



Fall 2014

Nigeria: land of mystery and ministry

By Nicholas Kennicott

Over the past five years, I haven't gone a day without thinking about the strange land of Nigeria and its vast array of cultural eccentricities.

"Naija," as locals call it, reminds me of just how different the American experience is from much of the rest of the world. The late Nigerian political activist Ken Saro-Wiwa once wrote, "To live a day in Nigeria is to die many times."

How is it that the richest, most populous nation in Africa with the 24th-largest economy in the world is still a third-world country? Electricity is still a scarce commodity, even in the largest cities; a day on the road feels like 10 rounds with a heavyweight boxing champion; political structures are significantly influenced by tribal and religious loyalties; business is significantly hampered without engagement in corrupt practices; schools are everywhere but education is scarce; and churches scatter the land, yet finding a biblically structured church with sound teaching is next to impossible.

The Lord has given Ephesus Church and those who partner with us a unique opportunity to see the best and worst of Nigeria.

Through the month of October, I traveled to the three largest cities in the



Nicholas Kennicott with students in Nigeria.

country while visiting small groups of Reformed Baptists.

In Port Harcourt, there is a small Bible study of 15 people who meet weekly in a home. They asked me to discuss church planting, to teach on the sufficiency of Scripture, and to help them in the establishment of a classical Christian school.

In Lagos – the 10th largest city in the

world – exists the only Reformed Baptist church in Nigeria along with Christ Pastor's Seminary. Sovereign Grace Bible Church just celebrated 10 years of being a local church, and is continually growing in its membership and outreach.

I was very encouraged to be able to worship at SGBC, and to teach on the fall

See **Nigeria** page 18

Inside: Meet the newest
IRBS students. PAGE 4

Missions: Dramatic heartbeat
of the Bible. PAGE 3

The kind of man God uses.
PAGE 17

ARBCA Update

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ASSOCIATION OF REFORMED BAPTIST CHURCHES OF AMERICA

The Association of Reformed Baptist Churches of America is a nonprofit organization registered in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The purpose of this association is to advance Christ's kingdom by providing a fellowship in which churches of common confession may find mutual encouragement, assistance, edification, and counsel, and may participate in cooperative efforts such as home missions, foreign missions, ministerial training and publications — all of which are often beyond the scope of one local church.

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Commentary: The drama of the Bible is missions

By Matt Foreman

When I was in high school, I loved English class. I loved reading literature and talking about literature. But I would get frustrated at times when we so dissected a story that it sucked the life out of the story.

A seminary professor of mine used to describe biblical theology and systematic theology as “plot and character analysis” of the epic story of redemption. We need to do the analysis, but we have to be careful not to miss the life and excitement of the story. The adventure of the Bible is a story about missions - the mission to carry God’s glory and gospel to the ends of the earth. Missions is the dramatic heartbeat of the Bible.

The call of God to Abram (Genesis 12:1-3) was a pivotal moment in the drama of Missions. God told Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation...and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

This text tells us about the call of Abram and his appointment as the federal head of the people of Israel. But God’s call to Abram to leave, to go – in order to be a blessing (within the framework of his particular covenant) – is part of the covenant call to missions throughout the whole Bible. It is echoed throughout the Bible as a call to a life of pilgrimage, a life of faith, and a life of purpose.

God’s Call to Leave

Leaving is a powerful and intimidating experience. When a student leaves for college for the first time, or a graduate takes a job away from home – it is a powerful time of uncertainty and stepping out of comfort zones, stepping away from safety nets. Leaving forces you to face life.

What did it mean for Abram to be asked to leave and go – in that day and age – into a fearful and uncertain world? It was being asked to leave behind safety and comfort and control. (This is when control-freaks freak out!) It was being asked to leave behind the normal things that give you identity and security, to leave behind your normal support networks.

But there was more to it than that. In Abraham’s life, it was also a call to leave behind his father’s gods, to leave behind idolatry. Abraham’s family were all Mesopotamian moon worshipers. God’s call was to leave behind his pet gods, to follow God alone, to trust God alone.

When it comes to the Mission of God, there is always a leaving – particularly a leaving of the idols of the heart. What are your pet gods? What are the things that give you security and identity, that you use as a crutch, that you trust more than you trust God? Sometimes it’s your family, sometimes it’s your material comfort, sometimes it’s your reputation, sometimes it’s your control, sometimes it’s your hobbies. God calls you to leave behind those things that you trust, even your good things, and to trust him.

Later in Abraham’s life (Gen. 22), God would tell him, “Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering.” Take the thing you’ve looked forward to, and trusted in, that you celebrate, and

sacrifice it. And then later in the same story, God tells him again, “I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring... and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice.” Because you left, because you sacrificed, because you trusted me.

Jesus would tell his disciples, “Leave your nets and follow me.” Peter would echo, “See, we have left everything and followed you.” And Jesus promised, “Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands, for my sake and for the gospel, who will not receive a hundredfold.”

God’s Call to Go

God didn’t just call Abram to leave. He called him to go – to go obediently and go in faith. Abraham had no idea where God was taking him. He couldn’t see the destination. He didn’t know the way or the how. There were many surprises and much uncertainty along the way.

“Going” means walking by faith, not by sight. Faith is not a leap in the dark; it’s being led by the hand, trusting God’s promises, even when you can’t see the fullness of them. When I’m walking in a crowd with my 4-year-old daughter, I tell her, “Hold tight to Daddy’s hand.” She’s overwhelmed because she can’t see and all these people are jostling her. But in that moment, her comfort is not in her hold on me; it’s in my hold on her. I’m not leaving it up to her. And in the tightness of my grip, she has the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen. That is faith.

Going means trusting God for “daily bread,” like the Israelites in the wilderness. It’s learning to put aside anxiety, and worry, and control. It means being obedient to whatever God asks, to wherever God calls. It’s overcoming doubt and paralysis and uncertainty and fear, and going, trusting God to guide and teach and correct you. God’s people are always a pilgrim people, who are living for a better home, pressing on and looking up.

“We rest on Thee, our shield and our defender!

We go not forth alone against the foe; strong in Thy strength, safe in Thy keeping tender,

We rest on Thee, and in Thy name we go.

We go in faith, our own great weakness feeling,

And needing more each day Thy grace to know:

Yet from our hearts a song of triumph peeling,

We rest on Thee, and in Thy name we go.”

God’s Call to Bless

Finally, God told Abram that he would “be a blessing,” that in him “all the families of the earth shall be blessed.” In context, Abraham is primarily the recipient of blessing, not the immediate bless-er. In that covenant, the nations were blessed as they blessed Abraham and cursed as they cursed Abraham. The primary mission was faithful presence, a mission of hospitality, to Come and See, not yet Go and Tell.

But the fulfillment of the promise comes in Jesus Christ. God’s call to Abraham was, in fact, the story of his own beloved Son - his

Institute of Reformed Baptist Studies: Meet our new class

Note from Dr. James Renihan:

It's my pleasure to introduce you to the incoming class of students at the Institute of Reformed Baptist Studies. We have an unusually international group of students this year. They have written their own introductions, and they are placed in alphabetical order.

Clark Edwards

I grew up in Enumclaw, Wash. I have attended Sovereign Grace Baptist Church in Enumclaw for twenty-four years. My dad is the pastor, so a large percentage of those years were, more or less, mandatory participation (mostly at the beginning).

As I have grown older I have come to realize the blessing of growing up in the church and witnessing the negative and positive aspects of church life. The one thing that has remained constant is the faithful preaching of God's word. It has become my conviction that the most important aspect of any church is the teaching and preaching.

It is this conviction that makes me realize the Institute of Reformed Baptist Studies as such a necessary training ground for the ministry of the Word. I'm encouraged, convicted, and daunted by the task of a preacher and if the Lord calls me into that ministry,

I view the training at IRBS as an essential foundation. I attended the University of Washington in Tacoma and graduated in 2011 with a B.A. in Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences with a focus in American Studies. My ministry experience has been brief but helpful in seeing the need for clear, biblical teaching in the church.

It is my goal to serve the church as a teacher at a university or seminary, or a Christian high school where I can train and equip minds to serve the Lord in whatever capacity he plans. I greatly look forward to future studies at IRBS.

Sam Gunnip

I'm 29 years old, married and have two children. My wife's name is Sang-hee and

our son's are Joon-ha (3) and Soo-ha (1).

