



From The President's Desk -

As we approach the Christmas season and the times of celebrating the birth of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, my thoughts have taken me into the scriptures and more especially **Isaiah 9:6** "For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." Looking back historically, we understand that these words were written by the prophet some 700 years before the birth of Jesus. I believe it is most appropriate for us to read such scriptures at Christmas because they were clearly fulfilled in the Lord Jesus Christ, Yes! His is the name above all names and He alone is worthy of not only the name, but the accolades that goes with that name. For, He is to us the redeemed, all that the scripture claims Him to be.

My thoughts: "For unto us a child is born". Who nurtured this child? "Unto us a Son is given". In our Christian belief, Jesus is that Son given. "The government shall be upon His shoulder". As Lord of Lord and King of Kings Jesus will return and take His rightful place on David's Royal Throne, to rule and to reign over all the earth.

Mary nurtured the child Jesus watching over and taking care of Him until He could stand on His own. Her motivation was her mother's love for the child, only wanting the very best for Him. That is called nurturing, which raises a question in my mind; how can the Body of Christ be nurtured today and by whom?

We the redeemed collectively are the body of Christ; Jesus is the head of the body. This body is like no other body for it is made up of many individual living members. Therefore self-enlarging as the motivated members of the body fulfilling the great commission to go out looking for lost souls, sharing the Love of God as explained in the Gospel. As Full Gospel Business Men we have a strong, proven, worldwide structure by which we are able to bring men to Christ. Simply by inviting them to a breakfast or dinner meeting to hear God inspired testimonies. That is nurturing the Body of Christ causing it to grow. The larger the Body of Christ becomes the stronger our chapters will become and more of the Holy Spirit is manifested in our meetings which in turn will attract others to attend.

Unto us a Son is given. **John 3:16** "For God so loved the world, that He gave us His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life". Mary, the mother of Jesus was motivated by her love for the child. God's motivation for giving us His Son was His love for the world. Our motivation to nurture the Body of Christ should be our love for God in Christ Jesus. Our labour of love is developed as our love for the lost souls of the same world that God so loves and doesn't want to see any of them perish.

"The government shall be upon His shoulder". Looking at world events, it's not hard to see that our situation is getting worse by the day. The political elite are passing more and more strange ungodly legislation, which in some cases according to our Christian teachings are quite evil. It is getting harder and harder to speak out against such atrocities without being condemned as homophobic, religious bigots' and the like. I feel at times the church itself is being pressed further and further into the back ground of society to a point of irrelevance. This is engineered in part by the principalities and powers of darkness and partly by the irreverent acts of the church leadership and what is presented as sermons today lacking sound biblical doctrine.

That having been said, what can be done to bring about any significant change to the world in which we live? If you take the time to read the chapters of Isaiah around the time of this prophesy, Israel was in strife. If you read about the birth of Jesus; God's chosen people were living under very hard taskmasters. We the children of God could find ourselves in simpler circumstances in the near future, but for the grace of God.

God didn't instruct us to change the world and make it a better place to live in. No! Jesus told us to in **Mark 16:15-18** "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he

that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; in my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues. They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover".

Therein is the answer. If we the redeemed of the Lord would only follow the instruction of Jesus and start making disciples. He, Jesus would soon make the changes. Remember when you were first saved how the Holy Spirit used you in all sorts of situations; every time you prayed for the sick they recovered. Signs and wonders just seemed to follow you as you shared the things of God with your friends; great times of joy and gladness.

That my friend is call new growth and that is what we need to get back to, getting the lost to our meetings so they are saved, discipled and empowered by the Holy Spirit to do great and mighty things. We in our maturity need to share our experiences by testimony that the hearer would be inspired and the Body of Christ continually nurtured. I well remember the joy on the faces of the older saints as God transformed me using me in all the gifts of the Holy Spirit to extend His Kingdom.

God bless you one and all, have a great Christmas with family and friends.
Len.

Coffee & Conversation with James **By Ron Oastler**

James and I were at the café much later than usual. In fact, the morning Dolphin Watch Cruise had returned and some of the visitors were at adjoining tables, chatting about having seen pods of dolphins 'up-close'. These folks were very impressed by the cruise skipper's ability to locate pods and engage playfully with the dolphins. How he did so was a complete mystery – but resulted in an exciting outcome.

'How wonderful to hear the comments of our visitors,' James remarked 'particularly their appreciation of such an exciting experience that the skipper had delivered.'

'Yes' I added 'I can relate with their wonderment at the ability of the cruise skipper to locate dolphin pods. The wonderment also of having the dolphins swim with and around the vessel like they were real friends. How marvellous is that!'

