



From the National President's Desk

Knowing the times and season in which we live. As we are approaching our annual convention, let me encourage you, one and all to come, after giving prayerful consideration as to what you are doing with your life for the extension of the Kingdom of God and what God is expecting from you as men of God, in the knowledge that we have all been saved for good works. Much like the great men of old, a good example being King David in 2 Samuel 5: 24. The Scriptures record that after David had become King of Israel, the Philistines deployed their army in an attempt to defeat the new King. David, knowing his strength was not in himself but in the Lord, inquired of Him as to what action he should take in this situation.

The Lord's answer to David, was, "Go up, for I will doubtless deliver the Philistines into your hands." And being true to His word God gave King David the victory on the day. David and his men were then able to destroy all the Philistine's images that they had brought to the battle in the hope that they would give them the victory over the God David served.

Not being satisfied with one battle, the Philistines came a second time. Now King David having one victory under his belt, didn't go head long into the second battle, but inquired of the Lord as to what action He should take. The Lord's answer was quite different this time, giving David a strategy for victory, instructing him how and where to deploy his army. **Verse 23.** "You shall not go up; circle around behind them, and come upon them in front of the mulberry trees. And it shall be, when you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the mulberry trees, then you shall advance quickly. For then the Lord will go out before you to strike the camp of the Philistines."

What is to be learned *here*? If the battle is the Lord's then we need to wait upon Him to gain His instruction as to what action or direction we are to go in, what troops to deploy and what strategies we are to use throughout that deployment. As individuals before you put your names forward for any position or role in the work of God, first seek God till you hear the marching in the mulberry trees and then you will know without a doubt that it is God, that He has called you into His service and you can go forward knowing that If God has called you then He will equip you, strengthen and sustain you. However if you don't hear the marching in

the mulberry trees and can't be certain that God is calling you to a set task, then have the good sense to leave well alone; you may be blocking someone that God has been trying to get the attention of so as to place him in that position that you are now filling and the end of that is the whole organisation has a meltdown. However if you know that you know that Almighty God is calling you into His service then come ready to move mountains for the push into this nation is on and I believe with a passion that this convention is the pivotal point in our fellowship. From this convention forward we are going to need every hand on the plough as we take the battle to the enemy. In any army there must be order, officers of different ranks, callings and abilities; foot soldiers with strength, passion, and a will to win, but all must be trained in their individual roles, coming together as one mighty force against the enemy, in the knowledge that if everyone does their duty the battle is won.

As members of the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International we have the great privilege of being part of one of the world's largest market place ministries, an army of men that have a passion for souls reaching out in the love of Jesus Christ, to a lost and suffering world. But for us as an organisation to be successful we must have Godly order. That being the right people in the right positions, for we are a mighty army in the Lord.

For the past three years the National Board has been working hard to put everything in godly order, ready for the sound of the rustling in the mulberry trees, yes waiting for the Captain of the host to give His command to go out quickly and complete the work He has set out for you to do. Now in the reading of the text I found that the Rabies of the Jewish faith, say they believe that the sound of marching in the top of the mulberry trees was coursed by the feet of the Heavenly army of Angels marching on top of the mulberry trees as they went out before King David's men, defeating the Philistines, so all King David's army had to do was the mopping up.

If our convention is our pivotal point and we are ready, then the army of the host of Heaven is ready and as soon as we hear the rustling in the mulberry trees we will be off and running. For if God is for us who can stand against us.

Come O mighty warrior, see you at the convention.

God Bless.
Len.



Coffee & Conversation with James

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

Submitted by Ron Oastler

It was unseasonably cold – and I mean cold – it was way down on the average for the Port and I was already half way through a hot cup of coffee when James arrived.

'Ah,' he chimed 'a wise move if I may say, a hot beverage is what the doctor ordered for today!'

Like a seasoned Met Bureau man, James just had to comment 'Climate, weather, topography, they are a fascinating study. The valley behind the Port is like a giant funnel – not so long ago the temperature was up in the 40's in the far west of the State and the wind headed east and came down the valley into the Port. The next thing we knew the temperature was in the 40s up the Valley, and here right on the Coast it was up into the high 20's and low 30's in quick time.'

'Now the same scenario is applying but with the temperature inverted. The extremely cold snap in the west is delivering bitterly cold air into the Valley and down to the Port. It is way below average – that is certain.'

I did know how all of this happens of course, but what got to me was how quickly James then 'joined the dots' to another experience ...

'You know,' he continued, with quite some feeling, 'I readily recall a sudden temperature drop in the drawing room of a church manse, up-country. It was early afternoon on a Friday – a really lovely day – one of those nice warm, cosy and comfortable days when all is well with the world and ...'

'Three of the brethren and I had been invited by the Senior Minister of this Country Parish to run a Seminar for the Church on the following day – Saturday. It was for the Elders and Leaders and other interested members, on the subject of "The Work, the Gifts and the Ministry of The Holy Spirit". We were then to take Sunday Services in the various parish churches within the Circuit. The invitation came on the recommendation of his Associate Minister who had attended a



number of our Fellowship Dinners and had experienced a new realm in The Holy Spirit.'

