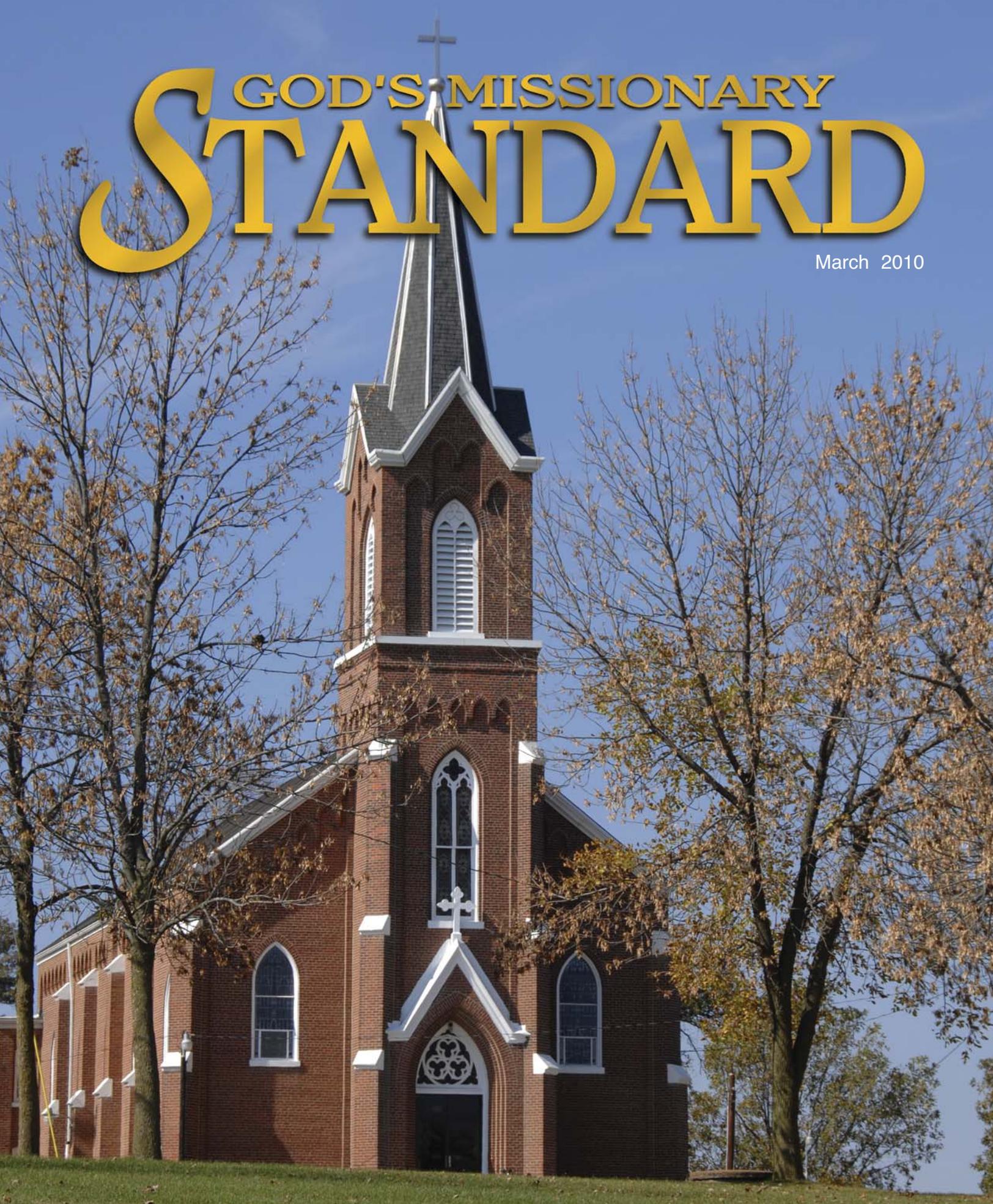


GOD'S MISSIONARY STANDARD

March 2010



1935

God's Missionary Church



Celebrating 75 Years

2010



Please Pass the Steak

ROBERT BOOTH



There is something about seeing old church architecture that I just enjoy. I love the high cathedral ceilings, the stately bell towers and the complicated design patterns. I love trying to figure out what the designer was trying to accomplish. To me, there is something mysterious and awe-inspiring to walk into a cathedral and see the beauty of light streaming through the majestic stained-glass windows.