Although I was originally born and raised in northeastern Vermont and my wife in South Korea, we moved to Escondido from Milwaukee.

Our sending church is Christ Reformed Baptist Church, located in the southwestern suburbs of Milwaukee. I completed my undergraduate degree at Wayland Baptist University in Plainview, Texas.

I came to IRBS because I desired a robust confessionally reformed seminary education, with an emphasis in 17th Century Particular Baptist theology and piety, as expressed in the Second London Confession.

I have no greater desire than to preach the gospel of Christ and minister the word of God to His church. My hope for future ministry is to begin a confessionally Reformed Baptist work in South Korea.

I want to see the recovery of Reformed Baptist theology and expression, which has been taking place in America over the last 40-plus years, brought to South Korea, a country that not only half of my family belongs to, but half of my very own heart.

Michael Kirkpatrick

Praise be to God for His goodness and wisdom, as it has been and continues to be evident in my life. I am from Vancouver, BC, Canada. I am one of several Canadian students at Westminster Seminary California (WSC) and the only one at IRBS.

The Lord has provided me with a faithful wife, whose name is Jessica. She is also Canadian and we lived in Langley, BC, Canada for the past three years. In 2013 I graduated from Trinity Western University with a BA in Religious Studies. We are members of Free Grace Baptist Church, our sending church in Chilliwack, BC, pastored by Jim Butler.

The primary reason for attending WSC along with the IRBS was to be grounded in solid theology, specifically Reformed Baptist theology. Since there is only one Canadian church that is part of ARBCA, my wife and I hope to return to BC to plant

a church in our hometown, where biblical, confessional Christianity is scarce.

I hope to be a faithful minister in order that sinners might be saved, believers might be edified and, ultimately, the Lord might be glorified.

Simon O'Mahony

I am a native of Cork, Ireland, and my wife Megan is from New York. We have a five-month-old daughter named Cecelia.

For the past number of years I have worked in the legal sector and as a reserve police officer, having obtained my law degree from University College Cork. During the summer we moved from Ireland to Escondido, Calif., in order to begin my three-year Master of Divinity program at Westminster Seminary California and IRBS.

One of the main reasons I choose WSC was the opportunity to take the IRBS classes. My desire after seminary is to serve as a minister of the gospel in a Reformed Baptist church and so I see the classes offered by the IRBS giving me a solid theological foundation for that humbling task. We attend Christ Reformed Baptist Church, Vista, Calif., where I am training as an intern.

Angelo Rodriguez Salais

I've come from Chihuahua city, in Chihuahua (state), in Mexico; I am single, both of my parents still live there and I've come from the Reformed Baptist church "Iglesia Bautista Betel," in Cuauhtemoc City.

I grew up in a Baptist family; my father is a retired Baptist pastor still preaching when some invitations come up from a Baptist church over there.

I graduated from Universidad Autonoma de Chihuahua (State University of Chihuahua) and my major is Engineering in Computer Systems and Software.

Since my teenage years I've had a deep and great desire to serve the Lord in

RBMS missions around the world



Let me thank you all for your prayers and support on behalf of my family and me. Recently I have had the opportunity to visit many churches that are not a part of ARBCA and tell them about the need of the gospel in Ireland. They were amazed at the number of churches we had supporting us. Most missionaries that they have talked to had only one to two churches supporting them.

I very much appreciate this association and the support and prayers you have provided. We would not be as far along in our fund-raising without you. As far as fund-raising goes, we are down to our last \$300 / month that we have to raise before we can go! We are so close.

In the picture to the right you can see our kids, Liam, Lorelai, and Méav, by our first packed crate ready to be sent to Ireland. Ashley spent several days at the end of October in Ireland securing a place to live for us.

The Emadis

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Michael, Ashley, Liam, Lorelai and Méav
Rockmarshall, Jenkinstown
Dundalk, Co Louth

IRELAND



Please keep us in your prayers. We ask that you would pray and consider joining with us in spreading the gospel in Ireland!

Editor's note: Michael and Ashley Emadi, missionaries serviced by RBMS and sent out by the Heritage Baptist Church in Owensboro, Ky., and their children left for Ireland on Nov. 17. The Lord did answer prayer and they have found a place to live. Please pray for the Emadi family as they get settled in and begin the ministry.

IRBS

From page 4

a local church proclaiming the gospel and teaching. However, in recent years when God draw me near to Reformed Theology, this desire grew much more, with great intensity to make known his Great name through preaching and teaching.

I believe that there's not doctrine more faithful to the Scripture and that glorifies most God than Reformed doctrine, specially Reformed Baptist doctrine, and I also believe that there's no better place to receive theological training than at the Institute of Reformed Baptist Studies under the teachings and guidance of the very gifted teachers here at IRBS as well as at the Westminster Seminary California.

I am thankful to God for this.

My hopes for the future is to serve the Lord Jesus Christ in a local church

preaching his glorious gospel and teaching this sound doctrine wherever God in his sovereign will and perfect providence will lead me. Soli Deo Gloria.

Tim Young

I am Chinese-American, born and raised in San Francisco. My parents are Christians. I have a younger sister.

I graduated from the University of California San Diego with a B.A. in Sociology and a minor in Education Studies. Originally looking into a career path in sociological research, and then in teaching, I started considering in my senior year if God was calling me to ministry. The semester after I graduated, I decided to attend Westminster Southern California in pursuit of an M.Div.

Currently, I attend Chinese Evangelical Church in San Diego, where I also serve as an intern. When the pastor and I first started talking about the internship, he informed

and encouraged me to take classes with the Institute of Reformed Baptist Studies. This was because previous interns from WSC who had taken the IRBS courses worked and served well with the leadership and congregation, theologically and ecclesiastically.

I am still seeking the Lord's guidance about where He may be leading me after seminary education. Several possible directions lay before me: pastoring a congregation, seeking long-term missionary work, or perhaps finding other opportunities to further the gospel ministry. Wherever the Lord may lead, I am very excited and humbled to study and work hard during this stage of my life for the gospel ministry in the future.

— Dr. James Renihan is dean of the Institute of Reformed Baptist Studies at Westminster Seminary West in Escondido, Calif.



RBMS missions around the world

This past August, as I was transitioning from the assignment at Fort Hood to the new one at Hurlburt Field, Fla., I had the wonderful opportunity to spend time with three of our ARBCA congregations on the Lord's Day: Heritage Baptist Church and Faith Community Baptist Church, both in Fort Worth, Texas, and Trinity Baptist Church in Baton Rouge, La.

I visited Heritage and Faith Community on the same Sunday, preaching during the morning worship service at Faith Community and spending the afternoon with Heritage during their Sunday School hour. My only regret is that I didn't have more time to spend with each congregation, but it was my very last Sunday in Texas before traveling to Florida.

I enjoyed being able to see Pastor Jason Montgomery, a former Air Force chaplain and valued friend since our student days at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. As always, I also enjoyed visiting with Larry Vincent and Jarrett Downs (another valued friend and fellow SWBTS alum), as well as many long-time friends from Heritage.

Pastor Montgomery stated that the time at Faith Community was well-spent, and that it was very beneficial to the congregation to hear first-hand about the chaplain ministry taking place on behalf of ARBCA.

The time at Heritage was utilized by discussing ministry within the special operations community, and how the new assignment would provide unique opportunities as well as special challenges.

After completing the Army Family Life Chaplain Training Program on Aug. 10, and graduating from Texas A&M University—Central Texas with a master of science in counseling psychology on Aug. 11, I hit the road immediately – or almost immediately.

Larry and Cindy Vincent traveled three hours down to Killeen to attend the A&M graduation ceremony on Saturday morning, and then treated me to lunch at a nearby restaurant. It is wonderful to have friends who are willing to invest sacrificial time

The Galyons

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into personal relationships, and I was very grateful to receive their heartfelt support.

It was difficult saying goodbye, but we did eventually, and then I made my way to Baton Rouge. I arrived there late Saturday night, and then woke up the next morning anticipating a meeting with the elders and congregation of Trinity Baptist Church.

After receiving a warm welcome from Chad Chauvin and Rob Shelby, as well as the congregation, we spent the Sunday School hour discussing the duties of a military chaplain. Those in attendance posed many thoughtful questions, and afterwards several people noted that the presentation and answers helped them to better understand how to pray for our ARBCA chaplains.

