

The **REVIEW**

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From the Pen of the Editor

On Being Marginalized

by Dave Reinhardt

That there are real pressures and stresses in the world today is well attested. That these things are part of the experience of Christians is also undeniable. The spirit of the age leans heavily on people with values, especially biblical ones.

At one end of the spectrum there is what seems to be the growing idea that people should not commit themselves to things like marriage or civic responsibilities or as is especially close to many of us, local churches. They simply want to experience good things without all the encumbrances of commitment and relationships. Some of our technology these days may contribute to this mindset. People can watch church services and fellowship sessions on their television sets and computer screens; they can listen to sermons and workshops on tapes, CD's, and mp3 players. And they often can check things out without leaving home through materials available on the internet. So why should they be seriously bothered with other people, except perhaps to secure the commodity that enables them to remain only distantly connected, money?

All of us have undoubtedly developed biblical responses to this way of thinking. We will not address them here today for there is another issue that flows out of the spirit of our age that is even more problematic. Our technology makes available a glut of data to the public. This quantity of information, though, is not necessarily an ally of truth. Often it supplants truth. Collections of data, spectrums of information, and interpretations *ad nauseum* have taken the high ground that truth once occupied in the minds of many around us. Rather than discerning truth, these are looking for another take, another opinion. The Bible is



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just another component in the scope of materials available to them, no more nor less. Manipulating information to one's advantage is a way of life as opposed to submitting to the truth. Manipulating the truth, massaging it, shading it, spinning it, distorting it, denying it, using it for one's own ends is in vogue. Truth has become a negotiable commodity, a leveraging tool, a detail of life.

Some in our fundamental Baptist churches have been drinking at this stream. They want our churches to be safe deposit boxes of the truth. They also want to be entertained, they want a soft dogmatism, a more or less casual Christianity. To be being upbeat, being pleasant, being unperturbed by sin, at least not too much so, to be above the fray has become the ideal for many leaders in our generation. Recognizing personality defects and an undue obtuseness among a few fundamentalists in the past, they make style, sometimes even softness, the primary focus for living and ministry. Ideals like raising a standard, contending for the faith, and standing true are subverted by lesser themes like projecting an image, having an impact, identifying and developing a niche in the larger community.

A word which has become quite popular in this culture is *marginalize*. To be marginalized is to be outside of the mainstream, to be out of the loop, to be ineffective. Often people use the term to describe or deride other individuals and groups. On occasion individuals even decry their own group's direction or potential with the term *marginalized*. More than a year ago, the National Religious Broadcasters were distressed when their new president, Wayne Pedersen, indicated in a newspaper that he did not want the group "associated with the far Christian right and marginalized." [http://www.christiantimes.com/Articles/Articles%20Mar02/Art_Mar02_01.html]. The reaction of some in the NRB was so intense that the board asked Pedersen to resign his position. He did. A year later, though Pedersen had been defeated by the very people that he felt might marginalize the NRB and a new leader, Frank Wright, is in place, the group still seems to have marginalization -- more particularly, avoid-

ing it -- as a priority. Wendy Griffith of *Christian World News* in February of this year quotes a woman at the NRB meeting who said, "We're kind of like 'old fogies', somewhat, in the broadcasting business, we need to come together on that, we need to 'freshen it up', 'liven it up', so we're reaching the lost" [<http://cbn.org/CBNNews/CWN/021403nrb.asp>].

There is a problem here. The NRB's position relative to the rest of the broadcasting business is the key issue for the group's future direction to this woman. Most of us, though, are troubled by contemporary religious stations, and it is not that they are too old fashioned. To the contrary, they are too worldly, too broad, too shallow. If they are viewing their present format as frumpy, what can we look forward to tomorrow? They clearly operate by a different standard.