In October of 2009, I had a meeting at a location near Chicago. As I was driving through a busy suburb, I saw a beautiful church off in the distance. When I saw the tall bell tower, the high cathedral roof and the beautiful stonework I slowed down, much to the chagrin of the drivers behind me. I finally pulled over to admire the structure for a few seconds before finishing the drive. It was a Thursday and I noticed that people were walking in and out of the church and I thought that was a little unusual. As I was pulling out, I looked for the sign that would indicate what type of

church this was and I saw a sign that made my heart sink. The sign read, “Steakhouse”. The church had become a steakhouse. As I drove away, I had questions swirling around in my head. I wonder when the vision died? When did they lose focus on the mission that God entrusted to them? How long did it take to no longer be a church, but become a steakhouse? If I had time that day, I would have loved to find people who had intimate knowledge of the church and ask them those questions. I know that there could be other reasons, but for this article, let's presume that the church died and had become a steakhouse.

Each year almost 4,000 churches close their doors for the final time in the United States.¹

That number is staggering to me. And I am sure that there are various cultural and theological reasons, but that is still an overwhelming number. Why do churches close? I am no expert, but here are two thoughts.

(continued on page 12)

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I Have a Dream

BY TIMOTHY L. COOLEY, SR.



I dream of a Church aflame, purged by the Spirit and purging the society around them, sloughing off the drag of materialism, and singing the fakers that flutter in imitation of her glory.

I celebrate the progress of “evangelical Christianity”, yet I weep for the lack of holiness. I weep for the repeated surveys (at least in the U.S.) that declare that evangelical Christians live exactly like the non-believers around them, and I pray we will not export that kind of empty profession of Christianity to the rest of the world.

I dream of a Church separate enough from sinners to call the entire world to holiness—holy living—trusting a Holy Christ, indwelt by a Holy Spirit, and impelled by a holy mission! The world around us deserves a personal demonstration, a visible incarnation of the grace of God. Over a hundred years ago, Daniel Steele wrote, “A Brahmin recently said to a Christian, ‘I have found you out. You are not as good as your book. If you Christians were as good as your book, you would in five years conquer India for Christ.’” I pray with Steele, “Come, Holy Spirit, and so cleanse and fill us that we may be as good as our book!”²

I dream of the Church falling neither into legalism nor into “cheap grace,”³ but taking seriously the authority of the Word of God over every facet of life. I pray for a Church conscious of its need to be forgiven and confident in the assurance of salvation. I pray for a Church personally alive and in direct contact with God!

I dream of a Church resistant to lukewarmness and the status quo, a Church energetic in reaching both far and near, both upward and downward in society.

I dream of contextualization without compromise. Solid Biblical truth anointed by the Spirit and meaningfully communicated to others will repel most errors. Charles Spurgeon quipped, “I never yet saw a fly alight on a hot [stove] plate.”⁴ We must remain fervently faithful to Biblical truth while stretching every nerve to be culturally in touch.

I dream of a Church that avoids the turf wars, the kingdom building, and the human arrogance of personal empires!