I preached during the morning worship service, and then visited for a while with several congregants. It is always encouraging to me to meet the members of our local congregations. I wish I could have met Pastor Dale Crawford, but, unfortunately, he had a previous engagement that took him out of town that Sunday.

Nonetheless, I appreciated the hospitality provided by Mrs. Crawford and Chad Chauvin's family after the service. They fed me well before I once again hit the highway, headed towards my family, who awaited me in Florida.

After being away from my family for about a month, seeing them was a welcome sight! Sharon and our children – Jenna, Jameson, and Jonathan, had already been enjoying the heat and humidity of the Sunshine State, no doubt because of the fact



Chaplain Galyon, right, with Larry and Cindy Vincent.

that the beach is only minutes away from our home.

A few days after my arrival, Jenna returned to Texas in order to continue her college studies. We are thankful that during her sophomore year of college she is living with a Southern Baptist pastor and his wife. The boys are adjusting well to their respective schools, probably better than they did in the previous two locations.

Much of the stress Sharon faced during our time at Fort Hood has been alleviated now that I no longer have academic

RBMS missions around the world



My age would want to tell me that the Christian faith and, in particular, the Doctrines of Grace would grow and flourish, as the men and women became more knowledgeable of this fallen world.

To my great surprise, I am finding out that this is not true. Those of us who preach the gospel of God's grace are finding it more difficult to be believed.

The educated, that is the university graduates, along with the ignorant pedestrians are having the same disbelieving attitude, saying "the church was instituted for the powerful to control the unfortunate."

So the church and the gospel are no longer relevant in this modern age.

We believe at Faith Missionary that our visitation in the community and our fliers given out at the Mico University College Hostel would produce people that

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JAMAICA



we could work with in hopes that some of them would answer the call of God upon their lives. They have and are still rejecting our invitation to the church, hence Christ and His gospel. Our numbers remain the same and most of our children have not returned.

The May Pen group (Pauline Baptist Church) remains the same. The two young men that I have baptized and received into

fellowship are there doing their best. They need to be taught but there is no one at that church who is qualified to do so as yet.

The work in Jamaica needs men who are not afraid to stand up for the true gospel, not men who will turn because they want to be popular and be prosperous and wealthy. Please continue to pray with us, that the few of us who are around may not give in to the modern-day view of the gospel.

Galyons

From page 6

responsibilities piled on top of work. It seems that in the short time we have been in Florida, we have been able to spend much, much more time together as a family.

This has been a tremendous blessing! I trust that will continue to be the case. I began in-processing on Monday, Aug. 11, and met the team members at the Hurlburt Chapel. Chaplain Lt. Col. Kleet Barclay (The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints) is the wing chaplain; Chaplain Capt. David Suh (Presbyterian Church in America) is the deputy wing chaplain; and Chaplain Capt. Mark Hunsinger (Wesleyan Church) and Chaplain Capt. Doug Lumpkin (Open Bible) are unit chaplains.

There are also three enlisted members who serve on the Hurlburt team, as well as several civilian contractors. The situation at Hurlburt Chapel is a bit dissimilar to what I have experienced previously, yet I trust that it is ultimately



Chaplain Galyon with his supervisor and good friend from the Army Family Life Chaplain Training & Resource Center of Ft. Hood, Chaplain, Lieutenant Colonel Jason Duckworth

because of God's providence that I am stationed here.

Units for which I have direct responsibility are the 505th Command & Control Wing; the 361st Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance Group; the 19th Special Operations Squadron (a training/student squadron); and the 823rd Rapid Engineer Deployable Heavy

Operational Repair Squadron Engineer Squadron.

I have recently had the opportunity to meet face-to-face with the respective commanders of these units, and am encouraged by their openness to having a chaplain in their midst.

There is a great need for the visible presence of the holy within these units, especially since there is a great deal of stress upon individuals and families due to heavy deployment cycles, not to mention severe combat responsibilities. It was mentioned in the last report that Missouri Baptist University produced an article related to leadership, and that I was one of the featured alums within its publication.

As promised, it may be accessed at:http://issuu.com/mobap/docs/magazine_summer_2014_high_res.

As always, please know that my family and I appreciate all of the love and support we receive from you. While I often feel the tremendous weight associated with

See **Gaylons**, page 18



RBMS missions around the world

After much searching we have found and rented premises for our meetings in the suburb town Bouc Bel Air, just outside of Aix-en-Provence.

Bouc Bel Air is located between Aix and Marseille (France's second-biggest city) so that people from either city can easily get to us. In fact, we have people from both the far side of Marseille and from Aix attending our services now.

The premises we have rented are in an office building owned by my next-door neighbor, Jacques. He and his wife Dany are wonderful neighbors and have been a big help to us. We are developing a fun and close relationship with them. We pray that in days to come they will become seekers of the Lord as well!

As I mentioned in my last letter, Joel and Anne Favre have joined us. Joel is working half time as my intern and doing studies half time at the Jean Calvin seminary in Aix to finish up his training for the ministry. We are so excited to have them with us. They are a lovely young couple with a great desire to serve the Lord and with many gifts to do so.

Joel preached his first sermon in our young church plant recently and it was absolutely excellent in every regard. When he did a two-month internship with me in Grenoble two years ago as he sought the Lord's will concerning his calling, we all concluded that he had evident gifts for preaching. Now, after two years of training at the London Theological Seminary, it is very evident that he has made much progress in his biblical and theological knowledge and in his pastoral concern and insight.

What thrilled us most about his sermon was not the biblical content, good structure, illustrations or other such matters, important as they are. It was the way in which he took the truth of God's Word in the passage before us and really spoke to us about our lives and the meaning of this truth for us in the "nitty-gritty" of life. He was concerned, graceful, practical and very God-exalting.

Any young man coming out of a good seminary who has some skills as a student can give an in-depth and accurate analysis of

The Vaughns <dvaughn@sfr.fr> David, Nicky, Jonathan and Michelle FRANCE



a biblical passage, but it another thing for a young man to have his heart set on helping people through exposition of the truth as the real goal of his preaching task! We praise the Lord for what we saw and heard on Sunday and take our hats off to LTS for their quality training.

One more note on Joel: He is attending the Christian Union meetings on campus to try to have a ministry among students and has already been asked to lead the Bible study once. He will undoubtedly have regular occasions to do so in weeks to come. These meetings are attended by 20-25 students, mostly Christians, with a few interested unbelievers present each time.

Anne is studying piano at the Conservatory in Aix as well as working part time teaching courses in piano and German. She has already had opportunities to begin to minister to new acquaintances and to speak to them of the Lord.

Please pray for Joel and Anne, for their integration into their new life and responsibilities, and for their opportunities for ministry. Pray also for my weekly meetings with Joel and our ministry efforts together.

Now that we have our new premises, we were to hold a "house warming" get-together towards the end of November. We distributed flyers to the homes in the cluster of suburb towns that touch each other and of which Bouc Bel Air is the biggest: Bouc Bel Air, Cabries, Simiane Collongue, and Callas.

These towns are home to about 35,000 people and there is no Protestant church in any of them except our young church plant.

The flyers will enable us to inform these people of our existence, times of service and other meetings and invite them both to the house-warming meeting on a Saturday evening, when a brief explanation will be given of what a Protestant church is (since most people don't know). The flyer will also invite them to a special "get to know us" Sunday service, where the gospel will be preached. Please pray for the results of this event.

As I mentioned in my last report, I have been going up to Brussels every two weeks to teach at the Belgium Bible Institute. It has been a wonderful experience and it seems that the Lord has been pleased to bless the ministry of His word during my times there. I don't know how the students in the courses on Romans and Biblical Piety actually manage it because in each of those courses I teach them for four sessions in a row of 45 minutes each (with short pauses between sessions, thankfully).

Despite the difficulty of this aspect of the courses, the students manifest and tremendous keenness and hunger to learn.

The course on Preaching has also been very rewarding and revealing. A couple of fine preachers have been spotted as I continue to think of the church at Grenoble and its need for a pastor. Perhaps someone from this institute will go there!

The director of the Institute asked me last week to come back next year and teach Romans again during the week and also teach the Biblical Piety course to special classes for

See **Vaughns**, page 9



RBMS missions around the world

As of two years ago, representatives of the Colombian government have been meeting in Habana, Cuba with those of the FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia) for peace talks. Over 50 years of armed conflict have passed already. No cease fires were required for these to start, and the confrontations and terrorist activities have continued at an ever-increasing rate.

