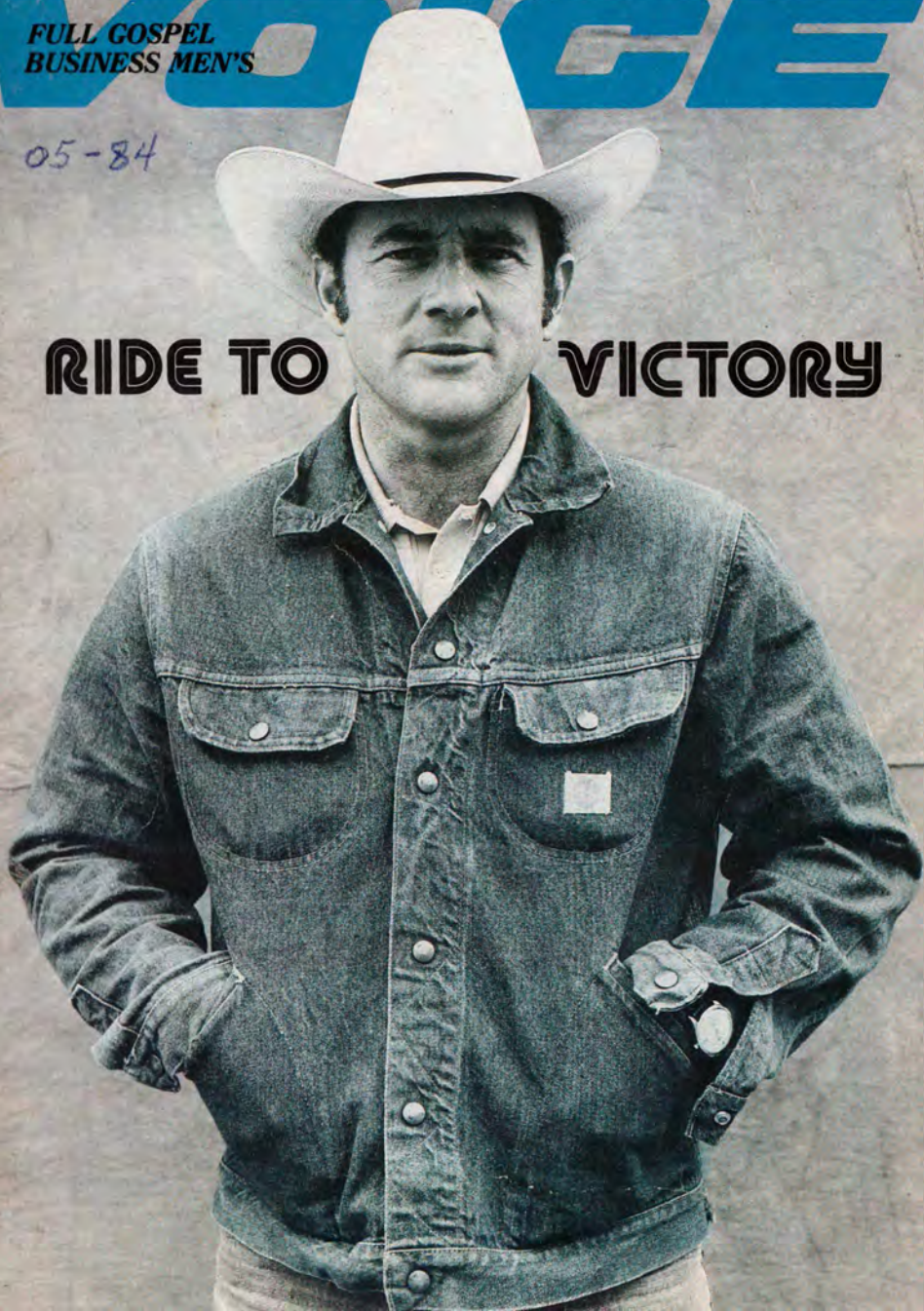


**FULL GOSPEL
BUSINESS MEN'S**

05-84

RIDE TO VICTORY





Phil Doan in 1979 bareback-riding event, Ponoka Rodeo

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World's Greatest Message

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God wouldn't be interested in riding bulls and broncs," I reasoned. "He'd probably stop me from rodeoing and send me to Africa as a missionary." This assumption turned me away every time I thought of Him, which mostly was only when I got hurt.

You see, all I ever wanted to be was a rodeo cowboy. My dad and four of his brothers were rodeo contestants in the 1930s and '40s, and after I came along in 1941 I started going to rodeos at a very early age.

We lived on a small ranch in central Alberta. When I got together with the neighbor kids on our horses we would generally round up somebody's cows and ride them. We were not at all popular

would never be another bad day.

Five years later I joined the Professional Rodeo Cowboy's Association and added another event to my roster: steer wrestling.

There were lots of parties and excitement around the rodeos; I was winning some money; and I liked what I was doing. Except for the times I'd have a wreck or a close call in the arena, I thought less and less about God.

Once in an Idaho rodeo a steer ran under my horse and upset us. Our momentum threw me in front of the steer, who rolled over me. And then my horse rolled over me. I came out of that with just minor injuries—and certain that God had protected me from being killed.

RIDE TO VICTORY

because of it, since this "riled up" the cattle and caused weight loss. But between riding the cows and attending rodeos with my dad, the idea of becoming a rodeo star took root and grew.

I started to enter boys' steer riding events in local rodeos. The first time, a cow bucked me off and knocked me out cold; this just made me all the more determined to be a rodeo star.

I started entering the men's events—bareback broncs and Brahma bulls—when I was fourteen. The first bull I ever rode (he was strong and I was just a skinny kid) broke my riding arm while I was on his back. I still won fourth money on him. I figured that after that there

Returning from a series of rodeos in 1965, I learned that my sister had brought a friend with her from eastern Canada. The very first time I saw Jane, I knew that I would marry that gal. We were married about six months later. It was very handy, too, for a cowboy to have a registered nurse as his wife.

We traveled a lot, to the southern U.S. in the winter and back to western Canada in the summer. Our first son was born in 1967 (we called him our centennial project) and our daughter was born in 1969. Both kids traveled well, going with us to all the rodeos.

We rented a place south of Calgary, Alberta, and Jane and the kids (now two

boys and a girl) started staying home more—while I started partying and drinking more after the rodeos were over. If I didn't win, it was time to have a few drinks and forget about it. If I did win, it was time to celebrate.

Since I had ignored the moral standards instilled in me as a child, my whole world seemed to be coming apart at the seams. I couldn't seem to love my kids like I ought. Every decision I made (when

God, this is the way I am. I don't like it, but I can't help myself.

I finally made it) seemed to be the wrong one. I hadn't done as well at rodeoing as I knew I could, and it had even lost its thrill.

I was proud of my tough exterior and what I thought was toughness inside. But things were bad. "Well," I thought, "if it's true that God made me, He'll have some answers, I guess. I'll clean up my life and see if things get better."

My big cleanup program began: Stop smoking. No more drinking. Start going to church. . . . It lasted for about a week. But some people at the church actually looked as though they enjoyed being there, and that really puzzled me.

Well, things went from bad to worse. One night I concluded that if I had to live

in failure and defeat with no purpose, then I didn't want to live. I decided to tell God.

Now, I had prayed before but I had always prayed, "God, help me and I sure will do better tomorrow." This time I understood that God knew all about me; there was no sense in trying to fool Him or to make excuses.

I told Him, "God, this is the way I am. I was born like this and I don't like it, but I can't help myself. I'm sorry."

Not knowing what else to say, I knelt there just being quiet. Then God spoke to me: "Ask Jesus."

Immediately another impression or voice said, "Oh, don't do anything as foolish as that!"

All my life I had heard about God and the devil, the good and the bad. Now I was in a full-blown encounter with them both. Somehow I knew that the one I listened to and obeyed would be the one that would rule my life.

I was done with it, anyway. Twenty-nine years old, worn out, drunk out, smoked out, broken up, and sick and tired of being sick and tired. So I yielded my life that day to the "Ask Jesus" voice.

I remembered someone telling me once that when you come to Jesus you should ask Him into your heart. (Not that organ that pumps blood through your body, but the very center of your being, your control center.) That's where Jesus

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wanted to be—not off somewhere in the sky or in a building on the corner, but right in the heart and center of this cowboy.

For the first time in my life I knew I was right with God. A peace came into me and over me that I didn't understand, but I liked it.

Well, now I'll have to quit rodeoing for sure, I thought, and go as a missionary to Africa. So I quit riding. But actually I didn't know what to do with myself. It didn't look as if God were sending me to Africa, and all I'd ever geared myself for was rodeo.

Something else had changed in my life. I could hardly put my Bible down. All of a sudden it was good reading. Through this new combination of studying His word and talking with Him, God let me know that He wanted me back in rodeo. He wanted me to stay there and start telling people what Jesus had done in my life.

Well, that news both pleased and troubled me. It pleased me because I liked to rodeo anyway. It troubled me because I couldn't tell those guys I lived and rodeoed with *about Jesus*.

