

SHIELD OF FAITH MISSION INTERNATIONAL

# SFMI Prayer/News UPDATE

Fulfilling the Great Commission Through Establishing New Testament Churches



## With a View of the Harvest

(see p. 8)

January-February 2012

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# Editorial Notes

Our cover photo shows a harvest underway in Lebanon. Further details of Jerry Skiles's recent trips are furnished in *Missionary News*.

Also, *Missionary News* contains an update from the Ed Drysdale family (*see photo, bottom right*), who, after 10 years in Mexico, are returning to the States. Their faithful service, most recently in Valle De Juarez, has borne fruit, and a body of believers is beginning to meet there. The Drysdales certainly would appreciate your prayers as they seek to follow the Lord in the next phase of what He desires for their life.

The year 2012 has been much in the “prophetic” news, with everything from the Mayan Calendar to pronouncements by others who have forecast what they believe will happen. Dick York reminds us that there is only one sure prophetic forecaster, who declares the end from the beginning. In Isaiah 46:10, the Lord states that He is the one who is “Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.”

Jim Lucas reminds us of the question that the Lord Jesus asked during His earthly ministry. Jesus asked, “And shall not God avenge His own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?” (Luke 18:7-8).


Faith is the issue. Man is willing to exert all sorts of effort; but when the disciples of Jesus asked, “What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?” (John 6:28), His answer might seem surprising to a performance-oriented humanity. “Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent” (v. 29).

Finally, Richard McDaniel contributes a good summary of the Lord's need for more laborers into His harvest. It is the compassion of the Lord

that demands more workers for this task: “But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few” (Matthew 9:36-37).

## Heads up for 2012

Here it is 2012—a new year, and one that we hope will see God's blessing on our lives as we live them for him. It is also January and the middle of winter, but spring is coming quickly and the Memorial Day Conference at Twin Rocks will happen almost before you know it. Economically, things have not been great for a couple of years, but if we are frugal and foresightful we can continue to do what we believe we should. So this is a heads-up to remind you to lay a little aside for this time of fellowship and edification. God wants to speak to us again.

P.S. God willing, Dun Gordy of New Tribes Mission will be a speaker. Those who know Dun won't want to miss that. 



*The Drysdales (left to right): Nicole, Dillon, Kaylyn, Abby, Ed, Caleb*

# 2012...



**By Dick York**

*Who is among you that feareth the LORD, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the LORD, and stay upon his God (Isaiah 50:10).*

Perhaps 2012 will be a difficult year. This is not a prophetic statement (at least I don't think it is) but an observation. Like you, for the last several years I have watched the course of events and have marveled that, in the light of all that is going on around us, evil men wax worse and worse and the hearts of the people grow harder toward the Lord. One would think that the population would see that the plight of the world grows more desperate every day and that they should begin to call upon the Lord, but that would be contrary to what has been written in scripture concerning these days. What is happening is exactly what the prophets and the apostles told us would happen, and that alone affords assurance and confidence that for those that love God; *all is well*. God has always been in control, and nothing has taken Him by surprise.

As I read Isaiah chapter 50 this morning, I felt that God was assuring and, at the same time, admonishing, telling me what to expect and how to react to the things that lie ahead; I knew that I had to pass it on. How great is our God, and how gentle His dealings with His people; even when they have rebelled and brought judgments upon themselves, His mind is to correct, to assure, and to redeem them!

Isaiah was God's mouthpiece as he spoke to an Israel made conscious that their present circumstances were God's judgments; and *His* perceived aloofness was the result of *their* sins, not God's willingness to forsake them. It was *they* that had caused Israel to be "divorced" by her husband; it was *their* iniquity that had

caused the heavens to become silent to their call (v.1). The truth was that God had actually come to them, but *they* were not available to *Him*; He had called to them, but they did not answer. It was *they* who were silent when God desired to speak with them. Did they not know that He was mighty on their behalf that He had power to deliver them and to redeem them? He, after all, is the one who had dried up the sea and the rivers and clothed the heavens with blackness (vs. 2,3). All power is His, and He was desirous to exercise it on their behalf. In fact He promised that He would do just that. Why could they not believe Him?

This could be said of our nation at this time in history. God does not take *pleasure* in judging nations, or families or individuals. His desire and His delight is when we choose to walk in obedience and fellowship with Him! "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"<sup>1</sup> All the while that Israel suffered as a result of their disobedience, there were those among them, such as the prophets, who *did* walk humbly with God but were made to endure the circumstances that were brought upon the nation by the majority that did not. That's just the way it is; everyone in the nation suffers together, but the outcome is different for the righteous and the unrighteous.