'Well, would you believe it' James asked rhetorically, 'we were met at the door of the Manse by the minister's wife, who led us into the parlour with the words "I don't know what my husband is doing, having you here and taking up a Saturday with this meeting and seminar thing. I certainly don't agree with it". A cool reception? Nay, a frigid reception indeed!' I could almost see James shudder.

So, 'What happened?' I asked, somewhat innocently.

'Well,' James stated with a wag of his head, 'the lady of the house served afternoon tea as a gesture of some conciliation and then her husband arrived home. The temperature then rose somewhat. We discussed the arrangements for the Seminar – timings, hand-out material, logistics and so on – following a word of prayer we bade them farewell and booked into the motel where we were staying for the Friday and Saturday nights. Much discussion and prayer took place that night (!) and we slept well, knowing that The Holy Spirit was in control.'

'Saturday came and our Team Leader for the day presented an overview of the program and then we shared the teaching throughout the day finishing with prayer for those seeking to go deeper with our Lord. Then, with an encouragement to see the folk in church the following day we bade farewell.'

'Sunday ... we scattered across the Parish, each preaching in an allocated church in the circuit. The "Finale" was a combined service on Sunday afternoon – open to all - in an historic little County Church. With only five pews on each side of the aisle in this beautiful little church it seated a maximum of fifty people. It was packed. There were folk standing along the walls all the way down to the pulpit, and in the vestibule – everywhere ... and may I say, "The psychological and spiritual temperature was very warm and comfortable."

Then, with a delightful smile as he recalled the moment, James again asked rhetorically, 'Would you believe it ... at the conclusion of the afternoon service the minister's wife came up to our team leader, wrapped her arms around him, hugged him and said "Thank you so much for coming. Thank you so much for what you shared. We are so grateful. Thank you. Thank you." The Holy Spirit had been at work drawing her to The Master.'

'So my friend, never forget that the Holy Spirit can change the temperature from frigid to "on-fire" when the Word of God is shared in Truth and Love – it is part of "... discipling folk to Christ."



Andrew Hastie

As a teenager, Andrew Hastie challenged his parents' religious beliefs. But in the worst moment of his life, they saved him.



Andrew William Hastie is an Australian politician who serves as Chair of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security and as the Federal Member for Canning, WA in the Australian House of Representatives.

When Andrew Hastie went to Afghanistan on combat service with the SAS he wrote a letter to his wife, Ruth, the envelope sealed with wax, to be opened by her only in the event of his death. He left the letter with a friend, who was to be part of the notification team, the small group that would go and see Hastie's wife if the worst happened.

The West Australian Liberal MP's parents have deep religious beliefs. Hastie rebelled against his dad's beliefs for a while: "Around age 16 to 19 I was very aggressively challenging a lot of what I was taught. The question for me was: can I still be a good person without God? I had embraced the postmodern view I got at school — that I was a consumer and I could make any choices I liked. Partly I wanted to justify under-age drinking and having a good time."

In 2000 his father took him to Biola University, an evangelical Christian university in California. On that trip he met Chuck Colson, the Nixon staffer who went to jail for his Watergate crimes, found God there and later got heavily involved in the Christian mission to prisoners in jail. Hastie also read a book about Christian belief: "The author started off with the empty self, describing narcissistic, modern man, and I felt he was describing me. That led me to ask the question, did I accept the basic tenets of Christianity? The next question was: how do I practise Christianity? What implications does it have for my weekends, boozing and trying to sleep with as many girls as possible?"

In one tragic incident in Afghanistan, Hastie called in American helicopter support to fire on two Taliban fighters who were planning to attack Hastie's soldiers and the Afghan base they were visiting when the helicopters came to pick them up. Hastie knew this because the Taliban signals had been intercepted.

In the worst moment of Hastie's life, the helicopters shot the wrong Afghans, killing two little boys, brothers aged six and seven. Hastie took control of his own emotional state, took a few soldiers with him to go out to where the boys had been shot and see if they were still alive and if there was any chance of saving them, then reported everything back to his bosses. He didn't eat or sleep for the next 24 hours and for a long time had nightmares about it. The boys are still regularly in his mind.

Later, he pushed to be allowed to go and talk to the boys' family: "It was about telling the truth and taking responsibility. I wanted to apologise to the boys' uncle. The uncle was about 45 or 50, with a grey, weather-beaten face. He had assumed the role of defender of the family. The 16-year-old brother, you could see the anger on his face. The uncle acknowledged the approach and said: 'You're forgiven.' For me, this prefigured divine forgiveness." This tragedy didn't shake Hastie's Christian faith: "Imagine if you weren't a Christian, if you were a closed universe atheist, how bleak and senseless those deaths would be."



