

A Dream Come True

in Caracarai, Roraima, Brazil

It started in October 29, 1978. We made a visit to Caracarai and felt that was where the Lord wanted us as missionaries to start an Independent Baptist church. Leaving Manaus, Amazonas, we moved north to the state of Roraima driving our Volkswagen van loaded with our baggage. The journey would take two days on the dirt roads, sometimes with lots of holes and mud. There were 46 wooden bridges, as well as four metal barges used to cross the small rivers with only one gas station in 400 miles. We had to drive through an Indian Reservation, which was not very friendly at times.

When we got to Caracarai, we stayed in a boarding house for a few days until we found a place to rent. There was only one house to rent and one other building to rent for church services in the town of 3,000 people. Bats were living in the house, so we had to get rid of them first. The building we rented for church services was on the main road in town across the street from a school. Many of the kids would stop and listen to Sharon playing the accordion before their classes began. We made several contacts with the kids during this time.

Being young and enthusiastic, we said we can do it with God's help and guidance. So we started services on Sunday morning and Sunday night, and Wednesday night as well. We made benches and began inviting people to come to the services. From a meager beginning of seven people in 1978, God has blessed the Bible Baptist Church. They now have a Brazilian pastor, a church building, new Sunday school classrooms, a kitchen, and a Bible Institute classroom. All of this has been paid for with the tithes and offerings of God's people. They support nine Brazilian missionaries with an average attendance of 80 people on Sunday.

On February 18, 2013, the Bible Baptist Institute started its first semester with five students. Pastor Luiz is training leaders to be pastors, Sunday school teachers, and better informed people in the church. This is a ministry of the Bible Baptist Church. There are more students ready to start the three-year program in the fall. The students study at night from 7:30pm to 10:00pm. The classes are from March through May and then September through November.

We had the desire to see the Bible Baptist Church grow. After 19 years working in this church, we felt the Lord leading us to move to Boa Vista, Roraima, to begin other Independent Baptist churches. The church called a Brazilian pastor but he only stayed about a year. Another Brazilian pastor took the church and stayed for nine years. He then he moved to another city.

Pastor Luiz has been at the church for seven years, and the Lord has led him to start a Bible Institute for the church people. Yes, it has been A Dream Come True for us. We wanted to start the Institute but never felt we could do the job. We praise the Lord for Pastor Luiz and his ability to teach the Bible. He asked us to help teach some of the classes and we were delighted to do so. We want to be a part of the Institute, but we want Pastor Luiz to be in leadership. The students all have jobs - three being public school teachers. They have families but are willing to study so that they can further their knowledge of God's Word.

Gecelita is one of the Institute students. She was saved at the church when she was nine years old and worked with us. Her family walked

over a mile on Sunday to come to church. We watched her grow in the Lord. She was able to study at the Bible Institute in Manaus, Amazonas, until her last semester. She had the opportunity to be paid to teach religion in the public school, and she decided to stay in Caracarai and teach. Now she has the possibility of finishing her Institute course in Caracarai and receiving her diploma at the end of this semester in November. She is married, has two children, and helps in the church activities. Her husband is a deacon in the church as well.

To see the church continue in the faith in which it was founded, to see most of the members that started with us still attending, and now to have a Bible Institute at the church to teach more of God's Word is truly a Dream Come True for us. As we sat at the first Institute closing service we couldn't help but praise the Lord for His goodness and watch care over us and His people. We pray that our churches here in the capital of Boa Vista will be able to catch the same vision of reaching out with the Gospel to train others to win the lost to Christ.



Bill & Sharon Smith

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INDEPENDENT BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP INTERNATIONAL

The Searchlight

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2013 VOLUME 30 ISSUE 3

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE
—IBFI FALL FELLOWSHIP MEETING—
TRINITY BAPTIST CHURCH, BIG SPRING, TEXAS



Willie Weaver



David Webb



Jerry Siler



Glen Anderson



John Hinton



Mark Haynes



Everyone enjoyed the delicious meals prepared by the ladies of the church.



President Jerry Siler presented Dr. & Mrs. Cotton with a thank you gift from the fellowship.



Songleader Steve Moses and the church choir.

