

SHIELD OF FAITH MISSION INTERNATIONAL

# SFMI

## Prayer/News UPDATE

Fulfilling the Great Commission Through Establishing New Testament Churches



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• P.O. Box 144 • Bend, OR 97709 • (541) 382-7081 •  
• Email [sfmi@sfmiusa.org](mailto:sfmi@sfmiusa.org) • fax (541) 382-4471 •

# Itching Ears and Those That Tickle Them



By Dick York

The Apostle Paul warned us that in the last days perilous times would come. He said that men would not endure sound doctrine but would heap to themselves teachers that would tickle their itching ears. It seems evident, then, that the last days would be a time when corrupt doctrine would proliferate.

Obviously, false doctrine would have to have some element of truth—or *appear* to have an element of truth—in order to gain any traction among thoughtful hearers. In order to seem scriptural, these fanciful doctrines must employ premises that seem to be convincingly biblical. Misdefining words to give them meanings compatible with the heresy would be one way of validating false doctrine; taking proof texts out of context would be another. Furthermore, by either ignoring or twisting any scriptures that oppose their deliberate reinterpretations, the purveyors of untruth are able to attract and educate an impressive number of adherents to their error.

Some of the doctrines troubling the church today have been around a very long time. Their longevity gives them a tenure that implies credibility and makes it difficult for knowledgeable believers to criticize them. Their acceptance—or at least the absence of rejection by apparently true believers—reinforces their inclusion among the true doctrines of the faith, and the deception spreads and becomes more firmly rooted with the passage of time. It is extremely important, then, that the saints think for themselves and pay attention to what the Scriptures actually say.

Not every believer is a public speaker. Nor does every believer have the opportunity or the inclination to engage groups of people. Nonetheless, every believer is responsible to understand what God is saying to him or her and to pass on accurate information to those with whom he or she communicates.

Jesus said, “What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in the light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops” (Matthew 10:27).

The fact that He uses the plural “you” and

“ye” strongly implies that God speaks personally to *all* of His people if they will listen, and what He says to them personally becomes *their* message. Please note that it is what *He* tells *them*—what *they* hear *Him* speak into *their* ear. This is a very personal scenario. It is not “whatever the consensus is among the saints,” or “what I heard my teacher, pastor, or best friend say.” It is what *I am absolutely sure that God said in His Word*. I did not take someone else’s word for it.

The reason many of us, perhaps even most of us, are susceptible to error is because of our human tendency to embrace the convincing arguments of those that impress us. Having readily accepted something as true simply because it was said by someone we liked or trusted, it becomes a *preconception* by which we judge everything that follows. If you teach a child that red is green, he will, until he learns differently, tell everyone that will listen to him that red things are green. He will be in error until he believes the truth. And any other children that learn from him will also be in error because they believed a lie—innocent perhaps, but nonetheless a lie. For a child that simply has his colors confused this is not a major problem. People will smile at his mistake, but they will probably not be misled.

What if this is not a child, however, but a person of influence? And what if this is not a matter of colors but of eternal truth that has a bearing on the everlasting destiny of the soul? Does that, then, become a matter of importance? Of course it does! What if it is doctrine that defines the very heart of the gospel—an erroneous definition of words that describe the means by which we are saved? would that be a serious error? It could be a lethal deception!

I have been receiving for some time now a monthly publication that focuses on “Grace.” As time has passed, I have realized that an unscriptural interpretation of “believe” has resulted in a misrepresentation of grace. This twist was designed to convince the reader that once he simply acknowledges some historical facts about Jesus, he is a believer, eternally secure. From that

time on, grace excuses all sin, and everything is OK for eternity. One of the monthly issues implied that once you have believed, even if you renounce the facts and stop believing, no matter what you do...you're stuck; you can't get out of salvation. Such teaching is convoluted and causes some people to embrace the idea that there is no present-day observable result from being saved. For the present, it's the same as being lost except that at the end God is obligated to take one to heaven because of the facts to which one had once subscribed. Dangerous!

To those who misdefine grace, the requirements of the law seem at odds with grace. Grace has no requirements, makes no demands and has no expectations. Grace dismisses sin. But the fact is that of the 122 times that "grace" appears in the New Testament, never once does it suggest that grace dismisses or excuses sin. Quite the contrary is true: grace accomplishes what the law could not do; it produces the righteousness that the law demanded.

Peter said, "But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we (Jews) shall be saved, even as they (Gentiles)."<sup>21</sup> What was in Peter's mind when he said that? "Unto you (Jews) first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, *in turning away every one of you from his iniquity*."<sup>22</sup> Grace saves us; it turns every man from his iniquity.

Paul said, "For *sin shall not have dominion over you*: for you are not under the law, but under grace."<sup>23</sup> Grace delivers us from the dominion of sin. Paul also said that "I was made a minister according to the gift of grace."<sup>24</sup> Gifts and ministries are the result of grace.

Grace brings forth fruit in the believers' lives.<sup>5</sup> Grace is what causes the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to be glorified among the believers.<sup>6</sup> The author of Hebrews (probably Paul) said, "Let us have grace, *whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear*."<sup>7</sup> Grace is the power of God by which we are enabled to serve him. "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men," according to Titus 2:11,12, "*teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world*; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ."

Where, in any of these references, would one glean the idea that grace simply dismisses or excuses

sin? It is by God's grace that His wrath was poured out upon His holy Son Jesus instead of on us who were so deserving of it. And that same grace now provides us with his righteousness and empowers us to glorify him in our bodies. It has delivered us from sin, teaches us how to live godly lives in this present time, and empowers us to minister in His name. These things are evidentiary. Though they may be minimal initially, if they are absent, grace is not evident.

Grace is the unmerited but freely given, love and favor of God toward man. It is the power of God's virtue bestowed upon totally unworthy recipients, with the result that they are delivered and transformed into new creatures that then show forth his virtue. (Dictionary definition: The divine influence operating in man to regenerate, sanctify, or strengthen him.) Grace is *power*; it does not leave man in his wretched state.

