"BROAD STRIPES AND BRIGHT STARS" by DR. JAMES JOHNSON
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by
DR. JAMES EDWARD JOHNSON

Given at the San Francisco International Regional Convention of the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship, March 29, 1975

WHEN I FIRST went to Washington, D.C. as Vice-Chairman of the Civil Service Commission, I was warned of the improbability of being an effective witness for Jesus Christ in a place like that.

What a challenge that was! Relying on my favorite verse, Philippians 4:13 which says, “I can do all things through Christ which strengthened me,” I set out to lift up Jesus Christ by starting a prayer breakfast. Most of the people there said that no one would come, but on the announced date twenty-six were in attendance. And when that prayer breakfast really began going strong, it wasn’t hard to move with it and start prayer breakfasts on Capitol Hill, in the White House, in the Pentagon, and in other governmental departments. That was my beginning in Washington, and the Lord has since moved me up and widened my witness for Him.
I love this country. I’ve been through forty-four different countries in my lifetime and I have never found one that I would trade the United States of America for.

"I'm proud of this land of ours."

"Four boys burned the American flag."

I love it because I can go to the Pentagon and lift up Christ. I love it because I can come to a city like San Francisco and say publicly that I love Jesus Christ and I won’t be put in jail for it. I love America because I can fellowship freely with others in the body of Christ any time I desire to do so and not be afraid of reprisal. And I love it because of the principle exemplified in the following experience.

One day, during my Civil Service Commission Vice-Chairmanship, my very patriotic daughter came home from school in tears. “Dad, you’ve been telling me that we should see good in all people and love them, so they too can love Christ and respect our country and our fellow man, but today four boys burned the American flag right in front of our school while nineteen hundred kids stood around and watched without doing a thing about it. I got so angry that I hit one of those boys right in the face with my fist.” I said, “You only hit one?” Then she said, “Dad, I’m not going back there until you do something

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about it. You always have said that if you really trust in Jesus to help you do something, He will show you what to do.”

He said, “Hey, man, listen—they will laugh at you. You got to relate to the kids. Have you ever been in jail? No? Ever demonstrated or marched?”

Remembering that while in the Marine Corps they had tried to march me to death, I said, yes, I had marched. “Where?” When I told him, he said, “No, no! That’s not what I mean! You know fella, you really don’t have anything to offer the kids—really!” But I insisted, saying, “Well, I still would like to talk to them about our country, and maybe about Jesus Christ.” With that he gave in, but warned of the dire circumstances that could befall me on campus if I attempted anything like that, and concluded, “I won’t be responsible for what happens.”

The introduction he gave me was unbelievable. “Here’s a guy who wants to talk to you about something like a rag being burned in front of the school. This guy is really something else! He also wants to bring in something about God and country. You know he’s got to be far out, but he’s all yours.” When I arose to speak, I looked at him and said, with a straight face, “Thank you very much Mr. President; you read that just the way I wrote it.” With that I got the students’ attention and proceeded to tell them what the Lord had put on my heart:

“There is a simple but true story that fully illustrates what I wish to say. When I was in the Marine Corps

“This guy is really something else. You know he’s got to be far out.”

She had me trapped with my own words, so the next day I called the principal and asked if it would be possible to speak to the student body about the flag burning incident and about our country. He referred me to the student body president who was in charge of guest speakers. The young man came on the phone and said, “Yep?” “My name is Dr. James Johnson and I’m from the Civil Service Commission,” I explained. “An American flag was burned in front of your school yesterday and I want to talk to the student body about it.”
flag being raised. As the bugle played and the flag was slowly drawn to the top of the mast, I began to cry. Turning my head so my fellow officers wouldn’t see the big tears running down my cheeks, I looked straight into the faces of thirteen hundred sailors and marines who were as emotionally moved as I. When the flag was finally secured at the top of the mast, as if by a pre-arranged signal, we all said in unison, ‘God bless America!’

“Maybe our flag should be taken away from us here for just a short span of time,” I continued, “so you would feel the same as we felt when we didn’t have our flag. Perhaps then you could say, ‘God bless America,’ and lift up the name of our Lord who
has blessed this country so.” With that, I turned and walked out—not to booing or hissing, but to a standing ovation. I could hardly get out of that school and into my car by reason of the students swarming around me and saying such things as “I feel the same way you do about our country.” “I too believe that God is the one who has actually made this country the way it is today.” “We could even feel the Spirit of God moving in our auditorium.” “More people should come out and tell us about this. We just don’t get enough of it.” One young man said, “I just wish my

Those four boys went out and worked hard doing all kinds of odd jobs until they finally earned enough money to buy the prettiest American flag I think I’ve ever seen. Today we had a flag raising ceremony and they let me hoist it. I didn’t hit them this time—I kissed them.”

I know there is a God and that His Spirit is moving today in our lives and in our country. When America is wrong, working together we should do everything possible to right that wrong. When she is right, we should do everything we possibly can to keep her right. But we should always remember that, right or wrong, America is still our country and it’s the only one we have. I’m proud of this land of ours and share daily the love of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit with those with whom I come in contact, to help make this an even better place in which to live. God bless America!
God is pouring out His Spirit in new abundance to bring His body together as one. This is . . .

The Lord’s Ecumenism

by FR. JOHN PATRICK BERTOLUCCI

HOW IMPORTANT it is for parents to take time to introduce their children to the Lord! What an effect they have on their future!