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A Heart for the Harvest

Jerry Siler
IBFI President



Wow! What a great Fall Fellowship Meeting at Trinity Baptist Church in Big Springs, TX! We were treated like royalty by Bro. Randy Cotton, his wife, and the entire church staff! The greeters and ushers were a blessing from the beginning as they welcomed us at the front door. Bro. Steve Moses had the choir and special music in order to greatly compliment the fantastic preaching and fellowship.

Pastor Paul King from Messiah Baptist Church in Richland Hills, TX, started us off on Tuesday morning with a wonderful message about "Heaven and Jesus: The Way to Get There." He was followed by Pastor Willie Weaver from Worth Baptist Church in Ft. Worth, TX, who preached from Psalm 126:5-6 on "Why We Are Not Seeing a Greater Harvest." Our Tuesday morning session was closed out by a powerful message from Pastor David Webb from Walker Springs Road Baptist Church in Jackson, AL. Bro Webb, a Norris Baptist Bible Institute graduate, challenged us from Mark 2:12 with the message, "We Never Saw it on This Fashion."

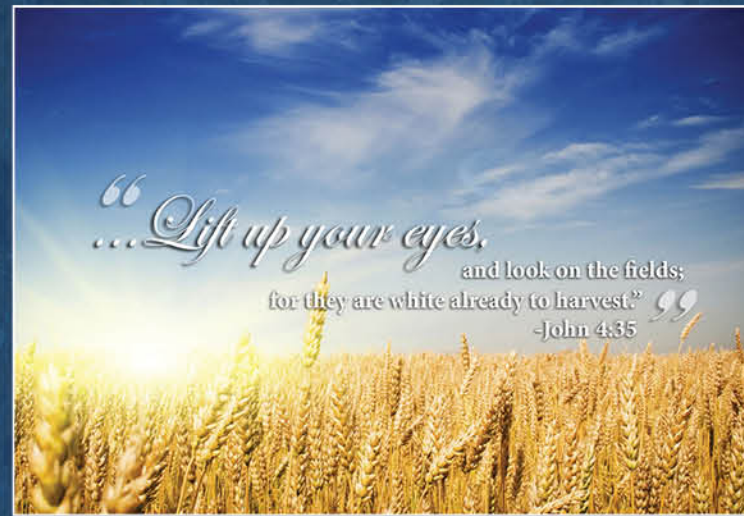
On Tuesday evening, the 50-voice choir prepared our hearts for Pastor Jim Pointer from Sioux City Baptist Church in Sioux City, IA. He opened the Bible to Matthew 9 and brought forth the "Plenty, the Potential, and the Prayer for the Harvest."

On Wednesday morning, we heard from Pastor Barry Bedwell from Faith Baptist Church in Dearborn Heights, MI. He presented a stirring message from Romans 9 and 10 that motivated the apostle Paul he had a "Convinced, Continued and Compassionate" heart.

Before our business meeting, I feebly used the great passage from John 4, where Jesus encouraged his disciples to see the urgency of "Reaping the Ready Harvest." In the evening service, after the great choir and special music, we were blessed by Bro. Mark Haynes, missionary to the Navajo Indians, as he took his text from Isaiah 6 and asked the question, "How Long Shall We Go Unto the Harvest Field?" He then answered from the same text..."until the houses be empty." The Wednesday evening service was concluded with a powerful, pointed,

persuasive personal (oh well, I'm not a Dr. Barber) message from the IBFI President Emeritus, Dr. Raymond Barber. Many were at the altar after the call to be "Laborers Together with God in the Harvest."

Thursday morning was the last session, but certainly not the least as three NBBS graduates preached their hearts out! Pastor John Hinton from Faith Baptist Church in Aransas Pass, TX, preached a heart convicting message from Mark 10 on "The Harvest is Crying Out...Are We Listening?" He was followed by Pastor Glen Anderson from Pensacola Baptist Temple in Pensacola, FL, who opened the Scripture to Mark 2 and proclaimed that the proper heart for the harvest has to be "Concerned, Confident, and Committed." Pastor Eric Crawford from Heritage Baptist Church in Haslet, TX, gave us a motivating send off using II Kings 22 and a young King Josiah to remind us to be "A Bright Light in a Dark Hour." Pastor Randy Cotton has a great heart for preachers! Trinity Baptist Church was used by the Lord to warm our hearts and caused us to lift up our spiritual eyes and desire "A Heart for the Harvest."