The conjoined word that is equally abused, thereby justifying the erroneous interpretation of

"grace," is "believe." There is a form of belief that is purely academic ("I believe there was a man named Jesus"). This belief does not make one a believer in the biblical sense. It is the believing that the apostle James attributes to the devils who know that Jesus is alive, and they tremble.<sup>8</sup>


Biblical belief has to do with "trust" (i.e. I trust Jesus. I believe the word he has spoken is true. I believe God raised him from the dead), and trust will translate into obedience). "For by grace are ye *saved* through faith (belief)."<sup>9</sup> Grace that saves through faith actually produces a new creation.<sup>10</sup> The evidence is visible. That is why James said, "*Show me thy faith without thy works*; and I will *show* thee my faith by my works."<sup>11</sup>

Why is it necessary to have this conversation? Because those who profess to be saved must understand that we are saved *from* something now and *to* something for time and eternity. We are saved *from* sin and delivered *from* this present evil world.<sup>12</sup> That is an observable, present-day fact. We are saved from the wrath to come because we are now in fellowship with God, which, if it is truly the case, is *evident*.

In these perilous times while the deception is strengthening, many people are being convinced that the most minimal deference to the existence of God or of Jesus constitutes saving faith; and without

**...many people are being convinced that the most minimal deference to the existence of God or of Jesus constitutes saving faith, and without repentance or even the slightest intent to obey his word or know his will.**

repentance or even the slightest intent to obey His Word or know His will, one may reap the benefits of salvation in eternity. That is not sound doctrine; there is no such message in Scripture.

It is true that beyond believing there is nothing we can do to achieve salvation—absolutely nothing; but believing is trusting implicitly in the Lord Jesus’ finished work, not just giving academic assent to His existence. It is also true that eternal life is eternal. Everlasting life lasts forever, otherwise, it’s not *everlasting*. For this reason, if we are born-again, we can’t be unborn-again. But the evidence that accompanies salvation is as enduring as the life that salvation produces.<sup>13</sup> The now popular phrase among evangelicals, “faith alone in Christ alone,” is not exactly a biblical quote. Although we are saved *only* through faith, not works, true faith is *never* alone. Paul said that the only thing that avails anything is “faith, *which worketh by love*.” James repeated himself when he said twice, “*Faith without works is dead*.”<sup>14</sup> The point is that faith is always accompanied by the evidence it automatically produces. Simply by the subtle misdefinition of words, we can produce a deception. Let us beware lest, being deceived, we pass it on! 

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Acts 15:11
- <sup>2</sup> Acts 3:26
- <sup>3</sup> Romans 6:14
- <sup>4</sup> Ephesians 3:8
- <sup>5</sup> Colossians 1:6
- <sup>6</sup> 2 Thessalonians 1:12
- <sup>7</sup> Hebrews 12:28
- <sup>8</sup> James 2:19
- <sup>9</sup> Ephesians 2:8
- <sup>10</sup> 2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 2:10
- <sup>11</sup> James 2:18
- <sup>12</sup> Galatians 1:3,4
- <sup>13</sup> Hebrews 6:9
- <sup>14</sup> James 2:20,26

**Our cover:** The Scriptures prophesy : “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears” (2 Timothy 4:3).

## Meet the Board:

### *The Testimony of Dick York*



Most things that happened 58 years ago have faded into the twilight of the distant past—but not all. Some are too directly connected to the future. One thing that remains as vivid today as when it

happened on December 1, 1950 is my experience of being born the second time. The first time, I was born in Seattle, Washington, in 1928. My father had died just two weeks before. Less than a year later the Great Depression began, leaving my widowed mother in poverty with three young children. Nevertheless, one of my earliest recollections is of me, as a toddler, standing on a church pew, steadied by my mother’s arm as she testified from her seat how faithfully God was caring for us. What a precious legacy: a believing mother who lived joyfully by faith and was steadfast in adversity.

For the next twenty-two years, however, I

lived without much appreciation for the sacrificial love that she demonstrated or the values that she endeavored to instill. The youngest in the family, I seemed to rebel at restraint and the example set for me by my mother and my sister, both born-again. My brother, five years my senior, comfortable with religion but unsaved, sent mixed messages, encouraging me to church activities while, at the same time, introducing me to many worldly pleasures and professing believers who pursued them. I made my choice to forsake religion and embrace the world.

In 1949, by now a youth leader in a liberal Baptist church, my brother was saved through the testimony of a young man that attended his youth meeting. His zeal to preach the gospel, resulting from his fresh salvation experience, earned him expulsion from the church. That didn’t discourage him from witnessing to me. After resisting adamantly for a year, I surrendered to the relentless persuasion of the Holy Spirit and

*Continued on page 6*



# Show Me Thy Glory

By Jim Lucas

Moses was a true man of God. At the burning bush, God called him and commissioned him to return to Egypt and lead his people out of the land of bondage. Moses' response was, "Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?" The Lord God then said, "Certainly *I will be with thee.*"

This is a very similar situation for us today. Each one of us has been called out of the world, and now He sends us back with the gospel in order to set the captives free. Many of us have said, "Who am I that I should preach the word of God?" Jesus has said, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the earth."

Moses was not satisfied just to know that God was with him. In chapter 33 of Exodus, he prayed, "If I have found grace in thy sight, shew me thy way, that I may know thee" (v. 13). Then he continues in verse 17, "The Lord said, unto Moses, I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken: for thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name." Moses didn't stop with that either. He then said, "I beseech (beg) thee, shew me thy glory." It seemed that this did please the Lord because He then said, "I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee." Wow! All of His goodness would indeed be glorious. And to have God proclaim His name—you know that God has many names, because each one gives just a little reflection of Him—if God is to reveal His name, He is indeed pulling back the curtain. God also said, "I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy." I certainly don't believe your average Sunday-go-to-meeting Christian will ever have that kind of revelation of His goodness (glory) without seeking for it. However, we know that God is not a respecter of persons, and if we truly want to see His glory (all of his goodness), I believe He will respond in the same way that he did for Moses.

Many of us are like a man who was engaged to a young virgin, then finally married; but he doesn't fully know her until he gains her trust and she knows that his intentions are pure. God honors those who honor Him (1 Sam. 2:30). Our honor to God must be genuine, because He knows our hearts better than we

do ourselves. Jesus said, "I am come in my Father's name, and you receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him you will receive. How can you believe, which receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that cometh from God only?" (John 5:43,44). When we are more concerned about the approval of man than we are of God, it reveals unbelief. God's glory will be reserved for those who honor Him in Spirit and in truth.

