04-84

FULL GOSPEL BUSINESS MEN'S

VOICE

★★★★★ the ★★★★★ fifty-fourth man

the honorable julian m. carroll kentucky's 54th governor

President and Mrs. Jimmy Carter exchange pleasantries with Governor Julian Carroll

the fifty-fourth man ★★★★★★★

Julian M. Carroll, Frankfort, Kentucky

The persistence of painful accusations strikes deep wounds and leaves festering sores for any person. They are particularly painful for a man who has always considered himself to be a Christian and who, after five years of intensive investigation by the Justice Department, was not even so much as charged with any act of wrongdoing.

In this testimony delivered August 12, 1983 at the FGBMFI Kentucky Regional Convention, Governor Carroll addresses the absolute necessity of confronting bitterness and the practical help provided by the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

A quote from a Messenger-Enquirer *reporter attests to the governor's spiritual triumph in adversity:*

"A few months ago, political observers counted Julian Carroll out. Leaks from a five-year probe of state government by the Federal Grand Jury had tarnished the former governor's image beyond repair, they said. The new Julian Carroll has risen from the ashes of that defeat."

I have discovered a power far more awesome than the political power that catapulted me from childhood poverty into the Commonwealth's highest office.

I have been privileged to be one of fifty-four men who in the 200-year history of our state have served as governor. In that capacity I have met with kings, presidents, vice-presidents and celebrities

and I appreciate all the privileges which that office afforded me. I'm grateful for the opportunity to share my testimony with you. I consider the message God has laid upon my heart to be the most important I have ever delivered.

I feel compelled to emphasize how essential it is that we rid ourselves of bitterness and unforgiveness and that we learn how the baptism in the Holy Spirit helps.

I was the third of eleven children raised on a farm in a very poor family. Both my father, a mechanic, and my mother were Christians. Every Sunday morning Mother took the time and effort to wash our faces, dress us in the best clothes we had (they were not very good) and get us to Sunday school.

Some of us lived with my grandparents during my teen years, for two good reasons: first, to help Grandfather Carroll, a telegraph agent for the Illinois Central Railroad and in declining health, with the farm chores; second, because Mother and Father couldn't afford to feed all of us.

My Grandmother Carroll was a Christian lady. She would take me to church early so I could build a fire in the pot-bellied stove of the Maxin Christian Church. We would sit around the stove for Sunday school, and hopefully the temperature would become warm enough for us to sit in the pews for the worship service.

Every night that I spent in my grandmother's house, we would read the Bible together, then I would get on my knees at the side of her or my bed and pray.

Because of my Christian upbringing it was almost a matter of course that at the age of sixteen I acknowledged the Lord Jesus Christ as my Saviour and was baptized in water. Ever since then I have been extremely active in the church. I've chaired the finance committee, taught Sunday school, directed the choir and held local and national offices throughout the denomination. I believe that I have preached in the pulpit of every denomination having a church in the state of Kentucky.

My interest in politics also dates back to my childhood. I was president of the eighth grade and, by the time I was a senior, president of the student body. During my junior year I was elected governor of Blue Grass Boy's State, sponsored by the American Legion. In that capacity I represented our state at Washington, D.C., where I met President Harry S. Truman, an experience which heightened my interest in politics.

At the University of Kentucky, my bachelor's degree was in political science, and two years later, in 1956, I completed a law degree. During the next three years in the Air Force, I was known as the base politician—always active in a movement of some kind. Meanwhile I had married and had two children.

Within months after getting out of the service I was back home and in the middle of a campaign for the creation of a public utility. That effort was so successful that my friends encouraged me to get more actively involved in politics. In 1962 I defeated our Paducah incumbent for a seat in the Kentucky House of Represen-

tatives, serving ten years in that position, the last four of them as Speaker of the House.

Next I became lieutenant governor for three years, then governor. During the years in which I served as chief executive—December 1974 to December 1979—Kentucky faced some of its greatest tragedies since the Civil War. But I can testify to you that in every tragedy and emergency my Christian faith was indispensable.

In the Beverly Hills fire we lost 167 people. I got out of bed at midnight, watched torsos extricated from the ruins and went to the morgue to comfort bereaved families. Again, when roving individuals carrying torches threatened to burn Louisville to the ground during the terrible bussing riots of 1975, I did not stand alone. The Lord gave me strength. Tornados came through our state killing thirty-one people and destroying communities. Violent strikes necessitated that we guard every railroad bridge in the commonwealth. While I was governor, we had the worst flood since 1937. In every trying ordeal I turned to the Lord and He helped me.

Yet I could not cope with an ordeal my family and I suffered after I left office.

A Kentucky governor may not succeed himself, so even though I couldn't run for re-election I supported a close personal friend for the office. It looked to some of the opposition as though I would be successful in this, so they mounted an all-out attack to cripple my reputation and thereby my support.

They persuaded the Public Integrity Section of the Justice Department (an outgrowth of Watergate) to come to Kentucky in June, 1978 to begin an investigation. Unsubstantiated accusations appeared daily in the press, even including regular testimony "leaks" during the closed grand-jury hearings. Resultant headlines were sensational—and unfair. Muckraking and harassment continued for five long years as the investigation wore on.

They mounted an all-out attack to cripple my reputation

Bitterness crept like a repulsive gangrenous sore from my wife Charlann and me, infecting our children and rotting our relationships. We even stopped going to church for a year and a half. One of the newspaper reporters who had so viciously attacked me sang in our choir, and it was more than we could do to face "that hypocrite" every Sunday.

About three years after the investigation began, Chuck Cotton invited Charlann and me to a Full Gospel Business Men's meeting in Frankfort, Kentucky. Although I considered myself

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a born-again Christian, was a member of the Cumberland Presbyterian church, had appeared on platforms with Billy Graham, Kathryn Kuhlman and Jerry Falwell, and felt well versed in the Bible, Charlann and I were totally ignorant about the baptism in the Holy Spirit. More open than I, she received at that first meeting.

Her experience raised more questions than I could answer. I had never understood before that Jesus himself received the baptism in the Holy Spirit when He was baptized by John in the Jordan River, and that the power of the Holy Spirit was that which raised Him from the dead. Suddenly it became clear to me: if Jesus couldn't do without that special power, how could I?

Then came the day when the Holy Spirit touched me in a new way. My baptism in the Holy Spirit was not a grand emotional experience but a quiet lifting of burdens. It brought me to the full realization of my own failure to be the man God wanted me to be. I saw that I must not, dare not, hate my brother, but must love and forgive.

I had repeated the Lord's Prayer all my life without realizing that the two verses *following* it read, "For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins" (Matthew 6:14,15, NIV).

Convicted by the Holy Spirit that my sin of hatred was as great as that of an adulterer, a thief or a drug addict, I did one of the toughest things I have ever done in my life.

I looked my political enemies right in the eye—but I did not say, "I forgive you for what you did to me."

No. I said, "I want you to forgive me for hating you." This allowed me to seek

forgiveness for my sins, not for theirs.

The most difficult thing of all was going to the newspaper reporter whom we felt had conspired with some of the authorities to publish innuendos and rumors without foundation. I looked him in the eye and asked him to forgive me for hating him. My wife did more than that. One day at church she grabbed him, hugged him and told him she loved him. He was speechless.

Of ourselves we did not have what it took to forgive those who for five long years had persecuted us. Only the blood of Jesus could wash away our bitterness, and only the power of the Holy Spirit could enable us to forgive.

