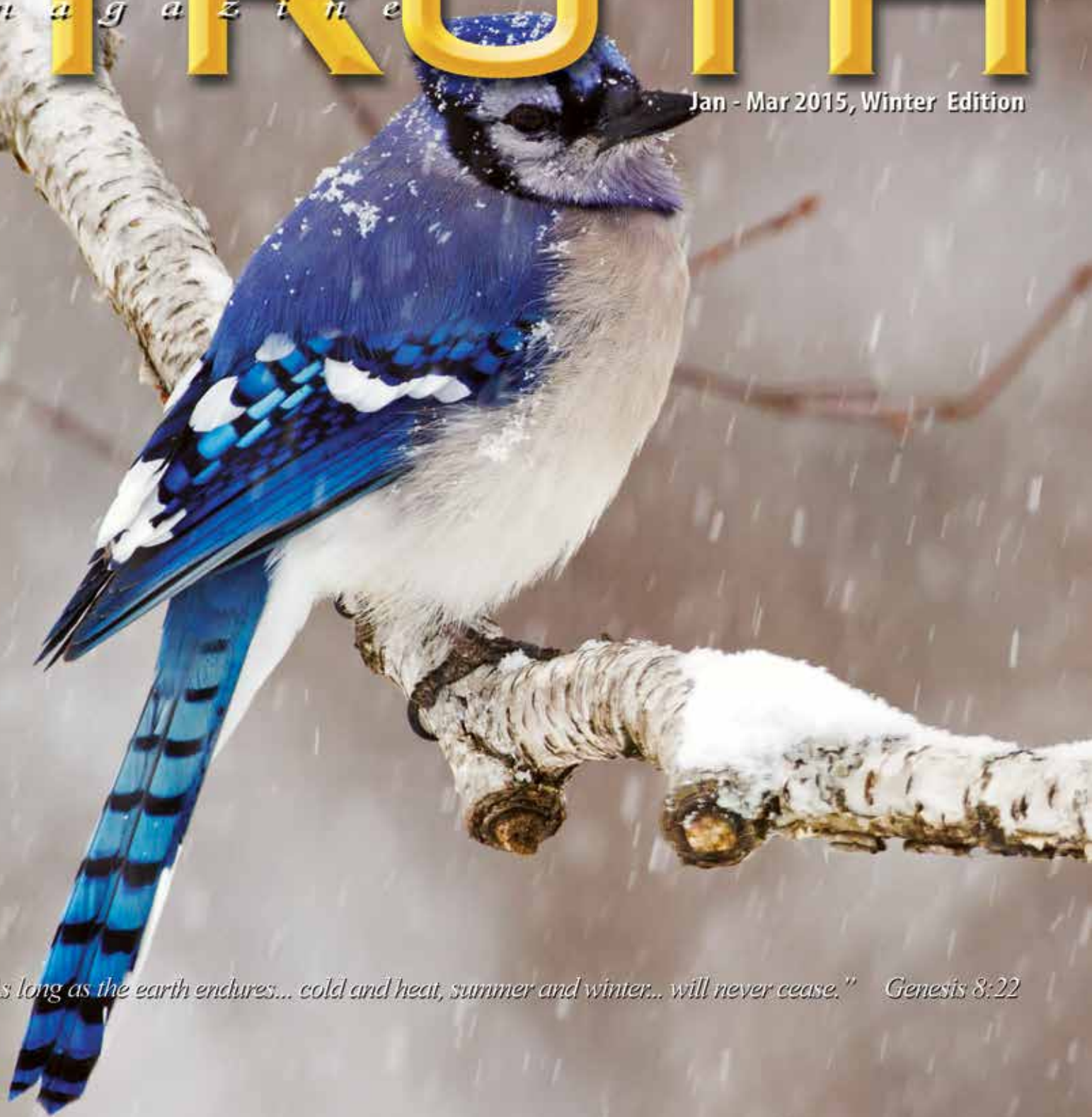


TRUTH

m a g a z i n e

Jan - Mar 2015, Winter Edition



"As long as the earth endures... cold and heat, summer and winter... will never cease." Genesis 8:22

Working Together to Advance the Grace of God and Impact the World for Christ



GRACE GOSPEL
FELLOWSHIP

TRUTH

Jan - Mar, Winter Edition, Volume 64, Issue 4

Endeavoring to set forth God's purpose and grace according to 2 Timothy 1:8-11

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The publishing of TRUTH, a quarterly magazine emphasizing the doctrines of the dispensation of grace, is to provide individuals and churches with Bible studies, articles of Christian concern and devotion, and news about Grace Gospel Fellowship (GGF), Grace Bible College, Grace Ministries International, Grace Publications, and other Grace organizations and activities.

The views and opinions expressed in the ads and articles are those of the authors and organizations. They do not necessarily reflect the view of GGF and/or the editorial staff of TRUTH.

PUBLISHED by
Grace Gospel Fellowship,
a nonprofit religious corporation,
incorporated in the State of
Michigan.

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TRUTH Magazine is the quarterly membership periodical of the GGF. Gift subscriptions can be purchased through the national office.



Engaging Our Young People



GRACE GOSPEL
FELLOWSHIP

by Andrew Clark
Grace Gospel Fellowship Intern
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Within our churches, between young people and adults, there is a disconnect about which we need to be concerned and one we can't ignore any longer—not true of every church, but it is a huge reason for teens leaving churches or seeking more “entertainment themed” ones. Trust me, *the youth want to be engaged by their local church*; not just thrown into another program or placed in a youth ministry, but fully engaged and part of something bigger. Do churches have to reinvent the wheel when it comes to their young people? Not at all. I have gathered some practical ways for engaging the next generation and beginning the process of developing them into Christ followers who have deeper relationships with him and their local churches.

Serving Alongside One Another

Working together with students to serve outside of the local church is a great way to foster involvement. There is something special about working alongside one another towards a like-minded goal that brings people together. Letting students fill lead roles in a service oriented situation can do wonders for their confidence. It will change their perspective of their church and what its ministry is all about. To care and work hard with one another builds bonds and can open the eyes of each person involved. A realization occurs at a point that the church is not made up of *separate groups* of people but instead is the Body of Christ working together with *each member* having a vital role in the greater reality of church life; the glorification of our Lord Jesus Christ.

It is a beautiful thing—to feel appreciated. Having young people involved in the church's community outreach/service encourages them, acknowledges that they are part of their church and just as important as anyone else. Plus, this is empowering

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them to serve down the road, even when it is just the youth that do it. A follow-up youth service day or week, for example, can be just as unifying, especially when it is recognized by the entire congregation. Engage the youth to serve alongside and then independently in ways and places where their energy and enthusiasm go a long way in making a difference, not only in their community but in their church as well.

Recruiting

More than just outreach and serving the community, the youth need to be engaged to serve within their church family. Recruiting teens to be involved in the Sunday service or as leaders/helpers in children's ministry can do wonders for their willingness to serve. *But it all starts with the idea of recruiting them.* A personal conversation or request for them to help is more meaningful than a mass congregational request. There is more meaning to one-on-one or face-to-face recruitment.

Recruiting youth to serve can pay dividends to the life and energy of the entire church. The next generation wants to serve but they also want to feel valued. Many teens feel like they don't have a purpose or are "in the way" when it comes to church ministry. Recruiting teens to serve is a practical way to engage them and can even reinvigorate the current helpers and make for a healthier pool of volunteers in the long run. By letting teens serve and making it a personal goal to seek them out and ask them to serve, you are bringing meaning and empowerment into their lives and changing how they are perceived by the church. It shouldn't come as a surprise that your teens can be some of your most innovative volunteers. They have passion and excitement, and their untapped potential can do marvels for the ministry. From personal experience, one of my first opportunities in ministry was as an eighth grader. I was approached to serve as an assistant in our children's ministry for younger elementary kids. I was asked in person and face-to-face by the children's director and, even though I was nervous and had a lot of questions, I felt encouraged and appreciated that this leader would think of me.

Leading

Recruiting teenagers not only to serve but to lead offers them a true opportunity to "own" their faith. Not only are they put in a situation where they have to study and experience training but you have an opportunity to say, "I trust you." Those three words



can impact a teen who either has a God given ability to minister or is still learning what it means to have faith. To trust someone means you believe in them and you want them to succeed. As a church, we need to start putting our teens in areas in which they can succeed.

Allowing teens to lead in areas of ministry will expose them to the responsibility of leadership and the growth that comes from it. Leading and learning to share one's faith develops a personal ownership of it and a deeper relationship with Christ. A beautiful thing from a youth pastor's perspective is a teen stepping up and leading without being asked to lead. The confidence they have from past experiences, and hearing you say "I trust you," and the encouragement they have received from leading before enables them to lead when others would least expect it. We have the potential right within our churches to raise up our next leaders, and what better way to do that than by giving them leadership opportunities within the church.