Finally I said, "Lord, I don't want to—but I will obey You. But I'll need a double shot of Your Spirit if I'm going to tell others about You."

He gave it to me right there. It was like liquid love being dumped on me. Any fears just drained out as He filled me up to overflowing. I finally had to ask the Lord to turn it off or I would get so happy I might jump right out of my hide.

Through Jesus I was able to go back into rodeo, healed in my body and mind,

and win two Canadian championships: Steer Wrestling Champion in 1973 and Canadian All-round Champion in 1974.

Last year I was impressed to start a ministry holding Cowboy Church on rodeo grounds and in some rodeo arenas on Sundays, with Bible studies for rodeo contestants.

The Lord has also made it possible for me to tell all over Canada and the United States what Jesus has done in my life. I've been able to share as far away as Yugoslavia with an FGBMFI airlift, and before this life is over I have a hunch that I may yet go to Africa. □



Phil Doan still rodeos part-time, is a rodeo judge for the Canadian Professional Rodeo Association, and in 1983 launched Word Cowboy Ministries to rodeos. He is past president of Cowboy Chapter, F.C.A., and of the Canadian Rodeo Cowboys Association, and vice-president of FGBMFI's Coronation (Alberta) Chapter. He and his wife Jane attend the Missionary Church in Castor and have three children: Bart, 16; Heather, 14; and Tyler, 10.

Top Ten GAMBLER

Gene Brock, Charlotte, North Carolina



Remember that TV show tune about “doing just a little bit more than the law will allow”? Those lyrics pretty well sum up my first fifty years. I’ve been a bookie, bootlegged liquor, fenced stolen goods, and that’s only a partial list, but you get the idea.

I was born and reared in Alabama, where my parents were tenant farmers. We didn’t own motorized machinery, and all ten of us children learned early to plow cotton fields behind a mule.

My growing-up years took place during the Great Depression when poverty seemed to be everywhere. As one fellow put it, we were so poor that when Mother tossed a bone into the back yard, the dog had to signal for a fair catch. At school I’d sneak off by myself to eat lunch. I was afraid the other kids might catch me eating cornbread and fat-back wrapped in a newspaper.

When World War II began I enlisted in the army. Right away they issued me three khaki uniforms, the best clothes I’d ever owned. When I looked around, everybody on the post was wearing the

same clothes, eating the same food and drawing the same pay. For the first time I felt equal to everyone else.

Speaking of pay, I received sixteen dollars as my first paycheck. That was far and away the most money I’d ever seen, let alone handled, at one time. I didn’t see how a fellow could spend that much money, but after one night in town with some buddies I learned some ways I hadn’t thought of.

One day I walked into a room and noticed some of the men playing a game. A couple of guys had a huge stack of greenbacks piled in front of them. That’s how I discovered poker.

When I learned some of the basics of the game, I made up my mind never to pick another boll of cotton. I set to work to become expert at poker so I could get my hands on those big bills.

Looking back, I believe the devil himself gave me special skill in winning. He was making sure I’d have enough cash to support my life in the fast lane. Soon I was a “pro” at taking money from people, whether the game was staged in a plush casino or the back room of a



greasy service station. Eventually I was able to split a deck of cards with my left hand, and could deal from the bottom of a pile quicker than most folks can deal from the top. By 1975 my peers rated me as one of the top ten gamblers in North Carolina.

But back to the war. I was wounded in combat and returned to a military hospital in England. The newscasters kept telling us that the European war was just about over and peace would come any day, but somehow the fighting kept going on as usual.

Meanwhile, my injuries were healing rapidly and I knew Uncle Sam would soon have me back at the front, a prospect I wasn't looking forward to. With my luck I'd be blown to pieces the day before they signed a truce.

Out of the hospital, I was sent to a unit near Birmingham, England. While there we received orders to ship out the following day. We received six-hour passes into town. I managed to stretch mine into twenty-four days. At last, hungry and broke, I surrendered at an MP station.

Without realizing the serious impli-

cations, I had signed the Eighth Article of War in order to receive my pass. That meant that if I came back more than six hours later I would be automatically considered guilty of attempted desertion. The penalty was twenty years in Leavenworth.

To make matters worse, the guards at our prison were soldiers who had been wounded in combat and were not able to return to active duty. Guess what kind of treatment you receive from somebody who has been seriously wounded in battle, when that guard hears that you're guilty of desertion?

Yet when I came up for trial before the provost marshal he looked at me and said, "You are charged with twenty-four days AWOL. Guilty or not guilty?"

I don't know to this day what happened to the desertion charges, but I replied without a second thought, "Guilty." I served four months behind bars.

God had a hand in that experience, for I would become involved many years later in a ministry to prisoners. Because of my stay behind bars, I know how prisoners hurt, how badly they want out, how they yearn for visitors. You never forget the feeling when they lock those doors—and you're on the inside.

After the war I went to work for Southern Bell in Huntsville, Alabama, then moved to Charlotte, North Carolina. For seventeen years I was on the night shift, but I got by doing as little as possible. Mostly I slept, then spent my days gambling and drinking. When cards lost their challenge for me, I ran a gambling house

and made an easy 20 percent of bets right off the top.

One night when I had to do some actual work on my job, I found that speed pills kept me awake. I quickly added these to my line of "services," consigning the pills to various places around town. I bought 1,000 pills for thirty-five dollars, then sold them for fifty cents each—a neat profit.

Along the way I got in with some professional thieves and fenced tires, TVs and other big-ticket items. One of my tricks was to steal construction materials, like plywood, from building sites. On a bright Saturday afternoon I would back my pickup truck up to the project, load the items and be gone within a few minutes. People figured that nobody in his right mind would be stealing plywood in broad daylight.

I'd married a girl named Ruby, then left her to raise our family by herself. Sometimes I'd be gone for four or five

days on gambling trips, and Ruby had no idea where to get in touch with me. It's amazing that she even stayed with me through all those years.

It was because of some things that happened to my wife that I began to think about the direction my life was going. Ruby had given her life to the Lord as a child, but I'd pulled her down with me. Then in 1975 she made a total recommitment to Jesus and started praying that He would change my life, too.

She suffered from arthritis in her elbow. Sometimes the pain was so severe that she couldn't lift a coffee cup. Then she read about how God had healed someone, and one morning, standing by the kitchen sink, she asked God to do the same thing for her elbow. When I came home that day she was waving her arms. God had marvelously answered.

You know, that impressed me. I began watching Christian TV programs and I liked what I heard. These preachers

Gene Brock (extreme left) helps prepare FGBMFI-sponsored barbecue inside prison compound. Thirty inmates received Jesus.



were telling me about all the benefits of being a Christian; about all the good things God wanted to do in my life. I hadn't heard that before.

At the same time I was watching television, I started losing at poker. I knew then that something was happening that I couldn't explain. More and more serious now, I read Christian books and started going to church.

On December 31, 1975 I joined 125 friends at a New Year's party. It was the last time I got drunk, and I felt miserable. I knew something would have to give.

Nine days later I was on my way home from work in my pickup. The Spirit of God came upon me right there on the highway and I heard myself praying, turning the terrible mess that my life was over to the Lord Jesus Christ.

"These preachers on television that say You'll take me just as I am . . .," I whispered. "I want to receive You, Lord Jesus. I give myself to You."

I pulled the pickup off the road and began to weep. I'm not sure how long I was parked, but God gave me a vision of myself and of the cleansing blood of Christ. I saw the slime I'd been living in just slip away; I felt completely clean from the inside out. Ever since that day I haven't wanted a drink of whiskey or had any desire to gamble.

God set me free.

Since 1981 I've worked in prison ministries throughout North Carolina for Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International, and in January, 1982 I became FGBMFI field representative for prison ministries in North Carolina. Because of my experience behind bars I can identify

with men who are paying their debts to society.

I've had the privilege of giving my testimony at FGBMFI meetings in North Carolina, South Carolina, Missouri and Iowa. After I share what the Lord has done I usually quote these Bible verses:

"I, even I, am he who blotteth out thy transgressions for my own sake, and will not remember thy sins" (Isaiah 43:25). "Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more" (Hebrews 8:12).

God forgives and forgets—and He sets prisoners free. He has done this for me and I guarantee that He will do the same for you. □



Gene Brock was employed for thirty-three years with Southern Bell Telephone and now spends full time as field representative for FGBMFI in his state and as director of prison ministries for the Charlotte Chapter. Since January, 1983 he has held chapter workshops in North and South Carolina to train and assist in prison ministry, resulting in the initiation during that period of ministry at thirteen North Carolina prisons. He and his wife Ruby have two children: son Steve and daughter Patti, and are members of Garr Memorial Church.

I can't take this anymore!" my wife Susanne cried out in despair. "I'm going back to Germany—and the children are going with me!"

She could no longer put up with my periods of hot temper and cold silence; my drinking; the reckless stockmarket risks that were ruining us financially.

As I drove my wife and our son Philipp and baby daughter Alexandra to Portland International Airport February 21, 1981, I suddenly realized how much they meant to me. Now it was too late. Not knowing if I would ever see them again, I watched their plane roar upward and vanish in the sky.

