

04-83

FULL GOSPEL BUSINESS MEN'S

VOICE



FASTEST MAN ALIVE



**JIM
RYUN**

SEE PAGE SIX



My tired eyes focused on the bars above my bunk.

"I can tie my towel around that one right there . . . slip my head through the loop, let go . . . should be unconscious in a few seconds . . . then done with it. They can't send my body to prison if I'm not in it!"

At the same moment, fear seized my heart.

"Where will I be when I die? What if all I've heard about hell is really on the level?"

I heard the click-clack of a guard's footsteps and the rhythmic jingle of jailer's keys as he passed my cell. "He won't be back for a while," I thought. "Got to do it now if I'm going to."

What brings a man to the desperate point where suicide becomes a genuine option? In my case, by the age of 28 I'd served time in 48 jails, penitentiaries and other "correctional" facilities. I'd broken probation three times and was on my way to state prison for burglary, grand theft and narcotics convictions. Death seemed preferable to a long prison stretch, especially for a life as messed up as mine.

I was only seven when my mother left my father. She was the only woman he ever cared for and it broke his heart. In the next eight years he and I drifted through 26 states. By the time I reached my teens I was living in

the streets, always picking the wrong friends. The New Mexico authorities placed me in a reformatory when I was 14, but I was released into the custody of Father Don Murray, the "Flying Padre."

Father Don operated a Camp Cook, South Dakota home for boys called Sky Ranch. He taught me how to ranch, fly and survive in the great outdoors. I even got baptized and became an altar boy—a good one at that. I knew all the right prayers, but still I never knew Jesus.

problems or fill the void I felt in my life, but at least they dulled the pain—for a while. The endless cycle of drugs, crime and incarceration finally brought me to the brink of suicide. Society had pronounced the verdict: guilty, incorrigible. Now I would carry out the final sentence: death.

I stared at the steel chain holding my iron-strip bunk to the wall . . . then at the bars that would be my gallows. My heart was filled with self-pity. Waves of remorse and regret washed over me.

EDGE OF LIFE

Rob Murray
Goleta, CA

By the time I left Sky Ranch at age 18 I felt ready to make it in the world. I moved to Sioux Falls, South Dakota, but once again I got in with the wrong crowd. After several burglaries and a breach of probation, I was sentenced to "The Hill"—South Dakota State Penitentiary. That's where I got my graduate degree in crime.

After my parole I returned to California, where I'd spent a few enjoyable years as a youngster. Putting my criminal education to work right away, I became pretty good at stealing anything I could convert into quick cash. Crime became such a part of my makeup that I couldn't walk into a place without casing it, thinking I might need to rob it next week.

I also began taking drugs, starting with "whites" (stimulants), "reds" (depressants), marijuana and eventually heroin. Drugs didn't solve my

"O God," I thought, "how did I ever get here? Why?"

Suddenly I realized I was talking to Someone. Even as one voice within me coaxed me to get on with my suicide plan, another voice was crying out to God. Without even thinking I exclaimed:

"Lord, I don't even know if You can hear me, but if You can, I really need You now. Please help me stop what I'm about to do!"

What happened next is not really explainable in natural terms. A feeling of warmth and love began welling up inside me and I began crying like a baby! I didn't care if anyone thought I'd turned "kack" (weakling). Something inside said that "I" had become "we"—the Spirit of the living God had taken up residence in me. It was as though I heard Him say, "Rob, you do have to die, but not the way you planned. You

have to die to your *self*. You've been your own god all these years, but now I will be your God; I will never leave you or forsake you. I'll break your chains of bondage and set you free!"

I lay back on my bunk, my eyes filled with tears and my heart filled with joy. I slept that night as I'd never slept before.

The very next day God confirmed the transformation in my life by sending Don Beckman, director of the Drug Abuse Prevention Center of Santa Barbara, to my cell. Don was visiting some other prisoners when the Lord prompted him to speak to me. I sat there in awe as Don told me things about myself that only God could have revealed to him. He explained what was wrong with my old life and why I leaned on drugs. He also told me how the Lord brings each one of us to a place where we must accept or reject Him. Then he prayed for me.

Nearly every waking hour of the days that followed as I awaited sentencing to state prison, I read my Bible and prayed. On the day I had to stand before the judge, Don came with me.

The judge had a reputation as a fair man, but one having little patience with multiple-repeat offenders. Don spoke first on my behalf.

"Your honor," Don exclaimed simply, "I believe this man is of a spirit to

walk with the Lord."

The judge peered at me skeptically. "What do you have to say for yourself before I pass sentence, young man?"

My tongue felt the size of an orange in my mouth. But as I began to speak, the Lord gave me things to say I'd never even thought of before. I talked nonstop for 15 minutes, and I noticed little beads of sweat popping out on the judge's forehead. At the end of my



Rob and Joanie Murray

speech the judge paused a moment, then turned to my lawyer.

"I don't know why I'm doing this," he said with an exasperated sigh, "but if you'll bring me a typed probation agreement I'll sign it."

Instead of being sent to prison for five years to life, I was given two years' county-jail time and five years' probation. The judge later shortened my sentence to seven months in jail.

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In the face of my deplorable rap sheet, this light sentence was nothing short of a miracle. I had had a three-year probation which I had broken; I had had a joint-suspended which I had broken; I had had two new felony charges to which I had pled guilty. I had been petitioned by the People of California as a drug addict and ordered into mandatory commitment to the California Rehabilitation Center at Corona. *Why wasn't I a goner?*

Simply because Colossians 2:14,15 says: "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross. And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it."

After serving my jail time I was sent to the Drug Abuse Prevention Center, where I received good, solid study in the word of God. My wife Joanie, who had endured all my years of drugs and crime, had already accepted the Lord, and together we drank in four years of teaching under Don Beckman. Also over these formative young-Christian years of mine I received encouragement from Full Gospel Business Men and other men of God.

We have been amazed at the doors God has opened to us. Recently I gained access to federal and state prisons through FGBMFI. Then the Lord directed us to become group counselors at juvenile hall in Santa Barbara; so far, over 4,000 young people have given their hearts to the Lord. We also began outreaches at

Los Prietos Boys' Camp two years ago, where 550 young men received Jesus; at California Youth Authority, Camarillo; Santa Barbara County Jail; and Lompoc Federal Penitentiary, Maximum Security.

Because I was a "throwaway" child myself, I have a burden to reach young people with the message of hope and life in Jesus Christ. Through Changed Lives Ministries, my wife and I find housing and jobs for inmates and kids when they are released from CYA, prison or jail. We want to intercept them with the love of Jesus and put a Bible in their hands before some pusher gets to them and puts a needle in one hand and a gun in the other.

For 28 years I tried to fill a gnawing void with drugs and crime. I literally came to the end of my rope, to the very edge of suicide, before I realized that God was there all the time, wanting to fill that void with His love.

Are you at the end of your rope? Call out to the Lord right now. He has a miracle waiting for you. As in Psalms 34:6, this poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles. □

As a restaurant chef, Rob Murray supervises 27 men. He and wife Joanie minister together to youth at the County Juvenile Hall, Los Prietos Boys' Camp and their local junior high school. Mr. Murray has been Central California Prison Ministries director for two years through the Santa Barbara Chapter, FGBMFI, and is an elder at Light-house Christian Fellowship, Santa Barbara. The Murrays have three children.