Points of agreement so far tend strongly to the left. Radical changes socially, economically, and politically could be in the making. Some of these changes have already come with the present government, a strong tendency in most of Latin America.

With the increased guerrilla activities during the present government, one result has been that exploration for additional oil reserves has decreased dramatically. Within perhaps seven years, Colombia may have to import, rather than export, oil and gas.

Meanwhile, church and educational activities of the Reformed churches continue. There's the Latin America Reformed Seminary, begun a year ago just outside Medellín.

The Miami International Seminary has been functioning for over 10 years. The Médula Teológica here in Bogotá is close to finishing the second four-year cycle of classes held one week at a time four times a year. There are other smaller efforts.

Most of the Reformed churches are growing slowly. The Reformed Baptist

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COLOMBIA



Church in Medellín is probably the largest of the same in the country with some 300 attending. In Bogotá, there are three congregations of between 140 and 200. Others are significantly smaller.

There is always the need for more pastors thoroughly prepared in the Reformed faith and for churches able to support them. The names and locations of some of the pastors in Bogotá: Marco Antonio Orjuela (San José de Bavaria); Augusto Ramírez (La Alborada); Ramiro Beltrán (Bosa); Mauricio Bonilla (Bosa); Guillermo Gómez (Castilla); Jorge Enrique Castañeda (Suba); Orosmán Roza (Calle 100); Juan Pablo Cruz (El Carmen); Helberth Conde (Barrio Boyacá). Helberth is also the chaplain in our Christian School.

The Christian School and all Christian schools in the country are facing the government requirement to remove the matter of homosexuality from their statutes and statements of principles, this difficulty along with the already almost overwhelming one of maintaining discipline in the

classroom. The recent suicide of a student in a non-Christian school has placed the gender issue on the front burner.

The two church plants in Bucaramanga, capital city of 1,200,000 of the state of Santander, grow slowly. Likewise, the church plant in San Gil is in the same state. Curití continues to struggle to stay alive.

Then there's the Baptist Church (not large at all) of the city of Neiva, still part of the Southern Baptist Convention. The pastor, José Gutiérrez, suffered a stroke three weeks ago, and will need at least three months for a possibly complete recovery.

Also, some four months before pastor Jose's stroke, the husband of one of the principal families of the church and his 14-year-old son were diagnosed at the same time with leukemia. The entire family is residing in Bogotá for another perhaps eight months of treatment.

Of great pride for Colombia was her national team's reaching the quarterfinals of the World Cup Soccer Games, falling only to Brazil 2-1.

Vaughns

From page 8

the public, which are held on Saturdays and which tend to draw good attendance from the evangelical churches.

I am praying about this but don't see at this point how I could manage it. The trips this fall have been very demanding and I simply cannot give the full time, energy and

focus to the church plant that I need to with such demanding and regular commitments elsewhere.

Though preparing and doing this teaching has been a real spiritual blessing to me, it has also been a trial and a fight to keep from becoming a "ministry machine" instead of being a man of God.

Over-busyness makes me less human, less relational, and so, less godly! (Ask my wife!!)

Thank you for your prayers for us and our work here.

Please remember what we cannot forget – there are tens of thousands of people around us who have never once been in a gospel church, never had a friend or neighbor who is an evangelical Christian, never seen or read a Bible, and have absolutely no idea of what the good news of Christ is, who the real God is, and what is the glorious salvation they desperately need and may have in Jesus.



RBMS missions around the world

Since our last Update report, Janet and I were blessed to welcome Lukas Mathew Stoley to our family.

It is hard to believe that he will be 5 months in just another week. He is such a sweet boy and has been a blessing to us and the kids. Speaking of our other three, it has taken them a little bit to adjust to a new baby brother, but they have. I've enjoyed the past month or so watching them play with and interact with Lukas, and he absolutely adores them.

Janet is working hard to balance taking care of Lukas while also continuing to home school Elisa, Caleb, and Katelyn. For the most part they do well, but like any kids in school it can be a struggle sometimes. Struggles aside, we are thankful that they do love to learn and love to read...we just have to work on the spelling words and math.

The past several months have been busy at work, and I'm blessed to see more and more people come in for advice and counseling. I've had the privilege to work with several couples, a few parents, and individual spouses looking for advice. I'm always encouraged to work with people in these times and to look for opportunities to share Scripture and the gospel. In fact, just about a month ago an individual I was working with through a difficult time was baptized at their local church.

Through the difficulties this individual came back to the Lord, joined a church, attends a weekly study, and is now newly baptized.

In late spring my family and I led a weekend family retreat in the mountains of Southern California. We were joined by 17 families for a total of over 110 people for the weekend. Our topic for the weekend was "Suffering and the Word of God" and we discussed the realities of sin and suffering in our world in light of the gospel.

During our teaching times I was especially encouraged to hear teenagers and children share and interact and, quite frankly, give some of the best answers to

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HOME MISSIONS



some of the questions I asked that I have ever heard. One that sticks in my mind was when I asked, "Why are we asking the wrong question when we ask why bad things happen to good people?" A young 12-year-old girl answered, "Because none of us are good; we are all sinful and need Jesus."

The weekend was amazing and the topics of teaching and discussion were very well received. There were several hurting families and individuals in attendance who were encouraged by Scripture and the Gospel. Still more, that weekend I had the honor to baptize a young wife and mother who I have known for several years. Her husband, who is an unbeliever, and her three boys heard her testimony and witnessed her baptism. We continue to pray that the Lord will use her faithfulness to bring her husband to Himself.

Over the spring I was able to start a "newcomer's" briefing for the spouses of new families moving into our area. The blessing of this has been that I get to meet the majority of our spouses face-to-face and am able to share with them the various services I can offer the community as a chaplain.

Directly resulting from this I have been able to work with and counsel a few families and marriages. I'm always encouraged to see people humbly asking for help and guidance when its needed, and encouraged all the more when they seek biblical and spiritual counsel!

With the good there have been difficult times as well. My organization suffered the sudden and tragic loss of

a beloved friend, co-worker, father and husband last month. As the Lord allowed, I was able to work with the family, pray with them, and present the gospel at his funeral. Conversations continue still today about his loss and I'm praying that the Lord continues to open doors for the gospel through this tragedy.

As a family, we have started attending a new church just in the past month and a half. It was difficult for us to transition from the church we have been attending for the past year, but after prayerful consideration and after seeking the wise counsel of others, we determined that we needed to leave.

To the Lord's praise, we have joined a congregation pastored by someone who lives just down the street from us. The church is a newer church plant and is distinctly Reformed in their convictions, something I personally find very encouraging.

Also, several families we have known here in town have joined the church recently, so we are excited to see God keeping us in fellowship with those who we have grown to know already. Our prayer is that the Lord will use us in this congregation and that we would be able to serve and use the gifts that Christ has entrusted us with. Please pray with us to this end.

Everything considered, these past few months have been a joy and blessing. Providing spiritual care and ministering to my members and their families is a true joy. Pray with me that the Lord will continue to create avenues for the gospel and that his name would be glorified. Janet and I so greatly appreciate your prayers and support!

RBMS missions around the world



“It is good to give thanks to the LORD, And to sing praises to Thy name, O Most High; To declare Thy lovingkindness in the morning, And Thy faithfulness by night.” (Ps. 92:1-2).

It is certainly good and fitting to give thanks to the Lord and to sing praises to His name. Day after day, we keep marveling at His lovingkindness (unfailing love) as we enjoy His numerous blessings in our life and ministry as it has still been the case for the last summer.

First of all, there are a couple of events over which the congregation in Quebec City is rejoicing.

On July 14, one of our elderly couples, Gilbert and Rose-Aimée Asselin celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. I had been invited to bring the Word of God on the occasion and about 12 non-believing people heard the gospel for the first time. We thank our Lord for the opportunity He provided for proclaiming His glorious gospel.

Also in July, one of our members bought a home for elderly people. My wife and I were there for the inauguration and Diane interpreted a couple of Christian songs.

The evangelical churches in the province of Quebec, as elsewhere in North America, are not in great shape. Some conservative pastors who have tried to resist all the new waves are severely affected.

