

SHIELD OF FAITH MISSION INTERNATIONAL

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**Prayer/News  
UPDATE**

Fulfilling the Great Commission Through Establishing New Testament Churches



# Training

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**November-December 2010**

## From the President's Desk

We sometimes see discipleship books, usually in a series, usually teaching the basic doctrines of the Word, and usually ending in ten or fifteen lessons. While many of these are good tools and useful in discipling, they are not in themselves discipleship.

Disciples are made, and the making takes time. We often say that the Lord Jesus took three years with the 12, yet we also know that He continued that work long after those first three years and the book of Acts tells some of that story.

Discipleship is not simply learning a prescribed set of doctrines. A mature disciple *will* know the Word, and every disciple *should* know or be learning the basic doctrines of Scripture. Discipleship, however, is more than just that.

Discipleship is training.

It is training that takes us to the Cross. It takes our frustrations, our fears, our needs to Calvary, where we learn to die to our own resources and methods and take up the infinite resources and oft-enigmatic ways of Him who called us to be disciples.

In this issue, you will hear that echo in Dick York's article as he addresses frustration over

unanswered prayer. The truth is, God is not simply in the business of answering our petitions. God is a *training* God, and He is in the business of training us to trust Him.

Jim Lucas addresses the issue of provision as he tells the story of how God provided outside the norm, outside the expected time and manner. Why? Because God trains us to trust Him.

Marcia writes about dealing with fears—the big ones, the little ones—by letting the Lord train us to face them head on, learning to have a trust in Him that outweighs the fear of what frightens us.

In my article on the New Testament church, we look at the emphasis that God puts on the church as a training tool. Open meetings, body ministry, long-suffering, forbearance—these are all training tools in the hand of the Master.

And each of the missionary reports relate in different ways how the Lord is training both the missionaries and those to whom they are ministering, challenging them to take their frustrations, fears, and needs to Him.

So discipleship is training toward the Cross. It is Divine training on how to apply the Cross of Christ to the call of the day.

God is a God of training.

*Steve Montgomery*

**Our Cover:** The training given Roman Soldiers was what enabled Rome to dominate the known world for centuries. Soldiers were trained to “keep rank,” to know that their conduct contributed to either defeat or victory. Roman soldiers were equipped with specialized weapons. Their shields were such that they could lock the edge of their shield with that of those next to them. The armor and equipment of the Roman soldier captured Paul's attention as he sat in his cell, prompting him to write of putting on the “whole armor of God” (Ephesians 6:10-18). In 2 Timothy 2:4 he used another military analogy to speak of discipline: “No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.”

# Why Does It Take So Long?



By Dick York

“I’m desperate, God! Why does it take so long for you to answer prayer?” If you have never said that out loud, it’s quite probable that, at some time, you have thought it in your heart. On occasion it seems that He answers almost before we finish asking. When that’s the case, our confidence in God is bolstered; we feel as though we are His special people and our desires are His special project. But that’s not always the case. There are times when it seems as though the world will end before God answers our prayer; in fact, it seems doubtful that He has paid any attention at all to our cry. Maybe He didn’t even hear us cry. Sometimes it seems as though prayer is a futile exercise because it is evident that no one is listening. We have prayed. We have waited. Nothing happened. We have given up hoping that God will answer when we hear a jubilant testimony from someone who has prayed and waited and continued to believe. Then, one day, after literally years of patient trusting, God has answered that person’s prayer. So we are persuaded in our heart that we should be patient. Perhaps that will happen for us.

The key words, of course, are “continued to believe.” That is not some nebulous sales job that we do on our psyche, persuading ourselves that if we believe anything strong enough and long enough, our faith will bring it about. That is *not* the case. Our faith doesn’t *cause* anything to happen. God is the author of His work: whether it is provision, the salvation of our loved ones, the healing of our diseases, or the perfecting of our souls. It is God who brings it about. Faith is our attitude of trusting Him. Trusting Him is a present-tense, on-going attitude based on His faultless and unchanging character—not on the fact that He has complied with our

will in our time.

Faith trusts God for who He is, not for what He does. God has made many promises in His Word. Some of them are personal, some national, some conditional, others unconditional. Saints of all ages have waited literally for centuries for some of the promises of God to unfold. At the end of the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, the famous and well-beloved faith chapter, we read of some who “received not the promise.” Up to verse 35 of that chapter, we read of the positive answers to prayer, the visible fulfillment of promises—and it causes us to rejoice in God’s constant faithfulness.

We don’t know, of course, how long it seemed to those who prayed and waited, nor how many times they were tempted to despair while they were waiting; but we can see from our perspective that their trust was well placed no matter how long it took. From verse 35 on we read of others who waited for similar promises, “others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, and were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute afflicted, tormented; (of whom the world was not worthy) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And these all [to whom the promises were made] having obtained a good report through faith received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.”

So why, in this case, did it take so long? Because they could not be made perfect without us, the rest of the members of His church! Some of God’s promises will be

fulfilled in the kingdom. If we do not have an eternal perspective, it may seem that God has not been faithful. But perhaps there is more than one reason for the apparent delay in God's response to our urgent prayers. We pray for the Lord's soon return, but He has not come. Jesus said, "Surely, I come quickly."