God is worthy of all glory, honor, and praise. If we love Him, we will endeavor to speak of His goodness. I remember what Orville (the one who preached the gospel to me) always said: "Jim if you are invited to preach somewhere and you don't know what to preach, just brag on Jesus." We are created for this purpose: that we should bring glory to God. You don't have to be a spiritual giant to bring glory to God, because in our weakness He is glorified (2 Cor.12:9).

Our God is the God of all flesh: He will be glorified in whom He chooses. The king's heart is in the hand of God, and He places whom He chooses to rule even over the affairs of men. He said, "Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for me"? (Jer. 32:27).

God will not be robbed of His glory: "I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images" (Is 42:8). But He will pour out His glory on the humble and God-fearing: "For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the LORD: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word" (Is 66:2). The promise of the glory of the Lord is included in the covenant that He made with the believer: "And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the LORD. As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the LORD; My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the LORD, from henceforth and for ever. Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD


shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee” (Is 59:21; 60:1,2).

It is not God and I, or God and you. It is God *alone* who is to be glorified if He is to be glorified in us (Matt. 6:2). We must be vessels that are sanctified and meet for the Master’s use. He will give His glory where it is put in the best light or where it mirrored back to Him. We must be hidden—nothing of ourselves spoiling His perfect image (Col.3:3).

We don’t like the way things are going in this world, and I don’t believe we should. However, our Heavenly Father has deemed it so. This must be just the way it has to be in order to bring forth the Bride of Christ, who will be without spot or wrinkle. When all things are finished and Jesus returns to be glorified in his saints, then, perhaps we will understand that our Father was in absolute control all the time and worked everything for the glory of His name.

We cannot choose the manner in which we think God will glorify His name. He may choose to bless us as He did Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob. They were given an abundance of material things, and they found favor with man and with God. Or men like Elijah, Jeremiah, or John the Baptist—men who endured hardships and enjoyed few comforts of this world. Or perhaps like Joshua or David, men of valor—leaders who were greatly admired. Maybe like Jonah, who at first resisted the will of God but later did the will of God and brought glory to God—but not without suffering. Or like Job, who was blessed with great riches and family—they were all taken away, but Job was given a greater position in the end; much like Joseph, who suffered greatly, but God used it for the good of Israel, and he saw great comfort in the later part of his life. Ruth was much the same. Consider Esther, who was told by her uncle Mordecai, “Who knoweth whether thou art

come to the kingdom for such a time as this?” Then, risking her life, she said, “If I perish, I perish,” and went in before the king. The example of the apostles was remarkable: they were used much of God in their lives, and all died a martyr’s death. We could be a deacon (servant) in the church like Stephen, whose life was cut short, but he brought much glory to God. I am afraid that some of us will die like the old priest Eli, knowing that he had failed miserably and that the glory of God had departed from Israel and from his household (1 Sam 3:12-18; 4:21,22). We should pray that we could be like Paul, who said, “For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing” (2 Tim 4:6-8).

We cannot choose the time or the setting where we will spend our lives—it may be in the King’s court or in the dungeon. It could be in North Korea, where many are suffering for the cause of Christ today. Or we might find ourselves full of sores, under a rich man’s table, eating the crumbs that fall on the floor (see Luke 16). In any case, let us be faithful to honor God, who rewards all, small or great, because He is not a respecter of persons. He will reward us according to how we honor Him and seek to glorify Him here on earth. It doesn’t matter what generation we live in, what the spiritual state of the government is, or whether conditions are good or bad. We must stand upon the Rock; then when His glory passes by, He will put us in the cleft of the Rock (or in the heart of Jesus - Exodus 33:21,22). That is where we shall see the glory of the Lord. 

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### *York Testimony, continued from page 4*

was born again, this time into the family of God. One by one, that little family of which I am a part has moved on to take up residence in the heavenly Jerusalem: first my father, before I even joined the family; then my sister, who wanted so much to be a missionary, but was called home before she was sent out. Next, my mother at ninety-three was called home to be rewarded for her many years of faithful prayer ministry and to hear, “Well done, thou good and faithful servant.” Last year, my brother, after twenty-two years of missionary service and many more years than that of faithful witness, departed

to assemble with the saints in that eternal city. Soon it will be my turn. I have my ticket and my reservation, but I don’t yet have my itinerary. While I am waiting for that, I have purposed, by God’s grace, to continue faithful until moving day.

*What a day that will be, when my Jesus I shall see;  
When I look upon his face, the one who saved me by  
his grace.*

*He will take me by the hand and lead me through  
the Promised Land.*

*What a day—glorious day—that will be!* 



## Praise report from Atotonilco, Mexico Steve and Linda Montgomery

(written by Nate Montgomery, Steve's oldest son)

*(Editor's Note: Steve Montgomery was operated on in early October for the removal of a kidney due to a tumorous mass. The post-operative biopsy determined it had been malignant. The tumor was encapsulated and had not spread to the rest of the kidney or beyond. The doctor states that there is reason to believe the cancer was fully removed, but Steve will be in conservative care, which simply means a doctor visit every three months for a year, then one or two years more of twice-a-year, followed by once-a-year visits until five years post-operation. Thank you for praying. Bills for the operation have not been completely covered. For those who wish to help or to inquire, communicate with Household of Faith Church, 1550 Wynn Joyce, Garland, TX (972) 240-0596. Here is a letter from his son.)*

I typically tend to be the kind of guy that takes good news and finds a way to see the downside. I tend to believe that every silver lining has a cloud in the middle. You know... a smiling Puddleglum. So the day that my dad called me to tell me the doctor had found a mass in his kidney I was devastated. I assumed the worse case scenario; I was hoping for the best, but I knew the best would never happen.

Within days, Dad was scheduled for surgery, and the kidney was out. The doctors confirmed the tumor was self contained in a sack of tissue, so to speak. Everything was in the kidney; nothing was invading any other tissue. It seemed to all be a good sign. However, we still did not know the pathology of the tumor. We waited several days for the pathology report. Yesterday the report came back. The tumor was indeed cancer. Upon hearing the report, nothing else penetrated my thick skull. Yes, it it was stage 1; yes, they are sure they got all of it; no, they will not have to do chemotherapy; yes, he will need to schedule regular checkups. CANCER—that is all I heard, the scariest word in the dictionary. Mentally and emotionally, I was on a ledge, ready to jump.

That is precisely where a trained, disciplined mind must spring into action. Unfortunately, my mind is not as disciplined as it should be. Upon my wife's insistence, I had to re-evaluate the entire chain of events.