This different standard permeates life around us. We and our churches are being pressured to operate by a purpose-driven mentality. Faithfulness and submission to a sovereign God seem often to be little details in such a mentality. Instead success, measured by some stated goals, is at center stage. Even when these goals flow out of the Scripture, the methodology and mindset for achieving them is regularly at odds with the Word of God. Hence, so many purpose-driven churches treat music as amoral and separation as self-defeating. Everything to them, even the Bible, is relative to the goals they have developed. Their end justifies their means. Even biblical ends call for biblical means for their accomplishment.

Certainly the Bible does teach that we as Christians are to be in the world and not of it (John 17:6-16). And I Corinthians 9:22 indicates that we are to stretch ourselves to win people to Christ. There is no room for smugness nor backwardness in living for Christ. We are to be bold, compassionate, and passionate in bringing people to our Lord and Savior. At the same time we must acknowledge that the way of Christ is narrow, especially when compared to the world's way (Matthew 7:13-14), and exclusive (John 14:6). We are also to bear Christ's reproach "outside the camp" (Hebrews 13:11-13), and to

be "the salt of the earth" (Matthew 5:13). Still more, we are not to desire to be wealthy (I Timothy 6:9), nor pursue a way of life that feeds our ego (Romans 12:16).

Not only is this pattern relevant for individuals, but also for churches and ministries. Fortune 500 companies and corresponding business models do not necessarily correspond to God's will for His people and work. Affluence can be an indicator of something less than vigorous commitment to the Word of God. The Roman Catholic church as well as the Mormon church certainly testify to this disconnect. Affirming this understanding, of course, is not a justification for bad stewardship or laziness on the part of fundamental Baptists. Rather, such an affirmation gives definition to our perspective and priorities.

More than twenty years ago Jerry Falwell referred to Bible-believing, separatist Christians as "the lunatic fringe" in his book, *The Fundamentalist Phenomenon*. He was heading up the Moral Majority, a group that was endeavoring to link fundamentalists and evangelicals to turn America back to God, and he seemed to perceive separation as standing in the way of this stated goal. He traded sound biblical conviction for what may have appeared to him as the higher good. Over the years he made many more trade offs (e.g. heading up the charismatic PTL network for a time, having Teddy Kennedy in to speak to the students of Liberty University, speaking himself at at least one conference sponsored by groups identified with Sun Myung Moon).

As Falwell has moved further away from theological, separatist, fundamentalist moorings over the years, he yet attentively maintains a politically conservative identity. He has courted the press offering his take on happenings and issues. And the press seems to look for his opinions on a range of matters in our world. Perhaps for this reason he seems on occasion to find it hard to follow the Lord's injunction in Matthew 7:6 not to throw "pearls before swine." Certainly we are to give an answer to people who ask us about the hope we have, but "meekness and fear" are to characterize our approach

(I Peter 3:15). Neither silliness nor toying with the truth is where we are to be.

Months ago there was a broohah over what kind of car Jesus would drive. On CNN, Falwell chose to berate some of his evangelical brethren who were saying that our Savior would drive a fuel-efficient model. These people truly were strange to me as a fundamentalist too -- ah, maybe they are the other side of the "lunatic fringe," the evangelical radicals in Falwell's parlance back in 1981. I presently drive a Ford Explorer; Falwell has two Suburbans. Perhaps because I used to drive a VW Beetle though, I am not so sure that Falwell's closing -- "I urge everyone to go out and buy an SUV today" -- was fitting. Being a fundamentalist-lunatic-fringe kind of a guy, I could only smile when a fellow on the internet who has a different point of view on cars and a whole lot of other things noted that "the most likely explanation [for urging people to buy an SUV today] is that Falwell is a boob" [<http://www.amarillonet.com/ubb/Forum1/HTML/002065-4.html>].

Being marginalized while honestly endeavoring to obey the truth, the Lord Jesus, is not so bad after all. Being marginalized while politically endeavoring to shape truth seems a whole lot more problematic. Especially later.