As I continued to read Isaiah, chapter fifty, I could hear in verses 4-9 the voice of the Lord Jesus telling me how He responded to the injustice He endured as God's righteous servant in a land hostile to God and yet constantly invoking His blessing—calling upon Him for His help while turning a deaf ear to His pleadings with them. It seemed so familiar. I hear it all the time: "God bless

America.” But He doesn’t seem to hear. Things are falling apart; His judgments are in evidence everywhere. The righteous must endure them along with the wicked that have provoked them.

The voice of the Lord Jesus is unmistakably heard in vs 4-9, saying,

*The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, **that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary:** he waketh morning by morning, he waketh mine ear to hear as the learned. The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. **I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting.** For the Lord God will help me; **therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face as a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed.** He is near that justifieth me; who will contend with me? Let us stand together: who is mine adversary? Let him come near to me. **Behold, the Lord God will help me;** who is he that shall condemn me? Lo, they all shall wax old as a garment; the moth shall eat them up.*

Jesus set the pace, instructing us both by what He did and how He reacted to His circumstances. The Apostle Peter said, “For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps.”<sup>2</sup>

“This” is a new year. I cannot avoid the sense that it will be a significant year for the United States, for the world, and for the church. It may be a hard year; if not, we can be quite

sure that hard years will soon follow, for which we, the saints, should be prepared. When Jesus said, “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross daily and follow me,”<sup>3</sup> He was not calling us to a picnic but to war. After saying that, He went to the cross. Indeed His whole earthly life was a journey to the Cross. Do not the scriptures say that “He was made a little lower than the angels *for the suffering of death*, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should *taste death for every man*?”<sup>4</sup>

Jesus’ words in Isaiah give us insight into how He managed His circumstances and what

was in His mind during that extremely difficult, but not unexpected, episode.

Morning by morning, He had listened to the Father; He knew, therefore, how to speak a word in season to him that was weary. Jesus, on His way to the Cross himself,

was an instrument of comfort to those who would collapse under far less suffering than He willingly endured. The lesson: Prepare to be a comforter—not a collapse—by listening morning by morning to the Father.

Jesus was not a victim. His suffering was with purpose. He *gave* His back to the smiters; He *gave* His cheeks to those who plucked off the hair. He was in charge even as He died. Could He not have called twelve legions of angels to deliver Him from His tormentors? Jesus said, “Therefore doth my Father love me, because *I lay down my life* that I might take it again. *No man taketh it from me*, but *I lay it down of myself*. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.”<sup>5</sup> This is the mind of Christ: we need not fear what man can do unto us or flee from the conflict or cringe before the enemy’s threats. We can surrender our lives to the Father’s will. He has brought life and immortality to light

**Being under attack by 185,000 Assyrian troops, without resources and absolutely no understanding of what to do, [Hezekiah] simply cast himself upon the mercy of the Lord whom he trusted implicitly; and God delivered him and his people in a miraculous victory.**

through the gospel.

I was impressed with the sequence represented by the “therefores” in Jesus’ statement; they are instructive (Isaiah 50:7). “For the Lord God shall help me; *therefore* I shall not be confounded (confused, perplexed or bewildered); *therefore* have I set my face as a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed (humiliated, disappointed or defeated).” Because I know with assured confidence that in my trial the Lord God shall (without doubt) help me, I am confident that I shall (without question) not be confounded. Because of that confidence, I am enabled to face my trial with unwavering resolve.

Following the encouraging example of the Lord Jesus is the verse that appears at the front of this article and the point of this essay. There are those of our number—and there will be more of us in the days ahead—who fear the Lord, that obey the voice of His servant, and yet they walk in darkness and have no light. King Hezekiah was an example of this. Being under attack by 185,000 Assyrian troops, without resources and absolutely no understanding of what to do, he simply cast himself upon the mercy of the Lord whom he trusted implicitly; and God delivered him and his people in a miraculous victory.<sup>6</sup> When circumstances are grim and we have no understanding of what to do, when the pathway is dark and we have no light to shine upon it, then we are instructed to trust in the name of the LORD (Jehovah) and *stay* (rely upon and rest) upon our God. Even in the darkest, most perplexing hour He is still in control.

Furthermore, He tells us what not to do. (v11) “Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks: walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow.”

When a man is in a dark spot, he is prone to invent his own solution, to kindle his own fire and create his own light. He can trust God in the light but not in the dark. King David, on the other hand, wrote, “Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil for thou art with me.”<sup>7</sup>

God says to the man who would kindle his

own fire and light his own way with his own sparks, “Walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand; *ye shall lie down in sorrow*” (Isaiah 50:11).