Opinions

Their opinions are important. We should ask our young people for their opinions because there is a great deal to be learned from the next generation. Yes, some opinions may seem nonsensical, others might be far-fetched, but teens do have an understanding of what is going on in the world, and if we are to engage the culture, then we have to engage the ones who are shaping it. They can give us viewpoints that we would normally overlook. On a certain ministry or function of the church, their take on it could totally revolutionize the way your church does what it does. For

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"We have the potential right within our churches to raise up our next leaders, and what better way to do that than by giving them leadership opportunities within the church."



Continued from page 2

leaders with a program needing a new battery, flag down a passing teenager and ask his or her opinion. Their fresh input could energize and give the spark needed to get you and the program going again.

To ask their opinions and engage them—to draw them out on their responses—means you truly have to care. You care about their opinions and you recognize them as a legitimate part of the church. Seeking the opinion of young leaders and giving them a platform to share their thoughts is a step towards a more unified church body. An opinion was shared in my own youth group and the results have been mind-blowing. Out of it has come a student led traveling worship team and more involvement at all levels on Sunday mornings. The youth saw a need to go out and serve the assisted living and elderly homes in our community (an area of service that myself and other leaders had ignored). Teens have brought newness to our ministry on Sundays and our weekly ministries as a whole because they were asked, “What do you think?”

Why?

For some churches there are no young people or teens to engage. My suggestion for such a church is to support a local

ministry that does work with teens and young adults. The reach of the church should stretch beyond the walls of the building and what better way to make an impact in your community than to support another. Whether it be volunteering or financial support, it is valuable to do.

There is a reason why teens are becoming disinterested with their churches and it starts with them feeling like an afterthought. As a whole, a church needs to recognize this and begin to engage them at a deeper level. Challenge them to do more and to be involved. Programs are good but only go so far. Instead, put them in situations to lead and feel empowered. Recognize them as a vital part of their church and the Body of Christ. Recruit them to serve and be a generation that can influence the world, not be influenced by it. The church should set a Christ centered example that reflects the gospel and engages the youth to own their faith.

Engaging the next generation starts with you and me. Mentoring, discipling, engagement of others were all part of Jesus’ ministry. Paul even engaged those younger than himself and encouraged them to lead and to make their faith real. These things may not work for everyone and are frightening thoughts for others, but they are a step in the right direction of engaging the younger generation and glorifying God through them. □

Celebrating
75 YEARS

GRACE
BIBLE COLLEGE



Bringing Grace Bible College Up to Date:
Grace's 75-year history from 1995 up to 2014

Part three of a three-part series

The last twenty years of Grace Bible College history were filled with challenges, changes, and blessings. There were a number of significant events and many special people used by God to impact the course of the College. In all of this we see the hand of God and His work in ways none of us could have imagined, bringing the College to where it is as we enter 2015. This summary of God's work through His servants intends to lift up His name, glorifying Him alone beyond the contributions of those mentioned here.

by Ken B. Kemper
President of Grace Bible College

Final Years of Bruce Kemper's Presidency

From 1995 until President Kemper's announced resignation in 2002, the College experienced stability and progress in student life and academics. Collaborative agreements were established with Cornerstone University in Education and with Davenport University in Business. In these programs, students could take all Bible, theology, and general education courses through Grace, and receive professional studies courses through the collaborating institution, receiving two degrees upon completion. During these years, enrollment leveled between 140 and 150 (as it had been in the 1970's and early 1980's) and excellent personnel were hired or faithfully continued to serve at the College. Among them, Phil Long (now Dr. Long) was hired to teach Bible and biblical languages, Jason Werkema (now Dr. Werkema) was added to the music department to teach worship arts with expertise in guitar and all things musical, Kevin Gilliam was hired as the Director of Enrollment Services, Jim Peters began serving in Information Technologies, Kathy Molenkamp became head librarian, and Nathan Johnson came as Director of Facilities, serving and stewarding the campus with love and vigor as unto the Lord. Additionally, Grant Siler and his wife Eleanor continued to serve in the area of planned giving, which is blessing the College to this day with needed estate gifts for scholarship endowments. Linda Siler (their daughter) came to the College in 1988 to serve as Registrar, replacing Evlyne Beyer who served in that capacity since the move to Grand Rapids in 1961.

Velting Soccer Field was constructed on the east end of campus as a home field for Grace's men's soccer team (women's soccer has shared the field since 2006). A renovation project, which originally envisioned building a totally new library, was launched in 2000. This project was downsized, and instead, significant space and much needed renovations were added to the current Bultema

Memorial Library. President Bruce Kemper worked to finance the competitive and challenging small Bible college when there was a national decline beginning in Bible college attendance. He traveled with his wife Judi and with student ministry teams to promote the College. At times, he was hospitalized during these trips due to heart problems, but God preserved him until his retirement in January 2003 at age 65. His nearly twelve years as President were valuable due to the heart of ministry that he displayed toward students, churches, faculty, and staff. His legacy at Grace is significant. Also, Dr. Dale DeWitt announced his retirement after more than forty years of teaching, and in 2003, a celebration was held to honor both of these men. What a legacy of faithfulness to the Word, ministry, and scholarship Dr. DeWitt displayed.

A Significant Transition

In October of 2002, the Board of Directors called a new President to lead the College into the future. They exercised unusual faith in the Lord by offering the position to a church planting, leadership developer who was serving in Africa. Ken Kemper, his wife Kathy and their three teen-aged children, returned to the US in early 2003 to assume the office of president from his father Bruce. Ken brought an enthusiasm and fervor for ministry and growth to the College used by the Lord to develop a culture of progress, which still impacts the College. Ken engaged the campus in the discovery of the "Grace Bible College Experience," and the redefinition of the core curriculum based on three important ingredients: Bible/theology, general education, and professional studies. This resulted in a clearer definition of what every student experiences as well as what the core competencies are of a graduate from Grace Bible College.

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The board also experienced some shifts as new committee chairs were appointed and a new chairman was selected to lead along with the new administration. Longtime board member and GBC alumnus, Rick Velting (along with his wife Terri), agreed to serve as chair. An executive committee was formed to meet on a regular basis to assist the new president and to navigate with him the challenges ahead. Jimmy Moore (Vice Chair), Mark Matychuk (Secretary), Randy Zandbergen (Treasurer), and Dr. Jim Webb were selected to serve with the new president as he pushed hard for progress in all areas. The College reaffirmed its commitment to remain a Bible college while many Bible colleges transitioned to become Christian liberal arts colleges in order to survive. President Kemper tirelessly worked to clarify and define the core values that make Grace Bible College what it is. The core values were timeless but needed clear definition. The following four resonated strongly with our alumni, students, faculty, staff, and board:

1. Grace Theology – Grace proudly holds to a Mid-Acts Dispensational perspective on the beginning of the Church, the Body of Christ, and believes in Grace living as the practice for every believer today.

2. Bible Centered – Grace Bible College enthusiastically embraces the Scriptures as the center of all education and will have no less than 30 hours of Bible, theology, and ministry in every program of study and all classes will be permeated with a strong biblical perspective.

3. Ministry Focused – Each student is engaged in ministry as part of the course of study and is prepared to serve the Lord in their God-given vocational calling.

4. Transformational Relationships – Grace works through relationships and will seek to cultivate meaningful relationships for life-on-life growth which leads to godliness.

Quality People Added to the College

The last twelve years have been marked by the addition of many very capable individuals who have advanced the College with vision. Dr. Paul Sweet (GBC alumnus) was hired as academic dean to lead the faculty. Along with a strong loyalty to the Grace Gospel Fellowship, Paul's diligent work and ministry focus helped to build the faculty and progress toward the new growth goals. Faculty member Dr. Mat Loverin (another GBC alumnus) was added to teach ethics, philosophy, and theology. Dr. Scott Shaw was hired to help teach psychology and sociology as well as counseling, supplementing the work of Dr. Jan Schregardus. In 2007, with the clearly needed drive toward ministry, Mark Carroll and Gary Spykerman were added to champion youth ministry and pastoral ministry respectively. Dr. Jason Werkema became chair of the worship arts program which replaced the music performance and digital media programs with renewed

focus on ministry. Kayleen Bobbitt returned in this area as well after several years away from the College.

Brian Sherstad added great people, like John Spooner and Becky Karsten, to the community life staff. Rich Renzema came out of retirement to become the women's basketball coach and athletic director, charting a new emphasis for athletics and student athletes. Rich hired Gary Bailey as basketball coach, and he recently succeeded Rich as athletic director. Randy Helm served as business manager during some crucial years, helping to "right the ship" financially while Bryan Walker served in marketing, fund development, and public relations to advance the College. Since then, Doug Vriesman and Steve Hilbrands respectively have diligently served in these vital roles. Many others (such as John Sprague, Joyce Storms, and Greg Heath) have served in various, shorter-termed, yet important roles as well.