Dad has had a bad back since I was eight years old, so back pain was nothing new. UTI's seem to be very attracted to Montgomery's, to the degree that they do not even raise an eyebrow. In general, we Montgomery's tend to tolerate pain for a long period of time. So the fact that Dad went to the doctor was a great thing. The doctor's recommendation that Dad get a sonogram "just in case," was, in hindsight, providential. According to the doctor, the history of back pain and UTIs would have made it easy to disregard any symptoms related to the kidney problem until too late. The ability of the surgeon to schedule the surgery and perform it within days was amazing. Even more amazing was the providential way that God supplied the funds to cover the incredibly large expense for the surgery.

And now we know that God worked all things together for good. (Yes, we need the reminder that He does.) Had Dad not gone to the doctor, and self-medicated instead, or had the doctor not ordered the sonogram....The chain of "coincidences" rapidly becomes a road map of God's loving hand directing the life of yet another one of His servants.

"Isn't the love of Jesus something wonderful?!!!" Sometimes we need the reminder that God is in control. things are not just going willy-nilly, and that in all things He will be glorified.

Please join me in gratefully lifting up God for the wonderful way that He orchestrated this episode to use my dad's life to bring Himself glory.

Please continue to pray.

Pray for Dad to recover.

Pray for the doctors and surgeons to have opportunity to hear the truth of God's Word and that it will take root in their hearts.

Pray for the church in Atotonilco, that it will grow even more in strength, maturity, and numbers.

Pray for my mom as she cares for Dad.

Pray that the Word of God may run freely.

Pray that the work in the Circle of Silence and in the Highlands specifically will experience the undeniable blessing of God.

Even a dark cloud cannot compare to the splendor and majesty of the greatness of God. Forget the silver lining. God can outshine even that.

Nathan D Montgomery

## From the President's Desk




Training cannot make a call. A person with no call from God will not receive a call to a ministry simply because he or she has been trained. No seminary or Bible school can give a person a ministry the Lord has not given them.

Having said that, there is clearly a place in Scripture for training. Faithful men are trained to increase in faithfulness. The Apostle Paul was always on the lookout for faithful young men to recruit for training. When he came to Lystra, he saw a young man who was known to two congregations for his zeal and desire to serve. Paul went to the elders of the church to request that this young man, Timothy, be commended to Paul's care for training (Acts 16:1-3; 1 Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim. 1:6). Later we find Paul working with Titus, Tychicus, Trophimus, Demas, Aristarcus and others, training them as Barnabas had trained him. In Acts 19, we find Paul meeting with the disciples and others in the school of one Tyrannus.

Making disciples means training men, and training men is an essential part of the Great Commission.

In the past, SFMI has held both missionary training and discipleship training. In 2009, we will be conducting a

six-month discipleship training program followed by a three-month advanced training specifically designed for those who, having completed the discipleship training, believe they are headed to service on the mission field and whose churches are in accord. The six-month **School of Discipleship** lays out basic Bible teaching, along with regular evangelism and service. The three-month **Intensive Missions Preparation** is only available to those students who have completed the School of Discipleship. It will include advanced Bible courses, practical service, tools for language acquisition, training in practical skills and short-term service in the US and/or on the foreign field. Upon completing the Missions Preparation, trainees will return to their local church, which will be responsible for commending them to the work in the Lord's time.

You or your family may be among those who wish to get this training, or you may know an individual or family who does. The SFMI **School of Discipleship** offers practical, directed training that will give trainees the tools they need to serve the Lord in their home, their church, their school and job. For those headed to service in another culture, the final three-month **Intensive Missions Preparation** offers the guided, practical teaching, skills and service that can become key to the to fruitfulness in other cultures. Pray for this training and for the trainees that will participate. 

**On January 19, 2009** SFMI will initiate the **2009 School of Discipleship**, a six-month training for selected men and women, young people and families. The **School of Discipleship** offers classroom instruction in basic Bible doctrine, with times of evangelism, street preaching, Scripture Memorization, and practical service. For those who complete the School of Discipleship, believe they are called to serve in another culture and have the approval of their local church, the **School of Discipleship** is followed by a three-month **Intensive Missions Preparation**, which will include advanced Bible training, language acquisition, training in practical skills and service in the US and/or abroad. After the **Intensive Missions Preparation**, trainees will return to their local churches to be commended to the work in the Lord's time.

If you are interested, write:  
Shield of Faith Mission  
PO Box 144  
Bend OR 97709  
or email [sfmi@sfmiusa.org](mailto:sfmi@sfmiusa.org)  
Phone 541 382 7081.





# Missionary Reports

## Loron/Loma Tribal Report, Africa Jerry Skiles

Contrast and extremes are the first thoughts that come to mind as I reflect on my trip back to the tribe.

My travels to and from the village are a good illustration of this. Air travel is amazingly organized. Planes generally leave close to schedule and arrive safely. Airlines amaze me at their ability to get me places even when things don't go as planned—and, most of the time, my bags arrive.

On this trip, Hovare and I waited until 2:30 in the afternoon for the 8 o'clock morning departure of a bus leaving Abidjan. We finally realized that the bus would not leave until fully loaded, and that might take another day or two. We began to look for other options. I've ridden around in nice, shiny 4x4 vehicles owned by non-governmental organizations on paved streets and have ridden small motorcycles through swamps, and have walked slick muddy paths. I've used boat taxis in Abidjan. One thing I would *not* do was get into the back of a 20-ton truck loaded with salt, metal rebar, and wall-to-wall people with Hovare. He lost his papers in the truck, either due to the jostling around or to a pick-pocket. I opted for a motorcycle taxi that I drove on that leg of the journey. The trip from Abidjan to the tribe took us four days. When Cherry and I, had our vehicle, it took about 14 hours.

I spoke with a senior consular with the U.S. embassy, UN commanders, high-ranking Ivorian officials, an NGO president, rebel leaders, and, of course, the Loma tribal people, who are unknown to most people in the world. There were extreme differences in power, education, and financial abilities.

I saw opulent wealth and abject poverty. I saw people who slept on bare ground and those who slept in reclining seats seven miles in the air. There were people dressed in suits and ties and naked children with arms tightly folded across their chest to keep warm.