I dream of the whole Church, evangelizing the world as a spreading fire, united enough to fellowship and not duplicate each other’s work, yet committed enough not to lose the distinctives of each group. May God grant to each the courage to “creatively enunciate those biblical themes that may be missing in other Christian communities” yet “graciously understand the theological perspectives of other Christly believers.” All the while, let us “humbly pursue a ractical theology of loving holiness and of holy living.”⁵

(continued on page 7)

THE PATHWAY TO PENTECOST

BY BARRY ARNOLD



I have precious memories of several different paths that I have trod in my childhood. Some strike fear, some laughter and others real delight. In the area where I grew up, there was a small picnic grove where we enjoyed family fun. This grove, of course, had no faucets or plumbing. But how well I remember, what seemed as a boy, such a long path through the woods to the mountain spring. There with a dipper and bucket, we were rewarded with cool fresh water. Then there was the path through the meadow and over the narrow crude bridge that led to home. Never will I forget the cold, damp evening when I was so scared. A school book slipped out of my grasp and almost went over the bridge into the cold swift stream.

Many remember the dusty, narrow, well-worn path where the cows came home each evening from grazing, to be fed and milked. Then there is that dreamy path where romances bloomed and led all the way to the marriage altar. So many paths we have traveled; some by choice, others by force. What memories!

However, today, as I fondly recall those neat and sometimes challenging paths, there is one special path that blesses me above all others. It is the pathway to purity and power—the pathway to Pentecost. I am so glad that Jesus marked out the way to those original disciples and they left foot prints for us to follow, because in my heart there is a constant cry for higher ground.

Paths are always challenging, especially new ones. When we are trying to brave the storms and make the ascent, we should ever be grateful to those trusty, spiritual pilgrims who stuck to the path and received the upper room experience.

Those precious saints experienced the Pentecostal power time and again. Oh the encouragement they have brought to us. By God's grace, we too can make it.

It seems to me that somewhere around the cross, where my load was lifted and my guilt vanished, that I noted foot prints in the direction of the upper room. Before Jesus ascended, He commanded His disciples to strike out on this pathway. "Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high." The command was clear but "Oh what a challenge!" Anywhere but Jerusalem, which, at that time, was a hot-bed of opposition. Can't we go up to Bethlehem or down to Jordan? No, they knew the pathway, "the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them

that obey Him." God sealed this truth to their hearts and continues to seal it upon our hearts today.

Of course, this is not a pathway that leads to nowhere like a Berk's County road called, "The Road To Nowhere." This path is bright with promise. "Who can deny it?" Jesus said, "Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you! Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost!" Food is appetizing only to those who are hungry. I have heard some pilgrims on this sacred pathway crying like the southern slave girl, Amanda Smith, who said, "O this hunger and thirst!" Then we heard the Master say, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst, they shall be filled," and we joined the blood-washed as they sang, "Jesus come and fill me now."

Many who have made this journey tell of the obstacles they faced and the ruts they struggled over, realizing they could never make it on their own. So their prayers ascended often and with great fervor to the God who answers by fire. Rocks of carnal ambition, potholes of conformity to the crowd, and many puddles of jealousy and bitterness were among the hindrances. Rough surfaces of criticism with sharp stones of division and rugged roots of self-will. "Oh how hard it was to die and old self to crucify!" The faithful band lifted voices and sang with gusto "Sing on, pray on, we're gaining ground, O Hallelujah!" So confessing, adjusting, and laying all on the altar, they said, "Yes!" and "continued with one accord in prayer and supplication."

Nobody reaches the upper room who is just out for a morning stroll or a temporary sprint. With the disciples, it was not just an experiment that lasted a few days. Their hearts were set like a flint. Spectators come and go, real players stay in the game. The pathway, all the way to the upper room, demands full surrender and a faith that says, "I will not let thee go except thou bless me."

So often we are like the old farmer that Vance Havner told about long ago. The man spent his life eking out a poor existence on a small farm. After he died, oil was discovered under his house. He had untold wealth within reach, but he never knew what he had. He had wealth, yet he didn't have it.

"It is for us all today." Take courage, and press on! The pathway to Pentecost is wide open. "He shall baptized you with the Holy Ghost and fire." ■

*The pathway,
all the way to
the upper room,
demands full
surrender and a
faith that says,
"I will not let
thee go except
thou bless me."*

Penn View Bible Institute

JOHN ZECHMAN

Greetings from the Hilltop in Penns Creek.