Academic Changes

In 2010, with the firm conviction that many others could be trained for ministry who were not able to physically come to campus and study in a traditional format, the College began to pursue a new mode of education. The College began designing curriculum, hired Zak Sorensen to recruit, and launched an adult and online education program. Classes began in 2011 with accreditation approval for the Leadership and Ministry Degree. In 2012, Mike Stowell was hired to lead the Adult and Online (AOE) Studies program that has grown to over 350 students in just four years! Academic advisors, a registrar, assistants, and recruiters have been added as the years progressed.

The traditional studies program has recently added a concentration in criminal justice to the human services program and a bachelor's degree in business. Under the leadership of Dr. Paul Sweet and subsequently Dr. Mat Loverin the faculty has developed a strong assessment culture institution-wide. Through



this the College seeks to measure student learning according to established learning outcomes each semester. More faculty members continue to be added as student numbers increase. In the last ten years, the College has graduated more pastoral ministry and youth ministry students than in many, many years prior. Many of these young men have submitted to commissioning, licensing, and ordination through the Grace Gospel Fellowship and serve in GGF churches around the country. Our worship arts graduates are ministering in churches and other graduates are serving according to their education and calling.

Noteworthy Student Enrollment Growth

In 2006, with prayerful planning and a vision to thrive in a culture which is increasingly antagonistic to biblical values, the leadership dedicated themselves to grow the College. Through the generosity of many donors, the College was able to purchase adjacent developed property from Wyoming Public Schools. This building became the Jack T. Dean Academic Center, and all academic staff offices as well as classes were moved there in anticipation of upcoming growth. There was great excitement when student enrollment in 2010 surpassed 200 for the first time since 1979! Only two years later, our traditional fall enrollment had grown to 272 and about 180 non-traditional students were enrolled as well! Truly, God was doing something exciting in our midst while many other Bible colleges were going out of business or drastically declining in enrollment.

Now, in this 75th anniversary year, Grace Bible College is serving 320 traditional students and very nearly 400 non-traditional students studying online or in evening classes! We have had record enrollment each year for the past six years, and continue to make improvements as personnel and resources are added. This year the College will graduate over fifty students each from the traditional and non-traditional programs, and send them forth equipped to serve the Lord effectively!



Revitalized Facilities

Also in 2006, Grace Ministries International and Grace Gospel Fellowship sold their facility about two miles away and moved onto the Grace Bible College campus, making their new home in the J. C. O'Hair Administration Building. This building was totally renovated with their use in mind as the College moved academic operations to the newly purchased and remodeled Jack T. Dean Academic Center on Rogers Lane.

For 2010-2013, the College announced a major capital campaign to add a new drive, entrance, and beautiful student commons to connect O'Hair and Huston Hall. The Lord supplied around \$1.8 million to add the student commons, and totally revitalize the parking lots, walkways around and between buildings, the entrance to the Baker Chapel as well as the brick plazas in between. These changes, along with upgrades made to the Aldrich Athletic Center and Dean Academic Center have made Grace significantly more attractive to the first time visitor, as well as alumni who return to see God's blessings on their alma mater.

The Future

After 75 years of God's hand of blessing on Grace Bible College, it is amazing to think that He knows the future of the College better than we can know the past! Grace Bible College has submitted requests to the State of Michigan and our accrediting bodies to begin a graduate studies program with a Master of Arts in Ministry as soon as 2015. The College is blessed with a faithful group of alumni, donors, board members, faculty, and staff. We trust God will guide its future to be a testimony to His power and grace! □

Pictured far left: New student commons; Middle: From the commons, looking across the new walkway towards the Jack T. Dean Academic Center; Below: President Ken Kemper relaxing with students inside the commons.



THE PRESIDENT SPEAKS



Dr. Jack T. Dean (1930-2000)

From the Editor:

True to our word, we are following through on our promise to feature some of the writings of the second president of GBC (editor's note, Truth, vol. 64, is. 3, 10). Dr. Jack Dean, sometime in the late 1960s, most likely 1967, began serving as associate editor of Truth Magazine and gradually took on more of the editing responsibilities as Charles Baker was approaching retirement and working on other projects (e.g. finishing and publishing his "A Dispensational Theology"), especially from 1971 onward. This corresponds to Dean's accepting the position of president of GBC. The best that we can reconstruct supports Dr. Dean assuming the lead editor role in October, 1974. His influence on the magazine, however, can be detected as early as 1968. But content changed significantly after he became editor. The changes reflected the times, Dr. Dean's personality, and his sincere concern for the college and its students. No longer would the magazine have a recurring editorial column that tended towards apologetics of dispensational theology. Instead, Dr. Dean preferred to write in a more familiar style addressing topics that had direct appeal to the student body of the college. He began a column, "The President Speaks," which ran for several years and typically started with a subtitle, "On (fill in the blank)." These were short homilies and were featured in the College Columns section of Truth. We are reprinting a sampling of them to give readers a sense of the President's heart for his college, its mission, and student body.

(Reprinted with only minor formatting revisions)

On Absolutes and Meaningfulness

(Truth, vol. 26, no. 3, Oct-Nov, 1975, 63)

The question has been often asked, why should a Christian dedicate his life to Jesus Christ and live for the glory of God. The answer to that question is often given, we should be motivated to live for God because of what Christ did for us on Calvary and because of what he will yet do for us when we meet him in glory! You will note that the answer to the question said nothing about the present. I believe that one of the most important motivations for living for Jesus Christ is the fact that he brings meaning and purpose into our present life.

The world today is basically a world of despair without purpose, meaning, or direction. Suicide on the college campus has increased 400% in the last ten years. Such an increase indicates the great amount of depression, anxiety, and despair among college students. In an attempt to find meaning in life people have turned to alcohol, drugs, adventure, and immorality. After experiencing their round of gaiety, they conclude that life is meaningless and perhaps death (non-existence to them) is the ultimate. Dr. Francis Schaeffer in his book "The God Who Is There," points out the fact that society at large has lost its absolutes. We used

to know what was good or bad music, good or bad art, good or bad philosophy, and good or bad living. Without any absolutes we have no criteria to judge what is good or bad. Therefore today we have modern art, which might be the meaningless droplets of paint randomly sprinkled upon the canvas or the brushing of a donkey's tail smearing paint across the canvas. Such "paintings" show the lack of absolutes experienced in the life of the painter and is probably expression of his own despair.

The same principle applies in music. What is good music? Good harmony? The answer to that question according to "modern man" is "whatever is appealing to you." And even if there is no morality in musical notation, yet we find the themes of despair and meaninglessness constantly being sung in our modern tunes. These themes are anti-Christian for the Christian message is one of hope and meaning. The absolute of doing all for the glory of God in conformity with his principles brings purpose and meaning to life. As absolutes were lost in the social sciences and the arts, this dialectical thinking also crept into the Church and into theology. Ridiculous as it may sound there are "theologians" who do not believe in the existence of Theos (God). Since there are no absolutes in this type of thinking, there are no absolutes or criteria to determine who qualifies as a theologian.

Because of our losing absolutes, we are now discussing in some churches such questions as: Is homosexuality an acceptable alternative to heterosexuality?; Is fornication acceptable if it is accompanied with love?; Is there a basis upon which to evaluate the work of the Holy Spirit or is his work so individualistic that it cannot be evaluated?

The Bible teaches absolutes. It teaches that homosexuality is wrong. Fornication is wrong. The Bible does not say that under certain conditions these sins can be considered acceptable. The Bible is a book of absolutes.

However, we as Christians must make sure that our absolutes are in conformity to the Word of God. Often because of our own insecurity, we make absolutes where there are no biblical absolutes

and consequently become very restrictive in what is acceptable Christian behavior. We may even go so far as to think everyone should have the same kind of experience, the same kind of ministry, and the same method of service. Such thinking causes us to treat people like machines.

Yes, the Bible does teach absolutes. It's upon the basis of absolutes that we have a criteria for evaluating the right and wrong, the good and the evil. But the Bible also teaches diversity and the fact that there is not only the objective absolutes, but there is also the individualistic outworking of the absolutes in our own individual lives. God has not called all of us to be an arm or an eye in the Body of Christ, but we are all separate members having our own individuality and consequently we should expect diversity within the framework of the absolutes.

We should remember that when we disagree with someone on the basis of an absolute, we should communicate to him that we accept him but reject his behavior or thinking. He should know that we prize him as a person of worth and value even though our understanding of biblical principles causes us to reject his practice.