I was one of those fortunate persons who came to experience and appreciate the Lord Jesus Christ in a Christian Roman Catholic family. I thank God for my mom and dad who introduced me to the Lord at a young age. I remember the first time I went to church as a Roman Catholic. The presence of the Lord Jesus Christ was very real and very personal. He sustained me all through my preadolescent and adolescent years. Through the years the Lord ever made Himself real to me. Although I had a number of wonderful religious experiences and grew in a deeper religious awareness of Him, the experience that put the final touch on my life occurred about seven years ago.

In 1965 I was ordained. The bishop allowed me to go to one of the top theological centers in our country to learn and move along with the

FR. BERTOLUCCI was ordained Priest of the Diocese of Albany, Catholic University of America in 1965. In 1973 he was lecturer in the Religious Studies Dept. in the College of St. Rose, teaching “Pentecostalism in the Catholic Church.” He is a member of the National Advisory Committee for the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, and Liaison for the Bishop of Albany to Charismatic Renewal within the Diocese.

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changes that were occurring in the Roman Catholic Church because of Pope John, who had opened the Vatican II Council in prayer with, "Father, let's have a new Pentecost throughout the world." Not knowing the true meaning of this at the time, I simply thought that it was a nice theological term to use. But he really did open the doors of the Catholic Church and the Holy Spirit came rushing through. We moved our altars around, we began to pray in English, we changed some of our clothing, and we changed rules, regulations, disciplines and structures.

Then, in 1967 there was a group of Catholics in Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania who were really involved in church life and knew the Lord, but wanted a deeper walk with Him. While studying the Scriptures concerning Pentecost, they noticed that when the Holy Spirit came into someone’s life there was a visible difference. There were manifestations of His power. They decided that rather than talk any further about this, they would spend the next day in prayer and beseech the Lord to give this power to them. In answer to their prayers, the Lord baptized them in the Holy Spirit with speaking in tongues. The word that something like Pentecostalism was breaking out among the Roman Catholics, of all people, began to spread, especially when brothers and sisters at Duquesne headed toward Notre Dame University in South Bend, Indiana.

I came into the scene in 1969. At that time I was a theology professor teaching my favorite course, Christian Living, at one of our schools. I felt I had all the academic answers, but a priest friend of mine came to me one day and said, "John, I think there is something missing in your life." I said, "How dare you even imply
disciplines, and structures."

such a thing! I have four degrees and am a theology professor.” He said, “No, I think that you ought to come and join a group of us in an upper room over on Western Avenue. We’re getting together every Monday night for prayers.” I said, “You mean you read the prayers from the office books?” He said, “No, we read Scripture, we sing, and we pray.” My reply was, “How Protestant!”

I went with him, and I will never forget that night as long as I live! Ten of my brother priests were sitting around in a circle with Bibles in their hands, reading, singing and praying spontaneously. Priests just don’t pray much together; the Bible is usually used for academic study and training; and our book of common prayers is always used for praying. This was different than what I was used to, but the group really impressed me. In fact, the next day when I went to the holy table at the altar and presided at Eucharist, the sense of God’s presence there was overwhelming. Since I was in training in graduate school to be a psychotherapist or pastoral counselor, although I knew something had happened to me, I rationalized it away.

But David, my brother priest said to me, “Look, you really enjoyed that meeting last week, didn’t you?” I admitted that I’d had some good feelings about it. “However, I’m rather lonely and don’t have much companionship, so I guess my emotions were just reacting.” He smiled at me and said with a chuckle, “Don’t take your studies too seriously, John. We would like you to come back another Monday night. We do something else that we didn’t do at our last meeting. We lay hands on each other—sort of like a blessing.” I thought that sounded rather Catholic and said, “What does it do to you?” He said, “Well, you’ll find out.”
for about an hour. This was the first time I heard a lay person witness. He told me there was a group like them in Schenectady, in Glenville. They were all Roman Catholic and a priest was leading them on Friday nights. Wondering if there was some relationship between Monday night and Friday night, I decided to check it out.

It was Friday, February 14, 1969, Valentine’s Day—a day I will never forget. Everything went wrong. All kinds of obstacles got in my way of getting to that meeting. My car even went into a ditch and had to be towed out by a farmer. But I finally arrived there at about 9:30 p.m. The meeting had already started. I walked into this beautiful suburban house where about forty laymen and one clergyman were in the living room having a wonderful time praising the Lord and singing. I heard some strange sounds, but thought some people were visiting from another country. Being trained in psychology, I remembered to be free, accept people where they were and not judge. After being there about thirty minutes and watching everything that was going on, all of a sudden I saw a priest (whom I didn’t know) who fairly radiated God’s presence. I just kept staring at him, and knew that whatever he had I wanted.