'Marvellous indeed, my friend,' was James thoughtful response. These skippers certainly are very effective in achieving such results for their guests. There are some key elements that lead to their success and on top of that it is experience ... 'At this point his voice trailed off as he waited for me to pick up the thread.

'So, what sort of things are the elements for success?' I quizzed. 'How do they develop the experience?'

'Well my friend, a couple of the key elements would be knowing something of the lifestyle, habits and whereabouts of the dolphins and a real feeling for these wonderful creatures – empathy, if you will. Another would be an expectation of sighting and encountering them and therefore being aware and "on the lookout". Yet another of course, would be how the skipper – and their vessel - relates with the pod in their environment. That is, an engagement that shows respect, to

the dolphins and their habitat and communicates the acknowledgment of their presence and of their safety.'

'It is not unlike the way we should be building relationships with people in the space we occupy on this planet. In fact,' James continued, 'it is not unlike some of the keys to evangelism. We need to have *empathy* for people, an understanding of situations, an *expectation* of meaningful encounters, and behaving in a positive and supportive way that demonstrates an *engagement* based on genuine empathy.'

'You may recall me telling you about my encounter one Friday morning with Vlad, the company librarian, who was seeking advice about how to deal with a work group situation. This' James stated, 'was a classic "witnessing" situation, that I recognised immediately.'

Without a pause, James launched into the story. 'So, after exploring the details with him I offered a word of counsel. Expressing genuine empathy for his situation. I said: "Vlad, when I face situations like yours, I ask my Heavenly Father for wisdom and for His grace and favour. Our Lord loves you Vlad and He can ..." But before I could finish the sentence, Vlad turned and walked out of my office without saying a word. I was staggered, to say the least. He certainly reacted to my counsel but not in the way I had expected.'

'But it did turn out successfully as I remember' I offered.

'Yes, it did' James acknowledged. Naturally, I prayed that Vlad's heart would be good soil regardless of what it may have appeared at that time. I had to leave it to the Holy Spirit. Across the weekend I kept recalling Vlad's reaction and each time prayed for the Holy Spirit to do what no man could do.'

'Then of course it was Monday again and back to the office with all of its activity to occupy my mind. BUT, to my surprise at around morning coffee time, who should step into my office but Vlad! I admit, I really was surprised. His conversation was even more surprising ...' James' admission was genuine.

'Vlad said you may have wondered why I left your office rather abruptly on Friday' To which I replied 'Yes, it did cross my mind' said James, acknowledging this to be the understatement of the year!

'Then came the REAL clincher from Vlad.' James was once again re-living an episode from time past. 'He told me that his father had often told him that God loved him, and he should commit his life to God and live for Him. Then Vlad concluded this statement by saying: 'when you basically told me the same thing, I was moved to tears and did not want to be embarrassed so I left your office.' 'That was the ideal opportunity for me to reassure Vlad about the work of the Holy Spirit in softening our hearts even unto tears – nothing about which to be embarrassed. With the Holy Spirit having softened his heart it was time to receive Christ as his Lord and Saviour and be reconciled to the Heavenly Father.'

'So,' James concluded 'with *empathy*, *expectation*, *engagement* it was now my absolute joy and privilege to pray with Vlad as he committed his life to Christ there and then in my office. Praise the Lord.

By: "*Happy Jack*" Burbridge

Author of the amazing prison book: "*The Enforcer*"

I was a natural for violence, mainly because I was so fast. My reactions were like lightning. I could make a \$100 a night by betting guys in the bar that I could drop a playing card and catch it before it hit the floor. They said it couldn't be done, so they'd put down \$10. And I'd just rake it in.

Staff Note Interlude (testimony continues following this): Many incidents contributed to Jack's ability to have to deal with physical pain in the military, which then planted seeds of drug addiction that he shares about in the book on his life: "*The Enforcer*", but for the sake of trying to keep this testimony shorter than book-length, the goal is to just give highlights of his violent, criminal past to show you how God can take the most rebellious, hard-hearted, violent, authority-hating, people-using criminal ... and turn that person into a peaceful, loving, compassionate vessel ... useful to society and for God's glory, that to some ... has to be a total **impossibility**.

But if you read no further, allow me to leave you with this. **NEVER** underestimate God's willingness to answer the prayers of a parent who refuses to give up praying for a son or a daughter or a spouse ... or the prayer warrior praying for a next door neighbour or a prisoner locked up in a lonely cell that a great deal of society would rather see suffer there until death, rather than ever get released.