On Being a Good Testimony

(Truth, vol. 27, no. 4, Dec-Jan, 1976-1977, 87)

In Mark 10:45 the Lord Jesus Christ said to James and John "Even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." Christ basically was saying, "James and John, if you want to be a good testimony for me, stop being overly concerned about getting your own needs satisfied and begin meeting the needs of others."

Let me ask you a question. What more than any other concept measures our Christian life and testimony? Is it our knowledge of the Word of God? I don't think so. Is it the amount of time we spend in Christian ministry? I don't think so. Is it our prayer life? No. Is it the amount of money we give to Christian work? No. All of these are important, but I think the key [concept] is our attitude. Our attitude toward God and our fellow man will affect the time we spend in his Word, and Christian prayer, ministry, and how much money we give to his work.

Let me generalize for a moment. The average freshman when he comes to Grace Bible College has little concern for others and a great deal of concern for himself. He wants others to minister to his needs; and when he does not find a perfect environment here at the college, he may begin complaining, griping, and murmuring because his needs are not being met. This kind of a person we call self-centered. He is not Christ-centered nor Christ-like. (I thank God that we have many freshmen on our campus who are not average freshmen and who have developed an attitude of min-

istering to others already.) Some people, however, never mature beyond this level of being self-centered and wanting their own needs to be ministered unto. Their self-centeredness is usually due to a low self-concept, in which they feel they have nothing to offer to God or to their fellow man; and consequently, they do not share themselves with others. Very often these people don't even recognize that their poor testimony for Christ comes out of a low self-concept. Instead, they may act defensively to protect themselves from the realization of their own feelings of low self-worth. Some symptoms of this low self-concept are: 1) thinking that they are always right; 2) getting angry easily and thinking that their anger is due to righteous indignation; 3) finding fault in others; and 4) causing divisions among God's people.

Self-centered people are usually very unhappy because they feel that their needs are not being met. Sometimes they want to do something about their unhappiness, and consequently they begin to learn about themselves. But merely coming to realize one has a low self-concept is not sufficient of itself. They need to deal with that self-concept and have a change. How can they be helped?

It is at this point that I believe we Christians have an advantage over the non-Christians. When we read and believe Romans 12:3-8 and 1 Corinthians 12, we come to realize that God has made each of us differently so that each of us can fulfill the role and ministry he has for us. We do not need to be jealous of others because they have different gifts than we have or to compete with others because they are using their gifts effectively. Whenever we hear of another Christian who is being greatly blessed of God in his ministry, we need not feel competitive or jealous or envious, but we should thank God for the fact that this Christian is using the gift that God has given to him effectively. (I am amazed at how much jealousy and competitiveness there is among Christian workers.) We must also realize that God has made us the way we are and wants to use the gifts he has given us. He has made no mistake in placing us into his Body with our particular uniqueness. He did not make a mistake by making our large toe the way it is or our ear lobe the way it is, neither has he made a mistake by making you and me the way we are. It is my responsibility to try to use the gifts and talents God has given me to bring honor and glory to Jesus Christ. I can, of course, become a poor steward of the gifts which he has given; and instead of bringing honor and glory to his name, I can disgrace his name.

I think it is also very important that I recognize the gifts God has given to others of helping me. When I feel lonely, cast down, or in need of comfort, I should let God comfort me through the gifts He has given to others; just as Paul allowed himself to be comforted through Titus and as he says in 2 Corinthians 7:6-7: "Nevertheless God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us *by the coming of Titus*; and not by his coming but

See President, continued on page 16



His Attributes Are Clearly Seen



Pictured above:

Jeremy teaching through a translator at meeting of deaf youth in Kabwe, Zambia.

by Jeremy Clark
Executive Director of Grace Ministries International

It Has To Do with the Heart

This presentation differed completely from my experience at a nearby church where I preached just a few days earlier. It was hard to know if they understood anything I communicated through the translator. No one looked at me or uttered even the politest audible acknowledgment that might indicate they were tracking. All fixed their gaze on Kuzi, a young Zimbabwean man signing my simple lesson. Gathered at a church located in the center of Kabwe, a city in a central Zambian province, the twenty-five deaf youth began to ask questions.

Now life is hard for a deaf person, let alone a deaf person in Africa. In my mind, I could only imagine a most basic and simple existence for these kids who value their time together as a source of strength. But a young lady asked a question that changed my perspective of these deaf young people and yet confirmed what

you and I already realize—the world needs to know, understand, and believe the gospel of Jesus Christ. This was hardly the kind of question I expected from one whose life was “basic” and “simple,” and living in a thoroughly religious culture in an officially Christian country. She wanted hard evidence so she could explain to someone that God created the world and that we did not come into existence through natural processes. Two thousand years ago the Apostle Paul, looking back through history, observes that “Since the creation of the world his invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, because, although they knew God, they did not glorify him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened” (Rom 1:20-21). The natural tendency of man is to ignore God or pervert truth so he becomes unrecognizable when placed next to the revelation of his creation or the standard of Scripture.

“The natural tendency of man is to ignore God or pervert truth so he becomes unrecognizable when placed next to the revelation of his creation or the standard of Scripture.”

Anything But the Truth

GMI missionary, Ted Rabenold, shared at our board meeting last October about the unreached people in Tanzania’s Rukwa Valley that he is targeting. In order to explain the finished work of Jesus Christ as the sacrifice for our sins, one has to first explain that he is the only Creator-God of the universe and not just another deity governing some facet of life in the Valley. In a recent report, missionary Sally Roth noted the urgency to reach the deaf community in and around the city of Matagalpa, situated in the interior of Nicaragua. On a survey trip to the region late last year she observed other missionaries in the area working to reach the deaf. They were Jehovah’s Witnesses who deny our “blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ” (Ti 2:13) while elevating the ability of each man to save himself through his own works.

Throughout Africa, Latin America, and much of the world those who call themselves believers or those who are merely religious are in bondage to self-imposed legalism attempting to procure righteousness through any means and by any other name than what the Lord provided through his grace (Rom 3:21-22). There are so many who believe they will obtain health and worldly riches if they only do enough good, pray hard enough, and give

the right amount to the right ministries. The rich and healthy believe they have been rewarded and have no need to pursue the righteousness which comes by faith (Rom 9:30). The poor and sick live day-to-day frustrated that their rewards elude them, but condemnation continues to find them.

Perversion and ignorance of the truth rule throughout our world. But God “now commands all men everywhere to repent, because he has appointed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising him from the dead” (Acts 17:30b-31). As Paul preached these words in Athens, he had only begun to reach the world with this message. Within another twenty-five to thirty years he would be dead, but his message would live on. Throughout his ministry he worked with and sent men and women such as Timothy, Titus, Priscilla, Aquilla, Phoebe and many others—named and unnamed—to establish churches and preach the gospel so that whole regions and provinces might hear the gospel (e.g. Acts 19:8-10).

Truth Be Told

So, here we are nearly 2,000 years later, members of the same Body of Christ charged to “testify to the gospel of the grace of God” (Acts 20:24b). Grace Ministries International is committed to sharing God’s grace through our primary vehicle, faithful and dedicated missionaries who desire to equip others to multiply the ministry of God’s grace through his servants around the world. Because of this, GMI needs missionaries. We need missionaries who will share God’s grace and truth in this world where it needs to be known. Would you consider becoming a missionary with

Continued on page 12



Pictured at left:

Three men from the Sukuma people group. Their numbers have grown steadily in the Rukwa Valley and there is not a strong Christian church among them.

Continued from page 11

GMI? The paragraphs that follow contain just some of the opportunities and needs we have as an organization.

The ministry in Zambia needs a missionary to advance theological education and develop a Bible school program which will serve to educate national pastors and leaders in both the areas of theology and in the day-to-day practicalities of pastoral ministry. GMI missionary Steve Sherman and others have been developing curriculum for regional Bible schools so pastors and leaders can receive classes in their locale instead of traveling to a residential school far from their families, ministries, and livelihood. One of the goals would be to train Zambians to run the Bible schools so that they are self-sustaining and indigenous.

Kennedy Simtowe is moving to Zimbabwe full time at the beginning of 2015. There are already a handful of churches in the country—associated with the ministry of GMI—organizing themselves into a national church structure. Kennedy's emphasis will be church planting and evangelism. We need missionaries who can come alongside the churches and believers in order to better equip and provide further education for the pastors and church leaders. This would be similar to the ministry in Malawi, where GMI missionary Bill Vinton and GMI Partners Joseph Asong and Eric Mango are providing theological education for pastors and church leaders, to edify the churches already established in this field.

Through the ministry in Malawi we have developed contacts in Mozambique. There is a handful of churches there connected to GMI, and some of the pastors have participated in seminars and conferences in Malawi. In November, Eric Mango took a three-week survey trip to Mozambique and noted, "With regard to church planting, Mozambique is more like virgin land." In order to register a national church organization there must be 500 members of the church. This will take some time to achieve through evangelism and church planting as the ministry in Mozambique continues to receive encouragement from the believers and missionaries in Malawi.