Then I did something that was totally out of character. It is not like

“I never got there, because I went to a retreat at a monastery in Vermont. While celebrating Eucharist with the monks, I was surprised to see a group of lay people right in front of me raising their hands and singing like Vatican II never said they were supposed to sing. This really shocked me. I turned to one of the monks and said, “Who are they?” He said that they were laymen from New Jersey and were called Catholic Pentecostals. There was something about the power that they had—they who weren’t supposed to have power. I was really impressed, and afterward talked to one of them...”
theology professors to get up in the middle of a lay group, kneel on the floor and say, “Praise God,” and “Hallelujah.” As I knelt in the middle of the living room, this same priest that I had been staring at, came over to me and laid hands on my head. The Holy Spirit rushed into my life like a fire of warmth, love, and peace coming over me. Then this brother prayed, “Lord, let him be in peace. Let him relax and let go, because you want to do a marvelous thing in him.” The more I relaxed, the more the Spirit rushed in. Something beautiful was happening inside me. The priest began to pray in what sounded like Hebrew. He had perhaps studied it in seminary, I thought. As he spoke, I was not at all prepared for what happened next. My tongue just started to move all over the place and I began speaking in a glorious new language, praising God and, at the same time, crying like a little baby in the middle of that floor with everybody around me rejoicing. I got up off that floor a new man, and felt “higher than a kite.” Going back to my seat, all I could do was repeat over and over, It’s true! It’s true!”

That night when I got home to my apartment, I could not put my Bible down. I had never approached Scripture like that before. It was always kind of a chore, an academic task, but now the Living Word Himself was just popping out of the pages.

“The sister not driving kept looking around at me. ‘Are you all right?’ she asked.”

The next day—I don’t even remember sleeping—I thought, “Who can I tell? I have to address 2,000 nuns at a conference, but how could I tell them?” That day two sisters came to pick me up to go to the conference. (I was chaplain to nuns at the time.) There I was, sitting in the back seat alone with a big grin on my face. The sister not driving kept looking around at me. Finally, she asked, “Are you all right?” I replied, “I never felt better in my life.” She leaned over the seat and said, “Were you prayed over last night?” I answered, “Yes, sister.” She said, “That happened to me last week.” How wonderful! Here I had somebody to tell!

When we got to that conference, I was told that our big-name speaker
from New York missed his plane and I was chosen to minister. I had never preached like that before! The sermon just flowed out of me. The sisters came up to me afterwards and said, "How come we didn't sign you up in the first place, instead of that other man? What's happened to you?"

The Students Came Alive!

Needless to say, my ministry had radically changed. I went back to my theology class and shared the Lordship of Christ with all those seminarians, religious educators and college students. I shared my new experience with them the best way I could with a Catholic vocabulary. Those students came alive. They also became one of the first prayer groups in our area at the end of the semester with every single student yielding to the power of the Holy Spirit. It was just glorious!

One thing that happens when the Holy Spirit is released in your life is that your whole prayer life changes. It is wonderful to be able to pray and know that the Lord is hearing you and is right there with you. I had always known Jesus, but now He was so real, and now I learned that I could talk freely and spontaneously with Him. I learned that when Jesus becomes your Lord, He doesn't suppress you, but makes you freer and more of a person.

Prior to this experience I had never laid hands on anyone in prayer nor had learned how. One night about midnight a brother showed up at my apartment and told me that even though he was in seminary, he was an agnostic. He couldn't go on with this charade any longer and was about to leave. But he knew that something had happened to me and whatever it was he wanted it. I just thought it best to do what had been done to me and that was to lay hands on him. In a very structured manner, I had him kneel down and while standing by him I touched him. All of a sudden he began to speak in tongues, and yielded his life to Jesus Christ then and there.

"Whatever You've Done, I Like It!"

The next day a superior phoned me. "What have you done to one of our students?" I said, "Father, it's very hard for me to explain this." "Well," he hastened to say, "whatever you've done, I like it! He's changed. Do you want to do it to a few more?" This is the way the Lord has been working. So many things have happened in my life and God has been teaching me so much.

I attended my first Catholic Charismatic conference at Notre Dame in 1970 where about five hundred or more people were present. This was the first time I heard a group singing in tongues—my hair just stood up
on end. All this was so new. I was just delighted, and felt edified and liberated. Last year I went back and over thirty thousand representatives were there.

Pray for our church, that there will continue to be a spreading of the charismatic renewal within it, and a new work accomplished within the hearts of many. Recently the United States bishops, through one of their committees on pastoral research, issued a statement on this phenomenon. The last part of it read, "To the members of the movement, and to pastors, and to all the faithful of Christ, we commend the words of Scripture which we take as our own guiding light. Do not stifle the Spirit. Do not despise prophecies. Test everything. Retain what is good and avoid any semblance of evil (I Thessalonians 5:19-22). We encourage those who already belong and we support the positive and desirable directions of the charismatic renewal."

I think it's wonderful that this Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship respects and appreciates all the churches that are represented. I want you to pray for our church. I'm not asking you Protestants to agree with all of those things that are a part of Roman Catholicism, but I am asking you in Christian love to understand us and love us. This isn't always easy. Nor is it always easy for me to forgive and love those who have spoken in disrespect of my church, but I want you to pray for us.

Recently the Lord has laid the concept of unity on my heart. About six months ago an Assemblies of God minister, an Episcopal priest, and I went on a retreat together. The topic of the week was how to evangelize, how to bring people to the Lord Jesus Christ and cause them to commit themselves to Him, and how to help them yield and surrender their lives to the Holy Spirit. What a re-

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Wonderful things are happening in the chaplaincy of the U.S. Army!

I was sent to Europe to serve as the V Corps Chaplain a while ago. Not wanting a job where there was no pulpit, I named eight other people in Europe that should have the job ahead of me, but God had His way. At this time the V Corps had about fifty-five chaplains in it, but due to some consolidating and to the filling of vacant positions, I was placed in charge of eighty-three chaplains.