But for those who trust in the name of the Lord and stay upon our God, the promised outcome is glorious. Whatever 2012 may bring, *let us stay upon our God!*

### Endnotes

- 1 Micah 6:8
- 2 1 Peter 2:21
- 3 Luke 9:23
- 4 Hebrews 2:9
- 5 John 10:17,18
- 6 Isaiah 37:14-36
- 7 Psalm 23:4 🙏



*An artist's rendering of the Assyrian King Sennacherib's army besieging Lachish in Judea.*



# Shall He Find Faith on the Earth?

By Jim Lucas

*When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?*<sup>1</sup>

That is a very interesting question. Until now, Adam's race hasn't demonstrated much success in trusting God. Throughout the generations, there has been a remnant, but at times it has been almost non-existent, as in the days of Noah. In fact, Jesus said, "But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."<sup>2</sup> That is a good indicator that there will not be many believers when the Lord comes. Let's look at what is written in Isaiah 24: 1-6:

Behold, the LORD maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof. And it shall be, as with the people, so with the priest; as with the servant, so with his master; as with the maid, so with her mistress; as with the buyer, so with the seller; as with the lender, so with the borrower; as with the taker of usury, so with the giver of usury to him. The land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled: for the LORD hath spoken this word. The earth mourneth and fadeth away, the world languisheth and fadeth away, the haughty people of the earth do languish. The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left.

If there be few men left, it is obvious that there won't be many men of faith. This prophecy also reveals why: because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. They have transgressed the Law of Moses, which God

gave to man 430 years after His promise to Abraham. Because they had failed to believe God's promise, they had become exceedingly sinful; therefore, God gave the commandment "That sin by the commandment might become exceedingly sinful."<sup>3</sup> Sin is very deceptive. The commandment exposed sin for what it is, because once you have the commandment and have broken it, it is difficult to deny your sin. The root problem from the beginning has been unbelief. When Moses gave the children of Israel the commandments, they said, "All that the Lord hath spoken we will do."<sup>4</sup> History declares that they were not capable of keeping the Father's commandments and that whole generation of people died in the wilderness in unbelief.<sup>5</sup>

We can make all kinds of excuses for sin, but the underlying problem is unbelief: without faith, it is impossible to do the will of God. Faith is the victory that overcomes the world; nevertheless, many still want someone to tell them what they can or cannot do.

Today's believers profess to believe in the New Covenant; however, it seems that many have not understood the difference in the Old and the New. They are still performance-oriented and not faith-oriented. They find themselves always trying to pull themselves up by their bootstraps and then feeling like failures because they fall back into the same sin. This will continue as long as they think they can do the will of God and thereby be a good Christian. There is only one good Christian, and that is Jesus. He is the only one who can live the Christian life. His life will never be manifested in you until you are fully persuaded that He is able to do all that He promised—not being persuaded of what is possible for you to do.

The old covenant was based on God's

*commandments*, and man was expected to *keep* them. The new covenant is based on God's *promises*, and man is expected to *believe* them. Man could never keep the commandments, but God is able to keep His promises. When we actually believe what He says, things happen.

Let's meditate a little on what he has promised. "And the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live."<sup>6</sup> He is promising that we and our children will love Him.

For they shall be my people, and I will be their God: And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me forever, for the good of them, and of their children after them: And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. Yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this land assuredly with my whole heart and with my whole soul. For thus saith the LORD; Like as I have brought all this great evil upon this people, so will I bring upon them all the good that I have promised them.<sup>7</sup>

"I will be their God." That is a promise; if He is my God, He will be in control. Another great promise is: "That they may fear Him forever" (Jeremiah 32:39). Sometimes men try to teach the fear of God; but the only way we can fear Him is by believing Him. Those who truly believe Him will not depart from Him. The only way we can break the everlasting covenant

is by not believing the promise of God. Notice that He promised with His whole heart and soul. This reveals His keen desire for us to trust Him.

The children of Israel had a very good pastor with a large congregation. They had seen God's love demonstrated when He delivered them from Egypt. They had seen many miracles along the way; nevertheless, they did not enter into (rest) the Promised Land but wandered in the wilderness until they perished in unbelief. Today we have a very similar scenario: many professing Christians have a good pastor; they have seen miracles and the love of God demonstrated, yet fail to enter into rest.

In Hebrews 4: 9 we read, "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." Where is this rest, and how do you find it? Look for the Cross; for your rest is just beyond the Cross. Surrender yourself to it in faith, and the Lord will lay you down to rest. Then you can live with great expectation of the resurrected Jesus living out His life in you. He is the author and the finisher of our faith.

What do you believe? Will Jesus Christ find faith on the earth when He comes? More important have you entered into His rest by faith? Are you ready for His soon return?