Ryun Disqualified from Olympics

MUNICH—Jim Ryun lost all chance today for the 1972 Olympics Gold Medal when he fell only 500 meters from the finish line in the qualifying race.

Headlines blared the disappointing news. America had pinned her Gold Medal hopes on me to win the 1500-meter event at the 1972 Olympics in Munich. Instead, I'd taken a spill just 500 meters from the

Jim Ryun
Lawrence, KS

FASTEST MAN ALIVE

finish of my first qualifying race.

"Somebody bumped me," I protested to the Olympic committee. But even though video footage proved I had indeed been fouled by another runner, the committee refused to reinstate me. This simple contest had been the focal point of all my training and energy during the last year. Now it was being stolen from me.

The old Jim Ryun wished he could give each and every member of the Olympic committee a good, swift kick with his #12½ track shoes.

But how was the *new* Jim Ryun going to handle the situation?

You see, for 10 years, running was my god. You don't take a man's god away from him without a fight—

unless he's already found something better. I'd told myself I *had* found something better, but the bitterness in my heart refuted that. Could anything—or any One—really replace my old god?

I guess my running career started sort of unofficially the day I ran out of my parents' front door with my dad close behind me, kicking me in the pants for something I'd done wrong. I lost that race, but you might say it introduced me to the healthful benefits of running.

I tried other sports in junior high school—basketball, baseball—but usually got invited to turn in my uniform. Then my first year in high school I tried out for cross country

and made it. I was last man on the C team, but I *made* it, and was I thrilled! I determined to pour everything I had into this sport, and progressed so fast that it surprised even me.

In the fall of 1962 when I joined the team I ran the mile in 5:38. By the following spring I was running it in 4:07.

In 1964, my junior year, I became the first high-schooler in the world to run the mile in under four minutes, and qualified to compete at the Olympics in Tokyo. This was pretty heady stuff for a young man. I owed it all (I thought) to my god Running, so I gave my god the best of everything . . . my time, my energy, my love.

On July 23, 1966 in Berkeley, California I set my first world's record at

3:51.3, bettering the old record by 2.3 seconds. I was the fastest man alive, but apparently at least one person in the stadium wasn't impressed; when I returned to my gear after an hour and a half of interviews, I discovered all of it had been stolen.

I was so exhausted and upset I barely noticed the pretty young girl

about the whole thing.

Later that year, as a college sophomore, I received the *Sports Illustrated* Sportsman of the Year Award, one of the most coveted prizes among professional and amateur competitors. I was on the cover of *Sports Illustrated* several times, received the Sullivan Award as best amateur competitor in



Jim Ryun setting first world record in the mile at Berkeley, CA

who stopped me outside the stadium to ask for my autograph.

"Look," I moaned, "I'm sorry, but I'm tired, somebody just stole all my equipment, and I just want to get back to my room. I'll give you one later." I ran to the dorm thinking I'd never see this girl again and promptly forgot

the U.S., and gained worldwide recognition as an athlete.

But in the midst of all the glory and fanfare I was becoming more and more aware of a gnawing sense of emptiness in my heart.

"If I'm so famous," I thought, "why am I so dissatisfied? I should be the



From left: Ryun as a high-school junior, preparing for Tokyo Olympic games; running in England's White City Stadium, representing Kansas University; walking off track after falling and losing at trials, Munich Olympics; with Marty Liquori in Philadelphia, 1975

happiest man alive!" The problem with running, or any type of sport for that matter, is that no matter how good you are you've always got to get better. You never reach the finish line. You've just got to keep running and running and running.

Around Thanksgiving of 1966 a friend set me up with a blind date. I didn't think I'd ever met this girl Anne, but I soon found out different.

"Remember that girl who wanted your autograph after you set the world record? You said you were tired and you'd give her one later, remember?" Anne prodded. "Well, I'm here to collect!"

We had a good laugh more than once over that. Anne and I began dating regularly and over a period of time I came to love her more than I loved running.

In 1967 I set another record for the mile: 3:51.1, a record that would remain unbroken for eight years. I

competed in the 1968 Olympics and took the silver medal in the 1500-meter race.

But still the emptiness remained.

Anne and I were married in 1969, and for the first time in my life running lost its place of supremacy. I began losing races and the sportswriters blamed Anne. Time and again I told them, "Look, you guys, I'm married now. I want to spend some time with my wife." I got so frustrated over the whole thing that I just walked off the track at the national championships, then went on coast-to-coast television with Howard Cosell and announced my retirement.

I thought I was through with running, but in 1971 Anne and I decided I should get back in competition. The next few months were some of the most frustrating of my life. One week I'd be running great, the next week I'd be in a nationally televised race and finish dead last. From the highest



At his house, Bernie explained he'd recently experienced something terrific. Although he'd attended church all his life, he never knew what it was to be a born-again Christian until his wife explained it to him. To be born again was to invite Christ to come into your life and take over completely. He had done this, he continued, and it had completely changed his life. Furthermore, he had been baptized in the Holy Spirit and spoken in tongues.

Anne and I didn't know quite what to make of this, but it forced us to analyze exactly where we were spiritually. We went home and studied the Bible, especially some verses Bernie pointed out. After about 30 days of looking into the Scriptures, Anne and I came to the amazing conclusion that Bernie (or rather, the Bible) was right. We needed to be born again and baptized in the Holy Spirit.

So on the third weekend of May in
(continued, p. 38)

Ryun family



highs to the lowest lows I soared and plunged, pulling Anne along with me.

About this time it seemed I kept meeting people who identified themselves as "born-again" Christians. I didn't really know what that meant. I mean, I'd gone to church most of my life, even been baptized at age 12 so I could pass out visitor's cards. I felt I was a Christian but I realized there was a big difference between me and these other people. They'd be going through the same kinds of trials I was having, but they'd come out the other end saying "Praise the Lord!" What kind of response was that?

One day, a few months before I was to leave for Munich to compete in the Olympics, Anne and I had a racquetball date with some friends, Bernie and Clara Taylor. After the game Bernie invited us to their house for a glass of lemonade.

"I have a story I want to tell you," he said mysteriously.

FLASHBACK



Henry L. Ingram, Jr., Myrtle Beach, SC

Mr. Ingram, one of your teachers is telling her classes about the Bible and Jesus. You know that's in violation of the Supreme Court ruling. I demand she be stopped!"

I had to agree with the irate mother in my office that if one of our instructors was bringing religion into the classroom she was violating the law. As a Christian I might agree with this teacher's beliefs, but as principal of the high school I had to uphold the law. I made up my mind to bawl the teacher out and fire her on the spot.

I expected a real confrontation when Mrs. Southern came to my office. But instead of arguing with me, that crazy teacher just smiled and smiled! I couldn't figure it out. I was a Christian and she was a Christian, but she seemed to exude a spirit of warmth and love I'd never seen before—except maybe once . . . a long, long time ago in a dream . . .

Momentarily my thoughts carried me away from the conflict in my office to another kind of conflict . . . a terrible battle that had lasted 10 years, that took me through the very corridors of hell, and that ended with a dream that changed my life.

The scene came up out of my memory like a video replay: Korea, 1951. Ten men on patrol; Lieutenant Henry Ingram, a sergeant and eight enlisted men have been dispatched to search out the enemy and report troop strength and position. It is 2:30 P.M. on Hill 440. No sign of the North Koreans.

