



From the National President's Desk

The 2018 National Convention and AGM of The Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International Australia Limited will be held at ALBURY WODONGA on the New South Wales/Victoria border, midway between the South Australia border and the sea; affectionately known as the crossing place. The twin cities of Albury Wodonga offer a country atmosphere combined with a cosmopolitan feel. Rich in history and natural beauty, the welcoming community, diverse culture, fine dining and contemporary attractions offer something for everyone.

The two State Cities are divided by the Murray River, living in perfect harmony whilst serving a large and diverse mixed farming rural area on the border edge of both States. There is plenty to do, as the area has a good reputation as a noted travel and tourist centre for visitors.

I have just returned from a look-and-see trip to make sure all was as it should be for this important event in our calendar, and to say I was delighted with what I encountered would have to be the understatement of the year.

Right from the outset I was taken with the place; from being picked up at the airport, meeting chapter members, being taken to speaking engagements, enjoying much rich fellowship, examining the convention venue, eating scrumptious meals in the local restaurants and staying in a really good Motel with an Italian restaurant attached. I can only say that all the good things you may have heard about this area are true and don't believe any negatives; I didn't find any.

The Date has been set as the weekend 10th to 12th August. Now for those who are flying in, you must book early to get direct flights, otherwise you will have to transit through Sydney and that will add flying time and cost to your journey. So let's get it done as soon as you can. Also the all-important matter of accommodation: when the convention brochure comes out you will see that there is any number available from Motels, Hotels, Caravan parks and the like. Ian Smith and I have spoken to the one I stayed in and they are going to keep Ian informed on any bookings they are receiving prior to ours going in, so we have a better chance of cutting a good deal pricewise.

It would be nice if we could stay together over the weekend as it enriches our fellowship and

catch-up time.

The theme for this year's convention is **HAND TO THE PLOUGH**. I believe it is most appropriate idiom given the times in which we live and the changes we are seeing in our nation. We are being called to get busy, to help out and to start work. Yes to grasp the plough, ready to work the fields.

Matthew 9:37 "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few." As a Fellowship, God used us mightily in ministering the Baptism of the Holy Spirit throughout the nation. That was former rain and was good for the season, but what I believe is about to happen is the latter rain. The rain by which, God will bring about the end-time harvest. Remember God does extraordinary things through ordinary people, His wonder to perform. What if it's the former and the Latter rain together? We don't want to miss that outpouring do we?

During the three meetings I shared in at Albury Wodonga I felt God was speaking through me a Preambles of encouragement to the convention, opening up something new in the Spirit Realm, causing me to believe that He has chosen this time and place to bring a fresh revelation to our Fellowship. These two cities have something of the Spirit of God over them that is refreshing to say the very least. The people are interesting friendly types that are easy to talk to, helpful and more importantly, know their God and His Word. Good folk to be around.

The way they conduct their Chapter meetings is copybook FGBMFI with all members pulling together for the greater good of the Fellowship, from greeters, cooks, helpers and those running the meetings. All are working for the best outcome, which is so good to see. No wonder they are growing with young men joining their ranks. Neal Keating has asked for 20 new starter packs so he can get the 16 new members pinned.

Our conventions to date have all been good though different. This one is going to be the one that takes the cake so to speak, if we gather together to hear God and not man, to receive that something very special from God that this nation needs and PUT OUR HANDS TO THE PLOUGH and determine to make a difference. God Bless as you prepare, see you there!

Len.



Lest we forget



Coffee & Conversation with James

Another true story from the experiences of a long-time member and friend.

Submitted by Ron Oastler

Late winter? It felt like the middle of spring! A beautiful, warm and sunny day, with the harbour waters like a sheet of glass – not a ripple. 'How blessed to be ensconced in such a beautiful spot' was James comment, as we enjoyed the moment together!

On top of that, we were at the café on a rather special day. They had apparently had a new pastry supplier and were offering some free samples with coffee orders. Not bad at all, I thought.

Then, as we sipped our cappuccinos, we overheard an interesting exchange between the waiter and a lady at a nearby table. He was telling the lady that she could have a pastry free-of-charge, but the lady was rather hesitant. "Oh, I don't know she said."

"The fruit and nuts in this Florentine are good for you and the chocolate base is just heavenly" said the waiter. But it seemed that no matter what the waiter said, the lady demurred."

"There is no charge" the waiter repeated. "They are there. It is up to you." But the lady still did not respond to the offer and the Florentines sat there in all of their loneliness."