Those men felt heavily upon them the weight of what they were trying to do. They were spiritually hungry to find more of God while struggling under their load, trying to do God’s work in their own strength. Although a Southern Baptist, I had experienced the strength and power of God through the infilling of the Holy Spirit at the age of thirteen, and knew that this was what they needed to do God’s work.

While visiting the chaplains, as was my duty, many times my heart became so heavy that I could barely breathe. Sometimes after a visit I would even have to pull the car off to the side of the highway and cry a while. In Europe the chaplains faced three main problems: First, fellow Americans fought one another, even their own commanders, because of race; second, drugs were heavily used; third, the occult was practiced...
everywhere. Chaplains would come to me and say, “I wasn’t equipped to minister like this.” I replied, “You’re right. Your church and your seminary didn’t equip you, but God can.”

We began to have prayer meetings, and then a year ago God laid it on my heart to have prayer meetings after the regular nightly meetings at our annual retreat for chaplains at Berchtesgaden. About one half of the chaplains would be there one week and the remaining half the next week. At our first prayer meeting I found enough faith to believe that maybe fifteen chaplains would come together to pray. We had never gotten that many together to really pray in the history of the chaplaincy. However, the first night twenty-nine showed up and the next night forty-eight came. We prayed until the wee morning hours and some continued to pray in their rooms until morning.

To begin with we didn’t have much unity. When I first opened the prayer session and said we were going to pray for God to pour out His power upon us like at Pentecost, one chaplain stood up and said, “That’s all of the devil.” I said, “You may have just offended the Holy Ghost and committed the unpardonable sin.” He turned white and sank to the floor. Then someone else said, “Anyone that doesn’t speak with tongues is going to hell and is not saved.” “Wait a minute,” I said, “Somewhere in be-

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Proper Priorities

by DEMOS SHAKARIAN

International President, Full Gospel Business Men’s Fellowship

Perhaps this is the first time you have read VOICE magazine, and so you ask the question: “Who are the Full Gospel Business Men?” The simple answer is, they are men raised up by God to call other men back to Himself—to urge men to set their priorities the way they ought to be. In the words of Jack Goodall, President of Foodmaker, Incorporated, “My priorities were mixed up. My business was first, my family second—and then God was somewhere back. But when I accepted Jesus Christ as my personal savior, I changed my priorities. Now God is number one, my family is number two, other young people are number three, and all my business is thereafter.” I said, “With twenty thousand employees, can you afford to put your business that far down the list?” His reply was: “Demos, with eight hundred restaurants to operate, I have to make a lot of decisions. Now I’m a better president for my company. I make better decisions, and no longer have fear to make them because God is with me. When I don’t know the answer to a specific problem, I will pray about it and, inevitably, before the day is over I will have solved my major problems. Furthermore, my wife now has a better husband, my children have a better father, and we have a lot of fun together—but God is number one.”

Jack Goodall lives in San Diego, California. As the President of Foodmaker, Incorporated, which is the

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“PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER”  
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tween those two opinions is where God wants His people to walk in love. Let’s pray.”

Silently I was really asking God how we could have enough unity to have His blessing among chaplains of fourteen different denominations. God assured me that if I could just get those men to agree to pray together, He would bless them. And praise God He did. We had chaplains of every denomination filled with the Holy Spirit—as well as their wives. Then these chaplains went to their assignments and God began to pour out His power everywhere. Now empty chapels became full—that’s the difference between a dry-bones ministry and a Spirit-filled ministry.

A little less than a year ago I was sent to Fort Leavenworth, Kansas to be the pastor for the Army’s Commander General Staff College with eleven hundred student officers, all having ten or twelve years’ service, and their families. God is continually saving souls and blessing lives there.

I had known about the Full Gospel Business Men and had read the VOICE every month for some time, but had never attended one of their meetings until my return trip to the United States from Europe. This organization really blesses me, because through it the Holy Spirit is bringing the Gospel and the move of the Spirit to all people all over the world—out in the streets, in the business offices, just everywhere. God is putting it all together here in America, in Europe, and throughout the world: Believe me, the military is not going to miss out on it, for God has them ready with spiritual Spirit-filled people and leaders to accept what He is going to do. It is so wonderful.

THE LORD’S ECUMENISM  
(Continued from page 13)
treat that was! During the day we discussed this and then went out on the streets by the beach evangelizing. That was a glorious experience for me to shed my sophistication, go out like a little child in my sports clothes, walk up to somebody and say, “Can I tell you about Jesus?” I watched a fallen away Roman Catholic being counseled by a Southern Baptist Pentecostal, touched by an Assemblies of God minister; hugged by an Episcopal priest—and brought to the Lord by yours truly.

As stated in John 17:9-11, “I pray for them . . . that they may be one, as we are,” God is moving to pour out His Spirit in new abundance to bring His body together as one. It is only in that power of unity that the world will look at us, see how we love one another and care about one another, and see how we pray together and agree about the Lordship of Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit. This is the Lord’s ecumenism.
SIX SCRIPTURAL STEPS TO SALVATION

Men still cry, "What must I do to be saved?" The Bible provides a clear answer. Here are the six Scriptural steps which all must take to pass from death unto life:

1. ACKNOWLEDGE: "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). "God be merciful to me a sinner" (Luke 18:13). You must acknowledge in the light of God's Word that you are a sinner.

2. REPENT: "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3). "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out" (Acts 3:19). You must see the awfulness of sin and then repent of it.

3. CONFESS: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (I John 1:9). "With the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Romans 10:10). The Lord awaits your admission of guilt.