I returned to an empty house. Walking through its rooms, I saw our baby girl's crib, our little boy's toy truck in a corner, a forgotten pacifier on the floor. Pain cut me like a knife.

I couldn't continue grieving like this. Life must go on. I walked into the bathroom and told my reflection in the mirror, "Wipe the family out of your mind! Forget them and start over."

I remembered a time, several years earlier and the distance of a continent away, when I had talked to myself in the mirror every morning. It was my daily ritual.

"I'm a beautiful person," I would assure the clean-cut young man who looked back at me. "I can sell. I'm a success in every way."

Although at that time I was a top executive with a New York import company, my reflection and I needed to psych each other up every morning to face the business day.

My sales force, I believed, needed the ritual too. My life goal was wealth, power and affluence. The way to that goal was sales. So I picked salesmen who, like me, had a tough drive to succeed. I encouraged each man to praise himself in his mirror daily.

Did I ever think of them as human beings with personal problems? No. That was none of my concern. My goal was to make each man over into a "little Manfred."

I felt I was a living example to them of how rapidly a man can rise in the business world. As an immigrant from Germany, I had landed in New York City nine years earlier at the age of twenty, speaking four languages. I started with the import company as a warehouse employee and after only three weeks was promoted to warehouse foreman. Transferring to the commercial department, I was again promoted after three weeks—this time to manager.

Now I was general manager for the company's United States division, responsible for thirty-five branch offices. I flew all over the world on business, dining in the finest restaurants of London and Paris.

But somehow I was never satisfied. Success, power and affluence came with two price tags—one labeled "restlessness," the other "emptiness."

Quitting the New York job, I returned in 1973 to Germany. Once more I rose to the top, this time as general manager of a Swedish company. I had two offices, in Germany and Paris. Again I was flying here and there, mixing with the so-called "beautiful people."



MAN IN THE MIRROR

In Germany I met an attractive young woman named Susanne. Soon she became my wife. At first she was thrilled to be the bride of a man who could take her to famous restaurants and to the world's glamorous beaches. But one day she informed me, "We're going to become parents. I want to settle down and have a home."

I quit the Swedish company and became a marketing consultant. We returned to the States and to Portland in 1974. By the time our second child was born, the inner restlessness and emptiness had taken control of me. Communication between Susanne and me had degenerated mostly into screaming at each other. At night I haunted the smoke-filled

bars, strutting around with a cowboy hat on my head, drowning my frustration in whiskey and the beat of loud music. At home, my mirror showed me a man tormented by inner pressures that he couldn't handle. In a perverse way, I actually wanted to fail. . . .

It was then that my wife knew she'd had enough and took the children with her to Germany to live with her parents.

Like Susanne, I too wanted to escape the Manfred I had become. I wished I could run to a different town, begin again in some little store as a humble sales clerk, have a new name and a new identity. Instead I got a new job selling time-share condominiums and moved into an apartment.

One day I noticed my apartment neighbor, a young single woman named Mary, sweeping her patio. When she had finished I asked, "May I borrow your broom?"

"Certainly." She gave me a friendly smile.

As I swept we talked. "I'm a reborn Christian," she remarked. "Jesus has changed my life."

Reborn? Jesus? I'd never heard the word "reborn" and had had practically no religious influences in early life. Jesus to me was merely a long-ago figure from the Bible.

I wanted to escape the Manfred I had become . . . have a new name and a new identity.

But my neighbor Mary's warmth attracted me. She was genuine—not like the shallow people I knew in the business world and in the bars.

One Sunday, just a month after Susanne and the children had said goodbye, Mary and her friend Marsha invited me to hear a guest speaker at an evening church service. Rather reluctantly I accepted. The church was packed. I wasn't too impressed by the sermon itself, but then the speaker began to talk of salvation.

"You have to make a choice," he said. He was looking straight at me.

Suddenly—I don't know quite how to say this—I felt enveloped in a warm,

glowing cloud. When he invited people to receive salvation I was the first to spring to my feet. *At that moment I knew the truth.*

"That's it!" I told myself excitedly. "This is what I've been searching for all my life!"

I hurried down the aisle. He led me in a prayer of commitment to the Lord. "Your sins are forgiven," he said. "You are saved."

Joy overflowed my heart. The old pressure and restlessness were gone, replaced by peace.

In the weeks that followed I knew that, while I still had problems, now I had the faith and the power to *deal* with them. The Lord was taking care of me.

As I began to go to church and to read the Bible I longed for my family to experience this peace and joy too. I prayed for them daily. I envisioned my prayers mounting up toward heaven and then descending upon Susanne and the children in Redwitz, Bavaria, southern Germany, 10,000 miles away. Ten thousand miles is nothing to God!

Eagerly I wrote Susanne: "I've changed—I am now a Christian. I love you and the children and intend to meet my obligation to support my family. Please come back to me." Prayerfully I sent it by registered mail, and followed it with another, and another. I bombarded her with letters.

Meanwhile, after reading some books telling about something called the baptism in the Holy Spirit, I received it while at home alone. I found I began to have new insights into spiritual matters.

Eventually Susanne wrote back. "I will

come alone for a short time, on a trial basis."

I was overjoyed to see her, yet the tension after our six-month separation was awkward. When I took her into my apartment we stood and looked at each other. "You can have my bed," I said. "I'll sleep here on the sofa."

So for several weeks we lived together almost like strangers. She could see how much I had changed, but she was puzzled by it all. We went to church together. Then one Sunday she responded to the altar call and accepted Jesus as her Saviour. Soon afterward she received healing of her painful memories and was able to forgive me. Now we were one in the Lord.

Susanne went back to Germany to face opposition from her parents and friends, who thought I had gone off the deep end into fanaticism. But she was able to stand firm, and I followed three weeks later to move her and the children back to the States.

I am now senior vice-president of an

Oregon-based company providing long-distance intercity and other telecommunication service to commercial and residential customers. I accepted the position only on condition that my personal priorities would be respected: the Lord first; my wife and family second; my church third; and my business responsibilities fourth. The Lord is blessing this arrangement. Many Christians are working under my supervision, and I have been able to witness about my faith to other employees also.

Now when I look into my mirror I see, not someone whose goal is money and power, but someone who loves people and wants only the best for them. I see, not a man who needs to psych himself up artificially every morning, but one who "can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Philippians 4:13).

I see a man with a new identity. To achieve it he didn't have to run away to a strange town, change his name or start over. Manfred Ohmes is reborn, and Jesus did it all. Praise His name! ☐



Manfred Ohmes is a native of Germany and a member of the Beaverton-Tigard (Oregon) Chapter of FGBMFI. He is senior vice-president of marketing, promotion and public relations for American Network, Inc. in Beaverton. He and his wife Susanne have three children: Philipp, 6; Alexandra, 4; and Eva, 1, and are members of Beaverton Foursquare Church.

Detroit's east side was a cauldron of boiling humanity. Once in a while someone would be spewn from the mouth of the inner-city hotbed only to encounter deeper problems elsewhere. I was one of those unfortunates.

After teen years filled with arguments and fights provoked by my unbearable arrogance, I joined the U.S. Air Force. I suppose I should have been a marine, though. Their motto fit me so well: "The Few. The Proud." I was a loner and proud of it.

Even as I was being kicked out of the Air Force on a general discharge as an untrainable troublemaker, my ego didn't flinch. The commanding officer gave me a long look and said, "You nearly made it to Leavenworth, young man." And he was right. Only that discharge prevented my winding up, sooner or later, in Federal prison. But I merely sneered at him.

Compared with my only sister, who always seemed to be in trouble, I was considered a quiet, even a good, child to start with. Although our parents were never involved in religious beliefs or church, they were good parents. When we moved to Largo, Florida I was fifteen, and that's when my problems really began.

I thought I was "somebody," a notion perhaps launched by pride over a high I.Q. and nurtured by the attention attracted by skill in painting scenery for class plays. When I became the first underclassman in our high school to be profiled in the senior column, my self-esteem rose to new heights.

I married while in the Air Force. Even then, at the age of twenty-two, the urge to gamble was like a mad fever in my blood and I was looking for ways to support my gambling habits. Upon discharge December 3, 1963, I got a job working in a restaurant and bar in Clearwater,

Thomas A. Noton, Lakeland, Florida

... *what*



Florida. Feeling that this was degrading and an affront to my ego, I became despondent and within weeks was booked on an assault-and-battery charge when the bartender and I got into a fight.

After paying the fine I took my family, consisting of my wife, two boys and a child on the way, to Gulfport, Mississippi. There I got a job driving a cab, then as night manager at McDonald's. We had no money, no furniture, no car. My mind had never stopped working on plans to steal, cheat or con. I spent my days sitting around our rented apartment, brooding...and planning an armed robbery of a small loan company. Fortunately, the robbery never took place. Instead I went into deep depression.