Suddenly there is a horrible, bursting concussion followed by blast after bone-jarring blast. I am hurtled through the air like a doll, my 250-pound frame thumps sandbag-like to the ground. Most of Hill 440 has been blown away by 10 land mines triggered in series by a careless step. I see blood gushing from both of my arms and my right leg. Three of my men are dead, four of us are critically wounded.



Henry L. Ingram, Jr.

The next scene is three years later—1953. After 19 operations I am being released from Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C. The physicians have declared me totally and permanently disabled, although I will later regain limited use

of my arms and legs. Pain, they say, will be my constant companion for the rest of my life.

But there is something to relieve the pain: morphine. With the sanction of the U.S. government I become a morphine addict, completely enslaved to drugs.

The morphine controls my every move, thought and reaction. When I get up in the morning, when I go to bed at night and every moment in between, morphine is what I think about.

The final scene is 1963. It is early in the morning and I am in my bed, dreaming. My wife Thelma, who has

deliver me from my addiction to drugs and to alcohol. My mind is healed, and I study to receive my teaching credential.

Over a period of several years I become an able teacher, then principal of a junior high school in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. I am aware of God's hand in my life and I know that Jesus has saved me physically, emotionally and spiritually. But has the reality of all He's done for me been fading in recent years?

...With a start, I realized I was back in my office, talking to a smiling teacher who needed to be fired.

"The way she's grinning," I thought

A terrible battle took me through the very corridors of hell.

lived through this 10 years of hell with me, is still beside me.

In my dream I am in a large field, at the bottom of an 8'X3' hole I am digging. I've dug it so deep that I can't get out, but still I dig.

Suddenly I stop and stare, tears in my eyes, into the blue sky above me, crying out, "God, help me!"

Immediately I am engulfed by brilliant light, brighter than the sun itself. Out of the light I see the face of Jesus. His hand stretches out to me, and in the kindest, most compassionate voice you can imagine, He says:

"I'll help you, Henry."

As I wake suddenly from my dream I am aware that Someone has taken control of my life. In the days and months that follow, God leads me to people and places which eventually

cynically, "she must be on something." I found out later she was "on" something, all right, but it wasn't dope!

I don't even remember exactly what I said to her that day. All I know is that I didn't fire her. Now, any sane teacher would have realized how lucky she was, and avoided seeing me as much as possible after that. But not Mrs. Southern. She started coming to my office every day, talking about Jesus and something called the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Nowadays, you can get the Baptism anywhere. You go into a restaurant or a rest stop or a restroom and there's some Full Gospel Business Man wanting to pray over you! Back then, though, you didn't come right out and talk about the Baptism. You

kind of had to get it on the sly.

One day Mrs. Southern brought me a copy of *The Holy Spirit and You* by Dennis Bennett. The book completely fascinated me because it came from an Episcopalian priest who claimed to know first-hand about the baptism in the Holy Spirit. It declared that there was more to the Christian walk than I'd yet experienced. My heart began to warm anew to the God who had delivered me from the hell of drug addiction and promised, "I'll help you, Henry."

About this time one of my wife's nephews was serving time in a Dallas jail on a variety of offenses. I don't know why, but Thelma and I decided I should go to Texas and get Billy out of jail and bring him home to live with us. I think some of Mrs. Southern's faith was rubbing off on me, to imagine I could just go to Dallas and get them to turn Billy loose.

When I shared this outrageous idea with Mrs. Southern, she exclaimed, "Mr. Ingram, you can't do that till you've been baptized in the Holy Spirit!"

"Well," I replied, "I think you're right. Let's do that."

She arranged for me to meet that weekend with a minister friend. I knelt on a floor in his home and there re-dedicated my life to Christ, felt myself washed clean of all my sins and of the hardness that had begun to crust over my heart... and was baptized in the Holy Ghost with the evidence of speaking in tongues.

Meantime, that teacher lady was at

my house, telling Thelma about the Baptism. When I came home, it was to a wife who'd been filled with the Holy Spirit. Hallelujah!

With this new empowering I went to Dallas, redeemed my nephew out of jail and brought him home. He lived with us for the next two years. When he'd gone to jail, his family hadn't known what to do with him. He's reunited with them now—but they still don't quite know what to do with him; he's a fired-up, Spirit-baptized Christian.

God has worked many miracles in my life since then. He delivered me from a 40-year smoking habit and has healed me of many of my war injuries. With his leading I began a real-estate development business in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, and God has prospered it miraculously.

In short, the Lord has blessed my home, my business, my whole life. I literally owe everything to Jesus.

Oh. You may be wondering how I resolved that run-in with the school parent who complained about Mrs. Southern.

Well, I haven't heard a complaint out of her since she got saved and baptized in the Holy Spirit. . . . □

Henry Ingram is now in condominium sales and land development. He has served as president of Secondary School Administrators Association and of FGBMFI's Grand Strand Chapter. He is a lay speaker and Sunday school teacher at First United Methodist Church, Myrtle Beach, and in part-time prison ministry in Horry County Jail. He and wife Thelma have three daughters: Deborah, Deetsie and Joan.



applied principles

Which of these commandments have you truly, fully kept?" Slowly the young pastor read through all of God's Ten Commandments. They were laws I had heard countless times in my life; yet as he read, something pierced my heart. I could see that my wife was moved, too.

The pastor must have discerned our thoughts. After the meeting he tried to comfort and encourage us. But when we returned to our room my wife Ingrid and I wept with grief. For the first time, we had seen ourselves in the mirror of God's truth—and it was more than we could bear.

Ever since childhood I had attended church regularly and considered myself to be an exemplary Christian. At age 38 I was a successful "self-made" man, part-owner of a chain of hobby shops employing nearly 150 people.

I was very proud of my life, even though I was in extremely bad health as the result of heavy smoking and drinking since age 15. Numerous medical specialists all had told me my nerves were very bad and that I should not work so hard. Meticulously, I ignored their advice.

Eventually, in an attempt to cleanse my system of the debris it had collected over many years, I checked into a health sanatorium with my wife to begin a four-week fast. One day in the sauna I met a young man who, judging by outward appearances, was worse off than I. Still, he seemed to possess an inner peace and joy. I told him so, and asked him why.

"I begin each day meditating on the Lord," he replied. I asked if he could teach me how, but he said it would be difficult because of my religious background. Apparently he detected a religious pride in me, and indeed I

privately thought myself to be a good Christian. But when he asked me what the sermon had been in my church the previous Sunday, I was chagrined to discover I couldn't even remember.

"Hmmm," I thought. "Maybe I'm not the wonderful Christian I believe myself to be."

Revealing that he was a pastor, the young man invited Ingrid and me to attend a Bible study he held there at the sanatorium. I was reluctant to go, but we were afraid no one else would attend either, and we didn't want to hurt the young man's feelings.

All my trepidation was cleared away, however, when we arrived at the Bible study. That first evening was glorious. The young pastor talked about the love of God and we learned spiritual truths we had never known before. We went to bed full of joy and happiness that night.

But the next night he decided we needed to examine our hearts before the Lord. That's when he read us the Ten Commandments. My wife and I were so crushed by the realization of our condition before God that we carefully avoided the young pastor from then on.

Arriving home after our stay at the sanatorium, at first we wanted to hear no more about either church or God. One day one of my employees confided to me that she had accepted Jesus as her Saviour, and invited me to a charismatic church meeting. I went, and experienced a peace I had

never known before and a joy even greater than at our first meeting with the young pastor.