*June 24-26, 2003 in Norwich,
Connecticut – Another Great IBFNA
Bible Conference – You're Coming,
Right? Of Course!*

THE MODERATOR

That "Old Time Religion?"

by Jeff Bailey

At the time of this writing, The United States is at war in the Middle East. The war is being waged before our eyes on cable television and the nation is, for the most part, rallying around the troops and the Commander-in-Chief. It is fitting that this should be the case, but it is with a certain amount of fascination that I observe the vigor of the vitriol that has been leveled at President Bush. I am convinced that much of the harsh invective directed toward him is a direct result of his unabashed proclamation of his faith and its effect on his life. There is nothing that makes those who reject God grind their teeth in frustration more than seeing a man of faith exercise integrity and leadership and enjoy the approval of a significant majority of the nation in so doing. We all must confess to a certain comfort and encouragement in the openness and sincerity of the President when he speaks of prayer, his love of Scripture and the numerous Bible Studies that are going on in the offices of the real West Wing (as opposed to the useless Martin Sheen claptrap on the television program of the same name.). Regardless of our fondness for the President, I believe a few words of caution are in order.

The noted church historian, D. G. Hart has recently produced a book entitled *That Old Time Religion in Modern America*. As a former professor at Wheaton College, Hart is no friend of fundamentalism, and he is even said to be less than enthusiastic about evangelicalism, but his conclusions are worth considering. Hart traces the journey of evangelicalism from concern with personal holiness, which he calls pietism, to concern with reforming society itself. Hart's view is that by failing to distinguish between the religious and the nonreligious (the sacred and the

secular, the temporal and eternal), evangelicals put too much of their energy into trying to make America into the Kingdom of God and too little into the church. Terry Eastland, an editor at the *Weekly Standard*, writing in the *Wall Street Journal* on January 14, 2003, in review of Hart's tome, states that Hart believes that "evangelicals are learning that the politics and culture of the United States today are not so readily turned to Christian ends, whether they take the next step and make the church the locus of their energies is the question raised by this well-informed, tightly written, and provocative book."

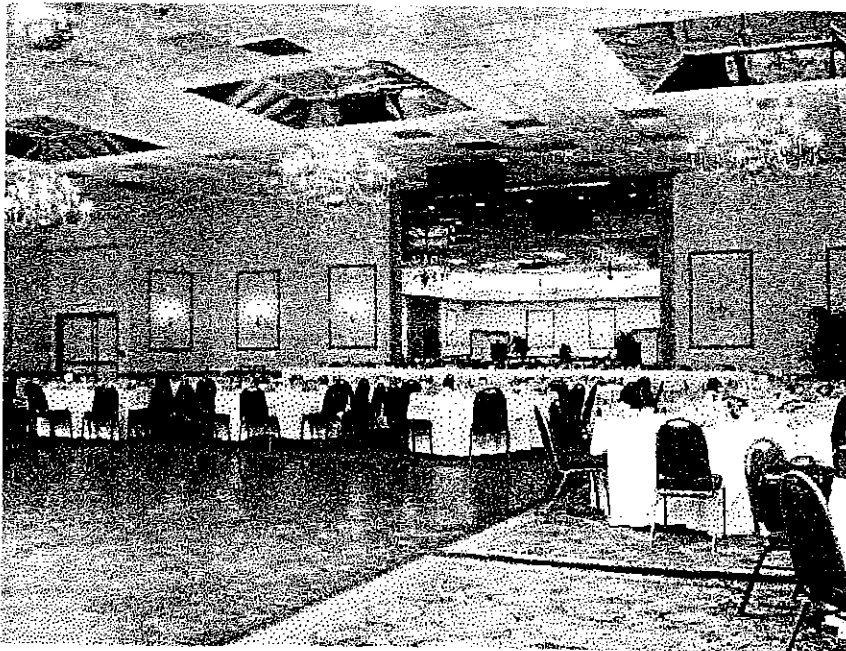
The question is well-worth raising, regardless of the source that raises it. It disturbs me to see that some Christian leaders are far more concerned with building political clout than advancing the church. I do not see this to be nearly as prevalent in our circles, but it is a danger nonetheless. We appreciate our President and we are thankful that we have a born-again man serving our nation at a time such as this. We cannot help but be refreshed by genuine, sincere faith as opposed to the religious opportunism of the previous administration, but at the same time it is imperative that we understand that Air Force One is not the Chariot of the Lord, no matter who is on board. Perhaps it is the fact that I minister in a State where Ted Kennedy and Barney Frank are re-elected by overwhelming margins that makes me a bit apprehensive when I place my political views on display. I do not fear putting my doctrinal and moral beliefs on public display, but I do not feel comfortable plac-