I took the time to have lunch with one of them in August as his church decreased so dramatically that he was reduced to a two-day-a-week paycheck. Most of his members gradually left to join an emerging church.

By the way, the emerging church is more and more present in our Province.

I have been in touch with a man who is pastoring a church in Montreal. I came to know him when I was invited by the Faculté de théologie évangélique de Montréal to sit on the committee for his

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master's thesis defense.

He is pastoring a church mostly made up of Haitian people and he has shown interest in collaborating with us. I recommended that he proceed with a careful study of the 1689 Confession of Faith and see if it corresponds to his beliefs. I would ask for your prayers on his behalf.

In August, during Pastor Jacques Pelletier's vacation, I came back to the pulpit in our church in Quebec City. We receive visitors almost every Sunday so that our building is full, as you can see on the picture below.

Each Sunday in August, we had a church picnic in a nearby park. The purpose was to have fellowship together but also to try to talk with the people around as some of them came to us while we were singing; we made contact with a couple of people and we have been able to sow the Word of God.

In September, Diane and I went on holiday. We spent time in Niagara-on-the-Lake area using the gift certificate that our church gave us last May on the occasion of our 25th church anniversary. It was a great time. We visited a couple of churches and fellowshiped with the saints.

Our church is putting an emphasis on mission. In September, for one of our midweek prayer meetings, we had a conversation via Skype with Mark and Sheryl Hatfield, who are in China.

Brother Mark initiated the idea and it has been very appreciated by our people.

During the time of my limited mobility due to a broken ankle, I spent many hours preparing a course (Anthropology) I was supposed to teach in the Congo in October. As I write this, there is a strong possibility my trip there will be postponed due to the existence of ebola there.

However, speaking of the Congo, we have an American family who joined our church a few months ago as they came to Quebec to learn French before going to serve in the Congo.

We thoroughly appreciated their presence with us and we'll be sad to see them leaving. You can certainly pray for them and their three children. They are solid 1689 people and we would have liked to keep them with us.

I would also like to ask your prayers for a man who used to attend an evangelical church, but went back to the world and has been strongly involved in drugs. He is now back and is attending our church for the last five months.

Spiritually, he is doing well but he still suffers the physical consequences of his substance abuse. I also ask you to keep praying for the conversion of our son Jonathan.

Thank you for this opportunity to share with you what our Lord is doing here and thank you for your fellowship, your prayers and support.



RBMS missions around the world

Three-fourths of the year is behind us, and I'd like you to walk with me and take a look back on our path.

Believe us when we say we are filled with joy to see the wonderful things God has done in this small flock. He is the One guiding, sustaining, and governing. He is the One who blesses and does all things "according to His will."

We know that, we believe that, and we take delight in it as Psalm 34:8 says "Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man who trusts in Him."

We began 2014 once again entrusting all to Him, and we gave ourselves over afresh to His powerful hands, waiting on Him, and the Lord has made His work grow. For that we are glad. We are sure that God has "many" in this city and its outskirts.

We've had new people attending – people who have been beaten, hurt, and disappointed with false teachings and the carelessness of unscrupulous men who have not tended to the spiritual needs of the sheep.

They are now among us and are learning the Gospel in all its purity and truth. Some who had left have returned to us, and we're anticipating that still others with whom we've been dialoguing will take a decisive step to return to us.

We have a plethora of activities that cover various needs for the growth and well-being of the church.

Every Sunday at 10:30 a.m. we have our main service when we expound the Word of God for the growth and encouragement of the believers and preach the gospel unto salvation for all who might believe through the Son, Jesus Christ. After this service, the Sunday school hour begins for the children and young people.

The ladies meeting on the second and fourth Saturdays of each month has strengthened the fellowship and the ties of sisterly love. It's also a perfect occasion to invite other women not yet part of the church, including unconverted women,

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that they may hear the good news of Christ. As the ladies dismiss, the young people gather, and their meetings have produced good fruit as they discuss current events in the light of Scripture, which generates great dialogue and debate.

This month was a perfect occasion to see the Martin Luther film to gain a better understanding of the Protestant Reformation from the true perspective, quite different from the one taught in the schools from the Roman Catholic Church's perspective.

On Oct. 25, we took them to Córdoba for the conference that Centro Crecer Bible Church is holding.

During this year I have been discipling a 17-year-old young man, Joaquín Fernández, who has grown up in the church. It has been such a joy to see him grow spiritually.

He has shown interest in studying in a seminary, but what has pleased us even more is his request to follow the Lord in obedience through baptism. He truly desires to please the Lord in all aspects of his life. Glory to God! The church is overjoyed!

Every Tuesday the men gather to study the Scriptures, beginning with the foundational teachings given by God in Genesis.

This is a great opportunity to exchange thoughts and ideas about biblical themes, learning to unite on a doctrinal basis. We'll continue to study through the whole Bible. These are great times of fellowship as brothers, and the Lord is edifying us.

The radio ministry continues. We've found it necessary to change stations in an effort to reach more people and a broader audience.

We are evaluating the possibility, benefits, and costs of two other stations. We plan to begin again mid-December when radio stations schedule their programs. However, we will continue with our same theme and time slot on Mondays and Thursdays.

We are excited for what will be our second annual retreat on March 22-24, 2015 with Pastor Jim Adams, his wife Nancy and their son David Adams. We are inviting brothers and sisters from other churches, as well as unbelievers. It's our hope and prayer that the Lord will reveal His glory to us and be glorified through His people at this retreat.

As Christmas festivities approach us, we are preparing (as we do every year), passages with biblical commentaries on them to print and hand out to the surrounding businesses and individuals as an opportunity of spreading the authentic Gospel message in the community. Our message is contrary to the idolatry in their various celebrations in this city.

It is against the indifference of a people who have submitted themselves to their material interests without any spiritual concern. It's against the false gospel that false teachers propagate, concerned only for their own well-being and economic status, using the hope and

See **Molinas**, page 13



RBMS missions around the world

We give thanks for a measure of numerical growth since the last Quarterly Update: a family of four has very recently moved to Palmerston North as a result of a job transfer and, having visited us on a number of occasions previously due to having friends in the congregation, it was an easy decision for them to make Crosspoint their new home.

We also have had a Maori lady attending regularly for a month or so at the time of writing. Her husband is not a Christian and so he does not come to church, but he and their youngest son did come along to a church barbecue.

With other visitors present on the last Sunday in October, our small venue was almost filled to capacity, and we give thanks to God for this encouragement to persevere.

At the time of writing the report for the last Quarterly Update we were preparing to host our eighth annual School of Theology, and I had promised a report for this update. We were greatly blessed to have Dr. Fred Malone teaching us on the topic "Preaching Christ in all the Scriptures."

With flight delays resulting in missed connections in the USA, Dr. Malone eventually arrived in Palmerston North a day later than planned, which meant spending most of July 4 in the air over the Pacific and less time to recover from jet-lag.

God was gracious, however, and our brother coped well with the adjustment and with the heavy schedule of preaching and teaching that followed.

It was a great encouragement to have him open the Word at our two services on Sunday, July 6, and I know our friends at Gracenet Church in Wellington were equally blessed by his ministry to them the following Sunday.

In the intervening days, Fred taught approximately 22 hours on the above-mentioned topic, covering the hermeneutics, the theology, and the practice of preaching

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NEW ZEALAND



Christ in all the Scriptures. The teaching was recorded and we anticipate that in due course it will be added to the Catalog on The Nehemiah Coxe Study Center website: irbscep.edu20.org (IRBS's Continuing Education Program).

Sixteen men participated in and benefitted from Dr. Malone's course, 13 of them from around New Zealand and three from Australia. Of these, 12 are serving their churches as elders (evenly divided between paid 'pastors' and unpaid 'elders') and three are involved in various forms of theological studies.

On the final day we also hosted a meeting of the Fellowship of Reformed Baptist Churches in New Zealand (FRBCNZ), in which Dr. Malone addressed the topic of "The Law and the Gospel in Pastoral Ministry."

Greetings were received from the ARBCA GA, and Dr. Malone was asked to convey the greetings and gratitude of the New Zealand Reformed Baptist Churches back to the ARBCA churches. We are

greatly blessed to have this encouragement through mutual prayers, reciprocated greetings and practical support.