#### Endnotes

1 Luke 18: 8


2 Matthew 24:37

3 Romans 7:13

4 Exodus 19:8

5 Hebrews 3:18, 19

6 Deuteronomy 30:6

7 Jeremiah 32:38-42 

***And I will give them an heart to know me, that I am the LORD: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: for they shall return unto me with their whole heart.***

***Jeremiah 24:7***

# With a View of the Harvest

By Richard McDaniel

*But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest (Matthew 9:36-38).*

This is one of the few specific petitions that our Lord has asked the church to bring before the Father. Why do you think He is asking us to pray for laborers to be raised up? Is it not because many of the Lord's disciples are not entering into the labors of our Lord. Or, those that do, do so with a half-hearted effort. Our Lord, who knows what is in man, knows that we are challenged by apathy and are prone to lose our vision and to get caught up with running a race that is built around our own convenience.

Beloved, we are called out of the world and into Christ for a purpose. Second Timothy 1:9 indicates that God "...hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." The Lord Jesus called out His disciples and immediately began to instruct them in the work of the ministry with a view of the harvest. The first thing He told them was, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."<sup>1</sup> The holy calling given to every believer is, first and foremost, to follow Jesus.

As we follow Him we will labor with Him to fulfill the purpose of God in this earth.

In order to enter into the Lord's labors, we must be able to see the Lord's vision. God's plan is *to fill the whole earth with His glory, and [as a part of that] He will bring all nations to worship before Him.*<sup>2</sup> To this end Christ came into the world.

Jesus said, "*My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.*"<sup>3</sup> Redemption was finished once and for all on the Cross. The Lord's work did not end with that however. Jesus rose from the dead and continues to work on the earth. He is able to do that even though He ascended to be with the Father because He left His body behind on earth. The church is the body of Christ and the vessel through which He accomplishes the Father's will on earth. He commissioned the church to go into all the world and preach the gospel and to make disciples among all nations. When that task is finished, Christ will return; God's enemies will be judged, and the whole earth will be filled with the glory of God.

Our job on earth is to preach Christ, warning every man and teaching every man with the goal of presenting every man perfect in Christ Jesus. As Christ works in us mightily, this is the end we labor to accomplish. That is my paraphrase of Colossians 1:28,29. Notice that the harvest is in view. The goal is to bring others first into Christ and then into maturity as disciples of Christ. The maturing is not just for others; it is for myself



as well. *“Wherefore we labor, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ;”*<sup>4</sup> My desire as a believer is to bring glory to God through being a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to Him.

The emphasis of this is that there is a calling to labor with Christ; there is a goal for these labors, and lastly, there are a variety of ways in which we labor. Paul talks about the women who labored with him in the gospel, of Clement and other “fellow laborers.”<sup>5</sup> In Romans 16 and likewise in 1 Corinthians 16, there are lists of names of those who have been laboring in the work. This is the labor of various types of service. There is also the labor of ministering the Word and of doctrine spoken of in I Timothy 5:17. Then there is the labor of love,<sup>6</sup> which encompasses a lot of our ministry; and finally, the labor of prayer.<sup>7</sup> In all of these labors there is a common objective.

The church was designed to be a collective, diversified group of laborers sent forth with a mission. We are called by God to assemble ourselves together into congregations of believers *committed to Christ, to one another and to the completion of His purpose on earth*. Without this, we cannot be effective laborers. The local church is intended to be a team that is working the ground of the city or town where they live and then supporting the ministry of the workers who are going out to the nations. I think we need to reexamine where we are at with that. Many of the saints have lost perspective. Churches have lost a sense of purpose and have become networks for social gatherings. Church prayer meetings are either nonexistent or have shrunk down to a handful of people. Many of us have very limited contact with unbelievers, and our churches are not engaged in evangelism. We are more concerned about peripheral issues than we are about bringing back the King. All around us we see the signs that we are in the

season of Christ’s return. We cannot afford to be disjointed, discontent and disunited. It is difficult to find a local church that perfectly fits our doctrine, our standards, etc.; but if our attitude is that we are available for God to use, He will place us and use us as He wants. Let us consider that it is more important to give than receive. We can be men and women of vision and pacesetters that others can follow, and in doing so, the Lord will build His church.

### Endnotes

- 1 Matthew 4:19
- 2 Numbers 14:21; Psalm 86:9
- 3 John 4:34
- 4 2 Corinthians 5:9,10
- 5 Philippians 4:3
- 6 Hebrews 6:10
- 7 Colossians 4:12 🙏

*Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.*

*John 4:35*



# Missionary News



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

## LEAVING MEXICO, RETURNING HOME

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We are coming home after ten years in Mexico. It has been an incredible journey. We have grown spiritually because of the trials and blessings we've experienced. May I relate some?