I rushed home to tell Ingrid, but the more excited I got the more closed she became. About this time I received a copy of *Voice* magazine, with its testimonies of lives transformed by God. I realized that the born-again, Spirit-filled life they talked about was real—and I wanted it. After some time



Heinrich and Ingrid Hartmann

I persuaded Ingrid to go with me to a meeting of Full Gospel Business Men, the people who publish *Voice*. We were both deeply affected.

A few days later, at an FGBMFI conference in Brunswick, my wife and I gave our lives totally to Jesus. What a liberating, unexplainably thrilling experience that was! From that moment on our business and personal lives were literally revolutionized.

Now my spiritual eyes had been opened. I wanted to share all the marvelous things Jesus was doing around me. At Christmas that year I wrote a letter to all of our employees, enclosing a bonus check and a copy of *The Happiest People on Earth* by Demos Shakarian, president of FGBMFI. I felt I too was on that list of happiest people.

Everyone seemed to notice the difference in me. I had always been thought of as a *good* man, but now I was a truly *happy* man. Of course there were skeptics. One friend who knew me very well asked when I was going to become critical and disenchanted. I asked Jesus for an answer, and He gave one almost immediately.

"For 30 years," I told my friend, "I practiced 'religianity,' confessing my sins and walking around in spiritual defeat and spiritual pride. But never did I receive such real liberation from my sins as I did that night in Brunswick when I dedicated my whole life to Jesus. That was the first time ever that I really felt free, and I had the courage to go on in freedom."

One day while hearing a famous person testify to the miraculous healing of her daughter, I sensed the Lord speaking to me clearly about my own health problems:

"Heinrich, you can have others pray over you for healing, but if you don't give up your life-endangering habits there will be no healing for you."

I knew what He meant: alcohol. Drinking had definitely contributed to my degenerating physical condition. I decided to quit alcohol altogether, and

gradually my health has improved.

Soon there was another result of the Lord's admonition to me. My brother-in-law and partner had just been talking to me about ways to motivate our workers. We had discussed several plans, but none seemed quite right. Now I began to see that our employees needed *spiritual* motivation.

The next day I called them all together, shared my testimony and

had built a wall around Jerusalem. We must plug up—by *prayer*—such vulnerable areas of concern as shoplifting, inventory losses and cash errors. The employees got enthusiastic. We assigned each of them a specific point to pray about, like watchmen on the wall, and our business losses began to decline.

As I have been learning to apply God's principles to my business and



Two views of Heinrich Hartmann's hobby shop, where employees meet to pray and Christian principles are applied

explained that Jesus could be the ultimate fulfillment in their lives. Today 12 of our employees are born-again Christians and many others are open to the Gospel. My business partner has also accepted Jesus.

We began holding prayer meetings at two stores, but when the recession began to pinch us we held several special prayer meetings. Out of one of these came a word from the Lord that we needed to build a spiritual wall about our company, just as Nehemiah

personal life, He has graciously prospered every area. I no longer rely on my own inadequate "goodness" but on the goodness, righteousness and mercy of almighty God. As Jesus said, "Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God" (Mark 10:18).

His goodness is the only kind you'll ever need. □

Mr. Hartmann is a field representative for FGBMF in West Germany.

CONVENTIONS

14th INDIANA REGIONAL

April 6-8, 1983

Essex Hotel, Indianapolis
Write: FGBMFI, Box 19032
Indianapolis, IN 46219

PRAIRIE REGIONAL

April 7-9, 1983

Saskatoon Centennial Auditorium
Write: FGBMFI-Saskatchewan
1412-10th St., E.
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
Canada S7H 0J5

WESTERN NEW YORK COUPLES' ADVANCE

April 22-24, 1983

Grand Island Holiday Inn
Write: Mr. Eugene Peterson
19 Bennett Ave.
Oakfield, NY 14125

WISCONSIN MEN'S ADVANCE

April 29-30, 1983

Holiday Inn, Marshfield
Write: Mr. Merlyn Peters
3741 S. 71st St.
Milwaukee, WI 53220

EAST TENNESSEE MEN'S ADVANCE

April 29-May 1, 1983

Wesley Woods Methodist Camp
Write: Mr. Thomas Trout
506 Sherwood Dr.
Maryville, TN 37801

NASHVILLE AREA SPRING ADVANCE

April 29-May 1, 1983

Henry Horton State Resort Park
Write: Mr. Hoyt Elliott
Box 24096, Nashville, TN 37202

ATLANTIC REGIONAL

May 5-7, 1983

Hotel Nova Scotia, Halifax
Write: Mr. Paul Beesley
224 Hill Heights Rd.
Saint John, New Brunswick
Canada E2K 2H3

ANGELO-ABILENE REGIONAL

May 12-14, 1983

Holiday Inn, San Angelo
Write: Mr. Randy Levens
264 N. Oxford
San Angelo, TX 76901

CINCINNATI RALLY

May 13-14, 1983

Quality Inn, Riverview
Covington, KY
Write: Mr. Gene Ellerbee
Box 30258, Cincinnati, OH 45230

FIRST ANNUAL ALASKA

MEN'S CAMP

May 13-15, 1983

Write: Mr. Guy Whitney
Box 60489, Fairbanks, AK 99706

NORTHERN ONTARIO REGIONAL

May 19-21, 1983

Senator Motor Hotel, Timmins
Write: Mr. Jack Wixson
164 Spruce St., N.
Timmins, Ontario
Canada P4N 6N1

NEW MEXICO MEN'S ADVANCE

May 19-22, 1983

Sacramento Methodist Assembly
Write: Mr. H.C. Godman
1808 Hubbard
Alamogordo, NM 88310

ALABAMA RALLY

May 20-21, 1983

Montrose
Write: Mr. Don McGriff
Box 399
Montrose, AL 36559

3RD SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON MEN'S ADVANCE

May 20-22, 1983

Black Lake Bible Conf.
Campgrounds, Olympia
Write: Mr. Jim Dermanoski
3218 Hoffman Rd.
Olympia, WA 98501

20TH ANNUAL PORTLAND CONVENTION

May 26-28, 1983

Red Lion, Jantzen Beach
Write: Mr. Art Evanson
Box 244, Vancouver, WA 98666

30TH ANNUAL WORLD CONVENTION

July 5-9, 1983

Detroit, Michigan
Write: Mr. Dave Byram
World Convention Coordinator
Box 5050
Costa Mesa, CA 92626

FULL GOSPEL BUSINESS MEN'S CHAPTER OUTREACH

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.

CANADA: **Chapeau-Quebec Chapter**, Jacques Poitras (418) 843-1148; **Lewisporte Chapter**, Wayne Tetford (709) 535-8349; **St. Thomas Chapter**, Randall (Otis) Clifton (519) 782-3881. **DENMARK:** **Aalborg Chapter**, Henning Simonsen 08-181690; **Aarhus Chapter**, Paul S. Boje (no phone); **Copenhagen Chapter**, Karl G. Svendsen 162-9292; **Horsens Chapter**, Erling Ilsoe Nielsen (no phone); **Silkeborg Chapter**, Johannes Muhlig (6) 81-13-83. **ENGLAND:** **Batley Chapter**, Barry L. Hartley 0924-472063; **Isle of Wight Chapter**, C.F. Rolf 098-329-2658. **FINLAND:** **Joensuu Chapter**, Ahti Miettinen (713) 822226. **SRI-LANKA:** **Kandy Sri-Lanka Chapter**, Tuan Sabreen 08-2260. **NEW ZEALAND:** **Takitimu Chapter**, Andrew Lovell 81-115. **UNITED STATES:** **ARIZONA:** **Douglas Chapter**, John Fortune (602) 364-9743. **CALIFORNIA:** **Palm Desert Chapter**, Roy E. Kelso (714) 340-4091. **INDIANA:** **Lake Wausee Chapter**, Stephen H. Bornman (219) 856-4331. **MISSOURI:** **Atchison County**, Gary Riley (816) 736-4506. **PENNSYLVANIA:** **South Philadelphia Chapter**, Joseph Andreozzi (215) 334-2710. **SOUTH DAKOTA:** **Hub City Chapter**, Art Greipp (605) 225-6108. **TEXAS:** **Golden Triangle Chapter**, L.D. Knight (817) 387-5268.