Black Hawk Down

"God, I know I'm going to die in the next few minutes and I need your strength." Sergeant Jeff Struecker

The Battle of Mogadishu



From Fearful to Belief to Salvation: Shedding Cultural Christianity

Jeff's testimony of brokenness to salvation is superbly detailed in his book *The Road to Unafraid*. A child of a divided home, Jeff grew up paralysed and even haunted by a seven-year fear of death, embarrassment, and failure. Despite knowing of Jesus Christ, attending Church, and desiring salvation, Jeff was still haunted by fear and lacked the peace that only the eternal confidence in one's salvation can provide. In the end, it was a single prayer that was the catalyst for the transformation from fear-ridden soul to a warrior for Christ.

"God, I don't want to go to hell. I don't want to be afraid of death anymore like I've been my whole life. I want to know I'm going to heaven." *13 Year Old Jeff Struecker.*

That God could recalibrate a soul broken by death and shame into one fearless enough to become an Army Ranger was only the beginning. Years into Jeff's walk with Christ, his faith and his daily duty remained bifurcated. Given his environment, this was not surprising. Not unlike the world where the common man finds himself surrounded by daily pitfalls, Jeff's surroundings were such that kindness, compassion, and temperance were generally mistaken for weakness. Through mentorship, fellowship, and faith, Jeff made the choice to transcend the temptations and actions that did not glorify Christ, invigorated by the words of the apostle Paul, "Whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. Do not cause anyone to stumble." (1 Corinthians 10:31-32). But Jeff would need every bit of intestinal fortitude ingrained in him by the Ranger Creed and inspired by Jesus Christ to meet his next challenge.

Leadership Emboldened Through Faith

With his walk singularly focused, Sergeant Struecker faced the challenge of proving the strength of Christian leadership to the world's toughest combat soldiers. A significant component of this challenge was, and is, the widely held assumption within the military's combat arms that Christians are, "too compassionate and distracted with moral restrictions to be tough." Jeff combated this "philosophy" by boldly weaving the Ranger doctrine with scripture, "God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline" (2 Timothy 1:7). In doing so, Jeff achieved a nexus between Ranger discipline and the courage shown by Jesus Christ in the Word. Like all things in the military, combat would serve as the authoritative barometer for both Jeff's Christian leadership and the marriage of Ranger discipline and faith. Exactly what kind of Christian, warrior, and leader Jeff Struecker had become through Christ was to be revealed on October 3-4, 1993. With a guiding sense of peace and purpose, Jeff led his men back into the city two more times, executing their mission with an unflinching call to duty. After 18 hours of brutally



"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



intense combat that included three trips into the streets of Mogadishu, Jeff and his men emerged alive, emboldened, and witnesses to the protection that only God's hand can provide.

As Jeff sat down and tried to make sense of the battle, Christ provided Sergeant Struecker his next challenge through the words of one of his men, "Hey Jeff, I've got questions. I need to talk to somebody." And so Jeff's walk toward the chaplaincy began.

Pastors Lead the Way

Having followed God's calling into the chaplaincy, Jeff continued bringing God's word to combat soldiers through more than a dozen combat deployments in Iraq and Afghanistan. Now a co-pastor at Calvary Baptist Church in Columbus, Georgia, Jeff Struecker's passion for the advancement of Christian leadership remains on fire. In his present role as co-pastor, Jeff endeavours to lead a Christian engagement of injustice while keeping mindful of Jesus' call for Christian accountability in Matthew 12:36.

"And I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the Day of Judgment. "Matthew 12:36.

Jeff Struecker has never been one to shy from the mantle of righteous leadership. A significant component of Struecker's aggregation of pastoral leadership today relates to what he sees as an abdication of Christian leaders' responsibility to properly and unapologetically educate their respective flocks about Godly anger as well as God's love. Struecker refers to the book of James in reminding us that Christians must provide for the innocent and be furious at their mistreatment. Each component of faith requires the same level of dedication and oneness with the Father.

Jeff believes that the responsibility of the conveyance and clear interpretation of the Word rests with Pastors, regardless of what a culturally lukewarm society would say. This unapologetic approach to the zero-sum undertaking of salvation versus damnation is not unreflective of the same no-excuses endeavour of combat. In neither arena is there a place for weakness in leadership in the face of the bold truth borne out through the Word.

Buoyed by his faith and gift of leadership, Jeff lists his life's passion as reaching un-churched men with the Gospel. Today he does that through his fiction and non-fiction writings, public speaking, and ministry group, The Gathering. Through these endeavours, Jeff is able to glorify God by sharing his testimony on the platform that the Lord has provided him.

Most will never experience the horrific nature of combat. That arena is reserved for those who would selflessly volunteer their lives to preserve ideals often taken for granted in today's society. But the spiritual combat that the average men and women who Jeff lists as his present day heroes face every day is no less fraught with eternal peril. To overcome one's fears, through faith and trust in Jesus Christ, is to triumph over dangers no less spiritually tumultuous than the killing fields of Somalia. Jeff Struecker's story is a portrait of meeting and defeating those fears bravely, boldly, yet meekly; and is a true testament to the words of Timothy:

"Be strong with the special favour God gives you in Christ Jesus...Endure suffering along with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. And as Christ's soldier, do not let yourself become tied up in the affairs of this life, for then you cannot satisfy the one who has enlisted you in his army."2 Timothy 2:1 3-4