The Grace Church of Tanzania desires a missionary to work with and provide guidance to its education ministry. Education is an important part of Tanzanian culture and thus, it is important for the Grace Church of Tanzania to develop this important Christ-centered ministry which will affect the lives of so many students and adults for years to come.

Paraguay, located between our fields in Uruguay and Bolivia, will be our newest field in 2015, when GMI Partners Alex and Deltha Gulart move there in the middle of next year. While strong in the area of evangelism and teaching, we are looking for teammates to come alongside and complement them as we strive to plant churches in Paraguay. There are two areas of the country we are looking to work: Asunción, the capital with a population

over 600,000; and Ciudad Del Este, a commercial city on the border with Argentina and Brazil. These cities have significant international communities, including a substantial Muslim population in Ciudad del Este. According to the research Alex has compiled, those who not only call themselves evangelicals in Paraguay but understand the gospel is fewer than 6%. Paraguayans need to hear the gospel of the grace of God.

In Bolivia, the churches with which we are working are planting new churches, sharing the gospel, and desiring to grow. One of their needs is for a missionary to give direction to and develop a theological education program so that the pastors and church leaders can better understand, teach, and live God's grace. The goal is to develop a program with our Bolivian brothers, of which they will take ownership and run on their own.

Nicaragua became our newest field early in 2014 when GMI missionaries Jeff and Sally Roth, along with GMI Associate Missionaries Emiliano and Raquel Seravalli, moved there to begin their ministry. A year into this new work, a group of 20-30 believers meet faithfully at Emiliano and Raquel's home in the town of Nagarote. Jeff and Sally, having taken survey trips to the region in and around Matagalpa, are beginning a new ministry there with the goal of planting churches. With two ministry sites, we need to increase our missionary force. Once GMI missionaries Brett and Debby Chapman conclude their language studies, they will begin serving in one of these two areas. We would like to see another missionary or missionary family work with our Nicaragua team in the other area.

Grace Ministries International's "Vision 2023" states our goal is to open eight new fields by the year 2023. In order to do so, we need missionaries. We need missionaries to meet the challenges listed above (along with many others) while reaching out to new parts of the world where we can and should share God's grace. Would you consider serving as a missionary on one of our fields? Would you pray for our missionaries or even support one if you are not already? Would you pray that God will raise up workers to serve him on our existing and new fields around the world? We are mindful of the privilege it is to serve God and count it a blessing to do so! ☐



Journal of Grace Theology

Vol. 1, No. 2 - Fall 2014

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We've already crossed the threshold of 2015! It seems like only yesterday there was a great panic regarding the turn of a new century (anyone remember Y2K?). Yet here we are, fifteen years later, opening a new chapter on another year, with all the possibilities another new year presents. I thought it best to review a number of simple disciplines that will make an enormous impact on our year if we will just add them to our morning routine, dedicate ourselves to them each day (and no, these are not resolutions; they are disciplines).

by Pastor Scott Cameron Myers
Northwest Bible Church, Enumclaw, WA

Walking by Faith

"Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him" (Col 2:6, ESV). How was it that we received the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord? Was it not by a simple act of faith, the gift given to us by the grace of our Lord? "For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God" (Eph 2:8). The very ability to respond through faith to the truth of the gospel is the gift of God's grace. And having been united with the Savior through faith, we now are commanded by the Apostle of grace to *walk in him*. Every moment of each day is to be fleshed out by faith.

By faith in what? Our daily walk by faith has the exact same *object* as our salvation, i.e. the faithful, gracious, loving God who is the Author and Perfecter of our faith (Heb 12:2). We are to trust him to craft our daily path as we *walk in him*. The Amplified Bible makes it even clearer: "As you have therefore received Christ, [even] Jesus the Lord, [so] walk (regulate your lives and conduct yourselves) in union with and conformity to Him" (Col 2:6, AMP). We are not to trust in our own wisdom and insight as we try to control our lives; we are to willingly hand our days over to Christ, asking and trusting that he will bring about what is most honoring to himself and best for us. He is the One who knows the beginning from the end (we don't); He is the One who knows what is best (we don't); He is the One who controls the limitless variables of our lives (again, we don't). So we willingly surrender to his leadership.

I suggest that we do this each morning before our feet even hit the floor! “Good morning, Lord. By your grace another day stretches out before me. I have my ‘to do’ list, my responsibilities, but you have the controls. Feel free to change the plans according to what you know is best. And whatever divine appointments you have for me today, cause me to see them and to step into them without fear knowing you are always with me.”

Abounding in Hope

“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope” (Rom 15:13, *esv*). I have heard it said that a man can live weeks without food, days without water, but only a few moments without hope. But what is hope? And how do we live abounding in hope?

The writer to the Hebrews gives us insight into a possible definition: “Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the *conviction* of things not seen” (Heb 11:1, *emphasis mine*). Biblical hope is simply conviction, the unwavering confidence that what God’s Word declares is completely reliable. When we live abounding in hope we choose to be unmoved by the circumstances of life because those circumstances are under the sovereign sway of our Lord. He has declared that all things will result in good (Rom 8:28), that whatever he allows to enter into our lives he will faithfully empower us to handle (1 Cor 10:13), and that we will be able to glorify him in it and through it (1 Cor 10:31).

With those promises in hand we can experience “joy and peace in believing,” but there is the *condition* of believing. For the Christian to *abound in hope* we must daily choose to be confident—not in our abilities—but in the power of the Holy Spirit who is our constant companion and who is at work in us and through us to accomplish God’s will (Phil 2:12-13).

Increasing in Love

“May the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, as we do for you, so that he may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints” (1 Thes 3:12-13, *esv*). There was song we used to sing at camp decades ago when I was a boy, “They Will Know We Are Christians by Our Love.” Love for one another is to be the mark of the believer in Jesus Christ.

Paul’s words to the believers in Thessalonica demonstrate this reality, and his desire is that they would go overboard, excel in this reflection of the character of the Savior. Jesus told his followers, “By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another” (Jn 13:35). And Paul commended those in Ephesus: “For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus *and your love toward all the saints*, I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers” (Eph 1:15-16, *emphasis mine*). Our daily default attitude is to be one of love, always seeking what is best for the other person, especially at the cost of oneself (Phil 2:3-4). This was the example that our Savior set for us, and as his ambassadors we must reflect his love to others.

But this is not a onetime choice; this also is a daily discipline. We must choose to be constantly aware that the way most people will be drawn to the Savior is through our continuous demonstration of unconditional love for them. As we engage others lovingly, graciously, gently and kindly, that is when they will be drawn to the Savior who produces his love in us (Rom 5:5).

My challenge to all of us is to memorize Romans 12:9-21 and then commit ourselves to recite it each morning, asking the Lord to make us models of this kind of faith, hope and love:

Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be conceited. Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, ‘Vengeance is mine, I will repay,’ says the Lord. To the contrary, if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head. Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Romans 12:9-21

Give yourself an edge this year. Repeat these simple disciplines consistently, and over time you will be amazed how the Holy Spirit will take our simple daily efforts and multiply them for God’s glory! □

by the consolation wherewith he was comforted in you, when he told us your earnest desire, your mourning, *your fervent mind toward me*; so that I rejoiced the more.” Relating deeply to others (especially fellow Christians) and realizing their love and care is helpful to my self-concept.

In conclusion, it is not sufficient merely to recognize our low self-concept; but we should do something about it. First, by realizing the special position into which God has called us and the gifts he has given to us. And secondly, by realizing that God has given gifts to others who can minister to our needs. When we realize and actualize our potential and allow others to use their gifts, we will have an effective positive testimony for Christ.

On Competition

(Truth, vol. 32, no. 5, Feb-Mar, 1982, 117)

Competition is good—at least it is good in some areas. I just came back from playing two strenuous racquetball games with Marlin Olson, one of our faculty members. We enjoyed the workout even though the competition was fierce.

Every four years the Olympic Games demonstrate the beauty and skill that competition can inspire.

Often, in our high school and college sports programs, coaches are rewarded for winning rather than for developing good sportsmanship. Young people are driven to develop the “killer instinct.” Recently the University of Michigan football coach said that his team is not playing well because they are not playing with intensity even though the team has as much talent as was there last year. Most of us feel that our sporting events from Little League through the professional ranks have gone too far in the development of this “killer instinct.” But, at the same time, we are not against sports competition. We of GBC are trying to be competitive on the floor, field, or court, while maintaining a Christian attitude of good sportsmanship and care for our opponents as persons of value.