Here we are in the 44th year of Penn View Bible Institute and Christian Academy, and already at the end of the first semester. Time has gone by so quickly.

The year started off quite well. We saw an increase in both the Institute and the Academy, with students coming from many states within our United States, Canada, Papua New Guinea, and Northern Ireland. The quality of students seems to be great.

We were blessed to host an area IHC in conjunction with several local churches in our area. Rev. and Mrs. John Case and Rev. Leonard Sankey ministered in these services. During this time, we conducted our annual Spiritual Emphasis Week. It was a great week together.

The students responded so well during the fall revival with Rev. Leonard Sankey, the General Secretary of the Inter-church Holiness Convention. In a couple of services nearly all the dormitory students were seeking for more of God. This always thrills my heart when the students respond so quickly. My greatest desire is to see our students get grounded spiritually.

This year we have our second student from the country of Northern Ireland, who came as a result of Nathan Purdy who had been with us for a few years as a student, and also a trip to Ireland by Dan Durkee and the Heritage Trio. Samuel Aileen has come to prepare for the ministry. He plans to go back to his home country and



minister when he is finished. Nathan is now teaching for us in the High School Department.

We have seen growth this year in our Missions Department and in the Music Department. God has blessed as the College Choir and Instrumental Ensemble ministered to hundreds of people in several churches in our area. They also ministered in the second annual Christmas Musical held here on campus. Nearly 1,500 people attended the two services. One of the evenings, we hosted a "Business Person's Banquet" for many business peo-



ple in our area. We were able to introduce Penn View Bible Institute to some who had never been on campus before this event. After the meal they enjoyed the Christmas Musical in the Straub Tabernacle. God met with us and spoke to several in attendance. One, who was not a church-going individual, requested a Bible from one of our students. Another contacted us and said, "I needed that service...it did me good." Thank God for helping our students minister as they sang and told the Christmas Story.

God has helped us to make significant progress on the Mason/McIntire Student Life Center over this past year. Interior walls, on the first floor, have been built. Stone has been hauled in, in preparation for the concrete for the first floor. Much grading has been done around the outside of the building, and the area seeded with grass. The area around the pond has been seeded, and waterfalls created to channel water to the pond. Our progress was slowed down for awhile due to a problem we encountered with the Department of Environmental Protection, but that is being solved, and they have allowed us to resume construction again. Thank the Lord! We are, however, facing a need of finances to complete the project. Please pray with us that God will supply the need. 

Keep Penn View Bible Institute in your prayers. We need you to stand with us in this great and challenging work.



(Continued from page 3)

I share the passion of John Wesley who cried out, "Give me a hundred men, who fear nothing but sin, and desire nothing but God, and I will shake the world; and I care not a straw whether they be clergymen or laymen; and such alone will overthrow the kingdom of Satan and build up the kingdom of God on earth."⁶ Wesley got his hundred men and they shook the world of their day! One century later, General William Booth sent his corporals and his lassies to invade the nations, and the Salvation Army was able to clean out the hell-holes and change the course of cities and nations. It can be done!

I dream of a Spirit-filled Church, fire-baptized and intelligently strategizing to reach the whole world. The Spirit without strategy is not enough.⁷ And strate-

gy without the Spirit is certainly not enough! God grant us the whole Church, preaching the whole Gospel to the whole world! 