I heard news of people fearing crop failures and the resulting hunger, and others fearing the loss of millions due to the financial collapse and having to work far longer into their lives than they expected. I heard of Americans losing jobs and Ivorians not being given their salaries for 15 months. Despite the extremes, I see that God is God, and He never changes. He helps those who are trusting in Him. He loves every one of the people I see, despite their differences.

The tribal work continues to move forward. Shortly before I arrived, a Loron man, tormented by

a demonic spirit, sought the Lord's help. The man was staying with Telkore, a believer; and we joined in prayer asking the Lord for a complete healing of the man. The man gave testimony that he was trusting the Lord for his salvation.

The Loma work continues to hold its own. Many of the young girls who once professed faith and then left have returned to be taught. Hovare says there is less hostility to the Christian faith among the Loma tribe than in the past by the village elders. Hovare and a Loma believer are working on available Saturdays to translate the Scriptures into the Loma language.

Hovare's village is moving forward. He leads morning devotions, and his older children teach the younger children literacy. In the evening, they have music lesson and singing time. He continues to teach Bible lesson to teachers going out to other villages and presenting weekly lessons. Thursday evenings a Christian radio station broadcasts his recorded lesson in Loron. There is a small dispensary for medicines at Boba, Hovare's village; and Hovare uses his motorcycle for medical emergencies and getting back and forth to the Loma tribe on Sundays. An organization also came in and installed a well and pump for a village near Hovare's house.

With each trip, I see a greater understanding that change comes about with knowledge and wisdom. Hovare laughed and repeated often to others a comment I had made. I'd said, "The price of ignorance is very costly."

When I visit the tribe during the rainy season, the lushness of the vegetation declares how productive the ground that God has entrusted to them is. Unfortunately, the vegetation is weeds that cannot be eaten.

The price of ignorance is costly in more than the loss of earthly blessing. Ignorance of the gospel will result in a man's spending eternity in hell.

*"How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?" (Romans 10:14). "And how shall they preach, except they be sent?" (Romans 10:14-15).*

Jerry Skiles 

## News from Ghana, West Africa Skip and Julie Voetberg and family

Dear Brothers in Christ,

We wanted to send you our greetings and an



## Missionary Reports continued...

update on the activities of our lives here.

First off, on our trip to Abidjan we were not able to accomplish what we had hoped for, that is, getting a three-to-six month extension of our current visas. But we did learn that we are able to stay in Ghana longer and that we can just leave the country every two months, extending our visas for an additional 2 months each time at the border. That's fine with us, as we do want to see some more of Ghana, and we will be able to fit some ministry into those trips as well. For now, we will probably travel to Togo at the end of October again to visit the saints there as well as stopping in the Volta region to visit the new believers there. We hope to get a 60-day visa at the border this time, as last time they only gave us 30. We are praising God for answered prayer in all of this.

The preaching here in Tarkwa / Tamsu continues on a regular schedule. The novelty of us "white men" is still here, but the people have sort of become used to us. We still have our regular visits for Bible study and are also making some new contacts locally and in a few neighboring villages. Last week we went to a small village about five miles away and did some door-to-door, and we seemed very well received. If you look on Soryn's Facebook of the video "Who's the man?" it was taken in that village. Boy, it felt good to chop wood again! We will visit there again soon.

We have a few faithful people who come to our meetings on Sundays and Thursday nights, and they seem to have really grasped the Word. Some are helping with the work as well, going out to do evangelism with us. I had made arrangements to hold a neighborhood evangelistic meeting at a lady's house last month, and we set a date for Saturday, September sixth. But when I went there the day before to let her know that we were still coming at 9:30 AM to hold the meeting, she said that we would have to change it, because she had other things to do. I told her that we were still going to have the meeting because we had been telling everyone about it. So our whole family came, and we had the meeting *outside* her house on the hillside and drew a decent-sized crowd, with her in attendance!

Sometimes the ministry seems to come easily, and other times it is a real labor to just communicate the Word to people. I can now ask, as Paul did, that you would pray for us "that utterance may be given unto me that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel." You could also pray that the Lord would give us greater wisdom on

handling some of the issues of life that come our way regularly. We get a lot of drop-in company at times and occasionally take a break by just locking up the house and going for a walk into town or out to eat somewhere. It probably goes without saying that Julie deals with that stuff very gracefully, and the little ones do very well also, as do the big girls. I know, you are surprised to see me at the bottom of that list. Well, He's still working on me!

•••

Greetings...Julie here. The work at His Vision Mission continues, and the work in each of our own lives continues as well. We've settled into a fairly basic routine, and yet we still manage to come up against a few challenges every now and then. Our health has been excellent besides a few minor skirmishes with parasites, infected wounds, and the occasional "Tarkwa Tummy." Shaela Wren, from our home fellowship, has arrived and is doing an excellent job fitting in and has been a real blessing to all of us.

It was great being able to "talk" to some of you at the Spokane Conference, though it was kind of strange talking into that computer. Everyone kept saying things like "How are you?"; "I'm fine, how are you?"; and so on, so I tried to tell you all the really important stuff, like how little boys wear girl's clothes and that lots of people have asked us whether Taite is a boy or a girl, as girls here all have their ears pierced. It seems that Clancy is sufficiently feminine enough because her ears aren't pierced either, and no one asks if she is a boy or a girl!

Lots of people have asked me to relate the humorous side of life here, so I will tell one funny story: I was looking around the taxi station/market for Skip, as we had become separated, and an older man asked me what I was looking for. I replied that I was looking for my husband, and he piped up joyfully that *he* didn't have a wife—I had to break it to him that I was looking for *my* husband and not *a* husband. He was so disappointed!

Our prayer requests would be for continued good health, for wisdom when it comes to difficult issues, and for grace to get through each day victoriously in Christ. We met a Pakistani man in Ivory Coast who works at the Liberian UN and struck up a friendship. We gave him the Book of John, and we just heard from him yesterday that he is reading it! He said he was heading back to Pakistan that day and was taking it with him—we pray that his heart would be opened to the Truth and would ask you to

join us. His name is Ahmed, and we are assuming he is Muslim. We love you all and, I must admit, miss you as well.

The Lord has been gracious to us here. We have had good health and daily protection of our lives. We have seen a real work being accomplished in the lives of all of us here. We have always been a fairly close family with our home births, home schooling, home business, etc., but living here has taken our family to the next level of being together, and the Lord is using that to refine us all into His image!