"Ah, dear me" James sighed "does this little scenario sound familiar to you? " Then, without a pause, he added "How many times have we seen people balk at accepting the offer of free Salvation...and it is not always the result of the person being unsure. It reminds me of an experience I had some time back where I had been asked to speak ..."

James had that innate ability to connect the dots between the experiences of here-and-now with one from his past.

He went on: "A very good friend of mine, who happened to be a member of our Fellowship, was helping a group who were holding 'Outreach Dinners' much like we



do. As a Chapter of an international Christian Businessmen's fellowship, this group's approach at the end of a meeting was to invite people to complete a decision card at the table, 'if they so felt'."

"Having run for most of the current year without seeing anyone accept Christ as Lord and Saviour, the committee decided to have a speaker from outside of their circle of contacts for their year-end function. Hence the invitation for me to speak, to which I willingly agreed of course."

"It was a wonderful night. Quite a large group was there for this particular year-end function, which had something of the Christmas spirit about it.

"As it transpired, I knew a number of the committee men from this group, so we renewed some wonderful acquaintances from way back. That was good. The catering was good too. Then they had a well presented businessman bring a good solid testimony after which I received a comfortable introduction. All good."

"I spoke on 'times and seasons' and shared my personal testimony of our Lord taking me through times and seasons to bring me to a critical decision – that of being reconciled to God through faith in Jesus Christ alone. There is no other way – for 'the just shall live by faith' the Scripture says.

"This led comfortably to an invitation for folk to respond to the Holy Spirit and receive Christ as Lord and Saviour by faith.

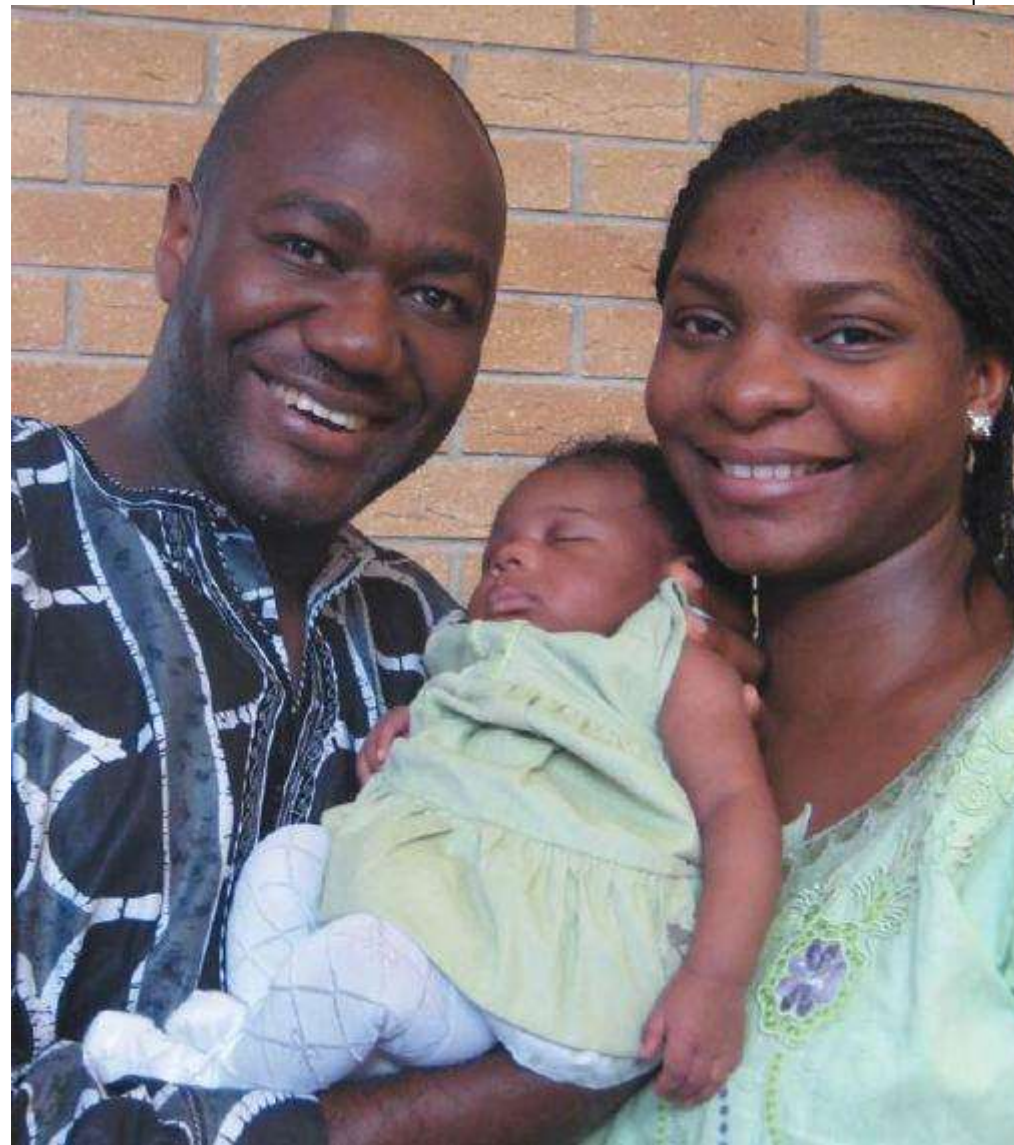
"Now, instead of suggesting that folk consider completing a decision card at the table, I encouraged those who sensed the Holy Spirit's conviction to raise their hand so that we could pray with them as they make that life changing commitment.