The Apostle John, therefore, prayed, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." But still, after 2,000 years, He has not come. What's the matter? It's obvious that the Lord's perspective differs from ours as much as ours differs from that of a fruit fly. The fruit fly lives his entire life in 24 hours. To him, then, our one day is his entire lifetime. What is "quickly" for us is to him an eternity. But further, seeing from God's perspective, who "is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance,"<sup>1</sup> there is still more reason to delay.

The prophet Jeremiah lived comparatively late in history, the Apostle Paul even later. God, it is noted in Scripture, knew both of these men before they were born. This can be said also of you and me. It was not the will of God to terminate the progress of history—to turn out the lights and lock the door, so to speak—until all the children were in. So we wait, and some of us wonder, "How long, O Lord...?" But He is faithful and true; it won't be a minute too long. Trust Him.

If God had finalized history early, Jeremiah may not have been included among the number of the redeemed or, perhaps, the Apostle Paul, or you and me. Another reason may be that every incident of history reveals something more of God's character. God's revelation of Himself continues to unfold with every event of history. As the children of Israel wandered in the wilderness for forty years, every incident said something to them about the character and the faithfulness of God. Even modern day conflicts have

revealed God's power and His goodness to those who are able to see.

The rise and fall of nations declares the consistency of God's principles if we are willing to notice. God's Word is complete. The entire revelation is recorded in the inspired Word of God. But to us, the revelation of what is recorded is still unfolding. Prophecy has all been written, but the fulfilling of that prophecy is still in the process. God is revealing Himself day by day. Even our waiting is accomplishing His purpose in us.

A further and much more subjective reason for the delay in answered prayer than the ones noted so far may be in the fact that God has committed Himself to working through the visible body that He has prepared for Himself. Regardless of what we may hear from other sources, God created all things by the Word of His power, and He created them for His

**Flesh is flesh. Since the fall of Adam, all flesh except that of the Lord Jesus Christ which was born without sin, has been by nature resistant to the will of God and more willing to live by sight and human reason than by faith.**

own pleasure. All things were created by Him and for Him. No matter how independent from God man may try to become, he can never negate that fact. God himself is an invisible spirit. But God's plan was to reveal Himself to someone with whom He would fellowship. He created man. This was to be the visible image of the invisible God so that not only *to* man, but *through* man, God would manifest Himself.

The main factors in fellowship with God are love and obedience, neither of which can be in evidence apart from freedom of choice. As a part of the "image of God" in which man was created, man must have a will and the ability to choose. He chose to disobey, even as God foreknew that he would. To redeem this fallen man and to pay the death penalty for his sin, the Word was made flesh.


The same Word who had created all things for God's pleasure took upon Himself the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of Adam before he fell. This is Jesus. When Jesus came into the world, He said to the Father, "A

body hast thou prepared me.” That was the body of the man Christ Jesus, prepared to be the final and perfect sacrifice for sin. In that perfect man dwelt the fullness of the Godhead bodily. He was the express image of the Father and the visible humanity through whom the Father worked. This was man as God meant man to be. He did the Father’s will without reluctance, perfectly, willingly, and immediately. When He spoke to the Father, there was no delay. He spoke, and the Father’s will was done. After Jesus’ death and resurrection, those who are redeemed thereby are called the body of Christ. This, now, is the body through which God works. Because the flesh in which we live lusts against the spirit, the Father’s will is often met with reluctance and unbelief on the part of God’s people.

But God, nevertheless, is committed to work through the church, which is His body. Much of our waiting for God is because God waits for us. Flesh is flesh. Since the fall of Adam, all flesh except that of the Lord Jesus Christ, which was born without sin, has been by nature resistant to the will of God and more willing to live by sight and human reason than by faith. We pray, therefore, sometimes not according to His will<sup>2</sup> but sometimes to “consume it upon our lusts.”<sup>3</sup> Sometimes we pray for God to remove the things that He has placed in our lives to perfect us.<sup>4</sup>

In all of these cases, we do not experience the answers to our prayers that we desire to see. That doesn’t mean that God doesn’t hear our cry; it means only that He cannot answer the way we ask Him to. He doesn’t ignore us, however. He perfects us and then answers according to *His* will. In Genesis 15:16 God told Abram that He could not give the land of Canaan to Abraham’s seed until the iniquity of the Amorites was full. God waited 400 years. When God told Jonah to preach to the Ninevites, Jonah took a ship in the opposite direction. God waited. When God brought the children of Israel to the southern border of the land that He had promised to them, the children of Israel feared the Canaanites and refused to go in and possess the land. God waited 40 years. God has often waited for man over the course of history.

Does that mean that God’s will is frustrated by man’s disobedience? Not at all! God is patient, and God is gracious. When the children of Israel rebelled against the LORD, God spoke to them through Isaiah the prophet and said, “For thus saith the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel; in returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and confidence shall be your strength: and ye would not. But ye said, ‘No’... And therefore will the LORD wait, that He may be gracious unto you, and therefore will He be exalted, that He may have mercy upon you.” Through the course of history, God has often waited while man has stopped the clock and delayed the game. The answers to many prayers are on hold until the subject is willing to repent, or trust, or until the thing that God is doing through the situation is accomplished. Think about this one.