By the time you get this, we will have been here for eight months; and we have been able to see a few faithful men and women saved and enter into a helping relationship with us in the work of evangelism. First, there is Samuel, a non-church-going Methodist, to whom I preached the gospel in a drinking establishment. After a few meetings with him there, he came to our Bible studies, then gave his life to the Lord, was baptized, and went through the Bible classes. He gave up drinking and is now a good testimony to those in his house and neighborhood. Sister Dora is another that came to us when Timothy and one of our girls were out sharing the Word. She also was baptized and went through the classes. Sister Julia, who lives in the neighborhood of Samuel, came to us as a result of Samuel's testimony and of our being out among the people preaching the Word to them. Then there came second Samuel, who was told about our Bible classes by Mathias, a previous disciple. He walked five miles one way every day to be at the classes, and he was here on time (8:30 AM) nearly every day! That is not the African way! He also has been faithful in joining us when we go out to witness.

We have met many young people here that seem excited to join with us when they are on a school break, and a few have gone through portions of the Bible classes. We believe the Lord is leading us to reach in that direction, as there is a college here in town, and it appears that we have liberty to preach there. The brothers and sister from Togo who completed the first training program continue to be steadfast and growing, and we look forward to seeing them again when we travel to Togo at the end of October for visa renewals.

There are many others that the Lord has brought to spend time with, either in our meetings here or when we go out to their homes. To put it plainly, the doors of opportunity are wide open. Many are frustrated with the status quo of the so-called church here, and nearly everyone will let you share the Word with them freely. Not all respond favorably, but we praise Him for open doors.

It is just my opinion, but I feel that this may be

the last years of open opportunity for Ghana, as we are seeing a real increase in Muslim influence. There are getting to be a number of them in places of official capacities such as our local immigration officer. Most of the people here do not think there will be a problem as today you can still talk freely with them, even about the gospel, but all one has to do is look at the nations around Ghana and see the problems that are rising up because of the increased activities of Islam.

There is more that I could say, but I think you get the picture, so we will close with this:

“And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand, let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.”

*In His grace, The Voetberg Family* 

## **News from Ghana** **Jim and Fran Lucas**

[From a letter recently received by the Lucas family.]

Praise God,

The wiseman said, if you what to hide knowledge from an African, put it in writting.

But in case the black man can understand the importance of study and keep documents well and value them, he will be the most powerfull man in study arena.

When we parted with you in Narok, you gave me your old manual book which you do use in training us in Narok Outreach Church.

My brother, you are not aware that you left to me the whole gospel riches. That book has worked magic in my ministry.

Right now i have a training college with the material you left with me. People are wondering the kind of knowledge i got from who ever trained me.

Your training style was nat easy but now i know it was and it is the best. I really wish people could know what you are.

Am still based in Uganda with my family, though i managed to open other teaching center in Rwanda, Burundi, And by 15th December am heading to Dar-es-salam Tanzania the on 10th January i will be heading to Zanzibar.

I have 13 trained working staff, who are helping me to run the college.


The college is known as A.G.A.M. (Foundation School of Discipleship)

God has bless us, per semester which runs for

4 months can hold students more than 700 to 800. I was blessed with land (free given) and now am working in prayer to build the school in it. but per now we are still renting.

Pass my regard to mum.

Welcome in Africa.

Geoffrey Auma 



### **News from Valle de Juarez, Mexico**

#### **Ed and Abby Drysdale**

Facing opposition can sometimes be a downer if we allow it to be. Two weeks ago, we received permission from the mayor to show a movie and give a gospel presentation at the plaza. The day arrived, and we went to the marketplace to pass out tracts and preach. That night, we began to set up at the plaza, excited to see some people gather and take notice. As soon as we got the movie screen up, the police came and told us that we had to take it down because they had received a phone call from the mayor, and asked us not to continue with this event. Some of the people heard this and were upset and wanted us to show the movie. They said this is a public area and that we have rights, but the police insisted. After several attempts trying to call the mayor, who was conveniently nowhere to be found, we relented and decided, for testimony's sake, not to continue.

The next week Abby and I went to talk to the mayor at his office, and his response was that he didn't really care about our rights in the public place. He told us that it is well known that the majority of the people here are Catholic, and he was going to appease them, since they were the ones who voted him in. I really shouldn't have been surprised, but it came to me as a shock, since we had held one meeting once before, which was mainly music and testimonials. Some of our friends

that we had been ministering to told us that the priest felt threatened by what we're doing here. The priest called the mayor and influenced him.

We know that the battle belongs to the Lord. He goes before us to fight our battles. We believe that the Lord will use this for His glory. We have been seeing the Lord's hand in all this because what seemed a total flop has piqued some interest.

We have been meeting fairly consistently with about four families on Friday nights. Praise the Lord! José and Raquel, an older couple, have adopted me as their own son. He reminds me of my dad in a lot of ways. He likes to see the reaction when he introduces me as his son. Most of his family lives in Mexico City, so he's pretty lonely; and I guess in some ways I can identify with his loneliness. We spend a great deal of time with each other. He loves to talk about his garden and the importance of each crop of corn. He can go on for hours talking about his garden, which opens the door for me to plant some seeds and water a bit here and there.

Harvest time is coming here in November. I'm waiting and hoping with expectation that the Lord of the Harvest will bring the increase.

Thank you for your prayers and support. They are greatly appreciated.

*With Love, the Drysdales* 

### **News from Atotonilcho, Mexico**

#### **Len and Marcia Sali**

Dear Friends,

We wanted to give you all an update of the happenings the last week here in Atotonilco.

While Steve and Linda were in the States in the month of September, Daniel Fontanez covered all of Steve's Bible studies. Daniel is a trainee with the Shield of Faith, and that was his assignment. He did a great job and was really enjoying each and every study: On Tuesdays, an evangelistic study in the local jail (new believers have been added to the church through this study in the last month but have not attended the Sunday meeting as they are still in jail); On Wednesdays, he had a study with a young man in the church named Carlos on church history, on Wednesday evening, a study with Mars and Rocio. Later in the evening is a study with Efrén and Rosa in Nuevo Refugio on justification by faith; on Fridays, there is a study in the morning with Chilo, another young man in the church, on hermeneutics. Then, in the afternoon, a study with Terecita and a new believer, and in the evening a study with Joel and Tere in Infonapo; on Saturday is another study in the local jail. There is also study with Juan and Ticha, and this Saturday, Rosi, who lives in Infonavit had


invited her neighbors to an evangelistic Bible study that Daniel was going to teach.