Being a college President I probably receive more mail than the average person. Most of the mail is positive, supportive, and encouraging. A few of these people don’t have things completely accurate, and think of our college more highly than they should. I’m a little afraid to disappoint them and let them know that we are human and things at GBC are not really that perfect. On the other hand, once in a while we receive a negative letter. These don’t come too often, but when they do, more than likely the person does not have the truth in the matter. Years ago I received a letter in which the writer stated he doubted everything about me—my salvation, my integrity, my leadership, my sincerity, etc. My human reaction was that I should write back a letter of

the same kind, letting him know that anybody who could write such a cruel letter certainly could not be experiencing much of the grace of God. But then I remembered some Scripture verses: James 1:2—“Count it all joy when you fall into testings”; Philippians 1:15,18—“It is true that some preach Christ out of envy and rivalry, but others out of good will... But what does it matter? The important thing is that in every way, whether from false motives or true, Christ is preached. Because of this I rejoice. Yes, and I will continue to rejoice”; Romans 12:14—“Bless those who persecute you. Bless and do not curse”; Luke 6:28—“Pray for them that despitefully use you.”

Oh, how hard these verses were on my flesh. This was God’s way, and I really wanted to do it my way. And I found myself arguing with God and saying, “Lord, aren’t there any exceptions? Can we not this one time let him know how dishonest and unkind he is?” But God’s way won out, and I’m glad he did. As the years have passed by, I have come to realize that God does not want any competition among his servants. Even though I may disagree on occasion with Billy Graham or the “700 Club” or Grace Mission or Grace Bible College or my local church, it is my responsibility to pray for them, to support them, and to love them.

Where then is the place for honest disagreement? This is to be done in private and in love, recognizing our own finiteness. That is, we should recognize we don’t have all of the answers. Perhaps the other fellow’s way of doing it is better than my way. Perhaps he has biblical insights that I lack. Perhaps my particular interpretation of a passage is not correct, even though I feel that it is. Perhaps he has wronged me, judged me, mistreated me, despitefully used me. Yet it is my privilege to give thanks in everything and to pray for him who has despitefully used me.

I don’t need to compete with others in order to find acceptance. I don’t need to prove myself to anyone because God has accepted me in his Beloved Son and I live forever in his love.

On Spirituality

(Truth, vol. 33, no. 1, Jun-Jul 1982, 15)

One of the most difficult concepts to quantify is that of spirituality. Since I was trained first as a physical scientist and then as a social scientist, my research training led me to think that we as Christian leaders should try to develop some kind of empirical definition for spirituality. I felt in the past that we should set up measurements so that we could determine what spirituality was and what it was not. My thinking was completely wrong.

For a matter of fact, that kind of thinking coincides somewhat with the legalist. Legalism is one extreme that some Christian leaders perpetuate which gives people the opinion that if they

do certain things and do not do certain other things, then they must be spiritual. I remember back to my early days in Sunday School. There I was given the impression that if I did not smoke, drink, dance, involve myself in mixed swimming, along with a number of other taboos, I would be on the right path toward spirituality. Of course, a list of “do’s” was also given to me, such as: go to church at least three times a week; pass out gospel tracts; and always act happy. I can remember one Sunday School teacher encouraging us to pass out five gospel tracts each week. I gave a gospel tract to a person who ripped it up so I gave him another one which he promptly ripped up also. I gave him five gospel tracts and he ripped up all of them. I felt good and relieved that I had completed the assignment given by my Sunday School teacher. I’m sure that most of us reading this article realize the dangers of legalism and that legalism by itself will never make one spiritual.

On the other hand, there have been those Christian leaders who have emphasized the freedom which we have in Christ Jesus. Now, it is true that we have been set free, but freedom without understanding of the discipline of the grace of God can also lead people astray. For a person might get the attitude that since his salvation is entirely a gift of God, the way he behaves has nothing to do with his spirituality. We are told in Titus 2 that grace teaches us or disciplines us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present evil age.

On Controlling the Tongue

(Truth, vol. 33, no. 4, Dec-Jan, 1982, 86)

Throughout the Scriptures we are told that the tongue can perhaps be the greatest liability in the believer’s life. Years ago a man sent to a Greek sage an animal for him to eat. But he asked the sage to send back the worst and best part of the animal. The Greek wise man sent back only one part, the tongue.

The Apostle Paul in Philippians chapter 2, after telling us that we should have the mind of Christ (v 5) and become servants as he is, states in verse 14, “Do everything without complaining or arguing.” He singles this one idea out. Perhaps Paul was recognizing the fact that if anyone can control his tongue, he can control his entire body so that he will become “blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation” (Phil 2:15).

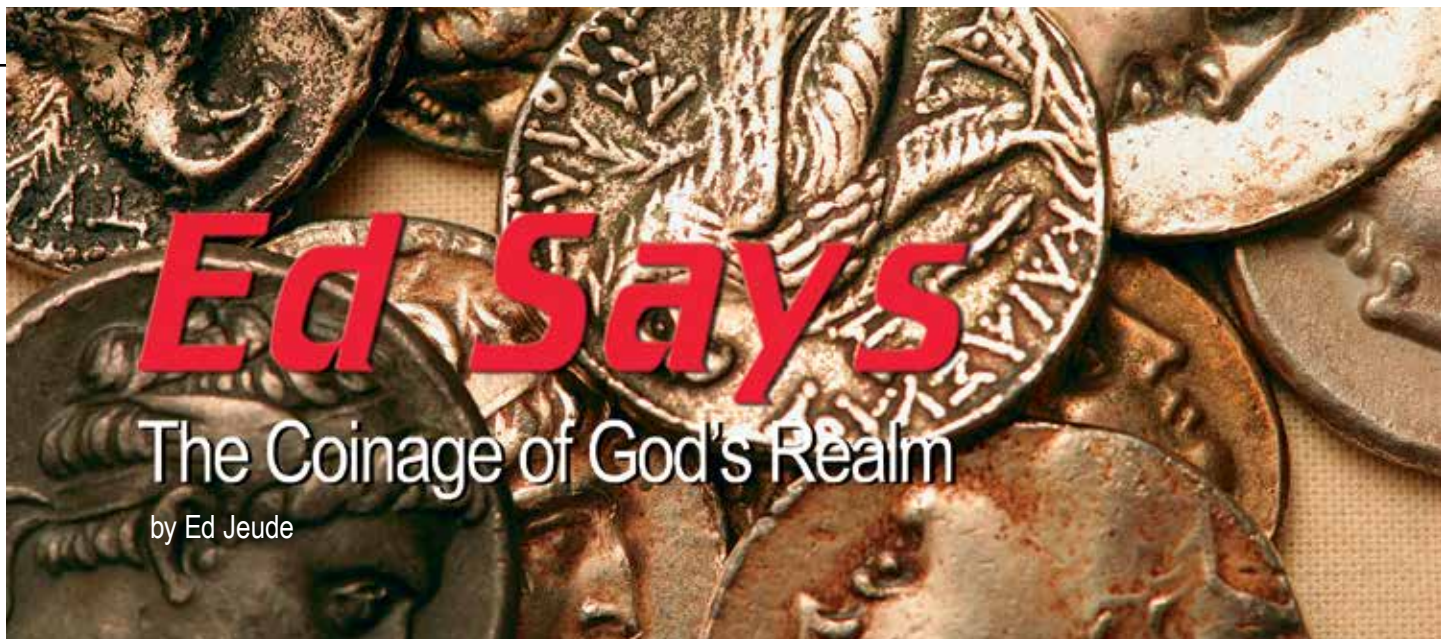
The most penetrating passage of Scripture concerning the tongue is found in James chapter 3. In that chapter James refers to six illustrations of the tongue. First he tells us that the tongue gives direction (3:3-5) as he likens the tongue to a bit and a rudder. A bit in the horse’s mouth is wonderfully able to control that large, spirited, impetuous animal. James does not mean that

a man should be dumb and lifeless, without ambition, but simply that control of the tongue will greatly affect the rest of the body. The rudder too gives direction in that it overcomes the contrary forces of winds and waves. It is only too obvious that one must watch his tongue if he is to avoid shipwreck in his own life.

James then tells us that the tongue causes destruction (3:5,6) and likens it to fire and wild beasts. It is so easy for fire to rage out of control, and we have seen (at least on TV) the forest fires in the mountains of California which have destroyed thousands of acres of land. You would think that in a sophisticated, mechanized age we would be able to contain fire to just a couple of acres and certainly stop it before it causes millions of dollars of damage. But just as fire is destructive, so is the tongue. It can stir the wildest passions of man to uncontrollable fury or exalt man to the highest emotions of his nature. The tongue can soothe the dying or damn the living. The tongue can sing like a songbird or growl like a lion. The tongue can speak words of tenderest love or venomous hate. The tongue can glorify God or condemn man. So too, wild beasts can cause great destruction. But James points out that the wild beast can be tamed, but the tongue is impossible for man to tame.