The Lord told His disciples to “Go and teach all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. And lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.”<sup>5</sup> There was a context for that commission. Earlier, in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew, it is recorded that Jesus, in prophesying of the end time said, “When this Gospel of the kingdom has been preached in all the world for a witness to all nations, then shall the end come.”<sup>6</sup> It’s hard for me to believe that the answer to John’s prayer, “even so come, Lord Jesus,” is not somehow related to Matthew 24:14 and the church’s serious attention to getting it done. After all, Jesus, who is our Head, said, “My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, **and to finish His work.**”<sup>7</sup> 

## Endnotes

1. 2 Peter 3:9
2. 1 John 5:14
3. James 4:3
4. 2 Corinthians 12:7-10
5. Matthew 28:19,20
6. Matthew 24:14
7. John 4:24



# Provision

By Jim Lucas

*When Jim and Fran Lucas went to Mexico as missionaries, they went in dependence upon the Lord. In this account of their early days in Mexico, Jim and Fran and their children learned more of the grace, mercy, and provision of the Lord.*

*“Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls?” (Luke 12:24).*

During those early days in Guadalajara, the children would sometimes get concerned when they knew that we were out of money. On one occasion, our daughter Shannon knew that we needed money to buy food. She told us that she had some money in her piggy bank and said we could use it to buy food. I told her that we really appreciated it but that we couldn't use it because the banks wouldn't exchange small change—only bills. She asked, “Why not? It's money.” I then remembered that Jesus fed five thousand people with a small boy's lunch: a few fish and a couple pieces of bread. I told Shannon to bring her bank, and she did. We shook out the money and counted it. There was a dollar and twenty-five cents.

We prayed and asked our Lord to bless it. Then we went to the bank and asked them to exchange it for pesos. They said that they didn't take small foreign change. We prayed again and went to another bank; they told us the same thing. We then prayed again and went to the third bank. This time they said, “No problem,” and gave us the dollar and a quarter in Mexican pesos. We prayed that the Lord Jesus would touch the people's heart at the market because usually when they saw that one was a gringo, they would charge about double the regular price. We went to the large market called *Abastos* with several shopping bags. The first thing we bought were potatoes. I told the man to give us three pesos worth. He weighed them

out and put them in our bag. He looked into our bag at the few potatoes and then at the large pile that he had and put in a lot more! I protested, but he motioned for me to be quiet. We thanked him and moved on. We were amazed because this conduct was totally contrary to previous experiences.

We found carrots and asked for three pesos worth. Much to our amazement, this man did exactly what the potato man had done! It was the same for the zucchini, cabbage, onions, cheese, beans, rice—everyone had the same desire to give us much more than the value of the money. The market was very big, and we were moving about, looking for different things that we wanted to buy. Because of that, none of the people were aware of what the others were doing; each one thought that he had a very unique idea. By this time, we were all ecstatic and our shopping bags full. On our way out of the market, we saw a man who was motioning for our son Richard (who was four years old) to come to him. I told Richard that it was okay for him to go. The man gave Richard a watermelon so large that it was all he could do to carry it. We were all laughing and waving and thanking the man while Richard staggered back. The dollar and twenty-five cents from the piggy bank bought enough food to last us seven full days! The food tasted better than normal, and every day we were conscious of the blessing of God.

The morning of the seventh day, we had breakfast. After breakfast, Francille pointed out to me that the food was gone. The honeymoon was over, and I felt so helpless that I went back into the bedroom and began to discuss my problem with the Lord Jesus. I reminded Him that it was against the law for me to work in Mexico and that He would not want me to beg. I also reminded Him that we had come to Mexico only under His command. I talked to him about the need for food in the house. While I was praying, I was reminded of the Prophet Elijah, who was told to go out in

the desert during the time of the drought and hide by the brook Cherith. He was told that the ravens were commanded to feed him there. Elijah did as he was told, and every morning the raven brought him bread and flesh. In the evening it was the same. I could just see Elijah on the first morning waiting for his delivery! I'm sure his eyes were focused on the sky, wondering from which direction the raven would come. I imagined that he would come out of his cave and check every so often for the expected visitor. Faith in the promise of God put great expectation in his heart. I knew then what it was that God was looking for in me. He wanted to see this *spirit of expectation*. The joy of the Lord Jesus came into my heart, and I began to look all around the room for the money I had asked for. I looked in all of my pockets and kept wondering where I was going to find it. It was time for me to go to the language school, so I left for school, but I assured Francille that the Lord was going to supply. I was walking because the car was out of gas, and, as I was walking, I continued looking for the money. I had walked for about fifteen minutes when I looked down—and right in front of me lay a hundred peso bill (at that time worth eight dollars U.S.)! After having the wonderful experience of eating for a week on a dollar and twenty-five cents, this was a sizeable amount.