We anticipate that Dr. Jim Renihan will return to teach at our School of Theology in July 2015, which, the Lord willing, will coincide with the 10th anniversary of the formation of the FRBCNZ.

As the year 2014 draws towards a close we are being made increasingly aware of the bicentenary of the gospel coming to New Zealand.

The first sermon was preached in the Bay of Islands (north of Auckland) by Samuel Marsden of the Church Missionary Society on Christmas Day 1814, when he took as his text Luke 2:10, "Behold! I bring you glad tidings of great joy."

This continues to be our message to a generation that is once again largely ignorant of the gospel, and we are grateful to the churches of ARBCA for your generous support and continual prayers which sustain us and enable us to persevere in this great commission.

Molinas

From page 12

faith of the people with no regard or care for the message of salvation.

They offer physical healing and financial prosperity without a call to repentance from sins. They do not bring to light the true God; they only give the

people the kind of god they want.

Our purpose is to be light. May this community of grace illuminate and attract many sinners to the God who is just, sovereign, merciful, and saving, as He has revealed His character and His work in taking away the sins of the world through His Son, so that anyone who believes in Him may be saved.



RBMS missions around the world

“It is my pleasure to tell you about the miraculous signs and wonders the Most High God has performed.” (Dan. 4.2).

IBCGrace in Santiago Chile, has come through difficult times. In March the elders had to face the opposition of a group of members, part of an extended family who, despite the efforts of the leadership, persisted in their wrongdoing and ended up leaving the congregation, taking with them seven other people. And so 18 of our brethren left the church.

We gave ourselves to prayer and sought the Lord’s face so that He could comfort and establish our hearts. And God has been faithful: despite our fragile nature, He has shown us His power and mercy.

Since that time, we haven’t ceased to receive visitors, most of whom have stayed with us.

We now have received six new members and also have 10 in discipleship, preparing to be baptized and become members. There is also a resounding interest in others who attend.

God has permitted us to minister to disoriented and broken marriages, too. We are witnessing how God’s grace can restore and heal past wounds.

Despite the fact that our visitors come from the Pentecostal world (remember that more than 80 percent of evangelical Christians in Chile are Pentecostals), not all of them are believers and they have come to that realization when they were confronted with the Word of God.

Recently I (Pastor Obed Rupertus) finished preaching and teaching from 1 Corinthians and a month ago I started with the Epistle to the Galatians. The theme of the teaching is “Free to Serve,” based on Gal. 5.1: “Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.”

Every Sunday, besides repeating this verse, we also hear some of our brothers and sisters give testimony to how the grace of God through Jesus Christ reached them. This has been a tremendous blessing and joy.

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CHILE



Before the service, during Sunday School in the class taught by elder Fernando Herrera, we are instructed in what membership means, its privileges, obligations and responsibilities. This has also been very welcome by some who were ignorant of these truths.

Our brethren come from different parts of the city and some of them travel completely across it from north to south just to be there every Sunday.

Since the majority of the people in Santiago use the public transportation system, getting from place to place is very time-consuming.

Nevertheless, the brethren arrive at service full of joy on Sundays and some of them manage to get there for Prayer Meeting on Wednesdays at 8 p.m. Sunday services start at 9.30 with congregational prayer, 10.30 Sunday school and 11.30 worship service and preaching.

The last Sunday of every month we celebrate the Lord’s Supper, and the first Sunday we have breakfast together.

Here’s what happened at our last breakfast: Jonathan and his wife Daniela, a very young married couple in our congregation, had started taking coffee and sandwiches on Saturdays to the waiting room of the Sotero del Rio Hospital in Puente Alto. The hospital is located near where we meet for our services in Gabriela Park.

In their outreach, Jonathan and Daniela came in contact with some homeless people, whom they invited to our breakfast the next day, Sunday morning.

So Luis, Marcelo, Bernardo, Jorge,

Juan Carlos, Nehemias and one more, whose name I do not recall, came to church that day – seven in all. Of those, only Nehemias and Juan Carlos continued coming.

Juan Carlos is in the hospital now because he has to have his feet amputated. This past Wednesday, Nehemias gave his testimony of the grace of God in his life. He is from elsewhere in Chile, where his wife divorced him, his daughter, a lawyer, legally robbed him of everything he had left, and after the death of his father he gave himself up to drink.

In this condition he moved to Santiago and started his life as a homeless man, drinking to escape reality, begging money for more alcohol, sinking lower and lower. He’d been living on the streets for eight months, then slept in the waiting room of the hospital with the others named above.

This is how Jonathan and Daniela found him.

They gave him coffee and food and invited him to church, where people who had never seen him chose to ignore his dirty, alcoholic condition, hugging and kissing him in Chilean custom with true Christian love.

He felt the love from those strangers, and feeling their love contributed to his contrite heart.

That Sunday God touched his life.

He’s now living in a public shelter and has found a job where his boss is a Christian. New brothers (attending for little more than a month) gave him

See Rupertuses, page 15



RBMS missions around the world

Since our last letter, I am glad to report that things continue on as they have been in the church. We enjoy peace, unity and growth in the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. And as one outside observer noted, we have “a really great group of people.”

I am preaching from the Gospel of Mark in the morning service and from the Sermon on the Mount in the evening service.

For this quarter of Christian Education, we began the series “Dust to Glory: An Overview of the Bible” by R. C. Sproul. And with everything that has happened in the Middle East lately, we have chosen to read together “The Israel of God” by O.P. Robertson for our book study.

We enjoyed having several guest preachers during the summer months. While I was on vacation Kim Doppler from SBC spoke on “Assurance” from Rom. 5:1-6. Brett Shaw, an IRBS intern, expounded Jude 20-25 on the subject “Kept in the Love of God.”

And on the first weekend in August, Jim Renihan taught on the doctrine of God and then preached on Luke 17:5 – “A Humble Prayer” and Psalm 61, “The King’s Prayer

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HOME MISSIONS



and Praise.”

Over the same period of time, we have had a few more visitors. Some come because of the preaching, but stumble over the worship; and others have come because of the worship, but struggle with the doctrine.

However, some have stayed, including a young couple who moved to the area from Green Bay, Wis. and are expecting their first child. And we have also added a young lady to the membership (25).

We also appreciate the other times when we can get together. Once again, our youth enjoyed the retreat sponsored by SBC and the speaker this year was Tom Chantry.

Earlier this month, there was a picnic

where many of our folk met with a few other Reformed Baptists, who have been very supportive of this work, and had a wonderful time together. And on the last Sunday of each month, we have a fellowship lunch which is usually followed by a hymn sing.

Again, please continue to pray for us.

Pray for our family as we seek to manage our time, especially since I have taken on a part-time job; pray that more would be added and committed to the church; pray for someone to assist me in the work; pray for wisdom as we plan for the future.

Again, thank you for your participation in this gospel work!

Rupertuses

From page 14

tools and bought him a drill, which they presented to him at Prayer Meeting.

His boss is trying to get him a house. His older daughter (the lawyer) called him from his home, 900 kilometers south of Santiago, wanting to know about him.

Nehemias is truly a changed man. He is astonished because he has no desire to drink, something that obsessed him before. Tears of joy come to our eyes as we thank our Savior for this great manifestation of His grace.

With little knowledge of his background, I brought to the Prayer Meeting a meditation from Mark 5:21-43, I centering it on the response Jesus gave to a despised woman in her disease.

She, prevented from worshipping, of

having fellowship with others, of enjoying the friendship and love of others due to her condition of permanent uncleanliness, found in Jesus a Savior and put her faith in Him. She found the cure for her 12-year illness, which had immersed her in the darkest misery.

Our brother Nehemias identified himself with this woman and thanked God and the church for so much love, for giving themselves to himself, a stranger.

Now his desire every week is to get to the prayer meetings, and he longs for the Lord’s Day to worship with the brethren of IBCGrace.

We listened to him astonished. We had no idea he was a civil electrical engineer! Now he is a child of God; he was lost and is found with a mission to tell his “misery mates” about God. Glory to God!

I ask your prayers for the Lord’s

continued work in Nehemias’ life: that he’ll be able to enjoy a right relationship with his daughters, that he may have a permanent home, and for God’s ongoing work in those who have graciously helped him. Wonderful grace! What a wonderful Savior we have!