OFFERING FROM FALL FELLOWSHIP MEETING

Goal.....	\$35,000.000
Cash offering received.....	\$35,234.00
Pledges	\$3,800
Grand Total.....	\$39,034.00



From the Pen of the President Emeritus

Dr. Raymond W. Barber

Rereading the Word of God (Continued from the last issue of Searchlight)

In the previous issue of the Searchlight, I wrote about rediscovering the Word of God. The article began with the fascinating story about Hilkiyah, Israel's priest, finding the "Book of the Law" that had been missing for eight hundred years. We can rejoice that the Bible was rediscovered. Now, we are challenged to reread the Word. Why should we read the scriptures?

REASON #1: BECAUSE OF WHO WROTE IT

The Bible is not the word of mere men. Peter's appraisal comes to us from II Peter 1:21: "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." The Bible is the very Word of God as Paul wrote in I Thessalonians 2:13: "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God..."

The Bible is not in the experimental stage: It has been tried and proven. It is not the book of the week, or the book of the month, or the book of the year, or the book of the decade, or the book of the century, or the book of the millennium. It is the book of the ages! When the Alps have melted, the oceans have run dry, the stars have fallen from the sky, the sun has turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, the Bible will still be the living Word of the living God. "For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven" (Psalm 119:89).

REASON #2: BECAUSE OF THE PEOPLE TO WHOM IT IS WRITTEN

The Bible is written to us as a collective body of believers known as the church. In the Revelation, chapters two and three, Jesus addresses letters to the seven churches in Asia: local, visible bodies of believers!

The Bible is furthermore written to us as individual

believers: A classic example is I John 2:1,2: "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

Jeremiah wrote in 15:16: "Thy words were found, and I did eat them, and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O Lord God of hosts."

Every believer can so testify, inasmuch as God's Word is written for the enlightenment, enhancement, and encouragement of every individual Christian.

REASON #3: BECAUSE OF WHAT THE BIBLE IS

The Bible is multi-faceted as is clearly seen in its internal evidence:

1. The Bible is a Sword--Hebrews 4:12.
2. The Bible is a Light—Psalm 119:105.
3. The Bible is a Fire—Jeremiah 20:9.
4. The Bible is a Hammer—Jeremiah 23:29.
5. The Bible is a Mirror—James 1:22-25.

Dear reader, as you prayerfully read the Word of God, keep in mind that the Bible is a book of everlasting duration. Jesus said (I love to quote Jesus) in Luke 21:33: "Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away." Consider what the poet said about this powerful, precious, perfect, pure, pontifical book: "We search the world for truth: we cull the good, the true, the beautiful from graven stone and written scroll, and all old flower fields of the soul. And weary seekers of the best, we come home laden from our quest to find that all the sages said is in the Book our mothers read."

What an awesome Book!

UPCOMING EVENT

**30th Anniversary Meeting
May 19-22, 2014**

to be held at the Raymond W. Barber
Conference Center in Ft. Worth, TX

Pensacola Baptist Temple located in Pensacola, Florida, had an old-fashioned, Western Round-up on Sunday, October 6. Folks were encouraged to dress old-fashioned or western. Prizes were given in each age group for the best-dressed male and female. They were also encouraged to round up "Strays," those who were church members but not regular attenders, and "Mavericks," those who were not members and not attending church anywhere. One teen boy rounded up five "Mavericks" and was awarded a certificate worth \$100.00 for summer church camp. One adult lady rounded up four "Mavericks" and was awarded a beautiful cedar-encased Family Bible. When the dust settled down there were 12 "Mavericks" and a total attendance for the day of 192.



The guest speaker Dr. Gene Howard preached an excellent message entitled "Freedom and Sacrifice" and gave a very clear presentation of the gospel. When the invitation was given, many responded by coming to the altar. There were no decisions for salvation made public, but the seed was certainly planted.

The day closed out with an old-fashioned BBQ dinner in the fellowship hall, complete with beef brisket, pork, sausage, and all the trimmings.

Pensacola Baptist Temple is pastored by 1994 Norris Bible Baptist Seminary graduate Glen Anderson, who will celebrate his 13th year as Pastor on November 7th of this year. To God be the Glory!