When I saw the bill, I reached down and picked it up, jumped in the air and said, "Praise the Lord!" There were two men and a boy there who were pulling an old cart full of trash paper that they would pick up and sell for

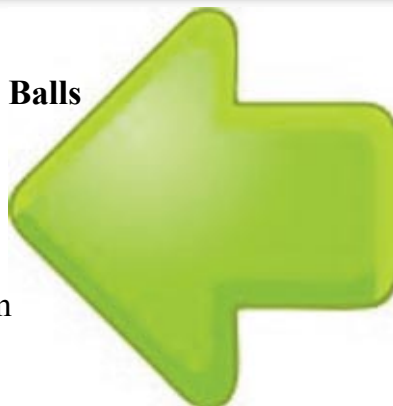
recycling. These poor people were living so meagerly off the trash of the land while Jesus was giving me the riches of His grace. They witnessed the whole event and stood looking in awe. I then began to speak in Spanish far beyond my ability and told them that I had a wife and five children at home with no food or money. I explained to them how I had prayed and that Jesus had heard me and that's why they were seeing me find this money in this manner. They began to weep and said that they also wanted to believe in Jesus, I had great liberty in sharing the gospel with them and prayed with them in Jesus' name. I still had three pesos left from the piggy bank money, and I gave it to them.

I walked on with great joy in my heart. When a car pulled over to give me a ride, it was one of the brothers with whom I went to school. I was speaking to him of the great things our Lord was doing, and he rejoiced with me for the faithfulness of God. The story then went around the language school among the missionaries, and I had mixed emotions about that. In some ways I was embarrassed. In other ways I was glad because I believed it was bringing glory to our Lord Jesus. Before the day was over, I had about seven hundred pesos in my pocket from different brothers who wanted to give. Some even came by the house later with boxes of food. From that time on, the brothers in the school looked at me a little differently. They really couldn't understand why we did things the way we did, but it seems they had a respect for our walk with the Lord. 🌍

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## New Address For the Balls

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# What Exactly Is a “New Testament” Church?

Part 2

**Steve Montgomery**



Previously, we defined a local church as a group of believers with a mutual commitment to gather regularly to exhort, teach, and pray for one another and to practice the ordinances of baptism and the Lord’s table. Within this definition, there are specific things that Shield of Faith holds vital concerning the local church:

- Autonomy of the local church
- Plurality of leadership
- Priesthood of the believer
- Centrality of Bible teaching
- Body ministry and an open pulpit
- Regular practice of the ordinances of the Lord’s table and baptism

Let’s consider the final four:

## **Priesthood of the believer**

The teaching of the priesthood of each believer—the God-ordained privilege of every child of God to go before the throne of God freely through the blood of Christ and to study and learn from Scripture through the indwelling Holy Spirit—is a precious truth.

Because each believer has access to the Father through Christ, and because the Holy Spirit indwells all believers, the New Testament teaches that all believers are gifted and can be led by Christ in the development of those gifts. Ministry is not primarily the result of schooling but of gifting and walk. The New Testament knows no clergy/laity dichotomy. As Garland Brock observes, “It’s not that we don’t believe in a clergy; we don’t believe in a laity!” The New Testament anticipates congregations in which each believer is developing and exercising his or her gifts for the benefit of the entire assembly.

## **Centrality of Bible teaching**

Jesus prayed that the Father would sanctify His disciples in the truth, adding, “Thy Word is truth.” Paul commended the Ephesian church to

God and the word of His grace (Acts 20:32). Peter exhorted believers to desire the Bible as newborns desire milk (1 Peter 2:2). The distinguishing mark of a local church is priority on the authority and exposition of the Word (Acts 2:42). Over programs or prophets, experience and emotion, organizations and plans and programs, the local church must distinguish itself by the centrality of Bible teaching.

## **Body ministry and open pulpit**

Ephesians 4:15 says that the whole body is knit together as every member functions. Men and women, young believers and mature saints, all have a part in the growth of the church. With each member acting in God-given capacity, the local church is edified. Any body with non-functioning parts is a body with problems. In the local church of the New Testament, there was room for every member to be actively involved. This is not simply an abundance of programs. This is nurturing each Christian to develop his own ministry, so that the work of edifying the church and reaching the lost is done by the members of the congregation.

Akin to this is an open pulpit. This means that at some of the regular meetings of the whole church, there is place for different ones to teach the Scripture, share a testimony, give an exhortation, pray and ask for prayer, sing or ask for a song. This does not mean that no one is designated to teach, and there are strictures concerning the public participation of women in the gathering of the whole church, but the local church is exhorted to provide opportunity for many to contribute to the ministry of the Body with liberty. Each local church is free to determine how they will express under the direction of the Holy Spirit, for no liturgy or set order of service exists in the New Testament. Like the church in Corinth, however, any local church should anticipate several people ministering the Word in a single service (1 Corinthians 14:26-31).

*Continued on page 16*



# Missionary Reports



## Ivory Coast, West Africa Jerry and Cherry Skiles

We have a new Loma family in the fellowship at Bwaybiye. The solidarity of the traditional Loma community is amazing. It is centered on worshipping idols and being part of the community that insures security. For those who have found faith in Jesus Christ, the ostracism from the tribal community is significant as they step out of that oneness into the confidence of Jesus as their only Savior and Lord. The wonderful thing about the gospel is that it is not a vain faith. I know that this is being read by Christians, but Jesus is the real deal. When someone enters into eternal life, it makes the difficulties of our labor more tolerable. Rejoice with us!