ing a higher priority on the confirmation of Miguel Estrada than on the propagation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. If fighting for the former hinders the effectiveness of the latter, then I have no problem making that choice. Jesus himself, said that His Kingdom is not of this world. We must mind our calling and focus our energy on fulfilling the Great Commission.

It is clear to me that most of the people in the fundamentalist and Bible-believing evangelical communities would agree with every statement I have made to this point. The affirmation of this principle does not detract from clear Biblical teaching regarding being "Salt and Light" in our communities. In the prelude to the current war, it disturbed me greatly that the men and women clergy of the mainline denominations, in taking their own stand presumed to allow the community as a whole to form the impression that the mainline liberal position was the position of all religious bodies. It was inevitable that in countering this false impression put forward by these "blind leaders of the blind", we would take a political position. I do not believe that this is evil; to the contrary, to do anything less was a dereliction of our own duty and fidelity to the Word of God.

The sum of the matter is this. We must continue to stand on the moral issues of the day. We must continue to fight for the right to life of the unborn. We must continue to use our influence in relationship to our societal institutions to ensure that our community operates in a manner consistent with biblical ideals. We must pray for the salvation of those who are currently enemies of the Gospel. We must pray for wisdom for all of our elected officials regardless of party or ideology. Even those who are opposed to the precepts of Scripture still need to see us as godly ladies and gentlemen whose speech is seasoned with grace and whose passion for God leads to a sincere compassion toward all men. We should desire to see the alleviation of human suffering and do our part as citizens to minister in practical ways so that "they will see our good works and glorify our Father in heaven". We must not be afraid to offer a cup of cold water to the thirsty or food to the man who is hungry. In so doing, we silence the critics on the left and the right, and we demonstrate our concern for the people among whom we live no matter what their political persuasion. By putting our energy into the locus of the church, we can effect eternal change that surpasses the temporal and cyclical political victories with which we too often preoccupy ourselves.



One of Our Meeting Rooms on June 24-26 for Our IBFNA Family Bible Conference. Have You Made Your Reservation Yet?

PERSPECTIVES

Purge Out Or Come Out?

by Ralph Colas

More than six hundred "conservatives" from mainline Protestant churches met in Indianapolis, Indiana, last Fall to launch a counter-assault on what they say are their liberal-leaning denominations.

"The Holy Spirit has not abandoned our churches, neither will we," a group of eighteen theologians wrote in a joint "Letter to Confessing Christians," which was released at the meeting of the Association for Church Renewal(ACR).

For the very first time, the leaders of some thirty evangelical "renewal movements" from eight mainline denominations met together to plot strategy and outline reasons why conservatives should not leave their churches.

"Churches need faithful confessors for one essential reason: a church that is unable to confess its faith is a lame and withered church," said the letter which was produced by Dr. Thomas Oden, a United Methodist theologian from Drew University. "The church needs faithful witnesses in order to be the church of Jesus Christ."

Conference participants came from the Presbyterian Church (USA), United Methodist Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, United Church of Christ, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Episcopal Church, American Baptist Churches USA and the United Church of Canada. (All of those denominations are a part of the apostate World Council of Churches!)

These evangelicals say their denominations

have abandoned Scripture by embracing homosexuality, an any-thing-goes theology and liberal causes like abortion as well as opposition to war with Iraq. However, these "conservatives" wonder if they should attempt a political takeover through legislation and election or try a coexistence with the progressives (liberals) and still have their voices heard.