Possibilities for strife confront us daily: in the business world, in the neighborhood, between friends and even in the family, between husband and wife and parents and children. We cannot experience full joy in our life until we have the power—*the power of the Holy Spirit*—to forgive.

I continue to remember names of persons whom I need to forgive. More than a year ago Charlann and I attended a seminar where we were asked to make a list of people whom we needed to forgive. I had a long list of names on my page. Yet months later, in another part of Kentucky where I gave my testimony, a man came up to me and asked, "Julian, have you forgiven so-and-so?"

"No," I replied, "I hadn't—but I have now." God's healing process continues.

If you wonder sometimes why your prayers are not being heard, it could just be that you have yet to forgive so that you might be forgiven. Perhaps you would like to let the Holy Spirit search your heart and free you from any binding bitterness. Let Him fill you with His love, which empowers you to forgive even your enemies. He will repair broken relationships and restore your joy and peace. □

In addition to being chairman of the Kentucky War on Drugs, former governor Carroll has a private law practice, is president of Shield Coating Systems, and has three farms and an oil-drilling business. He is an active speaker at FGBMFI meetings across the country, is a member of the Frankfort Chapter, and continues to fill lay pulpits as he has for twenty-five years. He and his wife Charlann have four children: Kenneth, 28; Patrice, 26; Brad, 19; and Elly, 8. The Carrolls and their two oldest children are members of the Cumberland Presbyterian church, and Brad is a member of the Presbyterian church where they now attend. The newspaper man still sings in their choir, and Julian says, "We sit there and pour our love out to him every Sunday."

If you have a testimony that will glorify God and bring others to Jesus through *Voice*, you are invited to request guidelines from the Editorial Department, Box 5050, Costa Mesa, CA 92628.

THE FINAL RESCUE

Ray Duerre, Yakima, Washington

The unleashed fury of a North Pacific storm is terrible to behold, and to attempt a night rescue during one in a thirty-six-foot open Coast Guard boat is sheer madness.

I know. I was one of three men who attempted to tow a stricken luxury yacht with its three passengers from the rocky tip of Washington's Olympic Peninsula.

Battling gale-force winds that whipped the seas into twenty- and twenty-five-foot mountains of black water and threatened to destroy us all, we decided to forget the yacht and to concentrate on the passengers. It was impossible for us to communicate with them or they with us. They

had no power for lights or radio, and our hoarse shouts were drowned by the banshee screech of the storm.

At each effort to come alongside the yacht, our launch was repeatedly slammed against either the yacht or the rocks. Even our hardy boat could not withstand such a continuous beating. Finally after several passes the forty-year-old man and his seventy-year-old father were able to jump into our boat.

But the elderly woman had suffered a heart attack. We boarded the yacht and attempted to pass her limp form to the launch. Waves forced our boats apart and just as the gunwhales of the two boats slammed back together her legs fell between them.

I clutched her to me with all my might. *Surely she cannot live through this*, I thought. In my mind I cried out to God for help.

After a desperate struggle we finally got the old lady aboard, laid her on the open deck and applied tourniquets to both her legs, which were badly cut all the way to the bone. Surprisingly, she regained consciousness and encouraged us to pray. As rain and seawater drenched her, she sang songs of praise, and all night and the next day she inspired us with her faith.

The storm had knocked out our radio, and search planes had lost us. We headed north toward the Straits of Juan de Fuca and the Neah Bay Coast Guard Station. Though I was nineteen years old and hadn't been to church for about nine years, desperately I asked God to help us, and vowed that if we survived I would get to know Him.

Two days later, safe on land, I made good my word. I found a parish where I could receive instruction to become Catholic. Later that year I was baptized.

Both of my parents had cancer, and when my father died six months before my enlistment was up I received an early discharge to assume responsibility for my terminally-ill mother and a younger brother. I worked hard, in construction and later in door-to-door sales, to support them. I also began to party heavily.

Moving the family to Los Angeles, I found the singles lifestyle there exciting. Before long, parties, sex and money were all that really mattered to me, and as the expenses of my family and lifestyle increased, I developed a driving desire for success. God was a distant memory seldom recalled.

After a couple of years of parties, hangovers and occasional loneliness, I met and married a Catholic girl whose background was quite different from mine. Her upbringing, unlike mine, had produced consistent beliefs and values. She helped care for my mother, who died two months after we were married.

Going to work as a salesman for a large Fortune 500 company, I worked hard, and within eighteen months had set a company record by being promoted to management. My new assignment involved extensive travel, which at first I enjoyed. My managers rated me highly and I knew I was headed for the top.

But motel and restaurant fare soon bored me. I began spending nights in cocktail lounges, which resulted in daily hangovers. Though I was successful, something was missing from my life and

Ray Duerre being awarded the Treasury's lifesaving medal at full-dress military ceremony in 1963

I didn't know what it was. Our church attendance became sporadic and, for me, meaningless.

At age twenty-nine I made a career change and began selling insurance. Though I took a cut in salary, I could now spend more time at home with my wife, daughter and son. As before, I worked hard and, with my wife's encouragement, was soon vice-president of a large international insurance brokerage.

I got the reputation of doing what others said was impossible. Again I was in control—or so I thought. The problem was that I set goals for myself which became harder and harder to achieve. This self-imposed pressure brought depression. Each new sales victory seemed hollow. I resumed drinking with regularity, and when I drank I usually became cruel and abusive to people I really cared about.

With our children in Catholic school, we began attending Mass regularly and were active in church and social affairs. Yet few people knew the real me, the chronically tired and lonely person whose mind was crying out for help.

I became involved with a Catholic renewal movement called Cursillo and began meeting weekly for breakfast with several men. One by one, they began to experience a freshness in their faith, and spoke of Jesus as if they really knew Him personally. But I still drank heavily, suffered from ulcers and ulcerative colitis, and knew that some vital ingredient was missing from my life.

Christmas of 1979 we spent the holidays with my wife's family. The men spent all day the 24th drinking and watching television. I became drunk and started a nasty argument with my brother-in-law about religion and faith.

When I awoke the next morning I had the worst hangover of my life, compounded by the knowledge that I had ruined Christmas for the family.

As I dallied that Christmas morning, not wanting to face everybody, I heard a voice, an audible, real voice. It said, "Don't ever drink and use My name again!" The voice was not condemning or threatening but was strong and gentle. At that moment, I knew my life had changed.

I had tried to quit drinking many times before, but now *I knew* that I would never drink again. I knew that I could count on the strength and love in that voice. He had heard my cry for help and He had answered!

After returning home from the holidays, my wife and I began to experience in many ways the reality of God in our lives. We learned to pray together, trusting the Holy Spirit to guide us. We began seeing our prayers answered every day. A genuine love for each other grew steadily. That love radiated out to others; soon people began to call us to pray for or with them.

A dark curtain, so to speak, had been drawn from over our eyes. We began to see and recognize the miraculous effects of Jesus' love for those who seek Him. We started attending Full Gospel Business Men's meetings and saw many lives changed as men testified of how they came to know Jesus and how important that experience was to them.

Our own problems didn't just disappear suddenly, and I was still plagued with ulcers and colitis. But we had new strength to deal with whatever we faced.

Then in February of 1981 we were asked to assist at a service led by a priest from Boston who had a special healing ministry.

That very evening I came home from work doubled over with pain. I had vomited blood and felt terrible. "Carmen, I'm too sick to go to the service," I told my wife.