4. FORSAKE: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord . . . for he will abundantly pardon" (Isaiah 55:7). Sorrow for sin is not enough in itself. We must want to be done with it once and for all.

5. BELIEVE: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shall believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Romans 10:9). "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16). Believe in the finished work of Christ on the cross.

6. RECEIVE: "He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (John 1:11,12). Christ must be received personally into the heart by faith, if the experience of the New Birth is to be yours.

Why not make your eternal decision right now: "I am convinced by God's Word that I am a lost sinner. I believe that Jesus Christ died for sinners and shed His blood to put away my sins. I NOW receive Him as my personal Lord and Saviour and will by His help, confess Him before men."

When you have made this greatest of all decisions, please let us know about it so that we may rejoice together.

NAME ................................................

ADDRESS ............................................

CITY/STATE/ZIP ....................................

Mail to: Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International, P.O. Box 17904, Los Angeles, California 90017

CLARIFICATION: The title, "Press Secretary to Pope Paul VI," used in reference to Fred Ladenius (March 1975) is applicable only to Mr. Frederico Alessandri, the regular Vatican spokesman. Mr. Ladenius is the director of an agency of Dutch bishops located in Rome. He has been a journalist and was at one time connected with the press corps covering and reporting from the Vatican.
by NORBERT SELKING
Farmer, Decatur, Indiana


ON THE DAY OF MY CONFIRMATION, our pastor laid his hand on my head and prayed that I receive the Holy Spirit. Though I didn't really understand what this meant, one scripture verse (Psalm 139:12) came forcefully to my mind and stayed with me for many years, "Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee, but the night shineth as the day. The darkness and the light are both alike to thee."

My grandparents and parents were active members of the Lutheran church—active in the sense that they were always in church on Sunday morning and during the festival seasons. Thus early in life I sensed the hand of God on my comings and goings. My pastor and other men of God encouraged me to go into the ministry, believing that this was my calling in life. Early in my twenties, as the time came to serve my country, I volunteered for a two-year enlistment in the Army. The eighteen months that followed found me engulfed in criminal investigation work with our military police in France. After military duty I went back to tending my father's small farm in Indiana.
In the summer of 1966, I married a young girl from Washington state—a deaconess graduate from Valparaiso University in Indiana—believing that God’s divine grace and mercy had drawn us together for a purpose. Just before our marriage, a Lutheran pastor friend said, “Norb, you ought to go into the full-time ministry. Why don’t you just try it. Just take that jump.” And so, little more than a month having passed after our wedding, I enrolled in Valparaiso University as a pre-ministerial student, at the same time making application to enter our seminary in Springfield, Illinois upon completion of the university’s two-year program. While being taught theology and doctrine at Valparaiso and serving as president of the Lutheran youth group, I felt within my heart a longing for something—but didn’t know what it was.

One Sunday morning as Esther and I were on our way to a district meeting in Indianapolis, we decided to stop en route for worship services in the small town of La Crosse, There at St. John’s Lutheran Church the pastor so wonderfully preached the Word of God, that after establishing ourselves as residents near the university, we returned to eventually become regular members. The pastor, Rev. Krum sieg, realized that we were searching for a closer personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ and shared with us the New Testament reality of the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

My immediate reaction was cautious and somewhat negative. Before accepting any spiritual gift, I wanted to be safe doctrinally and theologically and stay within acceptable traditions as a third generation Lutheran. One of my theology professors at Valparaiso University non-committingly told me that although he didn’t have grounds to disapprove of the charismatic experience, he believed we could either take it or leave it.
For several months afterward, I simply left it. But God found fertile ground in my wife’s pliant heart. His Spirit ministered to her, quickening her understanding as she read His Word. One evening while she was sitting in our little trailer reading a book the Krumsiegs had given us, the strong presence of God’s abiding Spirit surged up within her. She noticed a little tingle in her tongue, but dismissed it, concluding, “Well, that’s just me.”

During Lenten season after one of our weekly Bible studies, my wife and I stayed after the service to talk to the pastor. We were both finally convinced the baptism in the Holy Spirit was a source of sustaining power that we wanted and needed in our Christian walk. I approached the pastor with a request: “We would like to have the gift of the Holy Spirit.” After giving us some instruction on how to receive this Biblical promise, he said to my wife, “I’m going to lay hands on you and pray for you. I want you to praise God, not in your own language but in the new tongue that God will give you.” Immediately she began to pray very simply in a strange language. As he laid hands on me, I too was able to speak in a prayer language as the Spirit gave utterance. We knelt at the altar rail worshipping the Lord Jesus Christ in tongues for thirty minutes in the quiet, empty sanctuary.

When my studies at Valparaiso were finished, I sensed God calling us back to the farm where I had lived most of my life—into a new walk, a new work, sowing seeds of faith and reaping the fruit of His Spirit. Once there, we joined Zion Lutheran Church in Decatur. Since the pastor and the people had not been introduced to the baptism in the Holy Spirit, they seemed to sense a fresh new quality about our lives without realizing what caused it. We both became active in the choir, served on the evangelism committee.
and, later, on the new church building planning committee, and I was asked to teach a fourth grade Sunday school class.

"My Grandmother Has Been Healed!"