Within a minute or two there were seven who were ready to take that step of faith. No demurring with these seven folk. However, I do wonder how many others were too hesitant. For them, we encouraged the various hosts to talk with their guests and pray with them personally.

"So my friend" James concluded "right throughout, and particularly at the conclusion, make it clear, make it definite - and expect folk to respond openly. That is what we are all about 'winning and discipling folk to Christ'.

DR 'CHUKS' OKEREKE

Profession: Researcher



It seems like a series of miracles have literally transformed my life. I have gone from being a wild young 'rebel' in Nigeria to discovering academic success in Europe and a whole new meaning to life. Today, I am a published author and a senior researcher in international development.

But in my earlier years, it was a very different story. At university in eastern Nigeria, I became a radical union activist, challenging the government of the day - and was arrested several times. It seems I was a natural leader, as each time my fellow students demanded my release.

I was also ambitious and happy-go-lucky, out for all the fun we could find - a life very different from my Catholic upbringing. My parents, both career teachers and respected leaders in our community, had no idea how badly I was behaving.

Then something odd happened. My elder sister, Mneka, was invited by a group of Christian businessmen to a dinner in Port Harcourt. There she experienced 'an encounter with God' and claimed to have been 'born again'. I was baffled.

Worse was to follow. At another meeting, a Christian speaker had what they called a 'prophecy'. He pointed directly to my sister and said "You have brother," - and then gave her my name! "Go



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to your brother and say the Lord has a claim on his life," he added. "But remind him that, if he will not listen to the call, he will be in great danger."

Mneka told me later, in tears, what the speaker had said. But I laughed. "What are you doing, hob-nobbing with heretics who are only after your money?" I said. After all, I was a nominal Catholic with a strong sense of justice. What had this crazy prophecy to do with me? But my sister prayed and fasted that I would "listen to the advice of the man of God". She vowed she would never stop praying for me.

But I couldn't have cared less, until I got the shock of my life. In February 2000 I was out with my friends when the front tyre of our jeep burst. It was a ghastly accident as the vehicle somersaulted on a busy road. The young driver was fatally injured and my other friends were badly hurt. I escaped without a scratch but, as I carried my injured friend to a nearby car, I found myself crying out to God to save him.

Days later, I was still in complete shock. Then a girl, passing by on the street, gave me a leaflet about a Christian meeting for the following weekend. It was a wake-up call. I honestly couldn't wait till Sunday, so under great conviction I phoned the pastor whose name was on the leaflet. I also remembered the prophetic warning that my sister had given me - since I had escaped death by inches.

As the pastor led me in a prayer for forgiveness, so I came to simple faith in Christ. Now I understood why Christ died for me - for all of us - on the Cross. It was a life-changing experience. Within months, I had read the New Testament. I discovered that God can heal us by faith, and I, too, experienced physical healing. By then I was also a teacher, when a chance came to go to the Netherlands to study environmental science - but it would cost ten thousand euros and I didn't have a bean!

However, I had learned through the Bible that God will supply all our needs, if we trust him. I felt God was saying to me "if you release what's in your hand, I'll release what's in My hand!" So, in faith, I gave my month's salary to God - with no idea how he would provide. But he did - and I had enough to travel to Europe.