Her response was, "Well . . . it's a healing service . . ."

I felt guilty and was still sick as we headed for the church. A leader in our prayer group asked me what was wrong. When I told him, he laid his hands on me and asked God to heal me of ulcers and colitis right then and there. I immediately realized that the pain was gone. My healing was total and instaneous. Since then there has been no sign of ulcers or colitis and checkups have shown no need for medication or treatment.

During the days that followed I was filled with peace and happiness. For the first time I realized that God was in charge of my life, and that He was my trusted Friend.

Now there is an enthusiastic purpose and an excitement about my life, a confidence I could never generate within myself. The reason is that I've learned that no matter how badly the storm batters my little lifeboat, or how badly I'm hurting, when I cry out for help I will receive an answer.

This can be true for anyone. I have seen it happen again and again, but recently in the life of twenty-six-year old Jose. When Jose reached the hospital after an auto accident, doctors didn't expect him to live through the night.

When a friend and I saw Jose, we weren't prepared for the sight of his tragically broken body, being kept alive by artificial means. Though he was in a coma, I spoke to him and told him that my friend and I had come to pray for him. We anointed him with oil, told him of Jesus' love for him, and asked God to heal his injured body and brain.

The doctors said that even if Jose did survive, the severe brain damage would never allow him a normal life. For weeks there was little change. In fact, he suffered great weight loss, his muscles began to atrophy and his hands and feet to curl up, and dangerous amounts of fluid were building up in his skull.

Nevertheless, my wife and I visited him regularly, always reading the Scriptures aloud to him and praying. Throughout the lengthy ordeal, Jose's family was deeply impacted with the Gospel, and Jose's older brother received Jesus and was baptized in the Holy Spirit.

Carmen and I were with Jose when he first opened his eyes. She had been led to pray that fear would leave his body. Then the Lord had impressed me to place my hand on his head, pray silently for a while, then speak these words forcefully:

"Jose, in Jesus' name, wake up!"

When I opened my eyes, he was wide awake and looking straight into my eyes. By the next evening he was in a wheelchair. A week later he was moved to physical therapy. In April, 1983, seven months after his near-fatal accident, Jose walked down the church aisle toward Carmen and me as we were holding a service of communion.

Jose is a witness to his entire family and community that Jesus Christ is Lord of the living. He truly hears our cries. □

Until October, 1983, Ray Duerre was president of Ray Duerre and Associates, Inc. of Yakima, Washington, an insurance brokerage. He and his wife Carmen now serve fulltime as directors of Central Washington Catholic Renewal Services, through which they conduct seminars and workshops on healing and prayer in marriage. They are members of Holy Family Catholic Church and have two children: Michelle, age 15, and Michael, age 13. Ray is secretary of the Yakima Chapter of FGBMFI.

Sharecropper's Son

Cleve Howard, North Highlands, California

How long are the rows in an Alabama cotton field? As a sharecropper's son, I can tell you. I trudged them from sunup to sundown when a child. They are wearyingly long.

The distance is even greater from a childhood in which biscuits were a weekend treat and toast was eaten only on Sunday to the lifestyle my wife Lillian and I now enjoy: a comfortable home in California's capital city, a new Mercedes in the driveway, rental property and three children in college.

Never in any of my boyhood dreams could I have fabricated the material blessings God has bestowed upon us. Nor could I have conceived of the

spiritual road that I would travel.

From the time that I was very young I wanted to know Jesus, but I was not saved until I was sixteen. It was during a revival meeting, where my brother and a lot of others were saved. But it didn't happen in the church, even though I had sat on the "mourner's bench" with others who were seeking salvation.

I walked out of one of the meetings and said, "God, if You've really heard me pray and if You've forgiven me, please let me know." And He did. So I began confessing with my mouth that Jesus had come to live right inside of me and that He had given me a new start.

Like so many folks, later I turned my back on Him, went my own way and did my own thing. It wasn't until after I was married and stationed on the island of Guam that God graciously gave both my wife Lillian and me a new start.

Though I graduated from school in Alabama, I had missed so much schooling because of having to work on the farm that I began to feel I would never finish college, so I enlisted in the Air Force, where I spent twenty-one years.

Lillian, whom I had met while stationed at McGuire Air Force Base in New Jersey, had been a church member all her life, but had never known Jesus personally. Then on Guam she gave her life to the Lord and was filled with the Holy Spirit. Through her experience and much testing God spoke to me. "Cleve," He asked, "what are *you* going to do with My Son?"

This question caused me to realize that by "enjoying the pleasures of sin for a season" (Hebrews 11:25) I was putting Jesus to open shame. About a month after God asked me that question, alone in our house I began to pray: "God, if You are real, come in to my life again. Make Yourself real to me and make me real to You."

Soon I was praying in earnest. Stretched out full-length on the floor, I prayed for about an hour. Then I opened my mouth and began praying and praising God in another language. I didn't understand what was happening, but somehow I knew that I was speaking directly to God, that "the fruit of my lips was giving thanks to his name" (Hebrews 13:15), and that it was pleasing to Him.

I was praying in earnest, stretched full length on the floor

That's how God gave me a brand-new start, and I've been in business for Him ever since. It hasn't been all smooth sailing; there have been some waves. But the ship I'm sailing in is the Lord Jesus Christ, and *He's seaworthy.* He doesn't get shipwrecked in the storms of life I'm exposed to. And since I'm in Him, I'm sailing in waters that are safe for me, no matter how they look.

I began learning the Word from godly teachers. After completing my three-year tour of duty on Guam I was transferred to Sunnyvale, California, and there again a godly pastor instructed me in the Word. I couldn't get enough of it! I even carried the Bible to work with me.

At that time I worked swingshift at a satellite-tracking facility. My job was to maintain the electronic equipment at the Lockheed Missile Test Center. Often after my taking over the shift with none of the equipment working right, God would lead me quickly to the right button to push to clear the problem. Within minutes everything would be under control and operating smoothly, and in a couple of hours the work for the shift would be done.

I would spend the rest of these free times in the Word. This went on for two and a half years. By then I felt God directing me to begin teaching His word to others. The opportunity came when I was transferred to Taipei, Taiwan. There I met a group of servicemen and their wives who were hungry to learn more from the Bible and who asked me to teach a Bible class.

That Bible study grew rapidly. To extend our outreach, we leased and remodeled the old Japanese embassy building in Taipei and started a servicemen's church. In addition to Taiwan-based servicemen, many others came from Vietnam who were on R&R, and before long the building began to fill up at services.

For three years I assisted a missionary who worked with the nationals and also ministered to us. During his two-year leave of absence, I ministered in his place to the service people, twice on Sunday and on Wednesday night.

Shortly thereafter the remodeling expenses were cleared and our tithes and offerings created a treasury surplus. Hearing of an unevangelized area where

Cleve taught both in the "mother" church

missionaries didn't have time to go, we went in their place. A Chinese colonel would drive us as far as the roads extended and we would walk the remaining distance—as much as six miles.

Many were saved and healed and God enabled us to build several churches. The work continued after we left, and at last count sixteen of these remote mountain churches have been established.

When my tour of duty was completed in Taiwan we were transferred to Beale Air Force Base, thirty miles north of Sacramento, California, where we were instrumental in starting home Bible studies again. I was a master sergeant at the time. One evening as I came home from work the Lord laid the chaplain, a colonel, upon my heart and I couldn't rest until I went to his home to see him.