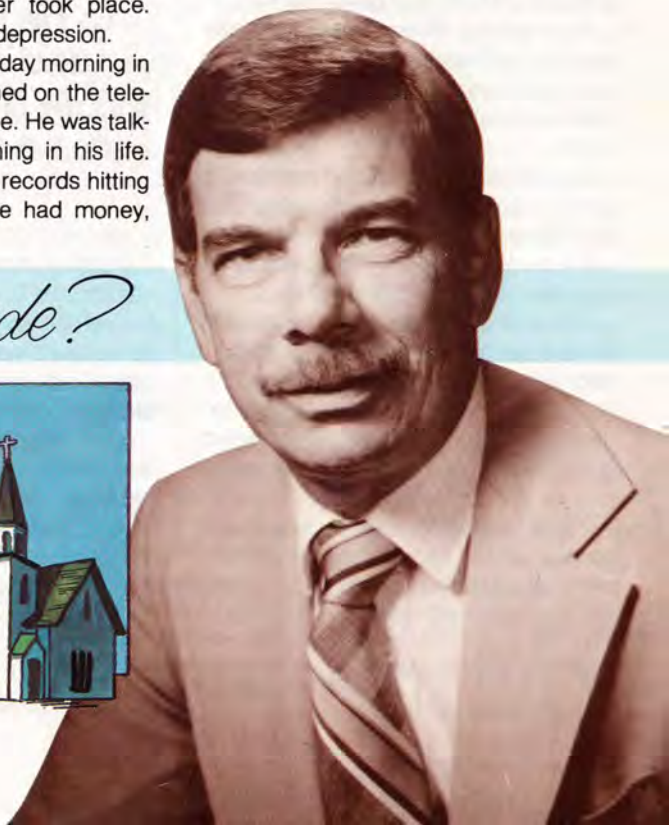
At home alone one Sunday morning in February of 1964, I switched on the television and heard Pat Boone. He was talking about lacking something in his life. Here was a guy who had records hitting the top of the charts. He had money,

fame, power. What could he possibly lack?

Pat said, "All my life I've had one foot in the church and one foot on the stage." Then he said, "I've been a part-time Christian. Now I'm making a commitment to become a fulltime Christian, with God's help... Friend, will you make that commitment, too?"

I was totally confused. How could a guy like Boone want to get into more religion? He had everything I was fighting to achieve. But he asked his audience to write him if we wanted to make the same commitment. I got some paper, jotted a note to him—and never sent it.

follows pride?



Not long after that, waiting in a coin laundry, I was rummaging through some magazines looking for something to read. Passing up some Christian materials that had been placed there, I finally came upon a little magazine called *Voice* that looked harmless enough.

Flipping through its pages, I came across a story about Nick Timko, a wealthy man in Detroit who had all that life could offer. We had all heard of him because, like my father had, he owned a tool-and-die company. Yet this man was saying that all of his possessions and success were nothing in comparison with the fulfillment which his relationship with Jesus Christ had given him.

I had gone to different churches occasionally, and I knew there was a God, but the only prayers I ever prayed were, "O God, help me to win this hand and I'll quit playing."

I remembered Pat Boone and how, in spite of success, he was reaching to God. Now this man Timko says it's all nothing compared to his walk with Jesus. And here I was, a fulltime failure . . .

Within a week I had taken the family Bible down from the shelf, dusted it off and begun reading the New Testament. My wife was skeptical. Still, one afternoon she came home and announced, "Ethel just invited us to go to a revival service at her church tonight."

"You mean the one where they sing so loud we can hear them even with the windows closed?"

Over my protestations we did attend that evening. The message was that "Jesus Christ will set you free. If the Son sets you free you're free indeed."

I'm sure an altar call must have been given, but I didn't hear it. Walking down the street the next day, as I pulled a pack of cigarettes from my coat pocket and stuck one in my mouth the words "Jesus Christ will set you free" echoed in my head. God was giving His own altar call at that moment.

I pulled the cigarette from my mouth, broke it in half, crushed the pack and threw it away. "Jesus," I mumbled, "I don't like the kind of life I'm living. If You've ever set a man free, set me free right now."

**To be miraculously
used of God can
inflate a man of pride
like a toy balloon.**

Nothing happened that I could feel, hear or see. But something was different. I went right over to see one of the families who attended that church, and they helped me understand that indeed I had changed.

That was May 15, 1964. Somebody introduced me to a man named Billy, who was from Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship and owned a coin laundry. That last fact caught my attention.

Billy talked to me about the Holy Spirit, and when the revival came to a close at the church a few nights later, I was baptized in the Holy Spirit. God gave me a new language with which to worship

Him and I prayed, wept, laughed and worshiped the God of heaven and His Son, Jesus. I couldn't thank God enough. I felt that now, with Him, I could be of value.

My life began a gradual turnaround. First I stopped smoking, then my gambling habit disappeared. Lying, cheating and conning people were more of a struggle—but soon those too were conquered.

After immersing myself in God's word for a full year, I felt that He was calling me to some ministry. But pride was still a problem. I answered His call with decisions made entirely on my own. I knew what I wanted to do and be for Him—and that was that!

Loading my family (now three boys and another on the way) into our '56 Buick, I headed back to Florida. In Lakeland, I managed to attend Southeastern College for a year, studying Bible subjects and working a part-time job.

Numerous invitations to minister in nearby churches were extended, and signs and wonders followed my ministry, just as the Word promised. That was wonderful, especially for the people who were healed and for those who received a word of knowledge from God through me.

But for a man filled with pride, to be miraculously used of God can inflate him like a toy balloon until he allows it to destroy him. There is a danger of his feeling that even when he is doing wrong, God is letting him get away with it.

Miracles can give birth to faulty rationale. I reasoned, "The more I am used of God, the more special I am to Him. If God were displeased with me, He wouldn't be using me."

Many of the people who followed my ministry were looking for the miraculous and not looking at my life. They followed me from church to church in that area, hung on to every word that I said, and waited to see what God would do. That puffed up my pride just that much more.

The pastor of the church I attended whenever I was not preaching myself tried to caution me, but I didn't want to hear his sound and biblical advice. Within a year my ministry had dried up. Another year and I was in financial trouble. Still pride wouldn't bend. Finally by 1971 my life was totally ruined and I found myself divorced and spiritually bankrupt.

Sharing an apartment with a college student devoted to pot, drinking and females, I adopted his lifestyle and my life went down the tubes.

When I met Bobbie I was at my lowest. She told me of her own ruined marriage and the divorce she had suffered. Though she had made a commitment to Christ at sixteen, she admitted she had grown spiritually cold. Still, she encouraged me to get back into church. Pride intact, I refused.

Our relationship grew and we were married. It was another year, however, before I would consent to go to church with her. I thought just visiting a few

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

churches would appease her. It didn't. "Honey," she prodded, "let's go to the church you used to attend."

Several months later we did visit my old home church, First Assembly of God. Cautiously I positioned myself where I felt I would be hidden in the crowd from the pastor.

Can you believe that his sermon was on pride? Pastor Strader illustrated the destructiveness of pride with this experience: "Some years ago a young man came to my office who had been mightily used of God, but pride had a grip on him. He told me that he was going to be the greatest evangelist that ever lived. That was pride talking through him. He wouldn't listen to counsel."

The pastor hesitated. I turned to Bobbie, my eyes filled with tears. "He's talking about *me*," I whispered. "I was the one who told him that."

The pastor went on. "Today that man is on the shelf. God is not using him. He has become a dried, marred vessel."

Right then the Holy Spirit pierced my heart. I didn't hear another word. Instead I saw myself as a vase that was marred—dusty, dry, with a gaping hole in it—good for nothing.

When the invitation was given I made my way to the altar, sobbing as God forgave and cleansed me of my sins and filled me with peace and new joy. Pastor Strader was ministering to someone else and was not aware that I was in the service. Turning to see if there was someone else who needed him, he recognized me for the first time. He rushed over, burst into tears and said, "Torn, if I had known you were in the service I

never would have used that story."

We embraced across the altar rail, the tears on our cheeks intermingling. Between sobs of joy I replied, "Brother Strader, I needed to hear that message. It has changed my life."

Within a few months a new ministry began to blossom, one of helps for Christians who want to write. My ministry in the word of knowledge is stronger than ever, and we still lay hands on folks for healing. But that seems far less important to me now, compared to acquiring depth of spirit and an understanding of God's word. □



Thomas Noton is founder, publisher and editor of The Christian Writer magazine. He has authored several books on writing, and his novel Thieves was recently signed for a major motion picture. He and his wife Bobbie attend First Assembly of God Church in Lakeland. Mr. Noton began the Montgomery (Alabama) Chapter of FGBMFI as its president in 1968, held the office of vice-president of the Lakeland Chapter in 1981-82, and currently is an active speaker at FGBMFI chapter meetings and various writers' conferences.

AN OLYMPIC CHALLENGE

The 23rd Olympic games challenge Christians with one of the greatest witnessing opportunities of this century.

Nearly 650,000 people from around the world will converge on Los Angeles in July, including 14,000 contestants and judges.

You can be a witness to the nations of the world by providing vital testimonies of athletes and businessmen in a special *Voice* Olympics issue.