As part of Daniel's training, he was scheduled to go to Loreto Zacatecas and work with Mike and Faith Ball for the month of October. As Steve is out of commission for the next few days recovering from the removal of one of his kidneys and Daniel will be gone the rest of the month, Steve had a meeting with some of the men in the church, including myself (Len), and we divided up the responsibilities of the studies. For the next month, Omar and Ricardo will take over the evangelistic outreach at the local jail, and Hector will be doing the study with Carlos and Mars and Rocio. I had my first study on hermeneutic with Chilo (it was a great time, and Chilo is very forgiving of my poor language skills). Cuca will be having the study with Teracita and her friend, and Diana will be helping Rosi with the group from Infonavit. Marcia and I will be meeting with Efren and Rosa in Nuevo Refugio on Wednesday evenings, which we are looking forward to, as Efren is a very good cook and the study is at cena time! Daniel Duran will be meeting with Joel and Tere and with Juan and Ticha.

The women in the church have been hard at work raising funds for the upcoming family conference in the later part of November. They have what is called a "taquizas," where they prepare tacos and then sell them after the service on Sunday. Today, I (Marcia) went to Diana's house and with Cuca, Monica, Berta, Tere and Blanca and made tamales to sell. Some of the sales were to neighbors and, of course, to each other. Len and I bought 10. We made 197 tamales. Tere, who is the accountant of the group, calculated a profit of \$35.00 U.S.

Tomorrow we will be going to Jiquilpan for the dedication of the new church building in that city. This project has been a joint effort between local believers and Grace Chapel in Lancaster, California. Cliff and Mary Huffmire have spent the last three years overseeing the building project and ministering in Jiquilpan and surrounding area. This is going to be a big event with believers coming from many parts of Mexico to celebrate and eat pozole.

Thanks for all of your support and prayers.

Len and Marcia 

## **Atotonilco, Mexico**

### **Daniel and Mary Fontanez**

*(Editor's note: Daniel and Mary Fontanez are currently in training in Mexico. They are working with Steve and Linda Montgomery, Len and Marcia Sali, and the church in Atotonilco. Here is their latest report.)*

The way that God turns obviously negative things

into great blessings is one of my favorite things about Him. He is capable of making our greatest trials turn out to be our greatest growing experiences; He can turn our deepest hurts into tools for His glory. He's just awesome at it! He does this all the time with us as believers but also with those whom He seeks to save. One such example is the recent Bible study at the jail.


One of the young ladies from the church in Atotonilco married a guy who she thought was a true believer. It turns out that the young man decided (under the influence of drugs) to borrow a car and take it for a few loops around the plaza—all of this without asking the owner. He ends up in jail.

His wife asked Steve Montgomery if he would take a Bible study to him at the jail. This was the way that God directed our attention to the jail, not only for this young man but also for the other men there. When Steve left for the States in September, I had the privilege of continuing with the Bible study. We're going through the Bible chronologically and through the *New Life in Christ* discipleship material. So we've gone through the creation account, the fall, the first promise of a Redeemer, etc., and are now past the Ten Commandments. The introductory volume of the *New Life in Christ* material has been very helpful to open conversation and talk about the greatness of our Lord.

The Word of God has had a powerful impact among the men in the jail. One of the men is an elementary school teacher named Pedro. At first he would ask questions about evolution versus creation and would sit and listen, but only at a distance. After watching some Moody Science films and hearing some brief comments about what the Bible has to say about the topic, he now sits closer and listens with more interest. This same Pedro spent a couple days really ill there in the jail and afterwards confessed to me that he thought he was going to die, and he thought to himself that he wasn't ready to die. He had been relying on good works for salvation, but after seeing what the Bible teaches on salvation, he had nothing to claim before the Lord. Another man, Toño, always has questions concerning the Catholic beliefs and seems to understand the gospel but is afraid giving his full trust to Jesus Christ. Manuel, the young man who first directed our attention to the jail, has now taken a more serious decision to follow Jesus. Other men, like Fernando (a Columbian), have taken the decision to follow the Lord.

Many other things have happened in the jail that makes such a dark place shine with the light of God. We haven't enough room to write it all, but know that certainly God is at work in the Atotonilco Municipal Jail. Please pray for the conversion of the other men in the jail. Pray also that the Lord would give

us strength and wisdom to continue the work there. Thank you, and be blessed.

*Daniel and Mary Fontanez* 

## **Bible Expo News and Prayer Needs**

### **François Marcoux**

Last August, we traveled to Mexico with a couple from Quebec City, Dominic and Danielle Villeneuve, who have a serious interest in missionary work. We helped them make contact with Mexican believers as well as missionaries serving the Lord in Creel, Torreón, Gómez Palacio and Guadalajara. Among them were Larry and Peggy Gallegos who kindly received us into their home. We had a wonderful time of fellowship together. Their counsel and advice, drawn from the Word, and their many years of experience were truly a blessing to the Villeneuves and to us also.

I am teaching ESL at the Valcartier Military Base, situated north of Quebec City till the beginning of December. In January '09, we are looking forward, in the Lord's will, to bringing again the Bible Museum to Mexico for another three-month tour.

*François Marcoux* 

## **News from Loreto, Mexico**

### **Mike and Faith Ball**

We wanted to let you know what the Lord is doing in the little village of Mastranto, which is about 10 minutes from Loreto. As far as we know, Ramiro was the first person from Mastranto to come to know the Lord years ago. He got saved in Aguascalientes and was a member of a congregation there where we met him, back when we lived in Aguas. Ramiro led his uncle, José, to the Lord. José was in an apostolic group here in Loreto, which dissolved about the time we moved to Loreto; so Ramiro brought him to us, and he began to meet with us. For about a year I was going out to José's place to have Bible studies once a week. He would share with me how he was witnessing to his sister (Ramiro's mother), a niece, and others there in Mastranto, but as far as he knew, he was the only believer there.