After we had talked for awhile, I told him about my life in Christ and about the baptism in the Holy Spirit. I shared how the experience had made me hungry for the word of God and how the Bible had become alive for me. As I spoke, the colonel arose from where he was sitting across the room, jerked me to my feet and commanded, "Man, pray for me!"

converted from the Japanese embassy and in rural meeting houses.

We knelt with our arms around each other and prayed. Both of us began to feel the mighty power of the Holy Spirit. A few days later he phoned and told us that he had received the baptism in the Holy Spirit. When that happened, revival broke out at the base, among officers and enlisted men alike. Later some Oakland businessmen urged us to organize an FGBMFI chapter on the base. It was the first on any military facility. Many civilians were even coming from off base to our chapter meetings and Bible studies.

At that time I was in New Jersey for three months of additional electronics training. When I returned I learned that the chapter had been started with an Air Force colonel (a jet pilot) elected as president and myself as vice-president. When the newly-elected president informed me of this I asked, "How can I be vice-president of something I know nothing about?"

After much debate he said, "Now listen, Cleve. I'm a colonel, and I need help with this project. I don't know what it's all about, either. But I don't know anybody I'd rather have covering my rear in battle than you. I want you to accept the position!"

So I accepted. Two months later when he was unexpectedly transferred, I became president. *Voice* magazine soon began to circulate all over the base and many families came to Jesus because of it. We didn't hand the magazines out directly because some people's pride would prevent their accepting them. Instead, we put them in the bathroom stalls at work and inside the newspapers early in the morning.

I was at Beale Air Force Base nine years. A year or so before I was to retire from the Air Force in 1975, Bob Barber, a friend who had started an FGBMFI chapter at Folsom Prison, invited me to go there with him to speak. Five prisoners accepted Jesus that day. Bob asked me back a few months later and God blessed again. So when I got out of the service I went whenever I could, which was almost every Saturday.

Bob was preparing to move his business to Palm Springs and the prison chaplain had decided to discontinue the FGBMFI work when he left. But one Saturday after I'd spoken to the prisoners the chaplain said, "If Cleve will take your

place, Bob, we'll continue."

After much prayer I accepted the responsibility and challenge of going to the prison almost every Saturday for nearly three years.

Then I took on added responsibilities, as assistant to a brother who was starting a church in Sacramento. Suddenly I didn't have time to prepare adequately for the Bible teaching at Folsom. I decided it would be unfair to continue at the prison.

But as I walked through the prison the next Saturday I was surprised. For the first time the men slapped me on the back and told me how grateful they were for my coming, and how good it was that my wife would release me every Saturday from time I would otherwise have spent with her and our family.

Eight men received Jesus that day. I knew God had called me to minister not in the church but in the prisons. It's been my #1 priority for the last two years. Conservatively, more than 1,000 men have been saved in that time and baptized in the Holy Spirit. Only God knows the men who have come to Jesus through the witness of prisoners who have been saved.

As a barefoot boy trudging through the cotton fields, I could not have envisioned the doors of opportunities that would later be opened to me, or the material blessings I would enjoy which began with my enlisting in the service of my country. Far greater, however, is the joy and the satisfaction that is mine because I enlisted in the service of the Lord Jesus. □

Cleve Howard retired in 1975 as master sergeant (electronics) after twenty-one years in the United States Air Force. He spent six years in fulltime real estate and currently is employed as an electronic technician for the Air Force electronics division in Sacramento. He and his wife Lillian have three children: Cheryl, Craig and Crystal, and are members of Capital Christian Center Church. Cleve is a member of FGBMFI's Sacramento Chapter, and devotes a major portion of his personal ministry time to Folsom Prison inmates.

The Howard family at a recent reunion: Craig, Cleve, Lillian, Crystal and Cheryl.

The Harvest is Ready!

You can share in the Vision...

Jesus said: "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."—Luke 10:2, NIV

Our Vision

Our vision for the Fellowship is based upon a series of prophetic messages given over a period of time and confirmed by a literal vision from God.

In the vision, untold masses of men from every continent and nation, of all races and diverse culture and costume, once spiritually dead, are now alive. Delivered and set free, they are filled with the power of God's Holy Spirit, faces radiant with glory, hands raised and voices lifting their praises to heaven.

We see a vast global movement of laymen comprised of millions of men being used by God to bring this last great harvest through the outpouring of God's Holy Spirit before the return of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our Mission Statement

1. *To reach men in all nations for Jesus Christ*
2. *To call men back to God*
3. *To help believers to be baptized in the Holy Spirit and to grow spiritually*
4. *To train and equip men to fulfill the Great Commission*
5. *To provide an opportunity for Christian fellowship*
6. *To bring a greater unity among all people in the body of Christ*

Our Five-Year Goals, 1984-1989

I. Worldwide Outreach—
Chapters in every nation

II. International Membership—
A membership of one million

III. Chapters—
40,000 chapters

Become a member of
FULL GOSPEL BUSINESS MEN'S FELLOWSHIP INTERNATIONAL.
For information contact the FGBMFI Chapter nearest you,
or write FGBMFI / P.O. Box 5050 / Costa Mesa, CA 92628.

CONVENTIONS

The Southern California Regional, Santa Barbara, January 13-14 (featured in these photos), is one of the smaller conventions. Yet whatever the attendance at an FGBMFI convention, the benefits that attract participants are never disappointing. No matter which of the nearly 150 conventions and men's camps you attend, you will enjoy rich fellowship, faith-building testimonies, solid Bible teaching and ministry to those with spiritual and physical needs. □

FIFTEENTH INDIANA REGIONAL
April 4-7, 1984
Hilton Hotel, Indianapolis
Write: Fifteenth Indiana Regional
P.O. Box 19032
Indianapolis, IN 46219

WISCONSIN COUPLES' ADVANCE
April 12-14, 1984
Best Western, Stevens Point
Write: Mr. Merlyn Peters
3741 S. 72nd St.
Milwaukee, WI 53220

HOUSTON REGIONAL
April 19-21, 1984
Adams Mark Hotel, Houston
Write: FGBMFI
13401 S.W. Freeway
Sugar Land, TX 77478

B.C./VANCOUVER ISLAND CONVENTION
April 19-21, 1984
Empress Hotel, Victoria
Write: Mr. Rod Lindsay
2224 Departure Bay Rd.
Nanaimo, British Columbia
Canada V9S 3V8

PRAIRIE REGIONAL
April 26-28, 1984
Write: Mr. Martin Zip
Twelve MacLean Crescent
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
Canada S7K 4J1

THIRD ARIZONA REGIONAL
April 26-28, 1984
Marriott Hotel, Tucson
Write: Mr. John Krischak
17800 Placito Junio
Green Valley, AZ 85614

WILLIAMS LAKE ADVANCE
April 27-29, 1984
Springhouse Trails Ranch
Williams Lake
Write: Dr. John Burns
440 Comer St.
Williams Lake, British Columbia
Canada V2G 1T7

CENTRAL VALLEY CALIFORNIA REGIONAL
May 3-5, 1984
Assyrian/American Civic Club
Turlock
Write: Mr. Doug Dallman
1518 Dougfir, Modesto, CA 95350

UTAH MEN'S ADVANCE
May 4-6, 1984
Alta Peruvian Lodge, Alta
Write: Mr. Victor Martinez
6833 Village Green Rd.
Salt Lake City, UT 84121