¹ *Apologies to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*

² *Daniel Steele, Gospel of the Comforter (Milton, Massachusetts, 1897; Reprinted at Rochester, PA: Schmull, 1960), p.290, "The Holy Spirit: The Conservator of Orthodoxy."*

³ *Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Cost of Discipleship (Originally printed, 1939, Reprinted at New York, NY: Macmillan, 1968).*

⁴ *Daniel Steele, Gospel of the Comforter, p.275.*

⁵ *Gilbert Stafford in Charles Carter, ed., A Contemporary Wesleyan Theology 2 vols, (Grand Rapids, MI: Francis Asbury, Zondervan, 1983), I:40.*

⁶ *Daniel Steele, Gospel of the Comforter, p.289.*

⁷ *Dale Yocum, Armies of God (Salem, OH: Schmull, 1987), pp.90-93.*

Births

Congratulations to Rev. & Mrs. Nathan Walter on the birth of Darrin Nathanael

Congratulations to Rev. & Mrs. Keith Bunch on the birth of Caleb William.



Congratulations to Derek & Alanna (McKenzie) McIntire on the birth of Daryl Ray.

Daryl was born on October 39, 2009.

Congratulations to Jorge & Melinda (Fritz) Martin on the birth of Sabrina Lee. Sabrina was



born on November 6, 2009.

The Standard Pulpit

SERMON THOUGHTS FROM GMC MINISTERS PAST AND PRESENT

The Conversion of Zaccheus —*Luke 19:1–10*

1. Who and what Zaccheus was:

- The chief among the publicans
- A descendent of Abraham
- He was rich and possessed much

2. That which brought him to Jesus

- curiosity
- a hungry heart
- a true conviction

3. Zaccheus was a sincere and determined seeker

- a. He failed to allow the crowd to hinder him
(he ran ahead)
- b. He humbled himself (climbed a tree)
- c. He counted the cost
- d. He was ready to pay the price
- e. He was willing to make his wrongs right

4. Zaccheus became a truly converted man

- Because of the way he came down the tree
- Because of the way he received Christ
- Because of his generosity
(he was willing to do what the rich young ruler wasn't)

5. Three things Zaccheus should be admired for

- He took time to seek Jesus
- He didn't allow himself to become discouraged
- He took advantage of his only opportunity to get right with God 



BY G.I. STRAUB

QUOTES

“For the Church was not an organization merely, not a movement, but a walking incarnation of spiritual energy.” —*A.W. Tozer*

“The Church began in power, moved in power and moved just as long as she had power. When she no longer had power she dug in for safety and sought to conserve her gains.” —*A.W. Tozer*

“God will pour out His Spirit upon us in answer to simple faith, but real faith will be accompanied by deep poverty of spirit and mighty heart yearnings and will express itself in strong crying and tears.” —*A.W. Tozer*

“The command to be filled with the Spirit is just as compelling as the prohibition not to be drunk with wine.” —*Andrew Murray*

“The saints are the ordained rulers of the earth but they do not rule; indeed, they have dropped the scepter and repudiated the responsibility.” —*Samuel Chadwick*

“The ministry energized by the Holy Ghost is marked by aggressive evangelism, social revolution, and persecution.” —*Samuel Chadwick*

“Let us go to the altar with all we have and are and lie there and persist in prayer until we receive the endowment.” —*Charles Finney*

“I love prayer meetings and wish they were set up in every corner of the town.” —*John Wesley*



An Unknown Evangelist

by David Wise

“And the Syrians had gone out by companies, and had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid; and she waited on Naaman's wife. And she said unto her mistress, Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria! for he would recover him of his leprosy. And one went in, and told his lord, saying, Thus and thus said the maid that is of the land of Israel.” II Kings 5:2-4

The glory days of David and Solomon were quickly becoming just a glorious memory. The immaturity of Rehoboam destroyed the unity of the twelve tribes and caused the creation of two separate kingdoms. The northern kingdom of Israel had just plunged to new depths of debauchery as Ahab and his “lovely” bride Jezebel steered the ten-tribed nation further and further away from their godly heritage. If this all wasn’t bad enough, the threat of foreign invasion and all of the horrendous consequences associated with that was always a real possibility. And you think it is tough to raise a family in America today? Picture yourself as one of the “remnant” families in Ahab’s Israel trying your best to raise your kids for the

Lord in spite of all the glaring obstacles. The hopes and dreams for the future were always mixed with the very real possibility that the family might be ripped apart through circumstances beyond their control.