Jesus commanded, "Go ye...teach all nations" (Matthew 25:19). Now the nations are coming to us. We must not miss this opportunity to tell them about Jesus.

Who knows, God may use the copies you supply to touch a youth from China, a visitor from Japan or a family from Italy.

Indicate below the quantity you want to supply for the Olympics *Voice* outreach and mail with your check to FGBMFI Olympic *Voice*, P.O. Box 5050, Costa Mesa, CA 92628.

I want to provide *Voice* for the Olympics. Here is my check to supply the number of copies indicated.

☐ 1,000 at \$200 ☐ 500 at \$100 ☐ 200 at \$40

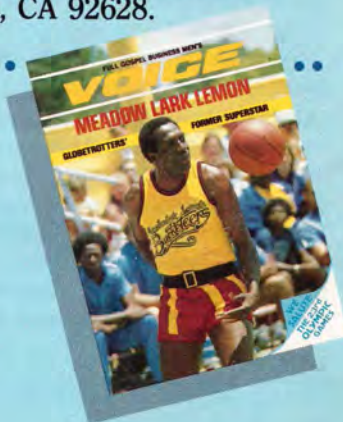
☐ 100 at \$ 20 ☐ 50 at \$ 10

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3020-18-0007



I don't want to die!

Rick Humphrey, Pearland, Texas



couldn't stand erect. I had phlebitis in both legs and crippling rheumatoid arthritis. But it was the abdominal pain that worried the doctors at Park Plaza Hospital.

After weeks of tests, one of them told me, "You have an incurable intestinal disease. We're going to start you on an experimental drug, to be taken by injection every other day."

I told the doctor that my wife Janie couldn't stand the sight of a hypodermic needle and wouldn't be able to give me the shots.

"Then you'll have to learn to do it yourself." Enter the orange. (It seems the skin of an orange is closest to the consistency of human skin.)

I should mention here that the hospital staff treated me with kindness, except for one little short woman, head nurse of the third shift. Tough as nails, cold and aloof, she resisted my every attempt to be friendly. I was to meet this woman again several years later, under most unusual circumstances.

The year was 1974. I lay in a Houston hospital, poking holes in an orange with a hypodermic syringe. Again and again I shoved the needle into the fruit, trying to get my wrist action just right.

What was a businessman with an income of \$28,000 a month doing in a hospital bed, stabbing holes in an orange?

In the business world I was a success, and an inventor, the owner of a research and development company. Now it didn't look as if I'd make it to my thirtieth birthday. Physically I was a medical junkie, in and out of hospitals at least a dozen times. My gut pained so that I

The hospital released me, but three weeks later I was back, worse than ever, running a four- or five-degree temperature. I couldn't walk; I couldn't button my shirt or feed myself.

Surgeons cut away a third of my intestines. A week later the pain returned, worse than ever. Morphine didn't help. The doctors scheduled more surgery.

I was sinking rapidly, paralyzed from the waist down, approaching a coma. A priest whom I didn't know came into my room and administered last rites. Suddenly, for the first time the truth hit me. *I was going to die.* And I wasn't ready.

Janie and I had been inside a church just once in our lives—at our wedding. Neither of us had been interested in things spiritual. I didn't know the Old Testament from the New, or anything about getting saved. And at that time my wife was a worldly person, with a hair-trigger temper and the vocabulary of a mule-skinner. But she was at my bedside that afternoon.

As I drifted in and out of consciousness, my thoughts turned to the only Christian man I knew: my uncle Gene in Fort Worth, Texas. I turned to Janie. "Call Uncle Gene for me."

"Why?" she asked.

"I'm dying. Janie, I don't want to go to hell."

She called, but Uncle Gene wasn't home. He was to speak at a men's function that afternoon, and was at that moment driving to the meeting. His family didn't expect him back for several hours and didn't know how to get in touch with him.

Janie hung up in tears. "Rick, I don't

know what to do for you."

At that time she and I didn't really love each other; we merely put up with each other. I couldn't afford a divorce with all the medical bills. But now we were both weeping—I because of the intolerable pain and the fear of death.

A few minutes later the bedside phone rang. It was Uncle Gene. "I was on my way to the meeting," he told Janie, "but the Lord told me to turn around and come back. I just learned of your call."

I took the phone. "Uncle Gene, they tell me I'm dying, and I don't want to go to hell."

"Rick, do you want to know Jesus Christ as your Saviour?"

**The truth hit me.
I was going to die.
And I wasn't ready.**

"Yes, I do."

He led me to the Lord, then prayed for me. Immediately I experienced a miracle. My vital signs went to normal for the first time in 102 days. My fever broke and was normal. The paralysis left. All the pain left, too—including pain from the thirty-seven injections a day. It seemed as if somebody was standing on top of me, pulling that pain out. I could literally feel it leave.

I started saying, "Praise the Lord!" I'd never even heard that term before, much less spoken it. That was the extent of my Christian vocabulary.

I hadn't been able to sit up without help from nurses. I hadn't been able to eat solid food. They brought me a tray of food and I sat up by myself and ate it all.

When Dr. Lynch, the head of the surgical team, came in and asked what I was doing I said, "God healed me." Now I had picked up three more words for my Christian vocabulary!

They had told me once that when I could do fourteen laps around the nurses' cubicle they would let me go home. The day the Lord healed me I took my IV pole (hooked up to both arms) and did fourteen laps, then kept on without counting. Spurred by a sudden tremendous urge, I told two women patients I happened to meet, "God can heal you!"

Two days later Dr. Lynch came to see me again. He said, "Where's your 'Praise the Lord'?"

I said, "Doctor, I just don't feel like it."
"Why not?"

"Doctor Galleardie (chief physician for the diagnostic team) was just in here a couple of hours ago and said he didn't want to hear about my going home for another three to six weeks."

Well, Dr. Lynch began poking and punching in areas where I couldn't have tolerated even a touch before. After half an hour he said, "Rick, your God has performed miracles for you. I'm going to release you. Go on home!"

During the next seven years Janie and I grew in the Lord and in His word. She was transformed into a vibrant, loving Christian. The baptism in the Holy Spirit brought a new dimension of God's power into our lives.

Then in 1981 I started feeling ill again.

My weight tumbled from 180 pounds to 145. I was anemic, with severe internal bleeding. But I was standing on the word of God, standing, standing . . .

I was to speak at a conference of the Christian Oilmen's Association in Dallas, along with Pat Robertson, Harald Bredesen and Dr. Edwin Cole. Shortly before the conference I went to the doctor. Tests brought the numbing verdict: intestinal cancer.

By this time I had learned something that every Christian should develop: the vocabulary of silence. If you can't say something completely in line with the word of God regarding circumstances, don't say anything. Satan can put something in your mind, but he doesn't know you've accepted it until you speak it. So I said nothing about the cancer.

Finally after two days of intensive prayer I assembled my best prayer partners, Janie and my daughters. I told them what the doctors had said. We sat in our automobile on the way home from church and I said, "Agree with me tonight in prayer that God is bigger than cancer." Each laid hands on me and prayed for me.

That was Wednesday. The doctors wanted me in the hospital immediately, but I told them I was going to the conference first.

At the conference Thursday, I was so weak I had to return to my hotel room. I prayed, "Father, I've got to know beyond doubt that You're not through with me, because I'm not through with You."

Friday morning I was to be the opening speaker. I got up at four o'clock and went down to the coffeeshop to drink an

orange juice and read my Bible. About six-thirty the organizer of the seminar came in and joined me, along with two other men.

They said, "Rick, share your healing testimony this morning. A lot of men here

**I don't understand. You
had cancer, there's no
question about that.**



are Christians in name only."

Here I stood under the shadow of cancer and they wanted me to share how God could heal! The devil was sitting on one shoulder saying, "You can't do that." But the Greater One within me (1 John 4:4) was telling me, "Yes, you can."

I shared that morning, and after it was over they took an unscheduled break because of the heavy anointing. Several men committed their lives to Christ, including one whose annual income was more than \$100 million.

That man counseled with me afterward for two hours. He was an elder in his church—yet that very day his wife and daughter were at home, packing to leave him. We prayed that God would move in that situation. The man called his wife and daughter, telling them what had happened in his life.

As we left Saturday morning, he met me in the hotel foyer and said, "Rick, I want to introduce you to my wife and daughter!" When he had called and testified to them, they had quit packing and came instead to join him.

I returned home Sunday and that evening I checked into the hospital. After two days of tests, one of the doctors, a Jew, came in and sat on the edge of my bed. "Rick," he said, "there's something I don't understand. You had cancer, there's no question about that."

"You can't find any, can you?" I asked.

"Not a trace. And there's not even an internal scar. We don't understand that."

I told him, "God healed me—the same God that you, as a Jew, serve."

"It can't be!" he protested. "Your God has a Son."

"So does yours. You just haven't received Him yet."

The most exciting thing about the Lord is how He can use you, even without your knowing it at the time. Two years ago I was the speaker at a meeting.