Experts do not predict a takeover like the one executed by conservatives in the Southern Baptist Convention in the late 1970s. (Those SBC leaders may be conservatives, but they are not Fundamentalists or they would have pulled out of the Southern Baptist Convention). Nancy Ammerman, a sociologist at Hartford (Conn.) Seminary said, "I cannot even imagine any of these denominations completely dominated by a conservative agenda."

One very important part of the letter by these so-called evangelicals in liberal churches is that they declare, "It is unnecessary" for them to leave. "Ultimately the reason we cannot and must not leave our denominations is that the gospel can still be freely proclaimed in them and the sacraments administered without hindrance.



PERSPECTIVES

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Even though 'other gospels' are also heard in our midst."

The apostle Paul wrote to the believers in Galatia, "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed."(Gal 1:8)

Years ago a great Baptist leader who awaits us in glory, Dr. Paul R. Jackson, taught our class in Seminary that "First you try to 'purge out' (I Cor 5:7) but if you cannot do that, then you 'come out' "(II Cor 6:17).

In 1998 at the World Council of Churches Fiftieth Anniversary meeting in Harare, Zimbabwe, Africa, Diane Knippers, who is the President of the Institute for Religion and Democracy, at a press conference asked me what was the difference between her group as evangelicals and the ACCC. My reply underlined that after we attempted to "purge out" the liberalism, we had "come out" as God's Word demanded, while they were staying in! It is interesting that Diane Knippers is one of the mainline speakers at the 2003 National Association of Evangelicals Convention March 6-7, 2003, in Eden Prairie, Minn.

SHEPHERD'S STAFF

The Dangers of Denominationalism


by Clay Nuttall

Benefits Of Fellowship

This discussion is not about isolationism. God created us with the need for fellowship. Fellowship is an important interaction found in the family, the church and community. Christian servants who ignore the counsel and encouragement of others make a serious mistake.

The same is true for the local church. History gives us a sad and clear commentary on those churches which saw themselves as the only right ones left. Interchurch fellowship can be beneficial. It can also be tragic.

The question is not about isolation. It is about the choices we make in fellowship. It would be folly to think a church could enter fellowship without some limitation. One of the great tragedies of our day is found in those churches which create illicit relationships.



SHEPHERD'S STAFF
is written by Dr. Clay Nuttall. Shepherd's Basic Care is a ministry of information and encouragement to pastors, missionaries, and churches. Write for information to shepherdstaff@juno.com.

Defining Denominations

There is no simple definition for the concept of denomination. The Baptist or Methodist denomination is a misnomer. There are in fact many denominations within all of these broad

designations. My thoughts here however are in the range of groups that would affect my readers directly. Not all of these are called conventions. These groups of churches are more often called, fellowships or associations. I am sure that many would protest that their group is not a denomination and that issue is the heart of our consideration.

We have learned historically that every church group has become a denomination or is on its way. Even those groups open to, or made up of, individual membership fall into this trap. Some of these groups are controlled by an educational institution or agency, others by a powerful individual or small group. I would go so far as to say that no group can escape the syndrome.

A Deadly Direction

The natural fellowship in these groups may be healthy. The growing control of local churches and members is not. In older denominations, the control is more overt and egregious. There seems to be a sense of pride about "lording it over" the churches. The real danger is in those associations and fellowships that think they are immune to such misdirection. It is true that their power is more subtle and in the minds of the majority of the members that it does not exist.

Then some upstart comes along and challenges the status quo. The response to such a challenge is all the proof needed to affirm the existence of such control. Let me illustrate how this works. When a member in one of these denominations points out some shade of theological error in the group, the response is not a discussion about the actual doctrine but an attack on the person who has dared to speak up. One of these just appeared in print. A member suggested that a doctrinal error has begun to grow in his own fellowship. The response was to impugn his character and call him a gossip. Not one word was written therein to affirm that such doctrinal error was not in existence.

A Personal Point Of View

I spent most of my life in one of those denominations. My youth, my ministry, and my

participation in denominational leadership was surrounded by the problems outlined here. As a young person I was honestly unaware of the control. In early ministry I bought the party line that such accusations were false. To my own shame, even when I became aware of it, I joined others in denying that such control existed. There came a day when the conviction of God's Spirit overcame my pride and fear.