During one of my Sunday morning classes, I asked the children to pray that the power of the Holy Spirit quicken God’s Word to their hearts. As the end of the class, when I asked for special prayer needs, a boy named Jimmy said, “Would you pray for my grandmother, that the Lord would heal her.” There was a strong current of faith as we believed God together for this. The next Sunday Jimmy announced, “My grandmother has been healed!” In ways like this God was confirming to us such Bible verses as Mark 16:20, “And they went forth and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the Word with signs following.”

A friend of mine interested me in a ministry to prisoners and invited me to come along with him to the local jail one Sunday. I was all excited about it and did a great deal of praying, but thirty minutes before we were to be there he called to say, “Norb, I can’t make it. Can you go by yourself?” Knowing that Jesus was with me, and praying that His Word would be manifested in these men’s lives, I drove to the jail. My wife had encouraged me to confront the inmates with Jesus Christ, and not just visit. Once there I shared Christ with them in a direct way and asked if any would like to receive Him into their lives. Two said, “Yes.” Fully overjoyed, I happily reported to the church’s annual voters meeting that same Sunday afternoon what God had done in jail and asked the voters to pray that those prisoners would remain true to their decision.

We Were Called Before the Elders

Little did I then see that the Holy Spirit is not only a Spirit of power, but of purification. He comes as a winnowing fork to separate the wheat from the chaff. We sensed this purification process coming. Suddenly we were called before the elders concerning the area of our church life in which I least expected to be challenged—my Sunday school class. The elders were displeased with some of my teachings. A short time earlier an understanding Bible teacher had told us, “When these things come, don’t resist them because it will be God working within you.” He shared with us the verse, “Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone. But if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit” (John 12:24). I didn’t become defensive to the accusations of the elders, for I believed we were beginning to see the death of self and our traditional pride. It was hard for us, however, when we received a letter telling us

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we were no longer members of the Lutheran church.

The first Sunday afterward we attended an evangelical church, but the service was as dry as toast. The second Sunday we tried a Pentecostal church and were met with acceptance, joy and freedom of worship. To the embarrassment of our relatives, we began to worship there.

One day, while we were getting ready to mail in applications to the Full Gospel Business Men’s World Convention in Washington, D.C., my uncle stopped by the farm. “Norbert,” he said, “what’s the matter with you? Aren’t the Lutherans good enough for you anymore? Don’t your confirmation vows and your confession of faith mean anything to you?”

Thinking this over carefully I answered, “You know, Uncle Bill, in that confirmation vow I said the desire of my life was to remain true to Jesus Christ—not to the denomination, but to Christ—and that I would suffer death rather than depart from the faith.” We talked back and forth. Then I asked, “Uncle Bill, can I pray for you?” By then tears were running down his cheeks. With his permission we prayed in the car, in the middle of a dusty country lane, but with us was the real power of prayer and the presence of Jesus.
From that day until now, whenever Uncle Bill sees me, a deep love and compassion flows between us.

My wife and I never felt led to join a church of another denomination. Thankfully, about two and a half years later we were invited back to the Lutheran church to partake of the Lord’s supper. Many people there were open to the moving of the Holy Spirit and we are always encouraged by the number entering into this walk of faith.

When the Full Gospel Business Men’s Fellowship began a chapter in Fort Wayne, I became a charter member and later became the chapter president. There I found out that in the presence of Jesus, denominational distinctions really don’t make much of a difference. On the FGBMFI airlift on Scandinavia in 1969, I was able to see the Spirit of God moving in the Lutheran churches in Sweden. While there I asked a new-born Christian to pray with me for my Lutheran brothers and sisters back home that they would receive Jesus Christ and the baptism in the Holy Spirit. We prayed, but I never thought I would see the results of that prayer so soon.

At the first meeting of the Fort Wayne Fellowship chapter after my return to the States, young men who were studying for the Lutheran ministry were seated near the front. After the meeting, when I found out that many of them had received the baptism in the Holy Spirit, I went up to them and cried with joy.

In 1974 I was privileged to join other Spirit-filled Christians for the Rome-European Conference in September. During our team visit to Genoa, I met a man who was an elder in one of the churches where we ministered those eight days. I sensed in Sebastiono Sitaliano’s heart a real desire to serve the Lord. However, due to my lack of knowledge of the Italian language, I had some difficulty conversing with him, except through interpreters. After leaving Genoa and returning to Rome for our final three-day conference, I again met Sebastiono. While talking with him, through an interpreter, I asked him in German if he spoke German. He said that he did. We were even closer after that as spiritual brothers.

The last evening of the conference I had prayed that the Lord Jesus would lead me to those to whom He wanted me to minister. Again Sebastiono came over to me, this time with a request that I should pray for an older couple with a personal need in their family. Knowing that all things are possible to him who believes (Mark 11:23-24), I told him I would be happy to pray for this couple.

As we gathered around in a small

(Please turn to page 29)
MY LIFE BEGAN in an old-fashioned German, Roman Catholic, southern background amid uncles, aunts and cousins by the dozen. I was the oldest son, the second born of six children. Until I reached high school my education was in a parochial school where only German was spoken and the sisters were strong disciplinarians. I was a good little German Catholic, whose beginning was not only strict but somewhat biased in many ways.