Thirdly, James says that the tongue is filled with deception. It is unlike a fountain and a tree (3:9-12). A fountain is consistent, it either gives forth bitter water or sweet water. A tree is consistent, there are either figs or olives, not both. The tongue is inconsistent. With the tongue we sing, “My Jesus I love Thee, I know Thou art mine,” or “Oh how I love Jesus,” and we spread rumors that hurt men who are made in the image of God. It was Peter who said, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God,” and then just a little while later cursed and swore that he never knew Jesus Christ.

How then can we control the tongue? I think James gives us the answer to that in the last few verses of James 3. It almost seems like he is changing the subject from that of the tongue to that of wisdom. But I think the two ideas are very much connected. It seems to me what James is saying is that the wisdom of this world can never tame the tongue. It is only as we follow the wisdom of God in our lives that the tongue will be controlled by that wisdom. We do not control the tongue directly by our self-efforts and energy, for no man can control the tongue (Jas 3:8). It can only be controlled as we yield our entire lives to the Lord Jesus Christ; allowing his wisdom of purity, peace, love, consideration, submissiveness, mercifulness, good fruits, impartiality, and sincerity to make us the kinds of peacemakers who live lives honoring and glorifying to Jesus Christ. □



Matthew 22:15-22 (cf Mk 12:13-17, Lk 20:20-26) records an intriguing encounter between the Lord Jesus and the Pharisees along with Herodians who ask, "Is it lawful to give a poll-tax to Caesar, or not?" It was their intent to entrap Jesus inciting Jews to not pay the tax. The Herodians would report this seditious behavior to Pilate who was responsible for tax collection in Roman Judea and he would arrest Jesus. "Why are *you* testing *me*, you hypocrites?" implores Jesus who from the very start is well aware of their devious intentions. "Show me the coin used for the poll-tax." They bring him a denarius and he asks them, "Whose likeness [*image* in kjv] and inscription is this?" They respond, "Caesar's." Jesus answers, "Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and to God the things that are God's." This final exchange reveals the significance of *image* to us.

Genesis 1:26 states "Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, *according* to our likeness...'" which means that Adam, before his disobedience, was created and existed in perfect harmony and total agreement in every way with God (that's what according means). The *first* Adam (think in terms of a coin) could be looked upon and expected to exercise his assigned duties flawlessly because he was stamped with the flawless image of God. The *first* Adam reflected the full authority of the One who issued him.

When the very first denarius was struck (and this can be said of any true coin) it was as pure as refining could achieve. The ruling caesar of the day stamped or cast his image upon the coin in order to convey assurances to those who used it that it was pure in content and volume. The denarius could be rendered in commerce without any concern; it was like having the very Roman Empire as a partner in your transactions.

But the caesars were not descended from deity as they liked to portray themselves, and they began *debas*ing their coins by introducing impurities and reducing the volume of the more valuable

silver and gold. The coin still carried the sovereign's image but it was known to all that the coin was worth less than its face value suggested.

When the *first* Adam was issued, he was without impurities. But his actions brought about his debasing. Through Adam's deliberate disobedience "sin entered into the world and death through sin, and so death spread to all men" (Rom 5:12). God's "our image" stamped in the *first* Adam, in essence God's coinage for conveying his plans and purposes throughout his realm, became marred, distorted, devalued, untrustworthy. We can all be thought of as "worth-less" *first* Adams.

Fortunately for us, God maintains an active interest in each of us who carry his image, even though we who carry that image have been marred and distorted by sin. God already had a plan from "before the foundation of the world..." (Eph 1:4) for redeeming those with his image and "when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, so that he might redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive adoption as sons" (Gal 4:4,5). It is written, "The first man Adam became a living soul. The *last* Adam became a life-giving spirit...The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is from heaven" (1 Cor 15:45-47). We could say that God, in his infinite wisdom, "minted" a one of a kind coin, Jesus Christ, the *last* Adam who is 100% pure and of such rare content as to be priceless. God is using his *last* Adam to restore full value to his *first* Adams. "And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, those who are called according to his purpose...to be conformed to the image of his Son..." (Rom 8:28,29). "For he (God) delivered us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son...And he is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation" (Col 1:13-15).

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When we place our full faith in the saving, restorative work of the *last* Adam, Jesus Christ, we find ourselves redeemed by God and having tremendous value added. Let every human who carries the image of God, render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's but especially render to God the things that are God's. We are to be used of God to carry out his plan for all of creation. To those who are being conformed to the image of God's Son, Paul urges them "...to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God which is your spiritual service of worship" (Rom 12:1). We should do no less. He did so much more.□

(All Scripture NASB unless otherwise noted)

	
<p>Be part of the trip of a lifetime and serve God in Malawi, the "Warm Heart of Africa." This summer a select group of high school and college students will travel to Malawi to share the love of Christ with the children and youth in the Lilongwe area. "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!" (Romans 10:15). A trip like this can be a life-changer as you see firsthand what God is doing in Malawi. Join us as we work together with GMI missionaries—Eric & Mercy Mango, Titus & Kristy Lloyd, Joseph & Emmanuela Asong, and Bill & Sue Vinton. This will be the first EXITE team to serve in Malawi. In addition to children's and youth ministries, we will work hard to improve the Bible School facilities in Lilongwe. Something exciting happens when we step out of our comfort zone to be the "hands and feet of Jesus." EXITE is about spiritual growth as we put our faith into action in practical ways—this year serving our Malawian brothers and sisters in Christ. Experience the joy of seeing how God can work through you in new and powerful ways as you share His love with people in need of a Savior in a culture and environment very different than your own. You'll never forget your first experience in Africa. Join the EXITE team!</p>	
<p>Dates: July 19- August 5, 2015 July 19-21: Boot Camp at Grace Bible College July 21-23: Travel to Malawi Aug 5: Return to Grand Rapids</p>	
	<p>Qualifications: No prior construction experience required. You need to be willing to work hard together with a team in hot weather under rustic conditions. Enjoy the warm Malawian culture, delicious food and beautiful scenery. Be ready to share your faith, step out of your comfort zone, and serve others in Christ's name. Prepare to grow in your faith and see God at work in and through your team.</p>
<p>Cost: \$850 - EXITE fees (room & board, local transportation, boot camp costs, project donations, etc.) \$2000- Estimated plane fare \$2850- Approximate total cost Age: 14 years old/9th grade – college</p>	
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Seeking New Editor

After nearly eighteen years as editor of Truth, Phil Cereghino has informed GGF that he would like to step down and allow somebody else an opportunity to serve our constituency through this important ministry. The prospective candidate should have a working knowledge of GGF and love sharing the gospel of the grace of God as revealed to the Apostle Paul. He or she should enjoy working with like-minded individuals and either live in the greater Michigan region or be willing to travel to Grand Rapids at least twice a year to participate on, and be a part of, the National Council (proximity to Grand Rapids is not a necessity—Phil has done the job from Jacksonville, FL; also, virtual commuting via video conferencing is acceptable from time to time).

Close collaboration with writers for the magazine is a must. A sound background in writing and editorial skills would be a plus. The right candidate would have or be willing to develop a knowledge base in editorial standards as set forth by "The Chicago Manual of Style" or a similar guide for writers, editors, and publishers. He or she will have proficiency in tabloid layout or be willing to learn. Knowing Adobe's Creative Suite 6 Design Standard, especially InDesign and Photo Shop, is practically a must (software under license with GGF); having a creative talent for graphics development will be required as well; producing an end product in an Adobe pdf (print quality) for electronic delivery to a printing company is a critical skill. These can all be basic level in ability and developed while on the job.

The right candidate will be able to work approximately forty to fifty hours per quarter in order to gather material from Truth columnists, writers, pastors, and regional representatives by email correspondence; to research Truth archives; to design and coordinate graphics; and to compile and manage the copy for a twenty-four page tabloid issue.

This is strictly a volunteer position with GGF. Job satisfaction, working with other dedicated individuals, growing in grace and personal knowledge of our great God are all included.

Time is running out. GGF will need the new editor in place by August or September this year, otherwise there is the possibility of an interruption in Truth publication, which hasn't happened in its sixty-four year history. Contact Frosty Hansen or Cindy Carmichael at 616-245-0100, or email: info@ggfusa.org. □



Region 3: West
Steve Blackwell

NEWS from AROUND GRACE GOSPEL FELLOWSHIP

Pastor Jesse Vaught, **The Point Bible Church**, Thornton, CO, reports that they are wrapping up an effort to clarify the roles of key leaders in the church. How to work out our jobs practically isn't always as clear as the qualitative descriptions in Scripture, especially in a small church where the pastor wears many hats. As we have put clearer guidance in place, we have seen increased levels of volunteerism and renewed enthusiasm from our leaders, even in a time when attendance has been down. We certainly have some challenges to face in 2015 so it is a blessing to launch the year with a cohesive leadership team.