Even with the decision and determination settled, I was not ready for the exercise of the raw denominational control that followed. The name calling, ridicule, personal attacks, recrimination and blacklisting were beyond my belief. Long time and deep friendships disappeared overnight, even though I continued to offer my love and friendship.

Now that many years have passed the level of control is clearer than ever before. It was not an easy decision to challenge the doctrinal downgrade in that denomination, but I have no regrets.

The sad result of denominational control is that it destroys churches. They become so locked into the organization that no church escapes in the long run. Associations and fellowship that were formed in reaction to doctrinal heresy in a main line denomination in due time return to their roots. Two of the churches I pastored have fallen back to their liberal roots in a clear fulfillment of this pattern. Like others locked into denominational control, I would have said this could not happen, but it has. To deny it would be an evidence of that very control.

Why Don't People Exit?

In the main line denominations, part of the control was retirement and security. Pride and fear are part of their sin as well. The formal issues may not be so apparent in evangelical and fundamental denominations. Pride, fear, and security, however, are very real in these. One would think that people would admit to the arrogance in the denominations described here. What will happen is that the challenges in this journal will be viewed as arrogant. To those with battle scars, it will be proof that the

errors do exist.

Fellowship In Safety

Is there anyway to experience inter-church fellowship with safety? Yes there is. This however must begin by admitting that there is no way any group will remain doctrinally pure over a long period of time. To maintain their control, they will have to absorb those who hold error. These often are the popular speakers and writers. This same pattern can be observed in all the men who have assumed the lead in the new theological fads such as Progressive Dispensationalism and the Open View of God.

The second safety net would be agreement to challenge doctrinal error even in the smallest form. This needs to be done with honesty, openness, and patience. Having done that without viable progress, one must be ready to walk away, no matter what the repercussions might be.

Finally it would be best never to become part of any group that you cannot leave in a matter of minutes. If it takes years or months of struggle in a church to leave a group, you are locked into denominational error that will drag you back to liberal roots.

Let us enjoy our fellowship but guard the liberty we have to leave when the group shows accommodation to error. This same advice applies to the individual member of a church. To leave over

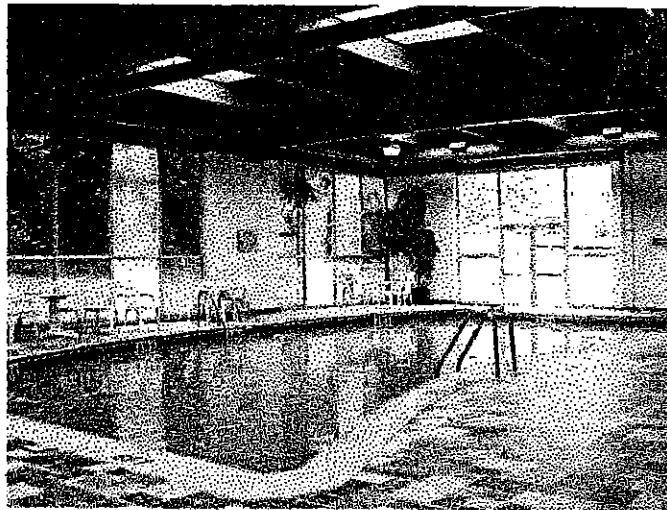


personal disagreement may be soul liberty. Not to leave when doctrinal error appears, is disobedience. Our responsibility is to know the difference. In both cases one should be gracious in his departure. A fleshly spirit is as evil as doctrinal error and may actually be more damaging.

One More Thing

Beware of people who use terms like peripheral, petty, and secondary doctrine. While some doctrines are central to the faith, all doctrines are important to the faith. To say that baptism by immersion or the time of Christ's return is unimportant is to confess a serious error about the Bible as a whole. What people believe about an individual doctrine is not as important as to how they came to that conclusion. If their hermeneutic is erroneous you can be sure they have many more errors in their belief system. This is the real issue.