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Against background of relaxation at Santa Barbara: yodeler Buzz Goertzen and medical doctor Richard Eby, speakers; convention chairman Walter Wolf; International Director Peter Congelli



Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International is one of the largest users of convention space. The approximately 150 Fellowship-sponsored conventions, rallies and men's advances throughout the world are all different.

For instance, the 1982 All-Asian Convention in Singapore held its evening meetings in the National Stadium, where attendance reached nearly 50,000 and drew believers from seven nations. By contrast, the Southern California Convention in Santa Barbara January 15-16 was an intimate gathering of about 500 people in a picturesque ocean-retreat setting.

Apart from the size and surroundings, a similarity is found in all conventions. The loving fellowship is unsurpassed anywhere. Friendships are born and bonded which will be cherished through life and eternity. Teaching, testimonies and personal ministry are at the heart of all FGBMFI meetings. The central purpose of all conventions is, first, to bring people to Jesus and, second, to equip believers to live victoriously in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Each of the conventions listed on the opposite page provides rich opportunities for those with physical and spiritual needs to receive ministry, and for believers to minister in Jesus' name.

SIGNS and WONDERS



Lee Buck



Kenneth Copeland



Kenneth Hagin

Kenneth Copeland, Lee Buck, Kenneth Hagin, Charles Duke, Marilyn Hickey, Dr. Roy Hicks, John Osteen, Bill Subritzky and Demos Shakarian are a few of the many men of faith who will minister at the **30th World Convention of Full Gospel Business Men in Detroit, July 5 through 9.**

Each of them has seen the Son of God express His love

and power through physical healings, restored marriages, the lifting of financial burdens, and the greatest of all miracles—salvation of lost souls.

Join the thousands from around the world who will come to Detroit's waterfront Cobo Arena, seeking Jesus and believing that signs and wonders will follow.

Anointed teaching,

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John Osteen



Demos Shakarian



Bill Subritzky

instruction for each member of your family, inspirational music, and witnessing opportunities provide an unexcelled time for you to give and receive ministry.

One thousand rooms have been reserved at the Westin (headquarters hotel). Register now to be assured of choice hotel space and to avoid registration upon arrival. Mail this coupon today.

DETROIT⁰³

Please rush a free copy of the 30th FGBMFI World Convention brochure containing information on registration, schedule, hotels and Convention meals to:

Name _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Harold F. Conell, St. Louis, MO

#29416



When I first heard this testimony of a man—truly innocent as well as Christian—going to jail, I was profoundly gripped, as I am now, by the way God's love can fortify and sustain one through all adversities. This true-life account deserves to be told to a much wider audience via the printed word. It demonstrates how, in any circumstances, one can continue to sing praises to a God of love, grace and charity.

**—Chaplain James E. Forsythe,
Federal Correctional Institution,
Ray Brook, NY (former chaplain at
U.S. Penitentiary, Terre Haute,
Indiana)**



Daughter Valerie photographed with her father during their recent visit to prison

"29416—report to the desk!" Three times the call came over the loud-speaker before I realized that it was me they wanted. I had always been referred to as "Brother Conell," but on May 29, 1972, my first day here at Terre Haute Federal Prison in Indiana, I became a number. For the next three years I would be 29416.

I had just entered A&O (Admissions and Orientation), the hell-hole of the prison through which every inmate must go; but God spared me when the officer told me to report to the prison hospital. Within minutes the doctor had me put to bed, on the verge of a

stroke. My blood pressure was 240/160. In January a doctor had told me that if something didn't happen to bring it down I'd be dead in six months. He had written the prison officials and now God had undertaken; the Lord had a plan for my life.

When the winds of adversity first began to blow I couldn't understand why I, a born-again child of God, deacon in the church, Sunday-school superintendent for 11 years, was being attacked.

Just a few short years earlier I had had everything a man could want: a lovely wife and family, new home, new

cars, good job as salesman for an investment firm—by world standards, a success. Then one day a federal marshal had walked into the office with a cease-and-desist order and my whole world began to crumble.

Unknown to any of us sales representatives, the company for which we worked had been under investigation by the Securities and Exchange Commission. Just a few months before the cease-and-desist order was served, the president and vice-president (who

uncomfortable and destructive position. I had not really sought the will of God in 1966 when I had gone to work for the company. All I could see was that I would no longer be a factory worker; instead, I would wear a business suit, drive a new car. I took it for granted that God had opened the door. I leaned to my own understanding!

I made my second mistake when I gave up my job as Sunday-school superintendent. Even though when first employed I had stipulated that I could

I thought God had opened the door— but I leaned to my own understanding.

owned the company) held a closed board meeting at which they had elected me treasurer, removing the name of the president's wife as a corporate officer. All this was without my knowledge; in fact, I was in the hospital recuperating from a heart attack.

When in February, 1969, along with the owners, I was indicted by a federal grand jury on 21 counts of fraud and securities violations, I was stunned. How could these men have done this to me?

But they weren't talking.

During the months before the trial I would cry out to God, "Why me, Lord? I've served You all these years. Why do I have to go through this?" But the answers didn't come; I was looking for them in the wrong place—outside myself, in circumstances.

Finally in a blinding flash of clarity I realized that I had put *myself* in this

not go out of town on Sundays, as I began to earn more money I compromised my convictions. Because I believed that a man should be faithful to a church position, I felt that I should give mine up and had stepped out from under the protective umbrella that is the perfect will of God. I hadn't backslidden. I was still very much a child of God. But I had opened myself to attacks of Satan.

Because I would not agree to the government's offer of a reduced sentence if I would plead guilty to Count 21 (the sale of an unregistered security), the government prosecutors had promised that I would not get off scot-free. They wanted a speedy trial and a sure conviction; but I would not lie, for my Bible tells me that no liar shall see the face of God.

"Juries are fickle," my attorney reminded me. "You're facing a possible 105 years. That's a long time."

"Not when you compare it to eternity!" With that I put my future in God's hands, knowing that "...God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (1 Corinthians 10:13).



Terre Haute Federal Prison, Indiana

It turned out that the government's own witnesses exonerated me on all counts. But the judge instructed the jury in such a way concerning Count 21 that if they found one man guilty, they must find all three guilty. He thus sealed my doom and made good the prosecutors' threat.

The five-year sentence I received in October of 1969, as staggering as it was, paled to insignificance with the news from my wife a few days later. She had suspected for some months that she had cancer, but had not wanted to burden me during the nine-day trial. Now the diagnosis was confirmed.

I had invested every dime I made

into the company—and lost it all. I began to work feverishly night and day, selling cars, to provide for my daughters while I would be in prison.