Early in life I had a real "fear" of God, yet I loved Him. As the years rolled by my association with the Church became almost non-existent; however, I always knew that God loved me, and though I was not walking in His way, I knew He was near. It would be many years later that my

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"FOR SUCH A TIME"
(Continued from page 27)
circle, I asked several of my American co-workers to pray in agreement
with us, according to Matthew 18:19,
then began to pray in my “best” German
after reading from John 10:27.
Two American Full Gospel Business
Men with me were also praying, one
in tongues and the other in English.
As I prayed in German, Sebastiono
translated into Italian.
Suddenly, upon conclusion of my
prayer, Sebastiono began speaking
in tongues. It wasn’t Italian, German
or English, because I was familiar
with those languages. As he prayed,
we felt the powerful presence of Jesus
around us, and it was evidenced on
the faces of this couple that we had
prayed for.
Then, while the husband was praising
the Lord in his Italian tongue,
suddenly, without hesitation he began
to speak in perfect English! Here
is what he was saying: “Unto thee, Jesus,
do I give praise for saving
my soul!” He went back to praising
in Italian—and then again in perfect
English: “Unto thee, Jesus, do I give
praise for saving my soul.”
By this time others were gathering
around us, as the multitude must have
gathered around the disciples on the
Day of Pentecost, hearing men “ex-
tolling the praises of God.” This was
another indication from God that I
had been “called for such a time as
this.” My German-Lutheran back-
ground had been extended to reach
the Italians also! Truly the prophet
Joel was correct when he wrote, “And
it shall come to pass, in the last days,
saith the Lord, that I will pour out
my Spirit upon all flesh . . .” (Joel
2:28).

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THE STRANGER  
(Continued from page 28)

minister would say, "Rudy's faith goes right straight from him to God, with little or no need for any of the extras." Yet, God and I were "strangers."

I married in haste—and eventually repented at leisure, but not before a daughter was born. Bitterness, and I suppose even hatred, was the end result of this broken home. I was to live with the memory of a little blond-haired, blue-eyed girl called Vicki, from the time I saw her last in 1946, when I left for Germany, until we met again twenty-eight years later.

We Lived a Pretty Fast Life

After my tour of duty I returned to the States and Texas. There I met Jo, the girl with whom I would spend the rest of my life. Between New Orleans, two tours in Japan, and the camps, posts and stations in between, we lived a pretty fast life, drinking and partying. Occasionally we attended the post chapel, but it was not until just prior to my retirement, in San Antonio, that we began to be "regular church-goers." We went every Sunday. One Sunday we would attend St. Pius X Catholic Church, the next we would go to Jo's church. She had been born and reared in the Methodist Church but became an Episcopalian when she was in her twenties. As we look back over those years we are sure that the Lord was speaking to us—we just weren't ready to listen. He led me to the decision to join with Jo in her church, and in 1968 I became a member of St. David's Episcopal Church. From then on things really began to happen—but, oh, I was "stiff-necked!"

A Faith Alive weekend brought Jo to a beautiful relationship with the Lord. As she said, "I have been to the well!" She really did not know what had happened to her—all she knew was that something wonderful had happened and now she knew Jesus instead of just knowing about Him. Books began to appear in our apartment, as she began seeking after the Lord for a deeper understanding of her experience. I went along with her to prayer and praise meetings and to her Bible class, listened to tapes, and did all the things she was doing, but somehow I just was not ready. I was still a stranger to God.

We Weren't Disappointed!

Then VOICE magazine appeared in our home—with my name on it, thanks to Jo—and the desire to attend one of the Full Gospel Business Men's conventions began to grow. We had met General Ralph Haines and his lovely wife, Sally, and knowing that he was to be one of the speakers at the April 1974 El Paso Convention, we decided to go. We went "expecting"—and we weren't disappointed! The Lord knew what He had in store for me even before I had any intention of going to El Paso! When the invitation was given I stepped for-
ward, and while I was "backstage" with General Haines, Jo and Sally Haines were "out front" praying for me. Jo says the next thing she knew, there I was, with a big grin on my face. Praise the Lord, Jesus had saved me and filled me with His Holy Spirit.

All that was so blessed that we began to make plans to attend the Fellowship's World Convention in St. Louis in July. The last time we had heard from my daughter, in 1957, she was living there, and via the family grapevine I had heard she was married. That is not much help when you have no name to go by. But the Lord knew and He would make a way so that I might be reunited with Vicki.

to step in, bringing doubts when for a time there was no further word from her. Then Earl Moore and his wife, Billie, and Andy and Lillian Little stood in prayer with Jo and me, our arms about each other, that God's will be accomplished. It was. The day we were to leave for Kansas City, we received word that Vicki would be at the airport with her husband.

How do you recognize a young woman, mother of four, when the last picture you saw of her was of a twelve-year-old girl? How do you act? Are you a stranger? Are you a father? While we waited what seemed like an eternity, Jo and I prayed

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"I heard Jo say, 'Vicki, this is your father.'"

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I had heard that my former wife also lived in St. Louis, but there was no telephone listing in her husband's name. Taking a second look, with a different spelling, I discovered a "Mrs. Kay" listed and the Lord seemed to tell me, "Call it." It was the right number! Now I had a name and a phone number for Vicki. When she answered the phone, I managed to say, hesitantly, "Vicki, this is your father." It must have been a shock to her, for it was almost strange to hear myself say those words. But how else does a father address himself to his daughter after so many years? After our talk, and a promise we would see each other, Satan tried many a prayer. How we watched each face that passed by—looking, wondering. Suddenly, there she was! I heard Jo say, "Vicki, this is your father" and I held my blond-haired, blue-eyed daughter in my arms once again.