There I shared for the first time about the tough, unfriendly little nurse in the Houston hospital where I was first healed.

"This lady *had* to harden her heart," I explained, "because, not being a Christian, she couldn't cope with death and sickness on a day-to-day basis."

As I looked out across that congregation my attention was drawn again and again to a little lady sitting out there. Suddenly I looked at her more intently, and as I did so God framed her face. . . .

Then I spoke to her. "You're the nurse that I talked about?"

"Yes, I am."

"Would you come up here?"

She did. We were both in tears as we embraced. "Can I share for just a moment?" she asked. She faced the congregation.

"Folks, after Mr. Humphrey left the hospital completely healed, they brought my little boy into the hospital with a terminal illness. There was nothing they could do for him. He was dying.

"One day after I got off my shift I walked into my son's room and knelt at the foot of his bed. 'God,' I said, 'I saw You heal a man in this hospital who, by all rights, should have died. If you would do that for a grown man, I know You'll do it for a little boy. If You'll heal him I'll serve you forever.'"

She looked out across the auditorium. "I'd like to introduce you to my son." A robust teenager stood up.

Then she added, "My husband and I were separated because the financial burden was too much for us. Divorce papers had been filed. Tonight I want you to meet my husband." A man arose and

stood beside the boy.

"Last month," she said, "my husband got saved and Spirit-filled."

Miracles like these continue. Each day is a miracle! Having twice experienced the power of God to heal, I can say with the psalmist, "I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord" (Psalms 118:17).

And that's a powerful statement for a man who started out with a limited Christian vocabulary: "God healed me. Praise the Lord!" □



Since 1978 Rick Humphrey has been owner of Gesco, Inc. of Pearland, Texas, specializing in many areas of research and development. Prior to that, he was self-employed in the private sector and did business-management consulting. He and his wife Jane are members of Living Stones Church and have three children: Jennifer, 15; Amy, 14; and Rebekah, 5. Mr. Humphrey is an active speaker throughout the United States and Canada at churches and FGBMFI meetings.



(L.) Attorney Don Evans, International Director, North Carolina, presents proposed national constitution to Executive Committee. (R.) Vice-President Adolf Zinsser enthusiastically reports expansion plans for Europe.

ENCOURAGING GROWTH NOTED

Major items on the agenda at a meeting of the FGBMFI Executive Committee in Dallas, Texas, February 2 and 3 were a proposed national constitution and by-laws for the United States and consideration of strategies to achieve five-year goals adopted by the Board of International Directors in July, 1983.

Since its founding, the Fellowship in the United States has operated under the international constitution and by-laws. Adoption of a national constitution and by-laws, considered favorably by the Executive Committee and adopted by the International Board of Directors on February 4, is a progressive step for the organization in keeping pace with its rapid overseas expansion. FGBMFI currently has chapters in eighty-three nations.

It is exciting to note that the Executive Committee also approved strategies to meet the five-year goals. Goals to be achieved by 1988 are: a chapter in every nation, one million members and 40,000 chapters.

Some of the thrilling gains and projected plans reported by vice-presidents outside the United States include rapid chapter growth in Europe, especially in the United Kingdom, where there are now 173 chapters. In anticipation of satellite availability in '85, FGBMFI is producing video programs in German, although European language programs will follow.

Kenya, one African nation alone, has set a goal of 10,000 members. Their zeal is typical of the spiritual fervor of the entire continent. Canada's five-year plan calls for 10,000 members and 1,000 chapters by 1988. Also, Canadian chapters are committed to sponsoring 12 chapters in Japan.

Down under, there were only six chapters in Australia in 1976. To date, there are seventy, with thirty additional outreaches.

Central and South America are experiencing a mighty wave of the Holy Spirit, reaching top-level professional and government men.

Two years ago, there were two chapters in Honduras; today there are seven. Guatemala has nine, and in the last eighteen months, twenty-five chapters have been established in Brazil.

Targets projected in Asia by 1984 include 40 chapters in eleven countries with a total of 3,000 members. The five-year plan envisions 640 chapters and 48,000 members.

These exciting glimpses of growth constitute some of the firstfruits of the greater harvest of souls that will be gathered from every continent. □



Fellowship News from Here, There and Around the World

UPDATE!

TRAINED FOR THE HARVEST

One hundred and one men, including 25 international directors, participated in a first FGBMFI Executive Leadership Training Seminar held at World Laymen's Headquarters, Costa Mesa, California, January 26-28.

The training session and two others to fol-

low are vital in achieving goals adopted last July by the board of international directors.

1984-89 goals are to form chapters in every nation, to increase international membership to one million and to reach a total of 40,000 chapters.

Training is seen as the key to success. The seminars are designed to train international directors and field representatives who in turn will train officers of chapters in their area. End product: every FGBMFI member equipped to fulfill a meaningful role in the world's harvest fields.

Founder/President Demos Shakarian



1. Head table at Executive Leadership Training Seminar banquet. 2. President/Founder Demos Shakarian shares his vision. 3. International Director Fred Doerflein gives action report from Washington state. 4. Through interpreter, Brazil's Custodio Pires (left) announces that his country now has twenty-five chapters. 5. Lee Buck and Don Ostrom delight in praise to God. 6. Demos discusses five-year goals with Tom Ashcraft, Executive Vice-President. 7. Men worship after International Director Bernie Gray, Australia, relates outpouring of Holy Spirit in South Pacific. 8. Ministry in Jesus' name. 9. Role play. 10. Refreshment and fellowship.

shared the Fellowship's vision, related how God is bringing it to pass around the world, and climaxed his message with thrilling accounts of recent spiritual breakthroughs.

Vice-President Tom Ashcraft drew from his wide experience of 27 years to provide practical training for successful chapters.

International Director-at-Large Lee Buck, trainer of thousands of insurance agents, set forth spiritual principles of leadership, presented strategies for evangelism and demonstrated performance-review procedures.

Other presenters were International Director Don Ostrom, Seattle, Washington; Chief

Operating Officer Steve Shakarian and several staff members. Attendees included leaders from ten nations: Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, England, Germany, Guatemala, Honduras, the Philippines and Scotland. To a man, each left highly challenged and completely committed to multiply seminar benefits by conducting chapter training seminars.

They will be fulfilling the admonition of St. Paul who, in II Timothy 2:2, directed, "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also."



CONVENTIONS

CENTRAL VALLEY CALIFORNIA REGIONAL

May 3-5, 1984

Assyrian/American Civic Club

Turlock

Write: Mr. Doug Dallman

1518 Dougfir, Modesto, CA 95350

LINCOLN RALLY

May 4-5, 1984

Holiday Inn, Lincoln

Write: FGBMFI, Box 80061

Lincoln, NE 68501

NORTHERN B.C. MEN'S ADVANCE

May 4-6, 1984

Hudson Bay Lodge, Smithers

Write: Mr. Peter Neave

Box 325, Smithers

British Columbia, Canada V0S 2N0

UTAH MEN'S ADVANCE

May 4-6, 1984

Alta Peruvian Lodge, Alta

Write: Mr. Victor Martinez

6833 Village Green Rd.

Salt Lake City, UT 84121

WESTERN NEW YORK COUPLES' ADVANCE

May 4-6, 1984

John's Niagara Hotel, Niagara Falls

Write: Mr. Jim McDonald

79 Norcrest Dr.

Rochester, NY 14617

BLUE GRASS REGIONAL

May 10-12, 1984

Write: Mr. Henry Bruins

2817 Clays Mill Rd.

Lexington, KY 40503

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA MEN'S CAMP

May 11-12, 1984

Young Life's Woodleaf, Challenge

Write: Mr. William Carlson

2125 Ramirez St.

Marysville, CA 95901

OLD OAK RANCH ADVANCE

May 11-13, 1984

Old Oak Ranch, Sonora

Write: Mr. John Gardner

Box 1178, San Andreas, CA 95249

SECOND ANNUAL ALASKA MEN'S CAMP

May 11-13, 1984

McKinley Village, Parks Hwy.

Write: Mr. Ralph Seekens

1625 Old Steese Hwy.

Fairbanks, AK 99701

ASIA CONVENTION/AIRLIFT

May 16-19, 1984

Philippine Plaza Hotel, Manila

Airlift Information (714) 754-1400

Write: Khoo Oon Theam

Two Finlayson Green

#18-00 Penthouse, Asia Ins. Bldg.

Singapore 0104

NORTHERN ONTARIO REGIONAL

May 17-19, 1984

Holiday Inn, Sudbury, Ontario

Write: Mr. Marcel Gratton

Box 2174, Chelmsford

Ontario, Canada P0M 1L0

WILLIAMSPORT REGIONAL

May 17-19, 1984

Lycoming College, Williamsport

Write: Henry Fenner, M.D.