Then I was given a scholarship for a University Doctorate in the UK and saw God provide in amazing ways. I also wrote down in faith how I believed God would guide my research career - and sure enough, it has worked out that way! Today, I believe that a life that is not in God's plan is a wasted life. There is no 'mountain' you cannot climb with God's help.

My wife Boma and I were married in January 2007, in Nigeria where we first met. We have a daughter, Ruth, and are now based at Oxford.

Dr Chuks Okereke teaches on international development, and has written two books on global justice and the politics of the environment.



He came but
now he has
risen



"His Banner Over Us is Love"

Membership



Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International (Australia) is open to all men who wish to be part of this vibrant organisation, who have a heart to reach others and bring them into a relationship with Jesus Christ. You must read and understand our Doctrinal Statement and be willing to serve as a chapter member giving of your time and expertise.

Please return your completed membership application (along with our doctrinal statement) form our **Membership** Director, Daniel Wright - PO Box 129 Taigum Qld 4018. Telephone: 0404 004 946. Membership forms can be printed from our website: fgbmfiustralia.com

Membership fees are \$100.00 per annum. To have an effective Fellowship we need all members to pay their dues to fund the ongoing expenses of the Fellowship as per the budget approved by the National Board. Being paid up members of the Fellowship is important and all personnel should hold their membership as significant and of value. Being members allows you to experience all the benefits that are associated with the organisation including being able to vote and have your say at the appropriate time. If you have no chapter in your area or it is not functioning your membership will be held as a National member. Those already in an active chapter will also be National Members and then chapter members. This way all members are included and not overlooked when information is being passed on.



**INTERNATIONAL
Our Mission**

FGBMFI is one of the largest Christian business organizations in the world. Founded in 1953, we are in 142 nations - meeting in over 7,000 chapters. Our members and leaders include every race, culture, social status and language.

By God's grace, we connect people with opportunities to reach out and help others find a better life and work together to build better communities.

We do this by:

Calling people back to God...

There is a better life by following Jesus Christ.

Promoting integrity and good character...

Being a reflection of God to our world.

Participating in God's good work...

Releasing gifts, talents and resources to help others.

Working together to build better cities & nations...

Impacting our leaders and our culture.

Taking the message of God's love to every family...

A true grass roots effort that is changing the world.

"The mandate from God is that we break the chains of despair in the world. Our mandate is to destroy the isolation of loneliness, and link the world to God!"

Demos Shakarian, Founder



"It is our destiny to lift up God in every business center, every marketplace, every government center and university... every nation, city, town and crossroads of the world. People of faith, shining with God's glory, bringing the uplifting message of God's power... reaching out, helping, encouraging and lifting. Today, through our efforts, we believe that over 2 million people come to God each year."



International President Mario Garcia



JESUS CHRIST Changed My Life!

My name is Ardian Kristanto. I was born in 1956 in a very small village called Kokas, West Papua, Indonesia. When I was 6 years old, my father passed away and my family became one of the poorest in the village.

Since I was a small boy, I know what poverty means. Not long after my father passed away, I was struck with a sickness in which there was no cure nor medical person can help. My family was just waiting for me to die because I was just lying on the bed for many weeks.

One day, an old missionary woman got stranded in our village. My grandma heard that this woman can heal any sickness, so we invited her to come to our home. She said she can't heal any sickness, but her God, whose name is Jesus, can. She stayed a few days in our house praying and fasting for me.

After a week, I can finally start to eat, and in the following week, I was completely healed. I became the first Christian in the village, soon after, my whole family became Christian, and slowly people in my village follows. Since then I became a devoted Christian. I grew up very tough because I did not have a father figure. I became a tough man at work and without realizing, a tough man to my family also.

It was not until 1986 my wife brought me to FGBMFI that my life was changed, and the relationship with my family was changed. At first, I was very sceptical about it, because I always believed that Christian businessmen are the biggest hypocrites because they cheat people in the weekdays and cheat God in the weekend.

But slowly, God changed my life through FGBMFI. Since then, I have served God 30+ years faithfully through FGBMFI, and God has never owed me anything because He has returned and given me a life, so much more than I could ever imagined. He gave me a loving wife, three wonderful children, two children in law, and two grandchildren.

He has blessed us with 16 companies moving in manufacturing, construction and trade. Everything that I am that I have, I owe it all to our Lord Jesus Christ.