Cherry continues to take pictures of sick people and record their symptoms for the team in February. Showing even that much concern has opened doors: today, a woman who has suffered for years with a sickness asked

the Christians to pray for her. Speaking to her, I asked what she wanted from God. She wanted healing. We asked Him on her behalf. Will there be more to the story?? I don't know yet. She did not want to follow God—just wanted healing. God's graciousness never stops amazing me, not only for her but for me. We have moved over eight tons of food into the village, most of it being carried 10 miles on women's heads. I



have never run a marathon, but I figure that walking 10 miles to get to the corn and then carry 40-60 lbs. back on top of your head must get pretty close to the task. They did this twice, with a rest of one day between the trips. Living in Africa has taught me that a lot of things are relative. Two that come to mind quickly are toughness and suffering.



Hovare continues to minister. I encourage him to say no to the needs that people bring to him, but he perseveres. He did spend two nights with us, just to get some rest and encouragement. He does medical work, along with teaching and translation. Sickness in the tribe is a combination of physical, emotional, and spiritual disorders. Medical doctors in the West focus primarily on the physical. Sick Africans love the attention Hovare gives them.

Cherry and I were able to rent a house in Ghana. We will go there and do office work such as lesson preparation and Bible translation. We are also looking forward to continuing our ministry to the church there in reaching out to the remaining unreached people groups. I must say that comforts are also one of the relative things in Africa. The Ghana location is more comfortable than our tribal location.

*Thanks again for your prayers!*

*Jerry & Cherry* 



## Asia L&M

We have heard from L and M serving in Asia. L continues to suffer from heart problems, so L&M have decided to return to the U.S. for what will be his third cardiac ablation in an attempt to control his heart palpitations. They hope to be in the U.S. in early November. Intercede with us that the Lord will administer healing here and that they will have the Lord's clear direction on their next steps.

They also reported that the Ag project they are doing is going well but slowly. They have had difficulties with propagation from existing plants and are looking for wisdom. They seek to bless their host country through this as well as provide a base for more workers to join them.

This is a very significant work among an unreached group. They are planting more than fruit bushes and are looking for eternal growth. Thank you for partnering with them through supplication. 🌍

## Rogers, Arkansas Jim and Fran Lucas

### *Praise Report!*

Jesus is coming soon, and He is preparing His people and bringing the gospel to the few in America who have never heard, giving many one more opportunity to repent of their sins.

Cottage Grove, Oregon has now had one more opportunity to repent of her sins and turn to the living God. Thanks to our Lord Jesus, who brought many fellow laborers to help in this outreach. We were able to cover most of the city by going door to door, speaking with many, and leaving gospel literature at each home. Also, daily for ten days, there were people standing on the street corners with sandwich board signs with scripture verses in bold, red letters. Many would drive by with frowns; others came by with thumbs up.

In the skateboard park, many young people were challenged with the gospel because we had, on the average, about 10 or more people preaching daily. It was like a tag team, where some on one day would



be talked to, one by one, and the next day by others. We preached to some right in the middle of drug deals. One of them wanted a Bible. He was given a Bible and was later seen standing with the Bible open and several young people standing around him.

Our two daily meetings in the tent were well attended. Although not great in numbers, the presence of our Lord Jesus was always strong, and many Christians went home edified and challenged to draw close unto the Lord. Many sinners were brought under the conviction of the Holy Spirit during this time of outreach, and our Heavenly Father knows how to bring the harvest in His time.

Even though we are not there now, the teaching of the Word and ministry in music and several testimonies that were given will be on local TV for several weeks to come. On our second night there, a Christian by the name of Dan Holts came by with a large movie camera and videoed the events for his local TV station.

I want to thank all of you who fasted and prayed with us for this time of ministry. May the Lord bless you. Our FATHER heard your prayers. I want to thank all the Christians who traveled, some quite far, and a special thanks to our hosts who so graciously put up many in their



homes and prepared great meals all the time we were there.

Please pray for our next outreach, which will take place somewhere in the San Antonio, Texas, area the first part of November. We will try to keep you updated on our plans.

*PS: Thank you for your prayers for Fran. It was confirmed by the MRI that she did have a minor stroke and was given a good report by the doctor. Everything looks good and there are no more blood clots to be seen. The doctor has given Fran the ok to travel back home to Arkansas. She is recovering and doing well.*

Lord bless you,  
James and Francille Lucas  
e-mail: james@usaforjesus.org 

### **Valle De Juarez, Mexico** **Ed and Abby Drysdale**

Dear Brothers,

Last Saturday night we were having our regular Bible study with Samuel and Rosario, and as usual we ended with a time of prayer. We do this almost every week, and every week Samuel passes when it comes to him. This week, he was sitting sandwiched between his wife and his nine-year-old son, Daniel. Rosario prayed, then silence. So Samuel nudges his son to tell him to pray. Daniel looks up at him and nudges him back. That is how the Lord got Samuel to pray out loud. Since then, Samuel has prayed for the families meals and at the night's Bible study.

It appears that the Lord is using Daniel to nudge his father in more ways than just prayer. Daniel went to kid's camp this year and gave his heart to the Lord. It is so neat to see his desire to follow God at such a young age. When his parents don't feel like coming, he asks if he can still go. Please continue to pray for this family, that they will continue to respond to the nudges from the Lord.

Next weekend is the annual family conference. I am so excited to report that this year we have 20 people (including children) signed up to go! I want to remind you that this time last year, Misael had just given his heart to the Lord. Claudia got saved at that conference. We were so excited to have the "first" converts—to go from 2 to 20 in one year! Praise the Lord! I would like to ask you to pray for each family that will be attending this conference.