601 S. Main St.

Muncy, PA 17756

NEW MEXICO MEN'S ADVANCE

May 17-20, 1984

Sacramento, New Mexico

Write: Col. Henry Godman

1808 Hubbard Dr.

Alamogordo, NM 88310

INLAND EMPIRE MEN'S ADVANCE

May 18-20, 1984

Riverview Bible Camp, Cusick

Write: Mr. Leonard Sampson

E. 4004 Longfellow

Spokane, WA 99207

SECOND ANNUAL NEBRASKA MEN'S ADVANCE

May 18-20, 1984

Quiet Oaks Camp, Fullerton

Write: FGBMFI, Box 604

Grand Island, NE 68802

MIDWEST REGIONAL

May 24-26, 1984

American Baptist Assembly

Greenlake

Write: Mr. Henry Carlson

564 W. Fulton St.

Chicago, IL 60606

NORTHWEST REGIONAL

May 24-26, 1984

Red Lion Motor Inn, Portland

Write: Mr. Tom Gutzler

11685 S.W. Denfield Rd.

Beaverton, OR 97005

MARYLAND STATE MEN'S ADVANCE

May 25-27, 1984

Brethren Service Center

New Windsor

Write: Mr. Emil McCollum

417 Heather Ridge Dr.

Frederick, MD 21701

ABILENE/ANGELO REGIONAL

May 31-June 2, 1984

Abilene Civic Center

Write: Mr. Jack Yates

318 BOC Bldg.

Abilene, TX 79605

CENTRAL CALIFORNIA ADVANCE

June 1-3, 1984

Camp Sugar Pine, Oakhurst

Write: L. Dean Whitlow, D.D.S.

2115 Merced St., Fresno, CA 93721

FOURTH SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON MEN'S CAMP

June 1-3, 1984

Black Lake Bible Campgrounds

Olympia

Write: Mr. Jim Dermanoski

3218 Hoffman Rd.

Olympia, WA 98502

ONTARIO/QUEBEC MEN'S ADVANCE

June 1-3, 1984

Peterborough Trent University

Write: Mr. J. McEwan

R.R. 1 Hampton, Newcastle

Ontario, Canada L0B 1S0

SECOND ANNUAL JACKSON REGIONAL

June 6-9, 1984

Executive Inn Riverfront

Paducah

Write: Mr. Robert Shelley

3000 Mississippi St.

Paducah, KY 42001

EMPIRE STATE MEN'S ADVANCE

June 8-10, 1984

Silver Bay Conference Ctr.

Write: Mr. Fred Lawrence

Box 206, Homer, NY 13077

KEYSTONE MEN'S ADVANCE

June 8-10, 1984

Messiah College

Write: Mr. R. A. Pugliese

44 S. Second St.

Steelton, PA 17027

TAHOE RALLY

June 15-16, 1984

Cal-Neva Lodge, N. Lake Tahoe

Write: Mr. Dick Young

1205 Industrial Way

Sparks, NV 89431

GEORGIA STATE

June 21-23, 1984

Marriott Hotel, Atlanta

Write: Mr. Lynwood Maddox

3490 Emperor Way

Tucker, GA 30084

31ST ANNUAL WORLD CONVENTION

July 3-7, 1984

Anaheim, California Conv. Ctr.

Write: FGBMFI World Convention

Box 5050

Costa Mesa, CA 92628

Conventions published in this issue were approved on or before January 23, 1984.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS: If experiencing difficulty in receiving *Voice*, please contact us immediately. If receiving more than one copy each month at the same address, or if there is variance in the way your name appears, please return undesired label. IF PLANNING TO MOVE, send label with your new address 60 days in advance to: FGBMFI, P.O. Box 5050, Costa Mesa, CA 92628.



1. First FGBMFI North Carolina State Convention was held at Raleigh, November 3-5, 1983. Change from regional convention to one sponsored by the state's fifty-three chapters proved to be a positive move; event is expected to become annual. Three international directors who served as convention co-chairmen: **2.** Reidy Lawing; **3.** Ogburn Yates; **4.** Don Evans; **5.** Dick Morgan, convention coordinator.

Full Gospel Business Men's Chapter Outreach

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

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

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two price tags

James Johnston
Florence, Alabama

I would come home to find this Pentecostal lady sitting in our living room



O God, I'm on a wheel. Get me off this wheel!"

On my knees, weeping before the Lord, I was at the lowest point of my life. A vision of my body strapped to a big wagon wheel, spinning in endless circles, passed before me.

For thirty-eight years I had been in and out of doctors' offices, hospitals and clinics for tests and X rays of a spastic colon and nervous stomach. At times my condition was so severe I could eat only baby food. Fourteen of those years I had been pastoring Cumberland Presbyterian churches, often so drugged from medications that I had to hold on to my pulpit to keep from falling. Sunday after Sunday I would give the invitation, praying silently, "Lord, don't let anyone come today. I don't feel like fooling with them. I'm

sicker than they are."

Ministry was merely a duty—something I had to do or get fired. I read my sermons just to get through them. I visited the sick, conducted funerals and performed weddings because I was paid to do it. And when I saw myself tied to the wheel, I felt even more the futility of my life.

Yet as God was showing me the picture of my life something miraculous was taking place. My tears were transforming the ground beneath me into a threshold to victory. I was about to walk through a new door into a land of miracles.

Convinced that Kathryn Kuhlman's prayers could help me get off that wagon wheel, I decided to write the evangelist. I was so desperate that I actually expected to receive a miracle back in an enve-

lope. She did respond, and her answer was like a hand of mercy, gently pulling me through the open door. From that time, things began to change for the better.

Soon a Pentecostal lady from Louisville, Kentucky, whose sister attended my church, began visiting our home. She was in her late sixties, plump, jolly and full of life. At first she bugged me. I would come home from the church office and she would be sitting in our living room, beaming and speaking in a foreign language. Every now and then, "Praise the Lord, I love you, Jesus," would slip out. I could hardly wait for her to leave so I could smoke and take my pills without her interference.

During her visits she left us some books, and we accepted them even though my library was full. I began reading them: Kathryn Kuhlman's *I Believe in Miracles*, John Sherrill's *They Speak With Other Tongues* and Pat Boone's *New Song*. Each spoke of hope, where my doctors had left me none. The testimonies of what God had done for them and others was sweet music to my ears.

I was pastoring a seven-hundred-member Cumberland Presbyterian church in Paducah, Kentucky when two brothers came to my office and shared what God had done for them through the baptism in the Holy Spirit. They prayed for me to be healed and to receive the Baptism. I felt something happen inside, but I could not get a full release.

One month later I was dismissed from my pastorate.

We returned to our home in Alabama, to two small, half-time churches where

we had started in the ministry years before. With our pride hurt and my salary cut, we moved in with my wife's parents. I began to take long walks and pray; I can still picture the old split-rail fence where often I sat during my prayers.

"God," I would weep, "I'm sick and tired of being empty, preaching just to be paid. I'm not going to be a hypocrite any longer. I can't go on like this. Give me this thing those two brothers called the baptism in the Holy Spirit or I will quit the ministry."

The Lord heard my prayer. Soon afterward, my wife Marie and I were invited to a Saturday-morning prayer group. My first reaction was a stubborn "No!"

"We're not going!" I told her. "I know about those prayer groups. They're Pentecostals. You're not getting me into that."

Saturday morning came. Without asking each other, we both got ready, left our two children watching cartoons and drove to the prayer meeting. I was in for the surprise of my life. I knocked on the door and as it opened, a tall lady grabbed and hugged me as if she knew me. Later I learned that she was a Holy Spirit-baptized Church of Christ member who had just been healed of an incurable disease.

I was the only man there. After a time of fellowship the leader announced, "It's time to pray," and the meeting began. Suddenly everyone started praying out loud at the same time. I felt confused. This was quite different from our Presbyterian style of prayer.

I listened quietly. They talked to God as if He were there in the room and I

knew in my heart that He was answering my prayer.

Every day for two weeks we met with those people. No one pushed us; they just prayed and loved us.

Finally one day while Marie was at the beauty shop, I headed for our bedroom to receive the Spirit. I prayed, waited and opened my mouth as I had been instructed, but nothing came out. Then the Lord seemed to be telling me, "Go to their church service in the morning, and I will baptize you in the Holy Spirit at 11:00 A.M."

I could hardly wait. The congregation sang choruses and praised the Lord, then a visiting minister from Jamaica began to preach. Again I felt that the Lord was speaking to me: "It's 11:00 A.M. Stop him, and I will give you the baptism in the Holy Spirit."

"But, God, I'm Presbyterian," I argued. "I can't interrupt the service."

The feeling continued but, paralyzed, I did nothing about it.

After the service Marie and I were invited to dinner at a restaurant. We accepted, but none of our new friends seemed in a hurry to leave the church. Finally I broke down and told them what God had impressed upon me.

"If you'll pray for me I'll receive right now," I concluded, surprised at my courage.

We all headed for the altar. As they laid hands on me the Holy Spirit flooded me with the glory of God, and I heard myself praising God in a heavenly language. Marie wanted the Baptism. God gloriously baptized both of us that morning with the evidence of speaking in tongues.

As our own two congregations saw the change in us during the weeks that followed, they opened themselves to the Lord. The churches began to grow, and many were saved, healed, and baptized in the Spirit.