We don’t know if this little maid without a name was ever dedicated in a formal “church” service like we do today. Considering the political party in charge, it may not have even been an option. While we are left without much background information, it is likely that she came from a godly home. Dad and Mom must have “lived it” before this young heroine and to such an extent that the memories of those happy and holy times held her steady in the midst of staggering setbacks. They may have been the only

family in their village or town that really served the Lord. This God-fearing clan probably stood out like a sore thumb in the moral chaos of that day. While respected, they were probably also hated by many for their decided stand for the right. The persecution would only have served to drive them closer to each other and to their Lord. Every day together would be taken as a blessing straight from the hand of Jehovah. Sadly, this time of happiness would be quickly and violently brought to an end.

War is brutal. It is very likely that the conquering Syrians killed members of the girl’s family. Her hopes of having her own family were destroyed. She would never see her parents and siblings again. She would never see her

native land again and she was destined to live what was left of her life as a slave in a foreign land. If ever one had a “right” to question the Providence of God, surely, this Israelite girl would be the one. The anguish of heart that she must have experienced goes beyond our poor power to comprehend. Without a Bible, a church, a pastor, fellowship and a family, this young lady was thrown into the valley of decision to sink or swim spiritually. She had to decide quickly whether her “old belief system” was something that needed to make the trip with her to Syria. The temptation to hate and swear revenge must have been strong. If not prone to violence, the tendency to sulk was just as powerful. What possible good could come from such terrible tragedy? Could the Lord really use such a broken life for His glory? The choice for usefulness, strangely enough, was about the only thing that had not been taken out of her hands.

While only a few verses tell us anything about her, what is said and what is implied are powerful and challenging indeed. She was a worker. No lazy bones here. To be placed into a home like Naaman’s meant that she did things well. She had no time to agonize over the past, but like her forefather Joseph, she had to make the most of a

bad situation. Not only that, but possibly the most amazing thing about this amazing girl is her tender spirit. Instead of secretly gloating over the Syrian warrior’s fate, she truly seemed concerned. This God-given compassion must have spoken to Mrs. Naaman in a time of great perplexity and sorrow. The Syrians may have triumphed in battle but this soldier and his family could not enjoy everyday life. Perhaps the Spirit of Christ in the heart of this brave daughter of Abraham caused memories of her own family to make her pity this distressed and nearly broken Syrian family. Truly, the Sermon on the Mount was being lived out before this proud Gentile warrior and his wife.

Look how quickly word went “up the ladder” and finally reached the king. And it all started with a captured slave girl from a defeated people. Trusted by her captors, this missionary lass preached such a sermon that all the hierarchy of Syria were moved to action. Once the wheel was set in motion, things proceeded until finally the “prophet that is in Samaria” could be reached on behalf of the leprous Naaman. What staggers the mind, however, is the fact that this girl had never seen anyone healed of leprosy, but her faith in God and in God’s

prophet was so strong that the impossible became a glorious reality. Not only did her faith not falter but she was able to triumph in the midst of adversity to such an extent that the battle-hardened Naaman became a witness to the wonder working power of her God. This little insignificant vessel now speaks to us today as a testimony that the Lord’s people can shine brightly in the darkest environments. Little did her faithful parents realize what a glorious future the God of heaven had planned for their precious daughter. Fellow parents, let us not limit the “Holy One of Israel” by our melancholy visions of the future. “For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring.” Isaiah 44:3 



Can you help us?