WESTERN NEW YORK COUPLES' ADVANCE
May 4-6, 1984
John's Niagara Hotel, Niagara Falls
Write: Mr. Jim McDonald
79 Norcrest Dr.
Rochester, NY 14617

NORTHERN B.C. MEN'S ADVANCE
May 4-6, 1984
Hudson Bay Lodge, Smithers
Write: Mr. Peter Neave
Box 325, Smithers
British Columbia, Canada V0S 2N0

BLUE GRASS REGIONAL
May 10-12, 1984
Write: Mr. Henry Bruins
2817 Clays Mill Rd.
Lexington, KY 40503

1. *Grand Ole Opry guitarist/singer (left) and convention co-chairman Chuck Damato listen attentively as Field Representative Walter Wolf, convention coordinator, emcees meeting.* **2.** *Field Representative Russ Kleinhans testifies to his instantaneous healing of cancer.* **3.** *A portion of the line of people who came forward for ministry.* **4.** *Singing TV evangelist Roger McDuff, Saturday-night speaker.*

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA MEN'S CAMP
May 11-12, 1984
Young Life's Woodleaf, Challenge
Write: Mr. William Carlson
2125 Ramirez St.
Marysville, CA 95901

SECOND ANNUAL ALASKA MEN'S CAMP
May 11-13, 1984
McKinley Village, Parks Hwy.
Write: Mr. Ralph Seekens
1625 Old Steese Hwy.
Fairbanks, AK 99701

NORTHERN ONTARIO REGIONAL
May 17-19, 1984
Holiday Inn, Sudbury, Ontario
Write: Mr. Marcel Gratton
Box 2174
Chelmsford, Ontario
Canada P0M 1L0

SECOND ANNUAL NEBRASKA MEN'S ADVANCE
May 18-20, 1984
Quiet Oaks Camp, Fullerton
Write: FGBMFI, Box 604
Grand Island, NE 68802

MIDWEST REGIONAL
May 24-26, 1984
American Baptist Assembly, Greenlake
Write: Mr. Henry Carlson
564 W. Fulton St.
Chicago, IL 60606

NORTHWEST REGIONAL
May 24-26, 1984
Red Lion Motor Inn, Portland
Write: Mr. Tom Gutzler
11685 S.W. Denfield Rd.
Beaverton, OR 97005

MARYLAND STATE MEN'S ADVANCE
May 25-27, 1984
Brethren Service Center, New Windsor
Write: Mr. Emil McCollum
417 Heather Ridge Dr.
Frederick, MD 21701

ABILENE/ANGELO REGIONAL
May 31-June 2, 1984
Abilene Civic Center
Write: Mr. Jack Yates
318 BOC Bldg.
Abilene, TX 79605

FOURTH SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON MEN'S CAMP
June 1-3, 1984
Black Lake Bible Campgrounds
Olympia
Write: Mr. Jim Dermanoski
3218 Hoffman Rd.
Olympia, WA 98502

31ST ANNUAL WORLD CONVENTION
July 3-7, 1984
Anaheim, California Conv. Ctr.
Write: FGBMFI World Convention
Box 5050
Costa Mesa, CA 92628

Conventions published in this issue were approved on or before December 14.

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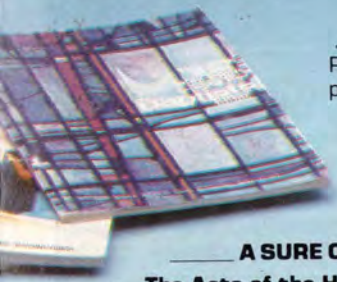

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LOCKUP

Chuck Curtis, San Quentin, California

Another "lockup." I looked out into the prison courtyard beyond my cell and contrasted the sunny calm out there with the tension that simmered inside the walls. It had started with a racial flareup—but what was the catalyst? I reasoned that anger and hatred were the roots.

In my case, it was guilt and disillusionment that had gradually led me down the path into bondage, then prison at San Quentin.

Growing up in Laguna Beach, one of the most desirable communities in southern California, one could reasonably say that I had a lot going for me. My parents divorced when I was very young and my mother, in search of happiness, left me with my grandparents, who raised me from age two through high school. They showed me a lot of love and I felt as though they were my real parents.

After high-school graduation I started playing music with country-western and rock-and-roll bands. Those were adventurous, fun-filled years, until the draft board caught up with me. I had the choice of being volunteered for the infantry, or enlisting—so I chose the Navy.

After training as a hospital corpsman, I was stationed for seventeen months with the Marines in Viet Nam, then for two years at Yokuska, Japan, working in an operating room.

I discovered that I really enjoyed medicine and after my discharge I found a job in Mission Viejo, California as an

operating-room technician.

I settled down, married a wonderful Christian woman, had two beautiful children, attended Calvary Chapel in Costa Mesa, bought a house and we lived very typical, suburban lives—until the roof caved in.

My grandfather became very ill, was admitted into the hospital where I was working and then died. His death was very hard for me to deal with, especially because he died in the place where I worked and there was nothing I could do about it. I was frustrated, helpless and hurt. Suddenly the six years of comfortable living my wife and I had enjoyed didn't mean as much to me. My job was no longer a source of enjoyment, either, until finally I knew I had to leave it.

I decided the only way I could ever be happy again would be to get back into music. So I first started working in small local clubs, playing with trios and quartets in the area. Soon I joined a country-music band that was touring the country.

In the meantime my wife was working in a dental office, trying to raise our daughter, who will soon be twelve, and our son, who will be eight. I wasn't around much to help, since I was on the road most of the time with the band. Bills began to pile up and we just couldn't seem to make ends meet. We finally sold our home, drifting from one apartment to the next.

Was I saved through all this? I believed in the Lord Jesus Christ and knew that the Bible was the word of God, but I just refused to relinquish my life to Him. I had a stubborn, ambitious desire to be a success on my own. It never occurred to me to check with God about any of my plans or decisions.

Of course I didn't realize what my selfishness cost those closest to me, particularly my wife, who by this time had taken all she could take of the life we were leading. She finally took our kids and left me, going to live in Oregon with her parents.

I had never given up the bitterness I had at my grandfather's death. When my wife left me, I loaded more of it on. Never once did I stop to examine myself or question my own motives. Instead, I blamed God and I blamed my wife for everything that had happened between us. I thought, if the Lord really loved us, then how could He allow my family to break up the way it did?

I was playing in Nashville with a band, doing fairly well and getting recognized by some important people (in the music industry), when the final blow came. My wife filed for divorce. At the same time, things went from bad to worse with the band. Some of our instruments were stolen. We had a lot of dissension. Leadership of the band was confusing. Eventually we split up and went our own separate ways. I found myself with nothing but a guitar, a few bucks in my pocket and a little gasoline in the car.

Heading back to California, I moved in with my sister and brother-in-law. I worked at some odd jobs but lacked any sort of real incentive to provide a good living for my children. I was behind in child-support payments and became really desperate for money, but still I didn't turn to the Lord for help or for guidance.

Months went by. My situation only got worse. My brother-in-law insisted that I help out more with their house payments, and my children needed clothes. Then I received a court order to pay what I owed.

Desperate, I decided I had to get money any way I could. Stealing a gun from a friend, I started doing armed robberies of clothing stores. But I soon went on to bigger jobs, stealing gold and jewelry. I also tried some gambling in Las Vegas.