Before we left, certain people encouraged me to seek the Lord in this matter. My sister had given me a book, *Open Doors*, by Brother Andrew, which made a lasting impression on me. The testimonies from other missionaries had lit a fire in me. The Lord was drawing me, but I had responsibilities. How and when was I to go?

In my immaturity, I thought, "How can I support myself on the mission field?" So I started to seek for answers through business instead of in the Almighty Creator who supplies all my needs. I was so worried about making a living that I was discontent and grasping at things without eternal weight. I lost sight of what the Lord had showed me. Why wasn't I content? Doesn't it say in the Bible, "Godliness with contentment is great gain?"

Meeting my wife was the best thing that ever happened to me. Before we married, I asked her, "Babe, could you live in one place for the rest of your life?" Her response was enlightening to me. She said, "If that is what the Lord wants of me, then that is what I'll do." So simple but so profound, it made me look at things differently. If the Lord is leading, then we just need to strap on the seat belt and enjoy the ride. That is all the Lord is asking of us: a willingness to follow Him despite our fears, worries, doubts, and preconceptions.

The Lord began to teach me to patiently wait for His perfect timing. This is a process; He needs to chip away our pride, stubbornness and self-centered lifestyle till we say, "Lord not my will but Yours be done." A lot of self had to die before He could use me. Thankfully, He is gracious, gentle, and patient with us, knowing what's best for us, molding us into His image. We are a work in progress.

Thinking I was going to go to Australia, I was disappointed when the Lord had other plans; but we yielded to His will and went to Mexico, where we came to know and love Steve and Linda Montgomery. After the

first year, I doubted if I would ever learn Spanish or if I really heard from the Lord about coming to Mexico. One day Steve and I were invited to minister to a family in a nearby town. I experienced culture shock. All the family members were huddled together in one room, which was both bedroom and kitchen. Materially they didn't have much, but what they had was priceless. I was overwhelmed by their pure joy in Christ. That made a real impact on me. What I have doesn't matter; I belong to the King, and He alone is sufficient.

Abby and I at the time were going through some tough financial struggles; the Lord was testing my faith. The money we had saved was gone, and now we were at the mercy of the Lord. Nicole was 5, Kaylyn, 3 and Caleb, 1. We had nothing in the cupboards except salt pepper and a little bit of sugar. As Steve and I were saying our good-byes to this family, the wife handed us two bags, full of chiles, to make chile rellenos. I was thinking, "Wow, the Lord has perfect timing." I was so excited!

When I arrived home, I shouted with joy to Abby, "Guess what the Lord has provided! (knowing that she loves chile rellenos). We are going to have chile rellenos tonight." She replied, "Without cheese?" No matter, those chiles filled our bellies and tasted spectacular *without* cheese! There were a number of challenges, but the Lord was teaching us to depend on Him. There is no better place to be.

After four years in Atotonilco, we prayed and felt called to a little town nestled between a lake and the mountains, Valle de Juarez, which has been home for the past six years. When we arrived, it was difficult to find a place to live; nobody wanted to rent to us. We felt alone because the people didn't like outsiders, especially Christian gringos. But we eventually made friends and began holding Bible studies. Four years passed without any fruit at all until we met a dear couple, Misael and Claudia, who came to Christ and became faithful to the ministry and a real blessing to us. We eventually saw other people added to the church and also some who fell away; that is hard to see, but we can only put them in the Lord's hands and trust Him to raise up His church for His glory.

As we approach the new year, we believe our time is coming to an end. We thought we would leave in May, but things have surfaced that make us believe it's time for us to come home. We have fasted and prayed about this decision, and the Lord has given us peace to return. We will be taking

a piece of Mexico with us. We have been blessed by the friends we have made here, and they will be dearly missed. Looking back on these last ten years, they have held some of the best and worst moments of my life. I wouldn't trade the experiences or the challenges we faced. It's hard to say good-bye, but one day we will never have to worry about borders because there will be none. Thank you to all who have invested their lives into us by supporting us prayerfully and financially. We look forward to what the Lord has in store for us. Please pray that the Lord will provide a job in the teaching profession, and also for my wife and kids to get settled in and be able to adjust to a new culture.

*Lord Bless,  
Ed and Abby Drysdale* 

### **Rogers, Arkansas James and Francille Lucas**

#### **FOCUS!**

If the camera is not in focus, it is useless exercise to take the picture. Our heavenly Father has encouraged me to sharpen my focus concerning the vision that He has given. The vision is a gift from God; but much like a camera which can be a good gift and capable of taking great pictures, it must nevertheless be in focus. The same holds true in the work of our Lord Jesus. To be in focus requires resolve on the goal desired and faith to continue without distractions. Jesus gave the best example ever; may we learn from His testimony:

“For the Lord GOD will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded (faith): therefore have I set my face like a flint (resolve), and I know that I shall not be ashamed” (Isaiah 50: 7).