In November of 1971, after two years of numerous appeals, and when the company president and vice-president left for their prison terms of 35 and 20 years, respectively, I was called before the judge. In the privacy of his office he told me for the first time that he knew I was innocent. Still he was sending me to prison! But my God was able to keep peace in my heart.

He also told me that he knew my wife was dying, and on her behalf he was going to grant a stay of sentence for one month. During the next six months this was renewed month by month. The repeated uncertainty, added to the work pressure and my wife's ill health, kept me in agonized dependence upon God. Somehow in His grace He did not permit me any anger or bitterness.

For a total of two years my wife was in and out of hospitals. Finally the doctors told me they could do no more for her.

On a warm, sunny day in May of 1972 we laid my wife to rest. By the time I left for Terre Haute I was exhausted mentally and physically.

But God saw to it that my escort was a Christian marshal. Just before entering the prison gates we joined hands and he prayed, "Lord, go with this man through these years. Walk before him, protect him, keep Your
(continued, p. 27)

UPDATE!

Fellowship News
from Here, There
and Around
the World

L.A. PRESIDENTIAL PARTNERS MEET

President Richard Reinjohn and the Executive Chapter served as host for the Presidential Partners banquet held at Los Angeles' Bonaventure Hotel January 21. With a touch of humor as he introduced the Fellowship's president and founder, Demos Shakarian, Reinjohn recalled that Demos started the Fellowship in 1952 at Clifton's Cafeteria, about seven blocks from the hotel. He added, "Demos, you haven't come very far."

In reality the 408 people, the place and program constitute strong evidence of how far the Fellowship has come in the last 31 years.

A Los Angeles police captain and his wife were a reminder of FGBMFI Peace Officer chapters and the ex-convict at a nearby table was a reminder of the Fellowship's effective prison ministry.

Speakers' testimonies at the event, one of 25 held in 1982 and 20 slated for 1983, included reference points indicating the Fellowship's extensive outreach—now to 81 countries.

Sir Lionel Luckhoo, knighted twice by the queen of England and proclaimed by Guinness' *World Book of Records* as world's most successful defense attorney, testified that November 7, 1978, because of an FGBMFI airlift to Guyana, he stood at a Fellowship banquet in the Pegasus Hotel and accepted Jesus, a decision that radically altered his life.

"Had I heeded the demands of my client, the infamous Jim Jones, to face Congressman Ryan with him on November 18, I would be in hell today," Luckhoo concluded. "I am alive because FGBMFI men came to Guyana. That is why I travel 600,000 miles to tell men about my Jesus."

Main speaker Founder/President Shakarian related several experiences indicating ways God has used the Fellowship to minister to those in high places. For instance, when Demos and his wife Rose were among 400 guests at the White House recently, Secretary of the Interior James Watts said, "Demos, I want to thank you for what the Fellowship has done for me." Jim Watts, while a young legislative aide, made a commitment to Jesus Christ at a Washington, D.C., FGBMFI convention which he testifies "changed my inner life."

Demos reported that Rios Montt, president of Guatemala and a member of FGBMFI, invited him to have dinner because of the part the Fellowship has played in his life. He also asked Demos to appear with him in a film that would show how the application of Christian principles is having a positive effect upon his nation.

Concluding, Demos said, "My job is to hold the vision before our men. They are calling men to gather the last great harvest before Jesus comes." □



President and Mrs. Shakarian receive guests; master of ceremonies, Richard Reinjohn

hand upon him." God answered his prayer.

The first three months were spent in the hospital. My doctor, an internist who specialized in my problems (including diabetes), was not an inmate but a conscientious objector doing his military service time at the prison. He was not there by chance; God had a plan.

On more than one occasion my life was spared. Once an inmate set off a bomb in the hospital kitchen, directly across the hall from my room. It knocked me to the floor and I barely got back into bed before I started having a heart attack. The officers had locked all the doors. Had it not been for an inmate orderly who just happened to look through my window, I might not be here today.

Then, because of knowledge I had, an inmate put out a contract on my life—with two cartons of cigarettes. I had become part of a group called The Christian Brotherhood: men who had gotten saved while in prison. One of these men had been an enforcer on the outside, and while they gathered around to protect me, he saw to it that the contract was canceled. Again God had used a man to save my life.

A few months later I was transferred to the farm camp. The cell next to mine housed a powerful underworld figure whose life I was able to save one night when he was having a heart attack. We became friends. He spread the word that I was a man to be trusted; I didn't play games; I was for real. As a result, no one bothered

me. Again God had used a man.

I found favor with the warden, the farm-camp superintendent and the officers. Because I was permitted to move freely about the camp, I could witness to more and more men about the love of God. Working with the chaplain, I became involved in a program to help new inmates become oriented. During those two years God used me to win more than 100 men to Christ.

I managed to secure a copy of my trial brief around Christmas, 1974. After my caseworker read it he asked me if I knew whose time I was doing. "Why, I'm doing my own time," I answered.

"No," he said. "You weren't an officer of that company. If I had read this two years ago you would have been on your way home."

But two years earlier God's plan for my life had not yet been accomplished. I had not won all those souls to Christ. It is because I went through this prison experience and still kept the love of God in my heart that I am now able to give this testimony. I praise God for it.

I testify not only in prisons but also to the church, to the complacent Christian, for I Corinthians 10:12 says, "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." □

Harold Conell has remarried and he and his wife Pat are active in prison ministry through their church. He has attended New Life Temple in St. Louis for 30 years, and has three daughters: Marian, Earline and Valerie.

Change in Thailand

Finn Strøm, Bangkok, Thailand

Look who's here! Isn't that the tailor? You know, the Indian—the one from next door. . . . Hmmm. He's a sikh, isn't he? Did you know that sikh's never cut their hair? That's why they wear turbans. . . . Let's go talk with him."

My wife and I walked to the front of the Bangkok bookstore where we worked.

"Excuse me, my name is Finn Strøm," I said, greeting the man who had just entered. "Sorry about my accent! I'm from Oslo, Norway, but my wife and I work here. Can we help you?"

To our surprise, the sikh knew very well who we were—and what we stood for. That was the reason for his being there; he wanted to know the Jesus we knew.

In the first six months of our stay in Bangkok, Thailand, we had given out 100,000 leaflets to people on the streets. As a result many people found new meaning to life, just as the Indian tailor did. Later on, posted to an orphanage, we saw God transform hurt, distraught, deserted children into new creatures, healed of bitterness and full of love.

In the north of Thailand we opened a house for homeless young people. Across the border was a hill tribe, the Karn, which has been at war with the Burmese Gomans for nearly 20 years. It was normal practice for the Karn to

force all young people in the area to fight for them.

One such unwilling captive was a girl of 16 who had previously met Jesus through Burmese missionaries. This young girl began praying for deliverance. Then one dark night she threw down her gun, discarded her Karn uniform and darted out into the unknown. Although she knew well the dangers of the jungle, she trusted in God, running and praying as she ran.

Everywhere was black nothingness. All directions looked alike. Feeling only the whip of wet underbrush as she ran, and racing to the point of total exhaustion, she finally burst out of the jungle and stopped, with no idea where she was or whether she were even still in Burma.

But she must have asylum. Taking a deep breath and not knowing what to expect, she chose a house, mustered her courage and knocked. . . . God had led her directly to our home! Since then, He has used her to reach many in our village.

How does a Norwegian businessman come to be in Thailand?

I cannot say, as some can, that I had real problems before I met Jesus. It was actually quite the opposite: everything I touched seemed to turn to gold. We had our own business selling insurance. I was married to a beautiful wife. Everything we wanted we simply bought, even traveling

around Europe and the world just because we wanted to.