I made connections with a man heavy into drug dealing, with a lot of cash he needed to unload. We made a deal where I would sell him the stolen jewelry. The night I was to make the sale, he wasn't home so I waited in a parking lot in my car. I must have looked suspicious because someone called the Orange County Sheriff's Department.

They ran my identification through their computer, found that I was in violation of probation for unpaid child support, and took me in. When they searched the car they discovered the stolen jewelry and the gun, and the next thing I knew they were booking me for armed robbery.

It was very strange how I suddenly felt relieved. Something had temporarily stopped my headlong descent into the world of crime. In spite of my arrest I felt fortunate, and realized that God must have been watching over me even in my despicable lifestyle. At least no one had ever been hurt and, more important, murder was not a part of my record.

In the Orange County jail I visited the chaplain, who gave me a New Testament to read. I turned to Luke 13 and read about the prodigal son who had returned to his father after living a wretched life. The story paralleled my own. The Bible says that the father opened his arms wide and welcomed back his lost son.

It was just like God was saying to me, "Son, I know what you have done. Nothing is hidden from Me. But I love you. Just come back to Me."

That night I committed my life to Christ, confessing that I couldn't make it on my own.

The prison is violent and I'm locked up. But now that I'm right with the Lord I'm experiencing a different kind of freedom that only He can give. I am involved now in the chapel programs especially, and it's a blessing to be able to play music for the Lord, to worship Him in song and to give my testimony to men here in San Quentin. □

UPDATE!

Fellowship News from Here, There and Around the World

WEST AFRICAN DOORS OPEN

Against impossible odds when air flights were cancelled, convention speakers Gerry Kibarabara, FGBMFI vice-president, West Africa; Fred Lawrence, international director, New York; Wes Smith, Grand Prairie, Texas chapter president; and Jose Pascua, global coordinator, International Office, arrived for the West African Convention, Accra, Ghana. A curfew was lifted just two days before the convention. West African harvest fields are large and ripe: in Nigeria alone, 100 million souls, another 15 million in Ghana.

1

1. *In front of national FGBMFI office: Anthony Akhigbe, national council member, and Dr. Benson Idahosa, the man credited with starting FGBMFI in Nigeria by inviting Tom Ashcraft to his country.* **2.** *West Africa Convention, Ambassador Hotel, Accra, Ghana.*

2

Is there meaning in the universe?

Andrew Pallos, D.D.S., Mission Viejo, California

Toward the end of his life Ernest Hemingway said, "I live in a vacuum, as lonely as a radio tube when it is dead and there is no plug to get life from." Blaise Pascal, the celebrated seventeenth-century French physicist, said that there is a God-shaped vacuum in every human heart.

It seems that I hit that vacuum early in my life.

I was born in Hungary and lived there for six years. In 1956 my mother, sister and I escaped to freedom from Communist Russia's rule through Yugoslavia and France to Switzerland, where my mother remarried and I was raised in boarding schools. When I was thirteen we all came to the United States, living in northern California and the San Francisco Bay area. My experiences related

to the revolution in Hungary and of our escape had instilled in me an insatiable desire to understand the values and affairs of mankind.

In school I skipped the first, seventh and eighth grades and, although I knew no English, finished high school in three years. I participated in varsity gymnastics, learned four years of Spanish in two years, and was involved in advanced mathematics and computer-programming sessions. At sixteen I attended the University of California at Santa Cruz, literally going, going, studying all the time without really understanding my intense motivation. I only knew that I had to get through school, then maybe I would find out what life was about.

Because of my success in high-school gymnastics, people encouraged me to try for the Olympics. However, instead of striving competitively for more short-lived rewards, I hungered to find something lasting, secure and meaningful to which I could give myself wholeheartedly and for my entire life.

People asked, "What is your goal in life?" Inwardly I responded, "Yes . . . what *is* my goal in life? That's what I'm trying to find out."

When I couldn't decide on a college major, the best advice I found was to "Go into physics; later you can always go into something less."

Philosophy professors talked to me about going into philosophy. I asked them, "Can you tell me what life is about?" I read different philosophers, and the more I read the more uncertain I became. Some of them I didn't understand; some made sense to me but others contradicted them. Each seemed to present some aspect of truth, but I could never fit the whole thing together.

At seventeen I was a fulltime summer teaching assistant of German at UC Santa Cruz, and in charge of the German dormitory. Students older than I came to me with their problems. Their needs and their seeking only added to my own sense of desperation.

It dawned on me that maybe education was not the answer. Both of my parents have PhD's; one in organic chemistry, the other in clinical psychology. Yet when I asked them, they could not say whether there was a God or a purpose to life.

It was no less than Albert Einstein who made this significant statement: "I don't know one-hundredth of 1 percent about anything." The more knowledge we get, the more we realize how little we know. Only fools boast of their knowledge. Solomon, one of the wisest men who ever lived, said, "He that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow" (Ecclesiastes 1:18). I was beginning to understand what he meant.

Things like these really disturbed me, however. Growing up and thinking that they knew the truth, I had believed everything grownups taught. Now I found that actually we are not even sure where we came from, where we are going or why we are here! The most important basics are missing—yet we are trying to play the game.

At the end of that summer of teaching German I hitchhiked with my friend to Nebraska, feeling I needed to get away. Tired of looking for answers, I gave up.

One night, for the first time in my life, I became drunk. I thought, *What's the use of being good? In the end we're all going to rot anyway.*

The following school year I attempted to adopt the lifestyle of some of my peers. I attended parties in dark houses with strange music and black lights, with marijuana, LSD, beer and cheap wine. Although I told myself that this might be the way to live, I was never really able to do as they did. My association with people going down into the pigsty of life and succumbing to every passion gave me a sense of uneasiness and longing. It was mainly out of disappointment from having nothing to live for that I explored this type of living.

Around Thanksgiving, 1967, a friend ground up and smoked a nut he had found on campus. Later he told me he feared he was losing his mind. I gave him a ride downtown, and at a stop sign he jumped out of the car without a word and ran away. I didn't see him for several days.

When he came back he had a Bible and was smiling and clear-eyed. He told me, "I became a Christian. I got saved!" He talked about having "a new life" and being "healed and delivered and forgiven."

Within a few weeks I noticed with surprise that he had stopped studying but was still reading his Bible. I appreciated what religion had done for him but I began to be concerned that he might flunk out of school. So I started to reason with him.

As I became involved with Vic, trying to help him, I began to recognize in myself the question mark I still had about God. I had groped for Him to the best of my ability, attended churches and acquired disappointing impressions of some professing Christians. I had honestly concluded that there could be no God, and that people were being deceived. Still, I had little assurance of being right, which only intensified my arguments against God.

One night in the dorm—we were listening to jazz, smoking cigars and sipping some wine, with our feet propped up on our beds—I set out to clear up this issue once for all.

I began to repeat to Vic all the arguments I had learned: "Why does God allow so much pain, cruelty and injustice in the world? Why do big fish eat little fish? Why does God keep silence? Why doesn't He manifest Himself amid all the corruptions and shams of life? Where is the love of God in war? in suffering? in all the inevitable inequalities of life?"

Vic couldn't answer me. He just kept saying, "I still believe. I don't know, but I believe." This really upset me.

I retorted, "We're going to college to learn to be reasonable, to be able to understand and to communicate, and here you can't even talk to me. You say you are saved, but you know nothing about God—you can't even answer me."