After being reminded of this important truth, I sat down before the Lord in reverence of His presence with a notepad and pen and began to write.

My focus is on the Lord God Almighty: to dwell with Him always, to commune face to face, as one speaks with a friend! To serve Him in all humility and love. To be a faithful witness. To do the work of an evangelist, teaching and making disciples, hopefully provoking many to love and good works. For the Church in the USA to be strengthened and revived in evangelism and for more laborers to be raised up for the fields that are white unto harvest.

I think most of you are aware of the vision of USA FOR JESUS, which has been to take the gospel to

at least one city in every state in the United States. Currently, if you check our website ([usaforjesus.com](http://usaforjesus.com)) you will see that we have visited twelve different States. This past year we visited seven, and I am very thankful for the prayers of the saints and for the labor of love of several faithful people that helped out in these outreaches. I know everyone that did help will be blessed, and I know for many they now are continuing in evangelism in their perspective places of residence. However, in order for us to reach this amount of cities, we were moving around a lot; and most of you didn't manage to keep up with us. By taking care to focus, maybe we won't be such a blur in your eyes; and more of you might be able to participate in the activities. This upcoming year we are going to cut it down to one city in three different states. Before too long, Lord willing, we will announce which three cities and the approximate dates.

Once these cities are made known, please pray for the preparation of people's hearts in these cities to turn from their sin and surrender their lives to God. Also, pray for the Lord Jesus to call out from among us willing believers to come and labor for the extension of the Kingdom of God. There is always the need for evangelism; there is also a need for someone to go ahead of the team and help make preparation. Then there is a need for some to come and help in follow-up after the team is gone. If any of you have an interest in helping out in any of these areas, please write to me at [james@usaforjesus.com](mailto:james@usaforjesus.com)

*James and Francille* 

### **Glendo, Wyoming Mike and Faith Ball**

October 1-23 the Lord gave us safe travel to Loreto, Aguascalientes, and to Valle de Juarez, Mexico, for a couple days with the Drysdales. In Loreto the first Friday, Saturday night, and Sunday morning Mike taught on the unique provisions of the new covenant—obedience and righteousness. We often see forgiveness, reconciliation, and the hope of heaven but do not see that which is unique to the new covenant: God's Spirit causing us to walk in His statutes, writing His law in our hearts, and putting His fear in us.

The following week, we traveled to Valle de Juarez with our dear friend Priscilla LaVallee, who had lived there for four months helping the Drysdales a couple years ago. That weekend, we were in Aguascalientes teaching on Friday, Saturday night, and Sunday morning. The girls stayed with the David and Martha Alviso family from Arandas

that came to Christ while we lived there. They are dear to us, and it was nice to be in their home.

We were encouraged by several things in Loreto and Aguas. Juan, a young married man who has been a drunk with marital problems, has stopped drinking and is coming to the meetings regularly. Pray for Beto and Gabriel, young people in Loreto who have decided to disobey God. Pray also for Karina and Laura who have recently forsaken their sin that God would work true repentance in their hearts and not just regret. Also, please pray for Martin and Gloria, who have had marital problems for several years, that God would break them both and bring them to the cross.

Thank you so much for your prayers for us on this trip; God provided and protected. Mike is praying about going back in March or April to take some men out to preach for a week in some other towns relatively close to Loreto.

*In Christ,  
Mike Ball*

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

### **We're Back**

Charley and Nayeli are finally married, and things are finally making sense. We now feel at home and are beginning to understand what has been going on and how to continue the work. We have some blessings, together with some prayer requests, to share with you.

### **A New Roof**

Since we moved to Maguey, we've missed the open spaces of our old house. We've always desired to do something with the garage space that this new house has. When we got back, we went to speak with the owner to see how we could work together to at least build another small room. To our surprise, the owner offered to put a roof over the whole garage space. We were very happy to hear this, but we also heard that maybe he wouldn't be able to do all that he said. So, we request your prayers that this project gets done. This would not only give us another room, but it would also be a good place to do homeschooling.

### **A Sports Park**

We have mentioned to some of you our desire to

begin an outreach for youth here in Maguey. One of the obstacles that this ministry faced was "where?" Well, glory be to God, the municipal government got busy building a Sports Park while we were in Yakima, Washington. They have only a little bit of work left; and when they are done, it will be the ideal place to have our tournaments, competitions and other activities that will be our bridge into the lives of the youth. Pray that God would help the municipal government finish the park and that the outreach would be successful.