Yet the more I had, the more empty possessions became. Then for Christmas in 1977 a Salvation Army friend gave me a book by Demos Shakarian entitled *The Happiest People on Earth*. I was highly impressed and felt I just had to meet these people, even if it meant a trip to the U.S.A. (where Shakarian had started the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship).

Such a trip wasn't necessary. A few days later a business friend asked if I would be interested in attending a FGBMFI meeting. I told him I'd just read their book, and was surprised to learn from him that the Fellowship had been in Norway for 10 years.

My life was changed at that meeting. Jesus was indeed the fulfillment that material things cannot give. At first my wife thought I had gone mad. I didn't say much, but just prayed. After a month she too committed her life to Jesus.

At this time God spoke to each of us separately, telling us to go to Thailand. We sold our possessions, liquidated our business and moved to Stavanger, Norway, in preparation for the trip.

God used us in Stavanger. We started an FGBMFI chapter there and saw many lives transformed through the testimonies of ordinary men like me. We also had special opportunities to share our faith with oilmen working in the North Sea.

After arriving in Bangkok we were able to start a chapter there as well. In

1982 a group of us went to the Fellowship's Asian convention in Singapore, where we heard a retired baker by the name of Tommy Ashcraft (who is now executive vice-president of the Fellowship) share with close to 50,000 people how God can change nations through ordinary men.

We believe that Thailand is one of the 81 nations where God is using the Fellowship to change men into "the happiest people on earth." The Six Steps to Salvation on page 39 have assisted thousands to discover a degree of happiness and fulfillment they never thought possible. You too can make this discovery. □



Finn Strøm has returned to Norway, where he is vice-president of the Oslo Chapter of FGBMFI and has just begun Thai-Scan, his own import/export company with Thailand. He and his wife have two children and are currently adopting a new daughter from Thailand.

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THREEFOLD PURPOSE OF FULL GOSPEL BUSINESS MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

1. *To witness to God's presence and power in the world today through the message of the total Gospel for the total man, and by this to reach men for Jesus Christ, especially those having the same social, cultural or business interests as the person doing the witnessing.*

2. *To provide a basis of Christian fellowship among all men everywhere through an organism not directly associated with any specific church but co-operating with all those of like mind, and to inspire its members to be active in their respective churches.*

Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International does not start churches. Rather, we desire solely to be a service arm to existing ones.

3. *To bring about a greater measure of unity and spirit of harmony in the body of Christ, where members are united in a common effort for the good of the whole body.*

HOW TO START A FULL GOSPEL BUSINESS MEN'S CHAPTER

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 92626.



a Voice for the People

Letters and phone calls continue to demonstrate that God uses the printed witness of Christ-changed lives in *Voice* to reach the unsaved and to minister to spiritual and physical needs.

Joe Levasseur of St. Louis wrote the following letter after his testimony appeared in the December, 1982 issue of *Voice*:



Dear Dr. Melvin: *Voice* magazine is demonstrating to us in a real way its tremendous ministry which reaches out to a world in need of its message. The "I Wanted Out" testimony in the December issue is resulting in phone calls and letters from all over the U.S. and from Canada, asking for prayer for all types of needs.

A 28-year-old airline pilot called, accepted Jesus as Lord and received the Baptism with the evidence of speaking in tongues. God healed an 83-year-old California woman's painful back problem and she received her prayer language after many years of seeking the Baptism.

Amazingly, in spite of our unlisted home phone number and the reference to "Coinco," which is not listed except as Coin Acceptors, Inc., the people who overcame those obstacles to contact us have received either salvation, the Baptism, healings or a combination of these.

After reading the testimony in *Voice*, a woman executive who was in mind science and meditation attended the FGBMFI chapter where I was speaking. She brought along another executive; they both responded to the altar call, gave their hearts to Jesus and received the Holy Spirit. Excited with the experience and the fellowship, they brought two others to church the next morning. One of those, who was unsaved, accepted the Lord.

A minister picked up a copy of *Voice* from a magazine rack at a truckstop in Missouri, wrote a long letter of problems and asked for help. God touched him as we talked by phone.

I just received a letter from a 38-year-old man in Grand Rapids who had called in early December for prayer for his tobacco-chewing habit, and for his wife, whom the doctors had given up as being barren after two surgeries. He writes, "To make a long story short, she is expecting."

For only \$10 a month you may have more than 3,300 powerful testimonies like that of Joe Levasseur to give to unsaved friends and loved ones. If you meet two people a day who need to know Jesus, you need at least 50 copies of *Voice* a month. Start your *Voice* evangelistic ministry today!

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Mail coupon and check payable to: **FGBMFI, P.O. Box 5050, Costa Mesa, CA 92626.**



Ridiculous Ridiculous



Richmond Page, Sturgis, SD

You've suffered a stroke and we suspect an obstruction—a blood clot—at the bottom of your speech center.” I heard the words from the concerned doctor bending over me, as if in some bizarre dream, but the stark and sterile hospital room was fiercely real.

As I lay like a wooden man, unable to move or speak, the almost certain loss of my career as Christian musician, singer and actor hung above my

head like a sword tied to a thin, breaking thread. Not to be able to play the piano? Never to sing a note again? Never to walk onstage to perform for the Lord?

Never... never... never. The unspoken word echoed in my mind as though down a dark, endless tunnel.

The nightmare had begun in the cold, early-morning hours of that February day in 1982 when I awoke with a start and found to my bewilderment

that my hands and arms were numb. I couldn't lift a finger or utter a sound and my equilibrium was gone. My wife Merle, a registered nurse, suspected immediately that I had suffered a stroke. Painstakingly, she had dressed me and driven the five miles to my doctor, Bruce Newell; from there I had been taken to the hospital at Lake Wales, Florida.

You think some long, sobering thoughts when a life-changing crisis sweeps down upon your life. Music had been my whole life; was it to be over now? My mother (Cora Richmond, a concert violinist) had found her three-year-old son on tiptoe trying to play the piano and had recognized that even at that tender age I must begin studying music. . . . I could see her, lovely and stylishly dressed, wearing one of her beautiful hats, and myself as a child sitting beside her in the pew of First Parish Congregational Church, where professional people of Dover, New Hampshire attended. . . . I saw myself at the age of 12 making my professional debut as accompanist for Norman Levitt, Metropolitan Opera singer; then, after college, studying at Rollins Conservatory, Winter Park, Florida, and Juilliard School of Music, New York.

Lying there in the white world of the hospital, I saw as through a kaleidoscope my years as singer and accompanist for Fred Waring's orchestra; my appearances in Broadway

productions; the two-year stint with Special Services, entertaining the troops during World War II; musical theater throughout the south; and, for the last 17 years, in the Black Hills Passion Play (Josef Meier's dramatic production of Christ's last week and crucifixion), roles from King Herod to Simon Peter.

For years I had been acquainted with the Scriptures through oratorio work and portraying biblical characters in the Passion Play, but even though I knew whole passages from the Bible I did not know the Lord Jesus Christ himself. I had played and sung in hundreds of churches and synagogues on high holy days, but always based on who paid the most.

To be sure, I believed there was a God, but He was just "a nice fellow upstairs"—not especially interested in me nor I in him. And certainly He was not relevant to the career of singer, actor and musician Richmond Page.