A simplistic approach to Scripture is common among denominational leaders. The problem is that they may know a lot "about" the Bible, but that is not the same thing as knowing "the" Bible. This is a major problem in the average local church as well. Very few people know the Bible. They only know about the Bible. That is a significant change from fifty years ago when Bible content ruled in preaching and teaching. In the present climate, there is hardly enough content in preaching to fill a thimble. It is more about form than substance.



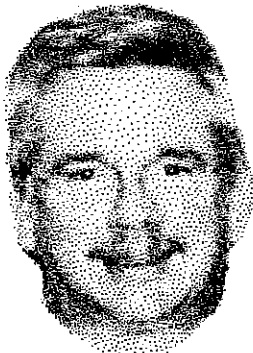
MISSIONS MATTERS

The Face of 21st Century Missions: India

by Daniel R. Brown

During March of 2003 I was able to travel with my wife, Mary Jo, to India having accepted the invitation of Dr. Sambhu De to speak at the graduation service of Faith Baptist Bible College and Seminary (FBBC & S) in Cochin (Kochi), Kerala. Kerala is an Indian state located in the far south of India. Dr. De serves as a missionary with Baptist World Mission in Decatur, Alabama, and is the founder and president of FBBC & S, the school that held its third graduation ceremony: it has been in existence only six years. The School has a board of eight Indian men from the area and surrounding states. Fourteen of the 185-member student body graduated this year, eight from the college and six from the seminary.

Dr. De has an unusual background and credentials. Born in Tripura, India, into a Bengali family, he was saved out of Hinduism under the ministry of Dr. Gene Burrows and Rev. Jim Garlow in Assam, India, both missionaries under Baptist Mid-Missions. He has been trained in America, receiving his Th.D. from Central Baptist Seminary in Minneapolis, Minnesota. In addition, Dr. De has served as the president of the NE India Baptist Bible College in Assam, India. I have known Dr. De for seven years as a godly man of the highest character and someone whose ministry has been blessed greatly by God.



India shrouds itself in mystery to the western mind. It is truly difficult to understand the multiple facets of this complex

society. First, the diversity of the Indian people defies description. Americans understand diversity because of immigration, especially in our area near New York City. But the extreme range within India related to language, culture and ethnicity never failed to amaze us while we were there.

Second, the Indian economy functions so far beneath the level of the USA that we were amazed at how people survive. We were in Kerala, a state with a one hundred percent literacy rate and relatively low unemployment. Tradesmen earn about three dollars a day, and most workers bring home much less. The Indian economy has no concept of "part-time" employment, making work for students an impossibility. Yet in this land of such great poverty people love gold, and only the twenty-two karat variety will suffice for them. Gold stores are more abundant than the ever present "holy cows."

Third, in this Hindu land, Christianity of any kind comprises an extremely small minority of people, though Kerala has the highest percentage of Christians among the states. Even so, large, new Catholic churches can be seen everywhere in Cochin along with Muslim mosques and the ever present cults. Independent Baptist churches are very rare, although three self-supporting churches have been planted outside Cochin in area villages, largely through the ministry of Matthew Thomas and his associates with Baptist World Mission. In addition, twenty other villages are in some stage of church organization and another ninety Bible studies are headed towards organization as the Lord blesses.

Finally, there is an Indian mindset that plans the large picture but often leaves the details to be worked out on the run. While the relaxed attitude is often refreshing after life in New Jersey, it was interesting to watch plans unfold, at times with spontaneity and often with the phrase from the Indians, "No problem."

The FBBC & S represents a diverse cross-section of India. Students come from thirteen different Indian states and speak a total of thirty-four different languages. Most attend the school despite great personal hardship from either family or finances. Thirty percent of the students are first-generation Christians, most being saved out of Hindu families, which unfortunately means they are often disowned and unable to return home under any condition. All of the instruction at the college takes place in English, which is the single common language. Many incoming students do not know English, so they arrive one month prior to the school year in order to start English classes. Those students struggle through the first year, understanding little for several months.