### **Mari's Health**

Mari got bad news from her last visit to the doctor. She had several samples taken, a biopsy, some prescriptions, and another analysis requested—and we still don't have results for anything. The possible illness seems to be something serious, so we request your prayers. God has given us confidence, and Mari and I are calmly waiting on Him, but we still covet your prayers.

### **Backpacks**

We also need your prayers in this project. We have already given some away, but the needy weren't who we anticipated. It turns out that the kids from the church were the ones without backpacks. The kids from the club that are from non-Christian homes were talking about how wonderful their new backpacks were. So, we need wisdom from the Lord concerning the best way to distribute the rest of the backpacks. The objective is still the same: to use the gift to introduce ourselves to the parents and have a chance to speak with them. We don't see clearly yet which families we should benefit.

*Thank you for your support and prayers. God bless you.*

*La Famila Fontanez* 

### **Bible Expo** **Francois Marcoux**

Just a small note to thank you for your prayers for a Bible Expo that was held the weekend of November 11-13 at a shopping mall in Quebec City (Galérie Quatre-Bourgeois). This was an open door from the Lord in a public area to share the gospel to many souls who came and visited the Bible Museum exhibit. Please continue to pray for the salvation of souls, the edification of believers, and future opportunities.

Marcel and I also presented the Bible Expo November 21-23 at the CEGEP College of Trois-Rivières. On colleges and university campuses,

the booth of Noah’s Ark and evidence for creation, usually draws a lot of attention. Our November 11-13 Expo went great. We had quite a few number of people come visit the exhibit, giving us many opportunities to explain the message of the gospel. Also, our Mexican friends who come to our weekly Bible study all came to see the exhibit. It really helped to confirm what we’ve studied as we went through the book of Hebrews with them this year. Also pray for a special exhibit Marcel finished making after many months of hard work with the theme, “From Eden to the manger to the Cross,” especially designed for the month of December in shopping malls. Thank you!



had more queries and suspicions about any previous thoughts and ideas that I had formed about Lebanon. I met the Druze population, but discovered little about who or what they were. I worked primarily with the Christian Community who were of the Maronite Church. They assured me they were Roman Catholics, but my intuitive thoughts were that they felt that their faith and Syriac Scriptures *preceded* Rome and the Latin Bible of the Roman Church.

The majority of my time was near the city of Baalbek. It is famous for the Roman temples ruins and in recent history (2006) of being a Hezbollah stronghold that Israel bombed and raided. I was surprised to learn that Hezbollah was supported by the Christians with whom I worked.

My memory of Lebanon and the people is very fond and favorable. I found all my hosts to be very accommodating and hospitable. They value hard work and industry and are very good traders. I can also say that Americans have a good reputation, which is not to say that Lebanon agrees with our foreign policies. I am glad most people separate the individual from the ideology and generalizations portrayed in news media. Bigotry and prejudice are not good qualities in any land, but they are constantly seducing the naïve.



*May the Lord bless and keep all of you in His footsteps!*

*Francois and Nohemi Marcoux* 🐼

### **Ivory Coast, West Africa Jerry and Cherry Skiles**

In July and August I was asked to help farmers improve their cooperative efforts in Lebanon through the USAID Farmer to Farmer program. I have learned by experience not to be presumptuous and not to have answers before you understand the problems. The truth and principles about work and production taught in the Bible are applicable in all lands and cultures, and I have been encouraged with the reception of God’s wisdom in almost all of my efforts in foreign lands.

It was not long after arriving in Lebanon that I discovered how little I knew or understood of the region’s history or problems. A fifteen-year civil war had officially ended in 1990. I soon sensed that mistrust was still there and created a hindrance to cooperative efforts. After two weeks in the country, I



*Some of the people of Lebanon above and top right.*



I returned to Africa and the tribe in October and stayed to early November. While in America, I had received news that a young unwed Christian mother's child had died and that another young mother's child had died. The day I drove into the village, I was shocked to learn that two other young infants had died that day, making four in less than a month! Mothers were anxious; it seemed that all the other mothers wanted me to see their children and assure them that all would be well. Not all were, but no more died while I was there. Another young Christian girl had recently been bitten by a snake just prior to my arrival in the village. She was still being treated with traditional medicine when I arrived but was soon working at the house making bread for the village after learning how to bake from Cherry. Another person was bitten by a snake when I was there, and we evacuated her to the hospital.

It was too short a visit, but the timing was good; and the encouragement and help given was opportune. Lazar, Hovare's son, started a new village school and is teaching thirty plus students. The government school was on vacation, but the



plans were for the government school teachers to return.

I had good visits with the leaders, and all are looking forward to the medical team coming in February. Please pray that God's love would be seen by the Loma people through the ministry of Christ's servants and that the Loma would respond to the Gospel of Christ and be saved.