My attack gathered momentum. "Listen, the Bible says that I'm a sinner, and you no doubt believe that I am. I don't believe I am; I don't even know what that means. I'm as good as most, and better than some. So if God is real—the God you're talking about—let *Him* come and tell me that I'm a sinner. I challenge God

to come to me and tell me that I am a sinner!"

I felt really good. *Now, if God is real,* I thought, *this is His chance.* There was nothing more to hide. I felt that my responsibility had finally been discharged. I would always be able to point back to this moment of having given God a challenge and an invitation—if He existed.

I turned around and headed for the

shower, a towel over my shoulder.

But something strange happened. For some reason it was hard for me to look at Vic. I sensed something that I couldn't explain. Silently I reasoned: *I challenged God honestly. I have no reason to be unable to look into Vic's eyes as I leave this room.*

Vic was standing near the door. As I went past him I forced myself to look into his eyes. As I did, a sweeping power coming from his direction overcame me and I was knocked backwards. By reflex I hit him in the stomach as hard as I could, then fell on the bed. Neither of us could account for what had happened.

I got up and went through the hall to the bathroom. What had happened? What about all my knowledge of physics? Was this electricity? Was it magnetism? I flash-reviewed my science courses. We had learned to explain everything by natural phenomena. But I could not explain the force that had knocked me down.

"Okay, that doesn't mean there's a God. It doesn't mean anything." I tried without success to shrug it off.

Probably the biggest struggle of my life took place in that shower. All of my experience, education and convictions led to the conclusion that there is no God. Jesus Christ could not be real. On the other hand, shaken, I realized that if I were to be really honest I would have to be open to new information. I remember telling myself, "I've tried to be honest about things. I don't know why, but the possibility does exist that there's something to what Vic says."

After what turned out to be forty-five minutes of intense self-debate in the shower, I came back and told Vic that, while I hadn't changed my mind about anything, I was willing nevertheless to entertain the idea that there might be something to what he was saying. . . . What should I do?

We knelt to pray. I repeated some words after him, and we prayed about the blood of Christ, which had never

meant anything to me. "Lord, wash me whiter than snow. Forgive all my sins. Sweep every part of me clean. Lord Jesus, come into me and restore me to Yourself."

As we prayed, right there on my knees something happened to me. I did not want to stop. It was amazing: although I had little idea what I was saying to God, He invaded me with love and joy and peace.

It was beyond my highest expectation. I felt so pure and clean and forgiven. By contrast I saw that I must have been really dirty. The light had come on, but with it came total forgiveness and acceptance, without the slightest hint of condemnation or "I told you so." That was the greatest surprise. Although I didn't have the words then, I experienced what Jeremiah 31:34 says: ". . . for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."

The New Testament says about the resurrection of Jesus that for awhile His followers disbelieved for joy (Luke 24:41). I too was so happy that I could not believe. It was overwhelming to realize that Jesus Christ is real, living and present right here and now.

I walked outside. It was past midnight. Flooded with peace, joy, happiness and love, I ran through the meadows. I recalled how I had often walked through that campus discouraged. I had been depressed as I realized something of the vastness of the universe and of the beauty of nature, then the insignificance and emptiness of our existence and the futility of all the liberty we are given.

I had looked at the stars and wondered, "What is behind them? Is there any meaning in the universe?" I had felt sick inside every time I had asked such questions. But now I knew that there was Someone, whom I had just met, behind creation. How thankful I was!

That night Jesus Christ became more real to me than anything I had ever experienced, learned, desired or imagined:

The Pallos family: Christy, Andrew, Jeanne and Jimmy

better than physics or philosophy or gymnastics. I gladly gave my all to know Him and follow Him.

More than fifteen years later, I write these things as a husband, father and practicing dentist. I have learned that people's greatest need is for inner peace; that on the cross of Christ nearly 2,000 years ago God made peace possible for each one of us.

It may be more than we can comprehend to claim that the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ can be meaningful to you today. Nevertheless, I have repeatedly witnessed His truth and power. I had to come to the point of being willing to accept the truth, even when it did not make sense.

One of the most difficult things for me was to be honest with God about my attitudes toward Him. But when I did speak to God by faith (that is, without any rational basis), telling Him how I felt and what I thought, He gently and lovingly turned me around and showed me the truth. It was like coming out of darkness into light. I simply *knew* the truth on the inside, and could no longer argue. My logical approach suddenly became meaningless.

Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6). The Bible tells us that the name of Jesus is above every name, and that there is no other name available to us by which we can have a new, genuine, satisfying life beyond all our hopes and expectations, both for now and for eternity.

I've chosen to stake my life and future on Jesus Christ. I have done so day by day for years, and have seen many others do so, each time without regret or disappointment.

Some may think we are wrong. But in light of the available evidence I believe that the name and person of Jesus Christ, God's unique Son, deserves your honest investigation. My experience is that if you ask Him into your life you will never regret it. I wholeheartedly recommend Him to everyone. □

Dr. Pallos is in private practice of general dentistry in Laguna Niguel, California. He and his wife Jeanne fellowship at Mission Hills Christian Center in Laguna Hills and have two children: son Jimmy, age 7, and daughter Christy, age 5. Dr. Pallos enjoys speaking to businessmen, schools and churches about Christ in his life.

Full Gospel Business Men's Chapter Outreach

As this issue was being prepared for publication, the following chapters were submitted as having been recently chartered. The president's name and telephone number are included in this list for your information. Write for information regarding the date and location of a chapter meeting in your area.

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Threefold Purpose of Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship

1. *To witness to God's presence and power* in the world today through the message of the total Gospel for the total man, and by this to reach men for Jesus Christ, especially those having the same social, cultural or business interests as the person doing the witnessing.

2. *To provide a basis of Christian fellowship* among all men everywhere through an organism not directly associated with any specific church but cooperating with all those of like mind, and to inspire its members to be active in their respective churches.

Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International does not start churches. Rather, we desire solely to be a service arm to existing ones.

3. *To bring about a greater measure of unity* and spirit of harmony in the body of Christ, where members are united in a common effort for the good of the whole body.

How to Start a Full Gospel Business Men's Chapter

Requests come in daily to start new chapters. If you have this burden laid on your heart and see the vision for your community, write for complete information to: Chapter Department, FGBMFI, P.O. Box 5050, Costa Mesa, CA 92628.

living in hell

Eduardo J. Alvarez, Lima, Peru

Though I was born and raised in Peru, I met and married an American woman while I was living and working in New York. Shortly after that, we were transferred to Peru. And that's when I began living in hell. . . .

I don't remember how it all started, but I became involved with a woman at the office, which Jean found out about eventually. Latin women do not like infidelity, but many of them will tolerate it. However, I discovered that my American wife would not. She would have divorced me, but she couldn't. She was in a foreign country. And since Peruvian law does not allow children to leave the country without both parents' permission, Jean could not take our children and go back to the United States.

She was forced to stay in Peru whether she liked it or not. So we lived in hell.

I was raised in Peru as a Catholic, so I went to Catholic schools. When I finished high school I went to Pennsylvania and enrolled in the University of Villanova, a Catholic university. So throughout all of my schooling I was exposed to theology and doctrine, but somehow I missed understanding my need for a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

From the time I was a child I had been taught that Jesus Christ was the Son of God. I believed that He came to this earth and died for our sins. I believed in heaven and hell. I believed in the coming judgment. *But it did no good.* None of it had any bearing on my life.

I took theology courses every semester at the university. I went to prayer meeting every Wednesday night and Mass every Sunday. After graduating from school, I also left God behind.