Pastor Bob Enyart writes that **Denver Bible Church** of Thornton, CO, planted by a grace church across town in January 2000, is scheduled to close in February on a church facility that seats 100. With mostly single-income, young home-school families, everything being accomplished (as with all churches) is a testimony to God's faithfulness!

Pastor Steve Blackwell, **Harvest Fellowship**, Brighton, CO, reports they have had an influx of people that are fairly new (last couple of years), and "We at Harvest are loving our church and people." They have been praying for people that would involve themselves in the church's ministry and several have come and love the grace message and love heading up ministries. "It has been great for me, a real answer to prayer," Pastor Steve continues, "as I now have hours like a 'normal' job!" (No more 80-hour weeks like in the past.) □

exciting when a woman comes to you and says she wants to get right with God (not exactly her words, but it captures the intent). I told her to really pay attention to the message that Sunday and we'd talk later if she wanted to understand more. That morning, three hands went up professing Jesus Christ as Savior! What a blessed morning in the Word of God, and then ending the service knowing that the Spirit of God added to the Body of Christ as 2014 drew to a close. It was a remarkable feeling. Others were saved in 2014, but this was a great way to end the year seeing people professing to come to the Savior. Winning souls for eternity is a great goal of ministry. It is only the beginning on the journey of each Christian, but thank God for that first step in each life.

We had several evangelistic outreaches to our community this past year and we are leaving the results to God. We showed the movie, "God's Not Dead" twice and just recently we had a church group go Christmas caroling to "Candy Cane Lane" in our city. While some sang songs of Christmas, others shared tracts, candy canes with the gospel attached, and others engages people to share the gospel.

God is alive and well. He is still in the soul-saving business. May God give us many more opportunities as time quickly passes by in our lives. May you and your church become actively involved in reaching out to the many that are living in darkness, recalling that we too were once in darkness. □

hypocrisy. Ben Anderson, president of TCM, gave a report on Brazil and briefed us on some of God's activities in that region.

Next meeting is scheduled for 10:45 AM, February 19, 2015, at Ryans in Effingham, IL. If you have something you'd like to share, let Ben know (317-783-0300) so we can all hear it. We have an assigned room. Come for the fellowship.

Steve McFarland is GGF Region 5 representative for Prison Mission Association and is setting up PMA presentations in many churches in the region. Steve's email is lakeshiresteve@hotmail.com. Kaleb Kemper invited Steve to speak at the Olney church on January 4, 2015.

St Louis Bible Fellowship is experiencing a good growth of new families. Tuesday evening Bible study sees 20-30 regularly. Thursday evening addresses WHAT we believe and WHY. It is so important that Christians have biblical answers to questions. **St Louis Theological Seminary** can provide documentation of your credentials in furthering the Lord's work. □



Region 6: Southeast
Phil Cereghino

Pastor David Cannon, **Grace Bible Church**, Palm Bay, FL, reports that October marked the beginning of the new fiscal year with Boards and committees invigorated with new faces, new energy, and new ideas. There was also the slight inkling that fall season was not far away and before long winter friends would return. It seems that with these changes would come a flurry of activities; if one could be bored, then it would definitely be one's own fault.

On Sunday, one can study the book of Revelation, join the prayer circle, attend and help at the Morning Worship Hour, have lunch with friends from church, learn to play the

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Region 4: Upper Midwest
Mark Matychuk & Les Takkinen

For **Grace Bible Church**, West Allis, WI, Pastor Les Takkinen wants to know, what really excites about ministry? The answer: It is people! It is the most difficult part of the ministry, but it is also the most rewarding. It is



Region 5: Lower Midwest
Ed Jude

On November 20, 2014, a meeting of GGF Region 5 (southern Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Missouri) "Grace" activities was held in Effingham, IL, with 15 participants, 5 absent with apology. Frosty Hansen, president of GGF, challenged ministers to closely watch their own lives for integrity and any trace of

Continued from page 20

guitar, attend or help with our teen group, or compare Islam to the Bible at the School of Theology.

During the week there are board meetings, the Ladies of Grace Bible study, AWANA, Mid-Week Worship, men's breakfast, a Family Movie night, bowling league, and maybe a missions committee meeting or even a church workday.

Fall also means that we have special outreach activities planned, such as our Fall Festival, where kid's and their families get to play games, win candy, and hear about Jesus. Thanksgiving included a special worship service with wonderful testimonies of God's blessings and food drives for the needy. December gave us great opportunity to let our community know through a candlelight Christmas Eve service of the loving God made flesh to become our Savior. Our church family also celebrated with a Christmas dinner and gift exchange. Then we closed out the year with a worship service to remember God's faithfulness and pray for the new year. It was a wonderful season.

Our missions committee has been very active. December 21-26 saw five of our members travel to Haiti to minister to the children at the Jacob Foundation school on La Tortue. After months of planning, our church will host a missions conference January 21-25, 2015. Participating will be missionaries and representatives from GMI, TCM, BDTLB, PMA, and the recently organized Grace Beyond Borders Mission. If you are in Florida during this time, please consider attending. You can contact the church office@gracebiblepalmbay.org for a full schedule of speakers and activities. □



Region 9: Western MI
Kathy Molenkamp

Pastor Gary Spykerman has accepted the call to be the new Sr. Pastor of **Parkside Bible Church**, Holland, MI, replacing Pastor Rob Renberg who went to be pastor at **Calvary Chapel** in Massillon, OH.

Born in Holland, MI, Gary moved as a young boy to Southern California and grew up in La Habra, California. He attended Grace Bible College between 1978 and 1985. He married his wife Susan in 1980 and they have four children, Michelle, Kevin, Brian, and

Karen. All four are married and six grandchildren have been added to the family.

Gary and Sue have been involved in numerous ministries. The first was in Grants Pass, OR, as Worship/Christian Education Director at **Grace Bible Church**. They then moved to Portage, MI, spending ten years church planting as Pastor of **Crossroads Community Church**—a church plant project of GGF Regions 9 and 10. In 1998, they accepted the call to pastor **Eastport Bible Church**, Long Island, NY, for five years. In 2000, they moved back to the west coast where they had met as teenagers in the Anaheim **Grace Bible Church**. They pastored their home church for four years. In 2007, Gary and Sue moved to Wyoming, MI where he served as a Grace Bible College faculty member and filled the Vernon Schutz Chair of Pastoral Ministry. Pastor Gary begins at Parkside mid-January.

Pastor Caleb Befus reports for **Grace Bible Fellowship**, Jenison, MI: The Fall season is always an exciting time at GBF. The holiday season fills the atmosphere and the activity within our church family. We have enjoyed many fellowship activities and events including ladies events, men's night, our annual Thanksgiving Service, Christmas Children's Program, and Christmas Dinner, in addition to our regular activities. It has been a joyous time of year as we celebrated the birth of Christ. We are also looking forward to the upcoming year and what God has in store for us as a church family. We continue to move forward and invite others to become part of GBF. Our desire is to continually be "an engaging community growing in Christ."

This past season we have had many exciting things happen within our church but also within our local regions. The GBF staff was encouraged to participate in a GGF Region 9 and 10 retreat at Grace Adventures where many pastors and staff members of our sister churches gathered to work toward greater unity within our area. It is encouraging to work together with a spirit of unity: "May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom 15:5-6). □



Region 10: Central MI
John Lowder

We have some bittersweet news to report from **Croton Community Church**, Newaygo, MI, in that Pastor Dwight Reed has retired. He was ordained by the GGF in 1956 and started as youth pastor at **Bethesda Church**, Minneapolis (now Prior Lake), MN, in 1957. He and Jane have two children, Dan (Mary Sue) Reed and DeAnna (Jerry) Olson, both of whom have served in GGF ministries all of their adult lives. President Frosty and Cathy Hansen were at the church on December 7, and presented them with a plaque. They have been a wonderful example of steadfast servants of Christ (1 Cor 15:58).

Here are the places Pastor Dwight served: Youth pastor, Bethesda Church, 1957-62 (married Jane in June 1958); Pastor at Lake Villa, IL (1962-67); Riverside, CA (1967-77); Downey, CA (1978-88); Associate Pastor at Muskegon, MI (1988-2011); Pastor at Croton Community Church, Croton, MI (2006-14).

For five years Dwight split his time between Croton and Muskegon. His last Sunday was December 28, 2014. They will be living in Muskegon near **Berean Church** and plan to be involved as volunteers in the ministry of the church as God enables them.

Everyone who knows Pastor Dwight knows he is a man who unreservedly loves his Lord and people. As you have opportunity, congratulate and thank them for their many years of faithful ministry! □



Picture above: Pastor Dwight Reed with wife Jane, surrounded by family on the occasion of Pastor Dwight's retirement.

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