When Ramiro would come to visit his folks, his father wanted nothing to do with Christ. About a month ago, Ramiro came for the weekend and asked his family if they would like to attend our meeting. Much to his surprise, his dad accepted the invitation, and a bunch of his family came to the Sunday meeting. (Ramiro is one of 20 children.) Since then, one of Ramiro's sisters has gotten saved and was baptized a couple of weeks ago. His mother and father and some of his siblings are still coming to the meetings. There are so many of them that it's hard to keep track of them all. Manolo goes to their

home on Friday evenings and has a Bible study with whoever shows up. Many different members of their family are always popping in to hear parts of the study with many questions and comments. Some are positive and some negative. The study ends up lasting between two and three hours. So please pray for Jose's extended family, including his own children, who have no interest in the gospel.

On another note, we plan to leave here the end of November to go back to Wyoming to see what the Lord has for us in the future. Austin plans to go to Ghana, Africa, to work with the team there as soon as he has funds. Jim Lucas would like to have him come by the first of January. Please pray the Lord would provide for his ticket. He is currently with us and will be looking for a job in Wyoming as soon as we arrive.

Thank you for your prayers,

*Mike and Faith Ball*

## **News from from Other Fields Vietnam**

*[Editor's Note: The following is included both for those who are acquainted with the ministry of Kevin and Colette Black and as a reminder of the persecutions faced by believers in other countries.]*

We were gathering together with friends for a time of study and worship when I got the call. The voice of the young woman on the other end of the phone was speaking broken English through crying and sobbing. I was confused but finally heard, "They have taken him. The police came this morning, and they have taken him away!" I could hear two children in the background crying, obviously hanging onto their mother. H. and her husband C. were also meeting in a small group for study and worship when ten officials came into their home and took C. to the police station. After four hours they released him, with the admonishment that he should not meet again without a license to teach and practice religion with others in his home.

We heard later in the week that another young man, N, also had this same encounter in his small group that same weekend. Both men continue to meet and continue to get called in to talk with officials. Their prayer requests? Not for protection or release from this harassment but rather for the new believers in the groups. They are fearful that the police will intimidate them into walking away from their new faith. It has been a long time since we have heard about these kinds of incidents. We have been lulled into a comfortable place of new decrees for "religious freedom," "registration," and "official permission to meet." Maybe we have gotten too comfortable.

*Continued on page 16*

# River Baptisms Highlight Labor Day Conference

Riverview Camp hosted the Ninth Annual Shield of Faith Labor Day Conference in the beautiful Pend Oreille valley this year. More than 340 people from California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Wyoming, as well as Canada, Mexico, and New Zealand, gathered to hear in-depth Bible teaching and enjoy worship and prayer together.

Camp coordinators, Brian, Peg, and David Martell reported that the camp had initially been reserved for another group. In an unusual twist, that church rescheduled, allowing the large Shield of Faith conference to be held on the busy Labor Day weekend.

This Northeast Washington conference has grown steadily—beginning with only 19 people, burgeoning to more than 400 in 2007. Much of the conference success can be attributed to the humble hospitality and conscientious organization of the Martell team, as well as the dynamic teaching of Shield of Faith Founder Dick York and other veteran missionary speakers.


This year, recreation involving water sports, gymnasium, a four-story, nine-run slide and wholesome and varied menus insured that conferees were fortified physically as well as spiritually.

Attendees who arrived Friday evening enjoyed an open meeting and late night fellowship in the dining room and tabernacle. Saturday morning, Shield of Faith President, Richard McDaniel, began with an appeal to deepen a personal knowledge of and relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, rather than simply knowing about Him.

Steve Hickman's personal testimony encouraged daily time in the Word and abiding in the True Vine in order to hear the Lord's voice, as well faithful obedience to the will of the Father. Dick York exhorted the saints to be single-minded, Christ-like, rather than interpreting Scripture through preconceived notions from other men. Steve Montgomery

delineated the difference between doctrine, conviction, and opinion, and Bob Woodward reminded the saints that the believer is sanctified by the righteousness of Christ. A unique tour through Moses' tabernacle was provided by guest speaker Les Garrett in a study of John 15-17.

Missions' highlights from Mexico, Ireland, and Ghana preceded a spirited challenge, inviting prospective team members to join the January training session in Bend, Oregon.

The three-day weekend culminated with 20 baptisms in the beautiful Pend Oreille River, and conferees left the picturesque valley hearing echoes of the well-known Les Garrett song, "This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it!" 




**MP3s are available of the Washington Conference,** but those who wish to have them in another format may request them from the office.

**For more information, write:**  
**Shield of Faith Mission**  
PO Box 144 • Bend OR 97709  
**or email [sfmi@sfmiusa.org](mailto:sfmi@sfmiusa.org)**  
**Phone 541 382 7081**

**Missionary News, continued from page 15**

T. has been attending the English club. She has made friends with several who have shared Christ with her. She has learned so much and is so hungry to know more. Her parents and family forbid her to “change religions.” She can’t resist any longer. She must call Him her Savior. She meets secretly with a friend and prays to give her life to the Lord. Now, she faces daily struggles with her family. She isn’t allowed to go to church. But, V., her faithful friend, is meeting with her privately, and they will grow in the Lord together. Their focus is to get up early and go out for “exercise” to steal away some time in God’s Word. Getting up early? Being forbidden to study God’s Word? Maybe we’ve gotten too comfortable.

A group discusses their church: “It’s hot and we need better air conditioning.” “It’s noisy, and we need somewhere for the children to go.” “We need more curriculum for more programs.” “I need a

schedule.” Maybe we’ve gotten too comfortable.  
*Kevin and Colette Black* 

**India**

Dearly beloved in the Lord,

Hindu activists have started attacking the Christians all over India, particularly in Orrisa and Maharashtra States, and now all over. *As of now:*

1. 4015 Christian homes burnt to ashes by Hindus
2. More than 100 churches attacked and destroyed
3. 36 Christians killed
4. 5 women raped
5. One Seminary attacked
6. Hindu temple to be constructed on church plot after burning the church.
7. Thousands of people in relief camp, with no proper food and clothes.

Please pray for the victims of this persecution.

*In His harvest field, Jolly Rimai & Team*

**IMPORTANT NOTICE**

SFMI is attempting to update its address list. If your address has changed or is different from the one on the front of this newsletter, would you please send us by mail (PO Box 144, Bend, OR 97709) or email ([sfmi@sfmiusa.org](mailto:sfmi@sfmiusa.org)) your correct mailing address? If your address doesn’t match the Post Office’s records exactly (even if the newsletter arrives at your doorstep with some errors in the address), we are not allowed to send them by bulk mail, thus costing the mission more. Please assist us in being good stewards by updating your address for us.

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