NEVER underestimate the transforming power of Jesus Christ, because no matter what you may have done, Jesus finds you just as *valuable* as any angel that resides in heaven with their Creator. It may take a great deal of "spiritual surgery" by Jesus to transform your heart into the heart of a heavenly angel, but that's what He specializes in. Jesus didn't *just* die for your sins so you don't have to be punished for them on the Judgment Day if you'll get right with Him (Don't put it off a day longer; you don't have *tomorrow* promised to you) ... He'll walk with you across stormy seas and even carry you if need be in *this* troubled life when no one else will.

You may have spent most of your life in prison, and feel as though your life has been (or is) a total waste. But let me remind you of a little "secret" that no one may have shared with you *yet*. God the Father, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit has **HUGE** awesome plans for you throughout **eternity!** Neither you nor I nor any other person **knows** just how valuable we are to Him, and how He desires to use us trillions throughout trillions of years from now – eternity without end – that will bring Him and us and others joy unspeakable. No one knows but Him the potential that lies in *any* of us, starting in this life and will continuously be enhanced forever! But for that potential to be birthed and continuously enhanced, it has to start in *this* life by letting Him be your most trusted "spiritual guidance counsellor and surgeon" and "stormy seas water-walking guide." He isn't called "Saviour" for nothing.

GETTING ORGANIZED

I was discharged from the hospital and the Air Force on the same day, in February, 1958. My superiors knew from my records that I had done everything illegal a soldier could do, and had been in trouble almost every day of my three years in uniform.

I had no plans, but I decided to go back to Indiana and find something, perhaps around Chicago. That night, I pumped myself full of pills to make the drive from Philadelphia to South Bend without stopping. I felt good. I had lost some weight, but most of my strength was back. I settled down in the seat of the sports car I had bought a few weeks earlier and headed out of town. I'd be home by morning.

As it turned out, I wouldn't be home for another year. On a sudden whim, I

decided to stop for a quick drink at a bar I knew. When I went in and sat down, a middle-aged man who introduced himself as "Tony" struck up a conversation with me about his son who was still in the service. Soon, he was buying my drinks and telling me how much I reminded him of his son. A couple of hours later, he invited me for a night on the town, but when I told him again I was headed out, he insisted. "All the drinks on me!" he urged. "Come on – you can leave in the morning." *Why not?* I thought to myself; *if he's got the money, I guess I could make the time.*

As soon as we sat down at the first bar, the bartender walked over to us and slipped Tony a white envelope. I didn't think anything of it, until it happened again ... and again. I wondered about it, but didn't want to ask questions. When we walked into the fifth bar, again the bartender came up to us, but this one started yelling and cursing Tony, then suddenly slugged him. I was tanked up from several drinks on top of a handful of pills, and before I knew it, I had landed on the bartender and worked him over. When I straightened up my tie and returned to Tony, I noticed he was looking at me in a new light. He was grinning from ear to ear.

"Jack, how would a like to earn 5 bills a week?" he asked the minute I sat down.

"Doing what? Who'd I have to kill?" I joked.

"Just do what you did then, that's all," he answered.

Five hundred dollars a week, I thought to myself, *just for beating up bartenders?* Tony had talked me into it.

My friend Tony turned out to be a chieftain in the Pennsylvania syndicate. That night, he hired me as an enforcer for his organized crime operations. I was ready for the job and I wanted the money.

My career was on the up. I was getting paid for doing what I always did for free. I rarely went to a bar without hurting somebody before the night was over anyway. This was a little different, however. I was supposed to walk up to a man who had never done anything to me and do a number on him, but I quickly discovered that all a guy had to do was say "No," and I got as mad as if he had kicked me in the teeth.

A few weeks into my career, I was sent to a club in Wildwood, New Jersey to do some enforcement and I ended up doing too much. The club was a front for prostitution and other operations, and the manager wasn't cooperating. When nothing I said convinced him to pay up, I got mad, started punching and just went crazy. I busted his shoulder with the butt end of the double barrelled shotgun I used and then shot up the place.

The club looked like a tornado had hit it. When I walked out, the manager was lying on the floor groaning. The incident was a turning point in my career, because it gave me a reputation, which is almost as valuable as a gun in enforcement. The brutality of the incident alarmed the local police and suddenly I was the "dangerous new man" to East Coast crime operations. Across the nation, law enforcement agencies that kept tabs on organized crime activities sat up and took notice.

A few weeks later, I was in one of the syndicate clubs, as a client this time, when I overheard a man at the next table talking about some enforcer. "And you should have seen the club when 'Happy Jack' got through with it!", the man was saying. When he mentioned that the club was located in Wildwood, I realized that he was talking about me.