God sustained us in the two small half-time churches for nearly two years. From there He led us into a wider ministry where we are working with people from all denominations. After receiving the baptism in the Spirit, I found power to witness and to overcome personal problems. The Scriptures also came alive to me.

But these wonderful experiences were just beginning.

Besides attending our own prayer group, we met at another home once a week. The large den, a beautiful, spacious setting to inspire worship, usually was filled with people singing and praising God with uplifted hands. And spiritual gifts were in operation.

A chair was placed in the center of the room during each meeting for those who wanted special prayer. One evening I felt led of the Lord to ask for prayer. Taking my place in the chair, I announced, "I've been sick for thirty-eight years with a nervous stomach and spastic colon. But if you will anoint me with oil and pray, God will heal me."

People came from all around the room. Some stood, others knelt, but all laid hands on me. Two brothers anointed me with oil and began to pray. Suddenly the power of the Spirit surged through my body. In those few moments, Isaiah 53:5 was fulfilled to me, "... with His stripes we are healed." The suffering



was over. I knew that God had done His work. I was healed!

That was nearly twelve years ago. I have not required any medication since—not even one Rolaid. Jesus is not only able to heal, but to keep us healed.

This was only the first of several healings in our family.

I had started wearing glasses in my college days and I became so near-sighted that without them I could not shave or distinguish anyone a few steps from me. They were the last thing I removed at night and the first thing I put on in the morning.

One morning I reached for my glasses and missed. At that moment God again spoke to me. "You will never need them again." I bounded out of bed, strode to the bathroom and drew open the curtains. I was amazed to be able to see

birds fly from tree to tree. So clear was my vision that I marveled at their colors. Without my asking, God had healed my eyes. From that time to this day I have not needed my glasses.

God healed Marie of severe curvature of the spine and allergies. For years she had suffered from these conditions; visits to doctors and chiropractors brought only temporary relief. During one of our home meetings, a word of knowledge was given that someone was being healed of a back problem. I was sitting next to Marie and heard a snap, as if someone had broken a twig in two.

Knowing that God had touched her, Marie began to cry, "It's me! It's me!" The pressure and drawing she felt in her spine left immediately. A week or two later, during another home meeting, she was freed from allergies and has never been bothered by them since.

From infancy, our daughter Dena suffered respiratory infections. Each attack would begin with chest congestion, wheezing and fever. Her body would shake with each beat of her heart. Usually an attack would last about three days. Medication relieved her only temporarily.

Her last bout came shortly after we received the baptism in the Spirit. We had just purchased a new vaporizer, which we ran continuously to clean the air and help her to breathe. Marie refilled the vaporizer and, just as she plugged it in, sparks flew, burning the cord at the point where it connected to the appliance. During these tense moments, the Lord spoke audibly into Marie's ear three

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Our Mission Statement

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

Our Five-Year Goals, 1984-1989

I. Worldwide Outreach—
Chapters in every nation

II. International Membership—
A membership of one million

III. Chapters—
40,000 chapters

TWO PRICE TAGS (from page 33)

times, saying, "Lay your hands on her and pray. I will heal her."

Marie was too frightened to obey. But two nights later her faith was quickened for Dena's healing during a home meeting. She brought Dena into the group.

As we anointed our daughter with oil and laid hands on her, Dena began to cry and laugh at the same time. For the first time in her life, she could take a deep breath. God had healed her completely.

A few years later as he got off a school bus in front of our home, our son Kenny was struck by a car and hurled forty feet. When we reached him he appeared already dead. Instantly, God gave us a gift of faith. Standing there among the children from the bus and the other spectators, we rebuked the spirit of death and called Kenny's spirit to return. Suddenly life returned to him. He started breathing, opened his eyes, and within a few minutes was talking.

The accident had broken both legs and crushed his pelvis. The doctors said that, if he walked again, it would be only after intense therapy. Meanwhile Kenny faced a long period of recovery, first in a wheelchair, then with a walker and a cane. But praise God, he was out of the hospital in twenty-one days. In eight weeks he was up walking and hasn't stopped yet, with no noticeable problems remaining.

Jesus is still in the healing and miracle-working business. Our family can take the witness stand about it. We've learned how to hear from God and to act on His directive. □



Rev. James Johnston is founder of The True Tabernacle Ministries in Florence, Alabama. A member of the Florence Chapter of FGBMFI, he has ministered at Fellowship meetings in Alabama, Tennessee, Florida and Kentucky and teaches and ministers throughout a wide area of the nation. He has authored two books. He and his wife Marie have two children, Kenny (seen below with his family) and Dena.



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

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

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

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

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

5. BELIEVE: "For God so loved the world,

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

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

Why not make your eternal decision now:

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

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

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()		

Give full names of all immediate family members included in your registration. List each name as you wish it to appear on name badge. \$10 registration fee is required per family (or per single).

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	No. of Tickets	Meal Cost	Total Amount
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Thursday, July 5 Breakfast		×\$ 7.00	
Friday, July 6 Ladies' Luncheon		×\$11.00	
Friday, July 6 Men's Luncheon		×\$11.00	
Friday PM, July 6 Youth Banquet		×\$ 6.00	
Sat., July 7 Breakfast		×\$ 7.00	

NOTE: There is no reserved seating at this year's convention. All functions are on a first-come, first-served basis. Every **ticket holder** is assured a seat.

Mail application (include check or money order for entire amount) to: FGBMFI World Convention Dept., P.O. Box 5050, Costa Mesa, CA 92628.

ADVANCE REGISTRATION FEE (nonrefundable)	3204-05-4309	\$10.00
TOTAL MEAL COST (if any)	3201-05-4318	\$
TOTAL ENCLOSED		\$

Signature	
Date	

Hotel Reservation Request—Please use this form to request reservations. All room-reservation requests must be made through FGBMFI Housing Bureau. Placement will be made in order received. Your first choice will be honored if rooms are available. In order to be processed by the Housing Bureau, reservation requests must be postmarked prior to June 1, 1984. (After this date all requests must be made to FGBMFI Housing at (714) 999-8939 only). Your hotel will confirm reservations by mail. Thereafter, failure to notify assigned hotel directly of any changes in arrival dates, times and/or type of accommodations may result in cancellation. **Note: A \$50 deposit is required for each room reserved. Make checks payable to FGBMFI Housing Bureau.** Mail coupon and deposit check to: **FGBMFI Housing Bureau, P.O. Box 4270, Anaheim, CA 93803.**

Last Name _____ First Name _____ Initial _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone Number () _____ Total Number of Occupants in Your Party _____

List names of each person occupying regular accommodations:

1. _____ Age _____

2. _____ Age _____

3. _____ Age _____

NOTE: Put bracket marks () around those sharing.

List Hotel Preference: ☐ Convention Proximity ☐ Rate Pref.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

☐ Single ☐ Double ☐ Twin ☐ Triple ☐ Quad

☐ Suite (☐ 1 bdm. ☐ 2 bdm.)

Reservations cannot be guaranteed by mail unless received by June 1, 1984. After June 1, 1984, phone FGBMFI Housing Bureau (714) 999-8939.

Arrival Date _____ Depart Date _____
☐ AM ☐ PM ☐ AM ☐ PM

Hotel

	Single	Double 1 bed	Twin 2 beds	Triple 2 beds	Quad 2 beds	Rlwy.	Suites 1 BR	2 BR
1. Anaheim Hilton & Towers*	\$59	\$59	\$59	\$68	\$68	\$12	\$150-400	\$210-480
2. Anaheim Marriott*	\$59	\$59	\$59	\$68	\$68	\$10	\$170-550	\$250-630
3. Hilton at the Park*	\$59	\$59	\$59	\$68	\$68	\$10	\$155-380	\$230-290
4. Jolly Roger	\$50	\$53	\$53	\$58	\$58	\$ 6	\$ 75-175	
5. Anaheim Town & Country**	\$44	\$44	\$44	\$49	\$54	\$ 5	\$ 44- 60	\$ 80- 90
6. Anaheim International Travelodge**	\$44	\$44	\$44	\$49	\$54	\$ 5		
7. Magic Carpet	\$44	\$44	\$44	\$48	\$48	\$ 5		
8. Magic Lamp	\$44	\$44	\$44	\$48	\$48	\$ 5		

* (Children under 18 are free in room with adult.)

** (Children under 12 are free in room with adult.)



1984 FGBMFI World Convention

July 3-7, 1984

Anaheim Convention Center

It's the 31st Annual World Convention of FGBMFI, and we're celebrating it in beautiful southern California, July 3-7, 1984.

This promises to be a week you will long remember, filled with inspirational messages, teaching, children and youth activities—something for the whole family. Plus you're also invited to visit Disneyland, Knott's Berry Farm and other local attractions.

Chairman: DEMOS SHAKARIAN

Co-chairman: PETER CONGELLIERE



Demos
Shakarian

James
Robison

Oral
Roberts



Sir Lionel
Luckhoo

Paul
Crouch

James
Watt

From: FGBMFI, P.O. Box 5050, Costa Mesa, CA 92628