*Thank you for your prayers.  
Jerry and Cherry Skiles 🌍*

**Atotonilco, Mexico  
Steve and Linda Montgomery**

On November 19, we left for the conference where Jim Lucas was one of the speakers. This is a family conference that our sister churches participate together in each year and for which we take turns doing the leg work. We work together in the same way with different events for outreach or edification each year. The church in Valle de Juarez, where Ed and Abby Drysdale are, is one of those that co-labor together in this way. So is the one in Briseño where the Bibles for Briseño event took place. Making the effort to labor together is sometimes just that—effort. But the results in fellowship and fruit have been worth it. We



would appreciate prayer for the building up of the brethren that go to the conference and eternal fruit from each of the events we lay our hands to.

*Thank you for your prayers,  
Steve and Linda Montgomery* 🙏

### **Ivory Coast, West Africa** **Ed and Patty Enns**

**Patty Enns writes:** “Ed is in Banfora, Burkina Faso, today and plans to head down south towards Mangodara (very small town on the border with Ivory Coast ) and Tougbo, the village we lived in for many years in Ivory Coast . He will be traveling by motorcycle and will be basically camping out as he and Kassoum visit some Dogose/Komono villages. Kassoum is a Komono man that worked with Ed as a language helper and helped him develop Bible lessons for many years.”

**Ed writes:** “So far, so good! I made the flight over and was a bit wobbly because of the ear situation. Since arriving, I have arranged my baggage for the next couple of steps. I rode my little motorbike, complete with two-man tent, down to the last town before I hit dirt roads and then on trails to the villages. I will be traveling 300 km on dirt roads and trails before getting back to where I started. I have switched to jungle mode and will appreciate prayers as it will get somewhat intense the next few days both physically and spiritually. Tomorrow, I will be in a village and then will hook up with Kassoum and possibly Yakouba and do some evangelism in southern Burkina Faso amongst the Dogose and Komono people groups who have all converted to Islam and are very resistant to the gospel. These are strongholds of the evil one who has these people all under his power of deception in both the realm of animism and Folk Islam. Pray for boldness for Kassoum and that the Lord goes before us to open doors and hearts. This will be about a one-week venture. After that, along with some recuperation, I will go onto Ivory Coast and then to Ghana to look for a place and get in position to help David Kangni with the next round of seminars throughout Ghana.”

*In Him,  
Ed and Patty Enns* 🙏

### **Hungary** **Kaylene Ball**

Dear Friends,

I thought I would write and update you on the

**SFMI Update**



situations I asked you to pray for. First off, thank you so much for praying for Katka and her family and the situation at the school. As things stand now, she has remained at the school as a teacher. She fully supports the new principal, and he supports her. He addressed the teachers at the start of his work at the school, saying he’s not sure how he can cooperate with a staff who had just betrayed their principal in such a way. Unfortunately these same parents and teachers are now targeting one of the teachers who is not in the “in” crowd by passing around a complaint letter for people to sign in hopes that the mayor will fire her as well. Of all the teachers, she has been the friendliest to Katka and me. She has also been open to the gospel when Katka has shared with her. She is a very intelligent and kind woman. They would be losing a well-qualified teacher. Please pray for her. She has three sons, is a single mom, and really needs her job there. Please pray that these unjustified accusations would stop and that these people would see that in trying to take care of themselves as number one, they could be devastating people’s lives.

Katka is doing well, and she and her family are praising the Lord in spite of everything. They can see good coming from this situation. She is looking for another job. Pray that God would lead their family. So far, there have been no problems with me continuing to teach at the school. My students are absolutely great this year, eager and willing to learn.

The Bible study I hoped to start is underway and going well! Marcus and Reni have been helping me out. We’re going through the book of John. Viola and her little brother, Baldi, who says he will never believe in God, have been coming for several weeks now. We have others who are hoping to come in the future as well. Baldi seems to enjoy coming and also comes to my English class at his school. Amazingly, his parents let them both come, though

*Continued on back cover*

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they want nothing to do with it themselves. Their father is an atheist, which has so far shaped Viola's brother's views, I think. Pray for their whole family to come to Christ! Whenever Baldi says, "I won't believe in God," Viola just chuckles and shakes her head and says, "That's what *I* said too."

We also were able to go to the children's home for the first time last week. Marcus and I loved meeting the kids and being with them. There were about eight, ranging in age from 10 to 17. Today a group of us is going back, and we're excited to start a consistent ministry there with a purposeful mission of sharing Christ and His love with them. We're getting other Christian young people involved in hopes they would learn to do and become excited about doing outreach in their own community.

**THANK YOU FOR PRAYING!**

*Sincerely,*

*Kaylene Ball* 

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