Now I was married, a husband and father, involved with another woman. I began to believe I would never find happiness on this earth, but that I might be

happy when I got to heaven. Even though I knew that what I was doing was very wrong, I didn't apply enough of the word of God to realize that, living as I was living, I would never get to heaven.

Not until 1976 did my hell on earth begin to change.

The beginning of the change took place one day when an encyclopedia salesman came to my door. As a bonus for buying the set of encyclopedias, he offered me a Bible.

I began reading it—beginning at Genesis 1:1. Every night I would read for fifteen minutes, and by August God's word began coming alive in me. As it did I became convicted of my immoral life.

That month something unusual happened that forever changed the course of my life: a dear friend of mine disappeared when his cargo plane went down in the Peruvian jungle. As a result, I met his sister and brother-in-law. They were both Pentecostals. Instead of talking to us about the loss of their brother and brother-in-law, they talked to my wife and me about Jesus.

I had never talked to non-Catholics before, at least none who spoke to me of God. These Protestants possessed a faith that was foreign to me. Their conversation was liberally sprinkled with "Praise the Lord"—a phrase also foreign to me.

Before we parted they gave me two mighty books, *Like a Mighty Wind* and *The Late, Great Planet Earth.* I took them home and read them. I not only read them, I believed them.

I didn't know where Timor, Indonesia was, but I wished I might go there and see these things for myself. I had never heard about Christ's second coming, but if He was coming back as Hal Lindsey declared, then I wanted to be there when He did.

Three months later (December of 1976) my wife and I traveled to the States to visit her family in Pennsylvania. By this time, despite that fact that I was still living a double life, I myself was beginning to talk about Jesus.

One day while driving in Pennsylvania, I turned on the car radio and heard a Catholic layman say the same thing my Pentecostal friends in Peru were saying: "Praise the Lord!" A few days later I turned on the same program and heard a man testify to what Jesus was doing in *Lima, Peru.*

I couldn't believe it. I had traveled all the way to Pennsylvania to hear what God was doing in my own country. I telephoned the radio station, asking the man to call me. He did, identifying himself as "an evangelical." I had never heard the term.

"When you go back to Lima," the man said, "I want you to go to this Catholic prayer group," and he gave me the pertinent facts. I promised.

I returned to Peru in January of 1977 and went to church. As I did, I experienced an overwhelming urge to go to communion. But I couldn't do that without going to confession—which I could not do because I wasn't yet finished with my sinful life.

By now it was clear to me that I had either to quit reading my Bible or to make some kind of decision.

Shortly thereafter, Jean returned from the States and we went together to the Catholic prayer group. About 250 people

were there, all praising God, clapping and singing, talking in strange languages. A layman got up and spoke. Jean said she was never going back unless a priest was there. She didn't realize that one of the leaders *was* a priest, though he wasn't dressed like one. I prevailed upon her and we did go back.

Then we started reading some other Christian books. One was by Merlin Carothers. I found myself wanting to go to California to meet him.

Each of these experiences was impacting my life. I felt a growing need to do something.

I took a list of the Ten Commandments with me to a church, knelt down alone and confessed to God the ones I had broken, and repented of my sin. I prayed, "God, You know that I'm a Catholic, and You know I've got to do this again before a priest. . . ."

The next Sunday Jean and I went to church and I confessed to the priest. I wanted to be restored to good standing with God and my church.

Then I began praying for the baptism in the Holy Spirit. I went to the priest in charge of the prayer group and asked him about it. He said, "Go to a Life in the Spirit seminar."

"When?" I asked.

"Next August."

I couldn't wait until August. So I began praying for this promised Baptism. One Saturday while I was taking a shower, Jesus appeared to me. He said, "I live, and I love you, and you are saved." I was wrapped in an indescribable love. A month later my wife was filled with His Spirit.

Almost immediately we began ministering, first within the Catholic renewal movement, then elsewhere. Three years later I met Demos Shakarian in Washington, D.C. After meeting him, Jimmy Pestana and I and some other men formed our FGBMFI chapter in Lima. That has given us an avenue in which to minister and it has helped to change our lives.

Our five children are being raised in a home whose center is Jesus; I introduced my brother and sister to Him. My father was eighty-two years of age when I shared the reality of my faith with him and my mother. They both wept their way to the Lord.

Everywhere I go I tell those I meet, "Jesus is real. He's alive and He loves you . . . and He will change your life as He changed mine." □

Eduardo Alvarez has been financial manager for an American pharmaceutical company since 1977. He and his wife Jean attend the Catholic church and have five children: Eduardo, 15; Jennifer, 11; Daniel, 10; David, 5; and Gabriel, 4. Mr. Alvarez is International Director for FGBMFI in Peru and president of the Lima Chapter; he also assists Jean in running a Christian bookstore.

You Are Cordially Invited

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THE SUM, THE ANSWER

Jesus is the answer! That sentence seems simplistic if you haven't discovered how true it really is.

After years of intellectual doubts, Andrew Pallos, dentist, discovered the reality of Jesus. . . . Ray Duerre ascended to a Fortune 500 sales management position only to find life's center hollow without the Saviour. . . . In contrast, Cleve Howard first met Jesus as a boy and witnesses to the many spiritual and material blessings he enjoys. . . . Already free in Jesus, Chuck Curtis knows joy and peace even while in San Quentin. . . . Eduardo Alvarez turned his marriage into a "living hell" and only Jesus could restore his relationships to their God-intended beauty. . . . Julian Carroll, while governor of Kentucky, was powerless to forgive political enemies intent on destroying him, and unable to rid himself of consuming bitterness—until his complete surrender to the Christ who forgave from the cross.

Whether your need is similar to these, or unlike any of them, Jesus is the answer. If you have not put your life in His hands, the Six Steps to Salvation will guide you. Also, without obligation, ask for the helpful booklet *Now that You Have Received Christ.*

SIX SCRIPTURAL STEPS TO SALVATION

Men still cry, "What must I do to be saved?" The Bible provides a clear answer.

1. ACKNOWLEDGE: "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). "God be merciful to me a sinner" (Luke 18:13).

2. REPENT: "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3). "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out" (Acts 3:19).

3. CONFESS: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (I John 1:9). "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Rom. 10:9).

4. FORSAKE: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord . . . for he will abundantly pardon" (Isaiah 55:7).

5. BELIEVE: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16).

6. RECEIVE: "He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (John 1:11,12).

Why not make your eternal decision now:

"Lord Jesus, I believe You died for my sins and I ask Your forgiveness. I receive You now as my personal Saviour and invite You to manage my life from this day forward. Amen."

Write us to tell of your decision. We'll send you a booklet, "Now That You've Received Christ." Our mailing address: Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International, P.O. Box 5050, Costa Mesa, CA 92628.

Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International World Laymen's Headquarters, Costa Mesa, CA

FULL GOSPEL BUSINESS MEN'S VOICE

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WHO ARE WE?

Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International was founded in 1952 by Demos Shakarian, an Armenian dairy farmer, to reach men for Jesus. One year later, God gave him a vision in which he saw the people of every continent, revealing that the ministry of the Fellowship would result in people everywhere in the world being brought to Jesus and linked in loving community.

That vision is becoming a reality through the Fellowship's ministries, now touching 83 nations and transcending denominational, racial and cultural barriers. Men interested in participating in this exciting end-time ministry are invited to write Chapter Department, FGBMFI, Box 5050, Costa Mesa, CA 92628.

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