#### **Please pray for:**

Don José and Dona Raquel—they seem to be doing well with the Lord, but they have been battling one health problem after another that causes them to miss a lot of church events. Pray for good health.

Samuel and Rosario—that they will give their

hearts to the Lord. Pray that they will have a full understanding of the gospel.

Oscar—that he will be steadfast in the Lord, whether his wife chooses to follow Christ or not. Pray that he will be baptized and encouraged in the Lord. Pray for his wife, Gaby, who "just doesn't feel like going" to the conference.

Misael and Claudia—pray that they will continue to be strengthened in the Lord.

Dona Marta—although Dona Marta lives in Tepic, we consider her one of us. She is Misael's mom. She is a Christian. When she found out about the conference, she tried to get her whole family to come. Pray that she will be able to find a church to attend in Tepic.

Ed and Abby—pray that we will remain faithful in the work the Lord puts before us.

This last week I've been trying to start up two new Bible studies. One is with the Chief of Police. He has shown a lot of interest in the things of the Lord. I have invited him and his family for dinner, but he finally told me that his wife isn't interested. Please pray that I will be able to meet with him anyway.

The other Bible study is with a young man named Jessie. I have had the opportunity to speak to him about the Lord a few times. Please be praying that we can meet on a consistent basis.


The Lord has also placed on my heart a young couple, Manuel and Araseli. Manuel is Oscar's brother. He has let it be known that he doesn't want anything to do with the Lord. His little girl told us, "My dad doesn't want me playing with your kids. He doesn't want me to meet with you at all." I know that the Lord can break through his walls. Please pray for this family.

For almost five years you have all been consistently praying for the work here in Valle de Juarez. The walls are starting to crumble. Brothers, the Lord God of Heaven is listening. Praise to His glorious name!

*Ed and Abby Drysdale*

#### **Contact:** Want to know more?

Call us anytime at (541) 728 5946. Yes, that is a U.S. number! Want more regular updates? Search for Abby Drysdale on Facebook. A first class letter will get to us in about three to five weeks; so if you prefer pen and ink, here is our address:

Ed and Abby Drysdale  
Apdo # 22, Calle Morelos 353  
Valle de Juarez,, Jalisco 49540, Mexico 

### **Atotonilco, Mexico** **Daniel and Mari Fontanez**

Praise the Lord! A lot of you have been praying for my dad, and I'm glad to report that he is better. We are also glad to share with you that a woman named

Juana, who lives at Maguey, called on the name of the Lord about three weeks ago. We also had two visitors last week at Maguey, and brother Juan shared with them about the forgiveness of sins. The Lord has been working at Maguey, and we appreciate your support.

In this update we would like to ask that you'd pray for an upcoming Festival of Life that will be held the 13th of November. In this event we will be sharing the gospel at Maguey through live music, mime, sketch, moppets, sketch board, and any other way that we can. There are many details that we would like you to pray for:

- Literature (tracts, New Testaments, Gospels of John or things of that nature that we can hand out to the unbelievers. Pray for provision.)
- Funds (We are going to need money to buy food, beverages, literature, and many other things for this event. Pray for provision.)
- Food (We're planning to feed lunch and dinner to the teams that are coming to help us share the Word. Pray for provision.)
- Water (We want to at least have Agua Fresca for the crowd that day. Pray for provision.)
- Mime/Sketch teams (Youth from Guadalajara and from the local church will be using their acting skills to share the message of Christ. Pray that the Lord would use them in a clear gospel presentation.)
- Music team (The Martus Band will be sharing the gospel through live music. Pray that we would be used of God to bring many to faith in Christ.)
- Children ministry team (A group from Arandas and a team assembled by Mari will be doing face painting, balloon animals, moppets, and games for the kids. Pray that the kids would not only have fun but that they would go home with the gospel.)
- Attendance (Pray that we would have a big crowd that day.)
- Safety (Lately there have been many drug-related killings and violence here in Atotonilco, so we ask that you pray for our safety for this day especially.)
- Stage (Pray that the Lord would provide a nice stage for that day.)
- Sound (Pray that we would have a good sound system and that what we say would be heard clearly.)
- Government permits (Pray that the Municipal Government would not only grant us the permits but also be enthusiastic about the event.)

On one final note, we also covet your prayers for our new pizza business. Mari and I started to sell pizzas again a week ago. Help us pray that this new venture would glorify God and be a blessing to our economy. Thanks again for your support.

*Daniel and Mary* 

## **Atotonilco, Mexico** **Steve and Linda Montgomery**

Dear friends:

I have perhaps been holding my breath longer than necessary, awaiting some kind of final word that will mark the spot from which we can say, "That is behind us, let's move on." However, at this moment what I most need to do is acknowledge what the Lord has done and celebrate His victory in this episode.

Ryan is back to work, working as he feels able, which is basically every day. Apart from closing down the company where he was CEO for many years, he is looking for work. He is in good spirits, with the energy he had prior to his kidney problems. We feel like we have our son back! He is continuing to see the doctor regularly, and the doctor reports that he is doing very well. He has been able to reduce Ryan's immune-suppressant medicine significantly. Ryan is back teaching in the church where they attend. They are well and deeply grateful to the Lord and to you for standing with them.