The God’s Missionary Church 75th Anniversary planning committee is building an archive collection in preparation for our upcoming anniversary celebration. If you are able to share historic photographs, documents or audio/video recordings relating to GMC or its founders, please contact Jon Plank as soon as possible by e-mail at jplank@media-spring.com or call 570-694-0123. Material may also be mailed to:

*Jon Plank, Media-Spring
3170 State Route 104
Mifflinburg, PA 17844*



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Celebrating 75 Years

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**UPCOMING
EVENTS**

March 2–4, 2010
Lebanon GMC
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Convention

March 11–19
Lehighon GMC
Revival—David Wise

April 6–11
Beavertown GMC
Revival—Rollin Mitchell

April 20–22
Dayton, OH
InterChurch Holiness
Convention

May 6–8
Penn View Bible Institute
Campus Days

TO HAVE YOUR EVENT LISTED HERE,
PLEASE EMAIL MARVIN MOSLEY,
PASTORMOSLEY07@GMAIL.COM



Travel Notes

HARRY F. PLANK

Oct. 18: We attended the morning service at the Butler church, and appreciated the message by fill-in pastor, Rev. Darl Dishong. A lovely dinner was provided in the home of the Henry Walburn's. We then traveled on to Canton, OH where I preached the evening message in the absence of Pastor Bob Bollis at the Chrystal Park church. Thank you, to our friends, Gene and Christine Roush for a lovely place to stay for the evening.

Oct. 20-25: We had lunch and a good time of fellowship with Rev. & Mrs. George Maloyed before traveling on to Clarksburg, Indiana where I preached a revival meeting where Rev. David Stidell is the pastor. This is the church where my wife spent a lot of her growing-up years. She enjoyed a lot of childhood memories this week. Thank you, to the David Spurgeon family, for providing our lodging for the week, a nice little camping trailer next to their home. On Saturday, we traveled to Redkey, Indiana where I took part in the beautiful wedding of Anthony Clough to Marie Turner.

Oct. 28: I attended two viewings; former God's Missionary minister, Joe Hoffman, in the morning and Beavertown parishioner, Mary Try, in the evening.

Oct. 29–Nov. 1: I preached a weekend meeting at the Salunga church. Pastor Sheldon Habecker was blessed with the help of his mother to entertain us for the weekend. We appreciated Nelson Evans helping with the music.

Nov. 2–8: I preached a revival at the Lehighon church. Pastor and Mrs. Marvin Mosley entertained us well in the parsonage. On Wednesday, we visited Treva Walter in the Pottsville hospital. We also learned that my father-in-law, Harold Will was taken by ambulance from church due to a heart attack. On Friday, Rachel drove by herself to Greenville, NC to be with him.

Nov. 9: Our son, Jon drove me to the Harrisburg airport where I boarded a flight to Greenville, NC arriving around 9:00 p.m.

Nov. 10 & 11: The family spent many hours in the Pitt County Memorial Hospital where Dad Will was recovering from triple bypass surgery.

Nov. 12: Rachel and I left Greenville around 9:00 a.m., arriving back at Middleburg about 7:15 p.m.

Nov. 13: I traveled to Lebanon to visit Rev. Dwight Rine who was a patient in the Good Samaritan hospital. We are also caring for two of our granddaughters, Ashley and Lauren, as their mother, Alicia was taken to the Lewisburg hospital, which turned out to be a six-day stay and a diagnosis of a form of spinal meningitis.

Nov. 15: Our scheduled service was canceled so we went to the Beavertown church. The Penn View Choir was there for the evening service.

Nov. 17: I attended a board meeting for the Missionary Youth Crusaders in the morning and hung dry wall in a small room of our house.

Nov. 18: We took our granddaughters back to their home and was happy that Alicia was able to come home from the hospital, although far from well. In the evening, Rachel and I attended revival meeting at the Mountain Road church where Rev. David Fulton was the evangelist.

Nov. 20: We made a trip with our grandchildren Jamison and Jennifer, to Tioga County to visit my mother and sight in some guns, in preparation for deer season.

Nov. 22: Since we had another cancellation for this Sunday, we enjoyed being with the Penn View Choir at the Gratz Emanuel Wesleyan church in the morning and Hummel's United Methodist church in the evening. We appreciate the dedication of Bro. Lucas Shroust and the testimonies of these young people. We have heard many positive reports on the choir this year.