Meanwhile we’d been praying that the Lord would have mercy on Juan Carlos, a friend of Nehemias, and He did! Juan Carlos didn’t lose his feet, and we will soon have him in IBCGrace. Nehemias tells us that the doctors are amazed at Juan Carlos’s recovery and are astonished about Nehemias’s change: an ex-alcoholic, now child of God.

Don’t cease to pray for the elders and the IBCGrace church. We need you to remember us before the throne of grace.

To God alone be all the glory!

– Pastor Obed Rupertus for the saints of IBCGrace in Santiago, Chile



RBMS missions around the world

In this ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations, that the trial of your faith being much more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tested with fire might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ. (1 Peter 1:6-7)

For the last few months the church of Montreal has been going through a difficult patch of hard times. Most of our people live outside of the city. Several factors make the traffic more difficult in Montreal.

Montreal is an island, so access is limited. In addition, a system of government corruption has weakened the infrastructure (roads, highways, interchanges, overpasses, bridges), making it necessary to repair these things within a period of about 20 years. This makes it very difficult.

Over the past eight months, the church of Montreal has lost families. Life in Montreal is not interesting for families. The attendance at the worship services was 50-60 people, and now, it's about 25-30 people. Among those who are still with us, a third live in the south shore of Montreal. So we're wondering whether we should not relocate to the south shore. For us, this is important because a move means the disappearance of the only

We have been active in seeking a building so that we may have a permanent presence in the town but after visiting real estate agents we are no further on. A building is not essential for the church to have, but it does give you an identifying space in the town as well as being able to use it when and how you like.

The radio ministry continues every seven weeks for an hour. We know that people listen to the broadcasts but I have no response thus far. This is one of those times when we trust and obey and leave the result with the Lord.

Alongside this evangelistic effort we continue with the youth clubs each Friday

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CANADA



Reformed Baptist church in the largest city in the province of Quebec. Thank you for your prayers asking the Lord to grant wisdom.

I assumed the responsibility as chaplain at the Faculté de théologie évangélique de Montréal. The Faculté has moved for the same traffic reasons cited for church. I had to resign.

Despite the decrease of the attendance in the recent months, we are encouraged by the maturity of the people who are with us. Six months ago a lady joined us. She found us when she visited a Christian bookstore where a brother in our church works. I held Bible studies with her for several months and she has asked to be baptized. Since her arrival with us, she demonstrates a willingness to receive what God's Word says. Despite difficult situations in her life,

she always receives the Word of God with great joy, reminding me of what Paul said to the Thessalonians (1 Thess.2:13).

Our youngest son has left home. He moved 350 miles north of Montreal which is six hours away. He is studying to become a pilot boat on the St. Lawrence River. His desire is to have a job that will allow his eventual wife to stay at home. We are sad he has gone, but we are happy for his desire to please the Lord.

In August some Christians contacted me and I started a Bible study each Monday evening in Drummondville (1 hour 45 min., 95 miles from my house). I thank the Lord for the thirst of these people and for the joy of teaching them the Word of God.

Thank you for keeping us in prayer before the throne of grace.

The Brennans

<matthewmbrennan@eircom.net>
Matthew, Barbara, Simon and Timothy
Ballingarrane North
Clonmel, Co. Tipperary

IRELAND



night.

The national economy has improved somewhat but we are still adjusting to the loss of people due to employment needs. We are thankful to the Lord for the people

we have, but desire to see more of the community come to faith.

We are thankful for the prayers and support of our ARBCA churches and trust each of you are prospering in the Lord.

Church Planting: The kind of man God uses

By Hank Rast

Geoff Thomas has done a very useful study of the Samaritan revival in Acts 8. In that study he takes a look at “The Man God Used,” Philip the Evangelist.

I want to piggyback on some things Geoff brings out to talk about the kind of man God uses in church-planting, missionary work, pastoring, any kind of labor for the kingdom.

The picture drawn of Philip is that of a gifted man with the graces of the Spirit in abundance.

Philip is described, along with the other “deacons,” as particularly suited for the work in the church as a man “of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom.” (Acts 6:3)

Philip – and the others – has already distinguished himself in the church. The phrase, “full of the Spirit,” has already been used in Acts 4 to describe Peter’s extraordinary, sudden filling for power in witness (Acts 4:8), in fulfillment of Christ’s promise in John 14:26-27 and Luke 21:14-15. And we know, of course, that no one can be a Christian without being united to Christ by the powerful working of the Spirit (John 3:5-8; Rom. 8:1-11).

But here in Philip’s case, the phrase seems to refer to maturity in the faith over time. In other words, the church recognized in him a spiritual maturity that set him apart in some sense from others. We might say that in Philip they saw a man characteristically “putting sin to death” in his personal life (Rom. 8:13); one “presenting (his body) as a living sacrifice” (Rom. 12:1); one “bearing with the failings of the weak and not pleasing himself (Rom. 15:1); “working out his salvation with fear and trembling” (Phil. 2:12); a man “pressing toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 3:14), among other things. In other words, Philip was a man growing in the faith and in that blessed likeness to Jesus Christ. To be “full of the Spirit” is to be full of Christ, the kind of man God uses.

We can also notice in Philip the Christ-likeness of humility. Philip is obviously a gifted man, and his evangelistic giftedness



Philip Baptizing the Ethiopian Eunuch, painted by Albert Cuyp.

is displayed in Samaria and then later in Caesarea, where he has won the title, “Philip the Evangelist” (Acts 21:8).

But here in Acts 6 we see a man willing to be a servant and take “the lower place” in ministry (Luke 14:7-11; 22:24-27). Philip is useful in defusing what could have been a “powder keg” situation in the early church. The Hellenist/Hebrew squabble has all the makings of a “church-split” involving poor, disgruntled widows. His is an opportunity for “gritty” ministry, requiring a measure of patience, wisdom, and humility. It is the kind of ministry the Lord was constantly calling his disciples to, particularly so in the last night before the cross, when he stooped to wash the disciples’ feet (John 13).

We can also note Philip’s humble obedience in his ministry to the Ethiopian eunuch. Philip is in the midst of a revival in Samaria, a ministry that is growing and fruitful, when the Lord calls him, through the angel, to “rise and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza” (Acts 8:26). We might have questioned those directions, thinking the place of fruitfulness is the best place to stay. “Why not keep the work going here?” we

might have said.

But Philip immediately, without question, “rose and went” (v. 27). Humility is, as one has said, an “emptying grace.” It makes no demands, does not seek the highest place, but rather is content to fill a low place in the kingdom, awaiting the Master’s call to any place of service.

Finally, we might note Philip’s faithful perseverance in the ministry. After the revival in Samaria and the one-person ministry to the Ethiopian eunuch, Philip pretty much vanishes from the pages of Scripture. But with the testimony we do have, we can surmise a faithful persevering ministry. He ministers along the coast until he comes to Caesarea (8:40) and there seems to settle down, all the while earning that title referred to above. He also raises a family, a troop of believing daughters, themselves useful in the kingdom of the Savior.

We live in entrepreneurial, consumer-driven, self-seeking days. And sometimes that mentality can seep into the church.

As those aspiring to do “great things” in the kingdom of God, some can put

See God’s man, page 18

Nigeria

From page 1

of the Roman Empire and the rise of the papacy in the seminary.

In the capitol city of Abuja, there is a group of 10 believers who meet twice weekly, once for prayer, and then on Sundays for Bible study and worship. Currently, they are listening to the sermons from Ephesus Church and working with SGBC of Lagos to take the next step in becoming a church plant.

Other than the elders of SGBC, almost all of these believers are in their 20s and 30s, many with young families. We have been able to encourage them, teach them and help guide them in establishing biblical practices as they meet together and, Lord willing, move toward church planting. I have been able to meet the majority of these brothers and sisters on social media platforms prior to meeting them in person, so I thank God for the global reach of these resources.

After two weeks of travel to Nigeria's

God's man

From page 17

themselves forward, eager to showcase their gifts. But Philip shows us, by the Lord's grace, another way. He was willing to take the lower place and simply serve. "What will you have me to do?" was his mindset. That has been true of many of Christ's choicest servants down through the years who had to wait in order to prove themselves: Moses, Joseph, Paul, Barnabas.

That humble, obedient, persevering spirit is the character of Christ, who "though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross (Phil. 2:6-8).

That is the kind of man God uses.

Hank Rast pastors at Heritage Church in Fayetteville, Ga.