Josh was already chomping at the bit to be home and back to work just two days after he had donated his kidney to his brother. He is now working full time and not seeing any complications from the surgery. He and Melisa are planning to attend a nine-month discipleship training course in Bend, OR, starting this January. They are excited about this step of faith, and we are, too.

Sometimes things happen that are so far beyond what one could reasonably expect that no words are adequate to express the amazement, the wonder, the appreciation felt. That is our situation. Literally hundreds of you have prayed and written words of encouragement. We've heard from people all over the globe who were interceding for Ryan and Josh. We recognize that this was not something orchestrated by any man. It came through a spectacular move of the Holy Spirit on His church. It has worked to make me more diligent to pray for the requests we often receive, and it has enriched my understanding of the verse that I shared with you before in 2 Corinthians 1:11:

Ye also helping together by prayer for us, that for the gift bestowed upon us by the means of many persons thanks may be given by many on our behalf."

Thanks given by many for a gift bestowed.

We thank you for caring enough to pray for my sons. We thank God that He moved you to pray, and we rejoice with you in thanksgiving for the gift bestowed.

*Steve and Linda Montgomery* 

# Training

"As we look back to the training program we attended 27 years ago, the most important aspect of it was the experiential outworking of what was taught by those who lived the Word of God. We were able to practice what was preached and then live the Word of God on the field and at home."

Pat and Kerry Harrigan

"I had been active in ministry for many years by the time I attended the program. Along with former trainees, Jack Ring and Roger Bagley, we established the Training Institute in Ibadan, Nigeria. That program continues and has trained many men for missions. I still draw from the foundational teaching I received at the SFMI Training Program."

Larry & Christa Montgomery

*"I went through the Training Program in San Antonio, TX. It was truly a highlight year of my Christian life. My three-month mission trip to Guadalajara, Mexico, as part of the training was a real faith-building experience. I heartily recommend the SFMI Training Program to anybody who has a desire to serve the Lord in missions."*

Francois Marcoux

"In 1980 I attended the Training in Ibadan, Nigeria. It brought about a tremendous turnaround in my life. The Bible teaching and the lives of the trainers that confirmed the truth of the teachings reshaped my life. The three month Service Training also matured me to depend on God. The training experience is more than what someone can share in one paragraph!"

Nathaniel Abimbola

"The things learned in the training program, combined with the example of the trainers

SFMI Update

has been invaluable to my walk with the Lord and to the ministry my wife and I have had for many years as we've disciplined others."

Richard McDaniel

*"The straightforward, practical training I received in the SFMI Training Program gave me the vision to step out into ministry in Mexico. That same training has come to the forefront to strengthen us time and again as my wife and I have served in Mexico for the last 30 years."*

Steve and Linda Montgomery

**"I attended the Training in 1980. The emphasis on the Scripture had a profound effect on my life. The example of the trainers challenged my walk in a way that has strengthened my life through the years."**

Jim Miller

"My wife and I didn't attend the SFMI missionary training program. Our training was through another ministry. Yet, several years later, one of our classmates (serving the Lord in Asia), asked to talk to Dick concerning incorporating aspects of SFMI training that he felt would benefit their program."

Ed and Sue Newby



**THIS SPACE RESERVED FOR YOUR  
COMMENTS AFTER ATTENDING  
TRAINING**



I have many blessings in my life, and one of them is my beautiful daughter-in-law, Alyssa. I often think of her when there is a situation in my life that frightens me or seems too impossible to even think about. I hear her saying, “Marcia! Run to the roar!” The first time I heard this saying I was puzzled. What could she be possibly be referring to? When I clearly did not understand what she was talking about, she explained that this was one of her mother’s favorite sayings. Her mother often repeated this to Alyssa whenever Alyssa was fearful or intimidated by a challenge. Now, I often say this to myself when am feeling small and weak: “Run to the roar!!”

When lions are hunting their prey, they use more than their magnificent strength and speed. They are also crafty! When hunting in a group, one lion will position himself upwind from the animals the pride is stalking. The rest of the lions will station themselves downwind, waiting in a group for the unsuspecting prey. When all of the lions are in position, the lone lion will let out a mighty, ferocious roar, shaking the ground and frightening their prey, who, in their panic, turn and rush straight away from the roar of the great king of beasts! They madly hurl themselves away from the terrifying roar and in the opposite direction as quickly as their legs will carry them. But in their fear and panic, they run headlong into the trap so shrewdly set for

them and into the mouths of the waiting lions.

If they had only “Run to the roar!” The real danger was not in the direction of the awesome sound that had frightened them. The real danger came when they ran AWAY from their fears. If only they had Alyssa’s mother there to warn them...”Run to the roar, my friends, run to the roar!”

It is the same for us, dear brothers and sisters. Satan would have us run away as fast as we can from our holy calling in the gospel. He would like to scare us; he would like to see us panic and run away from those things that are unfamiliar or difficult. If he can keep us running away, we will never step forward in faith and obey the Holy Spirit’s leading in our lives.