The Hindu pressure and danger is constant although felt more acutely at the school than in the churches. The government is dominated by those who are entrenched religiously as well as politically, typically people of the highest (and smallest) caste who have the most to lose if Hindu control is lessened. The school underwent a threat by a militant Hindu group this year but was preserved through God's providential hand. As a result the school completed and raised the concrete wall surrounding the entire campus as well as instituting a regular rotation of students to guard the gate.

One of the greatest blessings we received was observing the dedication of the believers in both the college and churches. Once a decision is made for Christ, a new believer is often cut off from family and even society. Many who accept Christ find themselves without a home or family and are often ostracized by their village. A number of the students cannot return home

because if they did, their Hindu families would never allow them to return to school. To cite one example, a Hindu family rejected one of this year's college graduates after he converted from Hinduism in 1998. This young man, Data Ram, has not seen his family since his conversion. His Hindu family has been forced to flee from India to Nepal because of Data's conversion. To this day, he does not know the whereabouts of his relatives in Nepal. Yet upon graduation, he left to go to Nepal to start a church-planting ministry with two other graduates without any financial support or backing from any mission agency. (Mission agencies do not exist in India.) These stories can be multiplied many times over. Their dedication puts many American believers to shame.

We loved our trip to India. We enjoyed the food and especially the way Molly De cooked for us. We miss the fresh fruit after every meal: mangos, papayas and pineapple. We also miss the thrill of Indian roads and whole lot of honking. New Jersey roads look quite tame to us after two weeks in Cochin. Most of all, we miss the wonderful believers in India who often give up so much to become Christians. Their devotion to Christ puts believers in America to shame. Persecution has always produced a purer Church.

What should believers in America do? India is a mission field that is closed to traditional missionaries and traditional mission practices. Yet missions do exist in India, and we must encourage those believers wherever we can. First of all, pray for India, the Des, the school, the students, and the churches. Then, give. Certainly Dr. De and FBBC & S are worthy of our best resources, energies, and love. Dr. De will be returning to the USA in August of 2003. He is looking to report to some of his churches but also to enlist new support for the ministry in Kerala. He may be reached at sammolly@satyam.net.in. Please contact me if you would like any additional information or clarification at KPBishop@aol.com.

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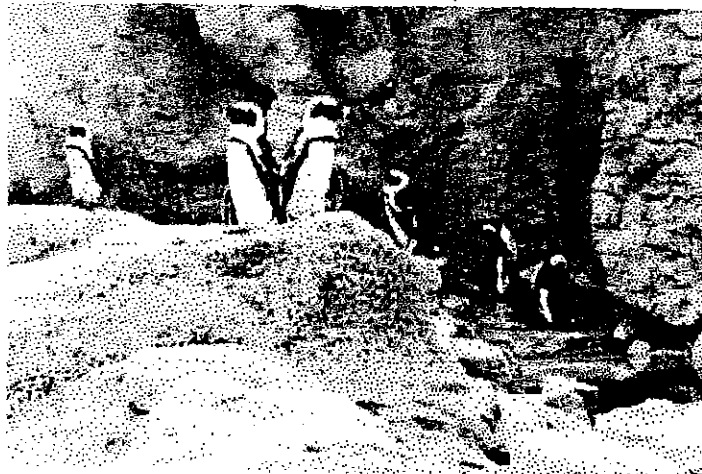


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The IBFNA Summer Family Bible Conference: Anchors of the Faith June 24-26

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With Ralph Colas of the ACCC, Doug Brown of FBBC, Bob Delnay of CCC, Paul Gustine, Jerry Johnson, Jerry Huffman of the Calvary Contender, Duane Brown, Tom Hamilton, and Jeff Bailey



These Guys Are Waiting To See You At One Of The Sites You Won't Want To Miss, Mystic Seaport. There's A Whole Lot More To See And Do.

Call today 860-889-5201 to make your \$79 per night IBFNA reservation at the Conference Headquarters, the Ramada Inn of Norwich/Mystic, Connecticut.