I was able to breathe, scream, and swim forward."

Rescued



Daniel Garner heard Mary's calls for help. He instantly swam out to her, and pulled her back towards land. The group of basketball players, alerted by others on the beach that someone was in trouble in the water, ran down to the shore. From Mary's continued calls for Katelyn, the young men understood that someone else

was still in the water. Katelyn was so far from shore (about 500 yards) that no one could see her, or hear her cries. Travis, with his brand new board, began the swim out to Katelyn.

Wade, without a board, also swam out, as did Philip. As the seriousness of the situation came over the remainder of the group, Austin ran to call 911.

News quickly spread from the beach to the campground of the unfolding events. Groups of people began to pray together for the safety of those in the water. The young people on the beach also began to pray that Jesus would calm the sea as He had 2000 years ago.

Wade was the first to reach Katelyn, and he was able to direct Travis to her location. Once Travis reached her, he and Wade were able to get her onto the board, and then to push her back to shore, where rescue vehicles awaited them. The girls and their rescuers were treated for hypothermia. Katelyn tearfully admitted that she had heard the Lord telling her not to go into the water, but that she had disobeyed Him.

At that evening's meeting, both girls stood to publicly thank the Lord, and the courageous young men who had saved them.

Conference News

2004

Memorial Day Weekend

Another outstanding conference is history. Unless they were accustomed to seeing God coordinate open meetings, no one would believe that hours and hours of planning did not go into preparing the program at this year's Memorial Day weekend conference. The fact is that hours and hours of work did go in to arranging accommodation for the maximum number of participants that filled every available bed and overflowed into tents and RVs.

The rain that fell every day was not able to dampen the spirits or the enthusiasm of the saints who came to seek the Lord together and to enjoy each other's fellowship. We have become accustomed to hear people say, "This was the best one ever," but it is still a blessing to know that God is refreshing His people with the contagious joy of the Lord.

In years past, it seems that the attendance would peak on Saturday and then taper off from Sunday. Not so this year; from the first meeting Friday night, to the last meeting Monday morning, a capacity crowd was in attendance. The theme was "Salt and Light, and prayer for the Church."

Missionary reports from Kenya, Ivory Coast, Mexico and North Africa highlighted the missions sessions. Jim Lucas and Dick York taught in the plenary sessions, and the rest of the entire conference was open meetings, including Monday morning when we broke bread together, remembered the Lord's death, rejoiced in His resurrection and anticipated His soon return. Families from California, Washington and Oregon spontaneously provided special music that was, indeed, "special."

Steve Hickman, with his family, has been absent from this conference for a number of years while he served the Lord in Chihuahua, Mexico, and then in New Mexico. Much to the delight of the children in the congregation (and the adults), Steve was there with his trumpet-playing mouse "Squeaky," who taught us that "without Me, ye can do nothing." If you weren't there, we really wish you could have been. Perhaps the Lord will make it possible for you to come next year. We are already praying about that. The events of the conference were taped, and the entire conference is also available on

disk (mp3). Contact the office if you would like to have any of them.

Sunday afternoon the rain stopped for a while and a sizeable group went to the streets of Rockaway beach to preach the Gospel to the holiday weekend crowds. However, probably because of the weather and the price of gas, the crowds didn't show up; so there were more of us than there were of them. The Gospel was preached anyway, and there were some that heard it and received tracts and a personal witness.

Labor Day Conference

Coming

Sept. 3-6, 2004

It will be the last weekend of summer and the last long weekend before school starts again. Many of us will spend it at Camp Gifford on the placid shores of Deer Lake in beautiful Northeastern Washington state. This Washington conference has become an annual event and has, for the past four years, been a blessing to many.

Conferences—that's what we call them—are a major part of this ministry, because they afford opportunity for saints from many local assemblies to meet, greet and edify one another. The underlying agenda is to encourage "body ministry," to have a spiritual link and a common vision with saints who recognize a common Head in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Come with your family and friends. If you have a testimony of God working in your life, or instruction from the Word; if you as an individual or as a family have an edifying ministry in music, there will be opportunity to share what God has given you.

"How is it then, brethren? When ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying.... Let all things be done decently and in order."

It seems obvious that in the order of Scripture there is a wonderful liberty of the Spirit, and there is also order. This is what we should expect in an open meeting, and this is what we have experienced. Jesus does all things well.

About The Washington Labor Day Weekend Conference

Labor Day 2004 will be the fifth 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. We used it last year because of it's availability for the long Labor Day weekend. Because it proved a desirable choice, we are happy to return this year. We hope you will join us.

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, but please do not let lack of finances keep you from coming.

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 previous conferences), 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
2 Baxter Lane
Kettle Falls, WA, 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) 738-3122 or the SFMI office at (541) 382-7081.

RM

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Office Use Only

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Office Use Only

Rec'd

Labor Day Believers Conference 2004

Shield of Faith Mission International

Registrar: Brian Martell

Mailing Address: 2 Baxter Lane
Kettle Falls, WA 99141

Phone or Fax: 1-509-738-3122
Call first before faxing!