Nov. 24: We attended Penn View's Thanksgiving Dinner where Rev. & Mrs. John Zechman's daughter, Marie organized a very lovely evening in honor of their 40th wedding anniversary, half of which were years serving at Penn View.

Nov. 26: Thanksgiving day! We had the usual wonderful dinner with our family traditional food items. Along with the turkey we always have my mother's pies and apple banana salad, Rachel's oyster stuffing, Marie's corn fritters, Alica's cranberry jello salad and Kara's sweet potato casserole, plus whatever the aunts and nephews bring. We had 24 family members in our home, nine of whom were children with energy to spare!

Nov. 29: After the morning service, we enjoyed a visit with Joseph, the former foster son of Jim and Marie, who is now a fine young man of thirteen. In the afternoon, we traveled to Tioga County, where I preached for Rev. Robert Goodrich at the Elkland church.

Nov. 30 & Dec. 1: I enjoyed the annual hunting on the farm with my brother, Tom sons James, Andrew and grandson Jamison. Andrew got the only deer of the two days, a nice five point, his first buck. We made family memories, enjoyed Mom's "boiled dinner", homemade donuts and pies, but with the sadness of the first deer season without Dad.

Dec. 6: I preached both services at the Mahaffey church. I also had meetings with the church board and the congregation concerning their search for a new pastor. Thank you Bro. & Sis. Goodyear for the wonderful meal and lovely place to stay for the day.

Dec. 10: I made a quick trip to Lebanon to visit Rev. Barry Arnold, who was recovering from shoulder surgery.

Office hours are spent in the month of December in preparation for upcoming conference events including the upcoming Florida District Camp meeting. 

(continued from page 2)

1. They fail to keep the main thing the main thing. I know I have written a little about this before, but bear with me please. In Samuel, a tragic story is written. Saul's life began well. He loved and served God. But gradually, he turned his back on God. Saul ended up slinking over to the witch of Endor, trying to access evil powers. He didn't keep that main thing the main thing in his life.

It starts out in the little things. It may not be obvious that little things are taking us away from our love and devotion to Jesus Christ. Sometimes it happens before we wake up.

I believe this is what happened to the church at Ephesus in Revelation 2. They were a thriving church: a church that was on fire at one point. When Jesus speaks to them He lists many positive things, but then the most chilling words are stated that they had lost their first love. Have we lost our first love? Have we become so involved where

we focus on important things, but forget the most important? If so, let us quickly go to the rock that is higher than we are. Let us fall on our faces and examine our lives before the throne of God.

2. They focus on remembering the glory days. I am thankful for my Holiness heritage. My family has told me all kinds of stories that makes my heart yearn for what they experienced. But I grow weary of hearing about the glory days. We often think of Christ in a historical fashion. But He hasn't changed! I don't want the individuals that I have the joy of leading to hear their pastor talk only about the God of the past, I want them to experience the God of the present!

I don't have any plans for my church to become a steakhouse and I am sure that you don't either. Lets renew our focus on glorifying God and lifting His name on high and lets focus on experiencing the Christ of the present. 

¹ Statistic from Ed Stetzer in his forthcoming book, *Viral Churches*

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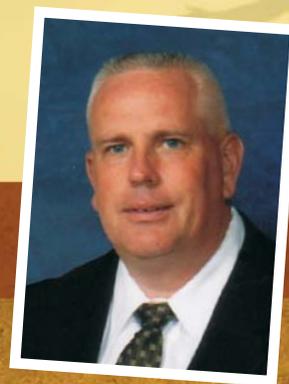
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Rollin Mitchell

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Dayton, Ohio

April 20-22, 2010

Speakers will include: John Manley, John Case, Tony Ross, Marc Sankey, Travis Johnson



Dedare His Glory

among all people