Nicholas Kenicott teaches at the seminar in Egbe.

largest and most prosperous cities, Pastor John Miller and two members of Ephesus Church arrived and met up with me in Abuja to make our way to the village of Egbe, where we have focused our mission efforts over the last five years.

As opposed to the large cities in Nigeria, Egbe is small and poor. One year after the official start of the Institute of Pastoral and

Theological Training (IPTT) in Egbe, we were anxious to see the students and hear what they have learned.

Truth be told, I didn't know what to expect. I have read their papers, answered their questions, and spoken with each of them throughout the year, but would they be able to accurately articulate the things they had learned? Were they agreeing with what they were hearing and reading? Were they getting it at all?

Perhaps these are the concerns of any teacher, but we've known from the start that the high ground in our battle was taken many years ago by the false teaching of the Word of Faith movement, so we were moving uphill in rather hostile territory. So one might imagine our surprise during our first meeting with the students, only hours after arriving in town.

I asked the men, "What questions do you have from all you've learned thus far?" Collectively the men looked to the eldest student who replied, "Sir, we are concerned that we now know that we have spent our entire lives worshipping God wrongly. We are so thankful to be changed, we have counted the cost, and we want to do whatever it takes to make it right."

Galyons

From page 7

helping military members and their families bear spiritual and emotional burdens, I am encouraged knowing that ARBCA congregations are praying for my family and me on a constant basis.

Belonging to a confessional association in which all members affirm the doctrines of grace without question, and labor in unity for the sake of our Lord and advancing His gospel, puts my mind at incredible ease.

It is tremendously uplifting to partner with those who remain steadfast to our Lord and His Word in the midst of a crooked culture. I thank you, and praise God for our partnership.

See **Nigeria**, page 19

Nigeria

From page 18

We spent the next three hours discussing biblical worship, the regulative principle, and how to begin teaching in their churches all they've learned so they could begin to turn the ship. Needless to say, we entered the week of teaching excited and hopeful – perhaps the last year of training was really making a difference!

Pastor John Miller delivered 16 hours of lectures on Old Testament Biblical Theology, and our Nigerian friend from Port Harcourt, Olamide Bode Falase, did 16 hours on Hermeneutics.

Time and time again the students made comments like, "We've never been taught how to study the Bible before." Surprisingly, some of these men were previously educated in the seminaries of the largest denomination in West Africa. I was able to spend the week meeting with each man individually, and each expressed his thankfulness for the training and the resources that have been provided thus far.

More importantly, every student indicated a growing desire to make significant changes in their preaching, their teaching, the counseling, and their ecclesiology. One man even told me, "It's likely I will be removed from my church, but I want to give it a try. I can't go on knowing what's biblical and not doing it."

More than anything, it appears that these men are forging solid convictions that may one day lead to true reformation in a land of false teaching and shallow sentimentalism.

We were thankful this year to be able to provide our students with mobile tablets. In the past we traveled with enough books and lecture notes for an entire year's worth of courses, equaling close to 200 pounds. Now, all of their materials are contained on tablets designed by a Nigerian who is a member of Sovereign Grace Bible Church in Lagos.

They have all of the books, lectures, and notes for eight classes to be completed by October 2015 on a single tablet. We were able to purchase the tablets for the students because of a generous donation from a sister ARBCA church, and all of the



John Miller teaches on the Old Testament.

class materials on the tablets were funded through the special project monies we received through ARBCA in 2013.

We hope to work closely with the tablet designer and manufacturer to develop a mobile seminary that can be used anywhere in the world on local cellphone networks, so the students at IPTT will be a wonderful test group to provide us with feedback on the device and its accompanying applications.

At the end of our time in Egbe, IPTT hosted a community-wide Bible conference where we – Pastor John Miller, Olamide Falase, and I – each preached on several of the parables of Jesus. Providentially, there were two large funerals the day of our conference, so attendance was very low; however, we trust the Lord's wisdom and the power of His Word to do as He sees fit in the hearts of those who were present.

Nigeria still has a very strong tribal influence, and small villages continue to take tradition very seriously. During our stay in Egbe, the new king of the village was installed, bringing a complete halt to all other activities.

We were blessed to receive an extensive lesson in the history of the village and to have a firmer grasp on its inner-workings, making political rivalries and factions in the United States look like playground banter!

Christianity was first introduced to Egbe in 1908 through a Canadian missionary named Tommy Titcombe with the Sudan Interior Mission (SIM, AKA Serving in Mission). The vast majority of the citizens of Egbe – like the majority of southern Nigerians – claim to be Christian as a result of these early missionary efforts. No doubt, there are vestiges of biblical Christianity throughout the land; however, the dominance of the Word of Faith heresy

makes one skeptical of any initial claims to Christianity.

While Tommy Titcombe is highly revered, much of what he taught has been lost. The need for theological training in Egbe – and throughout Nigeria – continues to be great, and we are thankful that the Lord has given us the opportunity to play a small role in this massive work.

Lord willing, in 2016 the first group of students from IPTT will graduate and we will be prepared to begin with a new group of students, increasing the class size to 15 pupils. We hope to eventually run three groups of students at a time, all graduating in successive years.

However, the success and growing interest of IPTT in Egbe hasn't been without its challenges.

The financial burden grows increasingly larger each year, but thankfully several Nigerians in the larger cities have learned about our work and have provided significant financial support alongside our churches.

Finding space to meet for class and to provide students with a substantial library has also proved difficult, prompting us to consider the possibility of building a stand-alone facility in the future. We have completed initial cost estimates and believe having our own facility will eventually lead to a more sustainable, cost-effective solution to many of our current difficulties and expenses.

A large library has been gifted to IPTT from one of our sister ARBCA churches, and through a relationship we've developed over the years we were able to ship the library to Egbe via free space in a cargo container. The books are there, but the space to shelve and use them isn't.

Of course, we would also love to see a local church planted in the area, however we are still waiting to see if any of the men we are training will be suitable candidates for a church plant in the next few years. We have also asked SGBC to consider any of their current members or seminary students for church planting efforts in Egbe.

Other plans include a documentary on the Word of Faith movement in Nigeria. Of the 10 wealthiest pastors in the world,

See **Nigeria**, page 20

Nigeria

From page 19

half of them are in Nigeria. Most people will recognize that there is something inherently unjust about a supposed “Man of God” being worth \$125 million in a country whose average citizen lives on less than \$2 per day.

Yet sadly, the biggest names in Nigeria are nothing short of demigods to the people, all modeled after the heretics in America.

We have made contact with a Christian documentarian who is very interested in our project and believe we can produce an important contribution to missiology in West Africa. This year we began in earnest collecting initial video for the beginnings of the documentary work.

Only God knows the final outcome of all our efforts. We plan, we work, we water, but God alone can give the increase. So far, He has shown us great favor and has blessed our efforts in Nigeria.



Students pay close attention during a class.

I pray regularly that we will see beauty arise from the ashes. I hope you will join Ephesus Church in praying for Nigeria as well, for the sake of the gospel and the great

renown of our God and King, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Nicholas Kennicott pastors at Ephesus Church in Rincon, Ga.

Commentary

From page 3

own heart and mission for the world!

Jesus was the one who left his country and his father’s house, and came into this world and walked by faith, and lived the life that we couldn’t live, and took Abraham’s son Isaac’s place, and your place and my place on the cross and became the blessing of all the nations – the seed of Abraham in whom all the nations of the earth would be blessed. That’s the climax of the drama.

“He left his Father’s throne above (so

free, so infinite his grace),

Humbled himself (so great his love) and
bled for Adam’s helpless race.

Amazing love, how can it be

That thou, my God, shouldst die for
me?”

Peter said in Acts 3:25-26, “You are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant that God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, ‘In your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed.’ God, having raised up his servant Jesus, sent him to you, to bless you by turning every one of you from your wickedness.” Jesus was the real blessing of all the world.

Now his mission continues through the church. Similarly, Jesus calls us to “Leave your nets and follow me. Become part of My story. Become fishers of men. Leave family and friends and houses and lands for My sake and for the gospel. Go and make disciples of all nations.”

That is the drama and adventure of the Bible. That is God’s call to a life of pilgrimage, a life of faith, and a life of purpose – wherever we are and wherever He will lead.

– Matt Foreman pastors at Faith Reformed Baptist Church in Media, Pa.

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