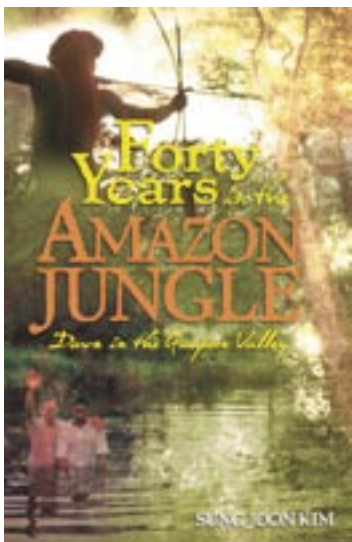
It is true that the devil is working against us. “Be sober, be watchful; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Peter 5:8).

But in Jesus Christ we have nothing to fear. “For God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of POWER and of love and of a sound mind” (2 Timothy 1:7).

So, let us be strong and courageous and “Run to the roar!” Let us leave behind our fears, and let us serve our God with full hearts. Jesus has paid the price and won the victory!

*Marcia*

# Resources to challenge and edify the reader



## Forty Years in the Amazon Jungle (Sung Joon Kim)

In 1968, Sung Joon Kim, with his wife Je Sun, left his homeland to be the first missionary from South Korea to carry the Gospel to an unreached tribe of primitive Indians in South America's vast Amazon Basin. His destination: the Valley of the Guapore, a river tributary to the mighty Amazon. His mission: to bring the light of the Gospel to a people living in heathen darkness, and to bring them into the twenty-first century.

Living where they lived, sleeping where they slept, eating what they ate and feeling what they felt, he became their advocate—fighting for their right to be treated as human beings in a developing country. Along the way, God used him marvelously and provided for him and Je Sun in remarkable and miraculous ways.

This is a worthwhile and encouraging read. It will make a wonderful gift with which to edify your family and friends.

Highly Recommended. **Price \$12.00 includes shipping and handling in the United States**

*Interested in multiple copies? Please call for information.*



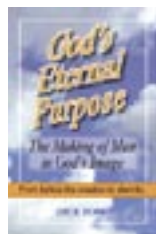
## Thou Therefore My Son

(Dick York)

Timothy received clear instruction from his mentor, the apostle Paul. We can too. Second Timothy is a book for disciples and disciple makers. And "Thou Therefore My Son" is

a very readable treatment of every verse in Paul's second letter to Timothy. If you are mentoring a young disciple, or if you are one yourself, you will benefit greatly from this book. Useful also in your home Bible study group or church gathering.

**Price 6.00 including shipping and handling; or in bulk (7 or more) \$4.00 ea. including S&H**

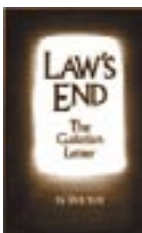


## God's Eternal Purpose

(Dick York)

God's plan for man from creation to eternity—a clear presentation of the gospel. It has been used by many as a tool for evangelizing and is a recommended Bible study guide.

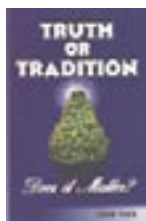
**Price \$6.00 including shipping and handling; in bulk (7 or more) \$4.00 ea. including S&H**



## Law's End (Dick York)

A look at the Law from Paul's inspired perspective (2 Timothy 3:16) in the epistle to the Galatians. Excellent for a verse by verse study of Galatians in your home or church meeting.

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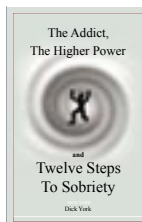


## Truth or Tradition

(Dick York)

Many traditions practiced by Christians cannot be supported biblically. Some of them are innocuous; others actually violate God's biblical injunctions. This book examines those traditions.

**Price \$6.00 including shipping and handling**



## The Addict, The Higher Power and Twelve Steps to Sobriety (Dick York)

A very much needed critique of the popularly utilized traditional twelve-step program from a biblical point of view. 36 pages.

**Price \$3.00 including shipping and handling**

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*New Testament Church continued.*

**Regular practice of the ordinances of the Lord's table and baptism**

These two ordinances speak of two truths in our lives as believers. The "once-for-all-ness" of baptism speaks of our salvation once for all, since baptism, if done as an expression of personal faith in Christ, need never be repeated. The regular and repeated celebration of communion speaks to our ongoing communion with Christ and our need for that to be constantly refreshed. The local church is commanded to practice these two ordinances consistently. Baptism in the New Testament was practiced immediately upon conversion. Breaking of bread was practiced often and continually.

A young woman, a believer for over ten years, broke bread with us one Sunday in Atotonilco. Afterwards, she commented it was the first time since she had come to Christ that she had participated in a communion service! Celebration of the Lord's table was such a regular practice in Acts that in 20:7 we read the Christians of Troas came together on the first day of the week *to* break bread! Another believer once told me that their congregation, which had been meeting for several years and seen many come to Christ, had never had a baptism because they had no

ordained clergy—ecclesiastic tradition insisting on disobedience to the Scripture!

**Conclusion**

The New Testament church, then, is a living, growing organism—a Body. The local church is an expression of that Body in a locality, an autonomous group of born-again believers committed to meet regularly for Bible teaching and the Lord's table. That congregation is led by a plurality of leaders, practices believer's baptism, and encourages the development of the gifts of each believer.

That is what SFMI means when we speak of fulfilling the Great Commission through establishing *New Testament churches*. 

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