Camp Gifford, 3846 N Deer Lake Road, Deer Lake, Washington

Sept. 3 – 6, 2004

How it Works: Arrivals begin at 4:00 p.m. Friday, Sept. 3. 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:** _____

Child: _____ **Age:** _____ **Child:** _____ **Age:** _____

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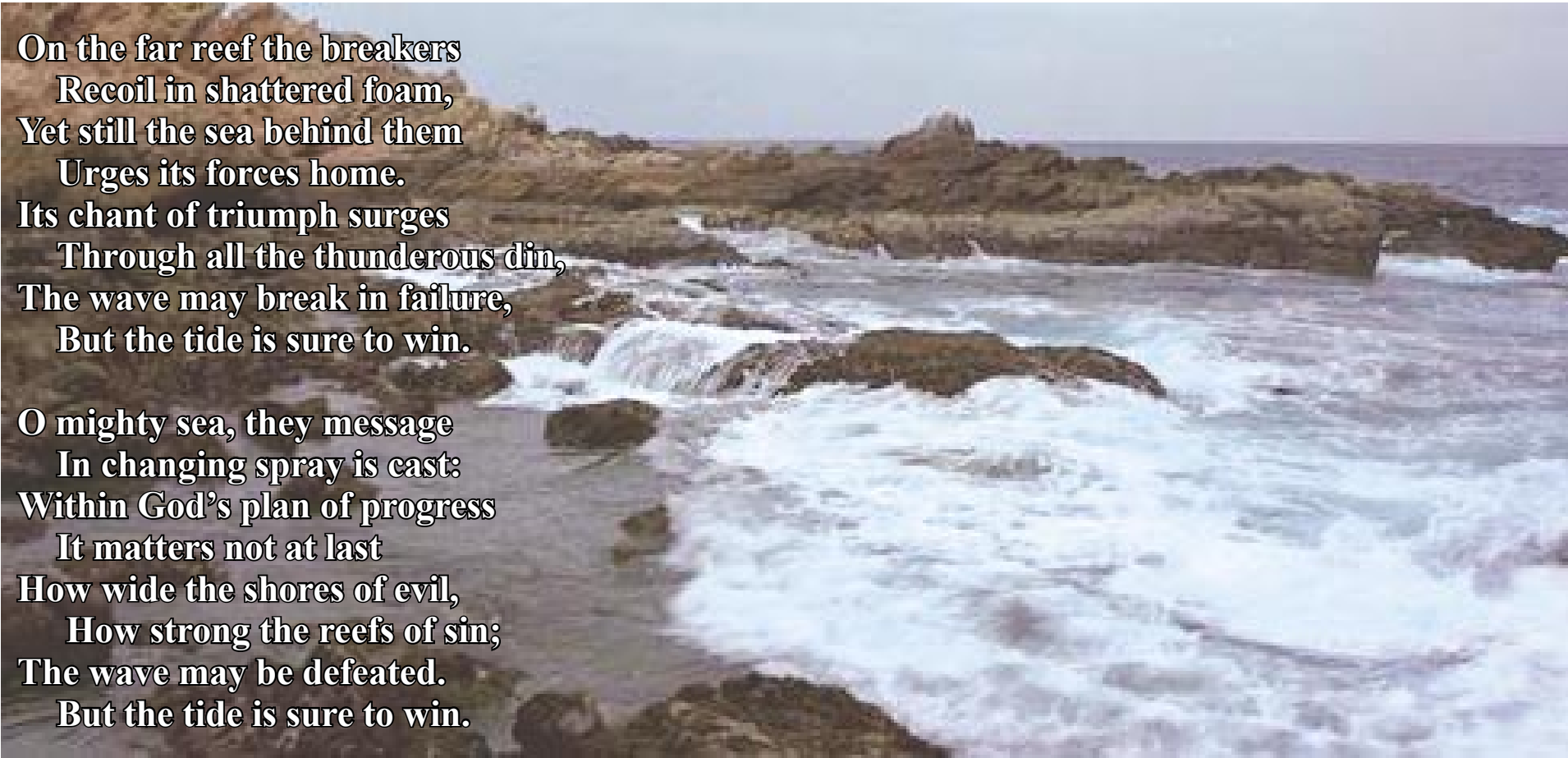
Child: _____ **Age:** _____ **Child:** _____ **Age:** _____

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



**On the far reef the breakers
Recoil in shattered foam,
Yet still the sea behind them
Urges its forces home.
Its chant of triumph surges
Through all the thunderous din,
The wave may break in failure,
But the tide is sure to win.**

**O mighty sea, thy message
In changing spray is cast:
Within God's plan of progress
It matters not at last
How wide the shores of evil,
How strong the reefs of sin;
The wave may be defeated.
But the tide is sure to win.**

The SFMI Prayer/News Update is published bi-monthly and is sent free of charge to God's people everywhere upon request. If you have friends to whom you would like a copy sent, please submit their address to this office. In response to inquiries about the cost of publication: \$12.00 per year per subscriber. Yes, contributions to offset this cost are accepted, but not solicited.