I had been nicknamed "Happy Jack" by some syndicate friends, because I snickered during an act of enforcement. I liked the name and it stuck! I was happy.

I knew enforcers didn't last long. For every enforcer that made it big in the syndicate, there were hundreds that were wasted before they were 30 years old. I was just a 21 year old kid with a lifetime in front of me. I *liked* the way my life was going. And besides, I didn't *think* – I reacted. I did whatever seemed to be the thing to do at the moment and whatever I did was right in my mind. It would be ten long years before I would realize that *perhaps* I wasn't a very nice person.

I may have been happy, but I made the enforcers in the neighbouring areas very unhappy. Each group had to defend its own territory against other groups that wanted to expand. Power struggles were the name of the game, and I was stepping on toes right and left. Within a year, I had hurt too many people in my zealously, and now it was time to take revenge. But I was too arrogant to be afraid.

Working in a high crime area like Chicago, I sometimes got mugged like everyone else. But when a guy attacked me, he got more than he bargained for and the results were funny (at least at that time they were). One night, while I was stopped at a red light, a black guy jumped in the seat beside me and pulled a knife. He saw my Lincoln and figured I was some old rich man who'd be an easy mark.

"Man, I'm robbing you!" he snarled. "Oh yeah?" I pulled my gun and shot him in the knee. A look of shock crossed his face and he almost fell over himself trying to get out of the car. I heard him running down the street yelling, "He shot me! He shot me!" I think he was more surprised than hurt. He ran two blocks before he finally fell down.

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EVENTS – See webpage for details



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



An Untouched Mission Field on Our Door Stop

By Ian Eckel

I first met Norma in a Pentecostal church; she is about five foot nothing; petite; pretty; Lebanese; about my age **and has a testimony**. She is an exuberant worshipper with a heart of gold; she feels her mission in life is to feed everyone. (In true Lebanese style). The trouble is she is on a pension. Talk about the widows mite, she's the epitome.

She came to our church out of a mainline church, because of her need to have Spirit filled worship with those of like-minded Christians. She even challenges the Pentecostals. I have been fellowshiping with her outside of church (taking her out to dinner), and we have been sharing out testimonies.

She sometimes is drawn back to fellowship with those mainline church people. One Sunday I asked if I could go with her. It just so happened that Sunday morning, the woman that conducted the whole service, when she brought the main message, she announced that she was going to do something that had never been done before. She would speak for 15 minutes on a subject then, we would be given a short break to discuss the topic with the person sitting next to us, the topic being our personal encounter with God, after that we would also be given the opportunity to come up and share what we felt was something worthwhile sharing. When that time came there was a stunned silence and no one budged.

A song sprang to mind, "never let a chance go by" so I gave Norma a dig in the ribs and said "go on Norma" so up she jumped and told her testimony of her encounter with God and the story of her full conversion. When she sat down there was another pregnant pause, then the cleric said "would someone else like to share?" After another pregnant pause, the guy behind Norma said "Gee we can't top that one". But the cleric wasn't daunted and asked again, "Is there anyone that has had an encounter with God", so I slowly put my hand up because I was in an unfamiliar church. To my delight the Cleric said "yes please we welcome visitors to speak". So I proceeded to tell how I also went to a Mainline Church; and how one day being early for church; there was no one there, as I sat on my own, a thought dropped into my mind which at the time I now know, was God speaking to me. The thought was this "there is more" straight away without thinking I said "well whatever it is I want it". Then I told the rest of **my testimony**. The point I kept making was that I had religion but was still empty inside and hadn't heard in 36 years of being a devout church goer, that there was more.

After the service, several men came up to me wanting to know more.

Last night I had another opportunity to tell **my testimony** with another lady of similar age from that same church, I thought of the stories that the Apostle Paul told about all the Jewish Synagogues he got to speak in as he travelled.

The people in those Synagogues all believed in and understood about God, but they also had never heard the good news about the one they had been waiting for brought to them, until Paul came.

When I was in the mainline church I knew about whom Jesus was and God the Father, but was never taken the next step until my brother came and told me. As for the third member of the trinity, well I always thought it was something to do with my left shoulder, because that was the only time He was mentioned.

What a golden opportunity awaits us, who have the knowledge of how to receive Jesus into our hearts and lives, by simply asking-inviting Him in. And about the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.

When I first became born again, I was so hungry for all that God had for me that I shunned the mainline church, but I now see them as an **untouched mission field**. Just think of how many thousands of people sitting in those churches that love God enough to want to go religiously to church every Sunday, however all those that have the good news are sitting in another church and will never come to them!