However, He had a few surprises in store for me. The first was backstage at the Passion Play in the Black Hills of South Dakota one night in the summer of 1974. Someone introduced me to a tall, smiling blonde lady who asked for a behind-the-scenes tour for her busload of Catholic student nurses. Directing the tour, I discovered incidentally that she was a born-again, Spirit-filled Christian with a lovely but untrained singing voice.

"Why don't you study with me?" I

asked, and she did. Later we were married, giving many sacred concerts together, with me as her accompanist.

It was at one of her appearances—October 19, 1976, to be exact—at the Open Bible College, Des Moines, Iowa, that the Lord Jesus came down in a miraculous, brilliant burst of heavenly light and made Himself known to me.

The second surprise came a month later at Mott, North Dakota, where we were appearing at our first Full Gospel Business Men's meeting as part of the musical program. At the conclusion of the meeting we gathered around the piano to sing. I was playing when the Holy Spirit laid hold of me and suddenly, unexpectedly, I was speaking in another tongue. *This* was not something I had learned phonetically in order to sing in a large cathedral. This was a God-given, Holy-Spirit language—a new voice with which to praise Him. My life would never again be the same.

Now, ironically, just when it seemed that the Lord was using me to the fullest—a stroke.

When the nurses had settled me comfortably in my hospital room, my good wife Merle said, "Honey, I'm going to have to leave you and attend to some things, but I'll be back in a few hours." She kissed me and tiptoed out, and I was left alone. Frustration and despair washed over this proud, independent man. My family's motto had always been "Resolve and Persevere." Persevere indeed! I was so

helpless it took several people to get me to the bathroom.

I was scheduled to go onstage that night in the role of Simon Peter and here I lay, unable to walk by myself, much less speak, my livelihood gone, my career finished. Tears stung my eyes.



Richmond Page as St. Peter

Then very quietly the Holy Spirit began to minister to me. "Why don't you start believing what you've been singing about all these years?" I seemed to hear.

Into my mind rushed a flood of Scriptures. "I sought the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me from all

my fears" (Psalms 34:4). "I am the Lord that healeth thee" (Exodus 15:26). "The Lord is my shepherd" (Psalms 23:1).

Then it came to me. Words . . . I must try to speak words. What would be the hardest word to say in this situation (a ridiculous one for a child of God to be in, for surely God didn't want me to be helpless)?

I pursed my lips and with effort forced the word out: "Ridiculous!" I was speaking! I said it over and over as I lay there, excitement rising within. I was talking . . . I was talking.

I must have continued for several hours, thrilled to say the word again and again. Then Merle walked back into my room and impulsively I reached out to her. I was able to move!

"I've been saying 'ridiculous, ridiculous, ridiculous' all afternoon," I exulted.

She looked at me with her big, astonished blue eyes. "Dear Lord," she cried, "You've healed him—but now he's gone crazy!" We found ourselves laughing and crying with relief and thankfulness in the beautiful recognition that God was healing me.

"Dear," she told me, "I called Pastor Hoefer back home and the Bible College in Des Moines. They've started a prayer chain. But look at you—God has already worked!"

As you can imagine, there was a great deal of consternation at the hospital. The doctors, baffled at my sudden recovery, insisted on doing 29 CATscans of my brain—and found

absolutely nothing wrong.

"We can't understand what's happened," they kept saying. We knew, though. It was God's mighty healing power.

The stroke occurred early Tuesday. I was released, a well man, from the hospital at 3:00 P.M. Thursday, just two days later. That evening at 7:30 I walked backstage, ready for the evening performance. My fellow actors were almost speechless, as though they had seen a ghost. "We thought you've just had a stroke," they marveled.

"I did, but God healed me."

"How do you feel now?" was their anxious question.

"Like a million," I replied. And I still do.

It's been a long spiritual journey, but how thankful I am that I accepted Christ and have the fullness of His Holy Spirit dwelling within. I can thank God even for the stroke, because now when I portray Simon Peter onstage, or present a sacred concert in song, it means so much more to me. With a full and overflowing heart I can say, "I will bless the Lord at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth" (Psalm 34:1). How grateful I am that I have a voice to praise Him! □

Richmond Page, bass, and his wife Merle, mezzosoprano, minister in sacred concerts, and he continues his roles with the Passion Play of the Black Hills as St. Peter and the angel in the tomb, announcing the resurrection.

FASTEST MAN ALIVE (from p. 9)

1972 we knelt with some friends and asked them to lay hands on us to receive the Lord into our lives and be filled with the Holy Spirit. As we prayed, the emptiness that running had never been able to fill was driven out completely. I rejoiced in a new, heavenly language and felt a joy and peace that the old Jim Ryun had never, ever experienced.

Now just a short time later, at the most important athletic event in the world, I was about to find out just how the new Jim Ryun would handle one of the major crises of his running career.

"Lord," I complained, "these Olympic officials *know* I was fouled out of that race. But they aren't going to reinstate me just because they've never done such a thing before!"

I guess it'd be nice if I could say the Lord performed a miracle and got me back in the race. Instead, though, He decided on a greater miracle.

For several weeks I struggled with the hurt and bitterness. After awhile I realized that my unforgiveness concerning these officials was seriously hampering my walk with the Lord. Finally one night I simply knelt and said, "Lord, forgive me." The next night I did the same thing, and the night after that. I knew the Lord had forgiven me but the unforgiveness in my own heart remained.

One day, though, I became aware of an amazing thing: I wasn't mad anymore. Before, I had imagined a

scenario of being in a dark room with one of those officials and beeping him in the nose. Now I knew that if I were to meet one of those men in a dark room I'd turn the light on and shake his hand and tell him about Jesus.

God had allowed me to be disqualified from the world's most prestigious athletic competition in order to make me a *real* winner.

Recently my family and I have moved back to Kansas, back where it all began, but not back to the old routine of running for myself. I am running—with a new desire: to share Jesus Christ and His wonderful, obedient, disciplined lifestyle. It has been a good move for our family; there are new adventures, new trials. And while some have said we moved back to the Midwest for safety, we are even more convinced you can raise a family anywhere when Jesus really is placed and kept on His throne.

No, I'm not the fastest man alive anymore. I don't need to be. Running with Jesus has brought me the freedom and happiness that running for myself never could.

That's real Gold Medal living. ☐

Jim acts as consultant for Nike Shoe Company and is working on his autobiography. He and Anne have four children: Heather, twins Ned and Drew, and Catharine.

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 92626.



World Laymen's Headquarters

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SIX SCRIPTURAL STEPS TO SALVATION

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 right 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 92626.

Hon Memorial Prayer Chapel



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THE SMALL MAGAZINE WITH
 THE WORLD'S GREATEST MESSAGE



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From: FGBMFI, P.O. Box 5050, Costa Mesa, CA 92626

**THE APPLE VALLEY CHAPTER OF
 FULL GOSPEL BUSINESSMEN FELLOWSHIP INTERNATIONAL**
 invites you to Fellowship with us on the 4th Monday each month
 except December at the Apple Valley Community Center on Navajo
 Road just south of Highway 18. Dinner served at 7 P.M.
Pastors, now pastoring a church, and wives invited as guests of the Chapter.
 All children 12 years old and under will be served for \$1. Ladies are welcome
 and all unable to attend dinner are welcome to attend the meeting at 8 P.M.
 DINNER \$2.50 - Reservations Required. DEADLINE - 7:30 A.M. Day of Meeting.
 For further information call 245-7860 or 244-2807