My walk in life is nearing its end; my walk with the Lord is just beginning. I am a new creature in Christ Jesus—reborn and filled with His Holy Spirit, that through me others may know Him too. Best of all, I am no longer a stranger, but am a member of the "household of faith"—an adopted son of my heavenly Father and a "joint-heir with Jesus," my elder brother!
I had just come down off "the fence" last April before joining the airlift to the Rome-European Conference in September. The Holy Spirit led me into a more complete involvement with the Full Gospel Business Men, and I quit speaking timidly and apologizing for what the Lord had blessed me with.

One day I mentioned to my wife that I would like to go to Italy on the airlift to minister to relatives in Milan. I forgot about it, but the next week my wife said that she would like to visit relatives back east and take our young baby while I was in Italy. The casualness of her attitude combined with her lack of concern about the expenditure of the money led me to recognize the hand of the Lord at work through her. Other men in the Seattle chapter assured me that an airlift was a life-changing experience, and I should plan to go.

Another brother, Alden Fitch, and I left Seattle and headed for Philadelphia, where we would depart for Rome. While on the ground in Kansas City, I asked him if he would like to see the cockpit when we were airborne again. He said, "Sure. Do you want to claim it for the Lord?" I replied, "No," because I knew it was against FAA regulations, but I was willing to pray a selfish prayer and ask God if we could get up in the cockpit. Well, we prayed and during the flight I showed the stewardess my Boeing Observer Flight Qualification card. Although she appeared impressed, she informed me that it was against regulations, so we forgot about it.

In Philadelphia, the Lord spoke to me while I was half-way up the ramp waiting to board the Alitalia DC-8.
As I looked around at all the people, He said, “I have called every person here for a mission that only they can do.” The only thing I could answer was, “Wow!”

About three hours into the flight, for some strange reason, I asked the steward if I could go up to the cockpit. To my surprise and joy, the steward returned with word that the captain said I could come up. I introduced myself to the navigator and flight engineer, and started to talk with them about their machine. The Lord gave me grace in the conversation, as we covered such topics as the airplane, Italy, the world situation, prophecy, Jesus, and being born again. I went back to my seat to get some Italian language tracts, and brought Alden back to the cockpit with me. We praised the Lord together for answering our Kansas City prayer. I gave the crew members copies of the tracts and told them as much as I knew about the impending conference in Rome.

As I sat in the jump seat behind the captain, the Lord spoke softly to me, “See what I mean? I called you to witness to the crew members; I did not call anyone else.” It was true; no one else had even shown an interest in the cockpit. I introduced Angelo Ferri, chairman of the Rome Conference, to the crew, but that was all. The Lord continued, “In like manner I have called every person on this plane for a unique ministry.”

Many miracles and healings occurred in Italy during those two weeks. Even more important, many people throughout Italy met Jesus Christ as Saviour, Lord and Baptizer. Through all of Italy our teams went—from Milan to Sicily—preaching
the Gospel of Jesus Christ and praying for the sick.

I was a member of the team that went to Naples. Every morning we would go to a different part of the city to distribute tracts. Women in windows many stories up let down their shopping baskets so that I could put tracts in them. I became acquainted with a former criminal, and he took me into some of the worst parts of Naples. I had always known in my head how much Americans have been blessed, but now I know in my heart. The spiritual hunger on their faces really affected me; I would pray silently while my newly-found brother would talk and witness to his former associates. Young communists tried to harass our group, and some ended up accepting Christ as their Saviour.

In the evenings we ministered at the only evangelistic church in Napoli. The pastor had been in jail twelve years previous for preaching the Gospel in Italy. As Vep Ellis preached and we shared our testimonies, we watched the Holy Spirit move across the people with His sovereign power. Whole families were brought to the Lord and other families were united in receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

The love that they showed us and the love that the Lord gave us for them is difficult to describe. We all very quickly forgot any self-consciousness, and yielded to God’s call. We prayed, sang, praised and wept together; I gained a confidence in the Lord to accomplish all since I could not speak Italian and did not know the specific needs of those I prayed for. I found a tremendous new use for my prayer language in trusting my spirit and the Lord’s to pray for their needs.

Rev. Joe Poppell and his wife (there were five wives in our group)
FGBMFI team which ministered in Naples last September.

were with us. He held two healing services. I saw Jesus heal the blind, the deaf, the dumb, and the lame. He straightened curvatures of the spine and instantly healed hernias. On the trip back to Rome, I questioned Joe about his ministry. He said that when he was younger, he used to pray longer with poorer results. Now his prayers are shorter, but he said he expects things to happen and the results are much better. He said, “Expect God to do something. The healing may be gradual or instantaneous, but expect some change to occur when you pray.”

We distributed literature on the Isle of Capri one day. That same day, the Lord increased the Christian population of Capri by 200% (from 1 to 3).

The team leader, Frank Palazzo, and his wife were married in Napoli 12 years ago. While we were there, her father accepted the Lord, and we watched him begin to grow in grace.

The parting was a time of tears and entreaties to return. At the end of the three-day conference in Rome, two busses came up from Napoli for the last day. We were all blessed, and veterans of former airlifts and other overseas Gospel travel said they had rarely ever received such love and hospitality. It was that way in areas other than Naples also.

As we departed Rome, I was exhausted; I could not take any more spiritual blessings. I was a different man; I had seen the “great things of God.” The Lord had increased my confidence in Him and my ability to trust Him and to be subject to the leading of His Holy Spirit.
"International" Label Marks 15th as Best

Washington, D.C. Regional Convention

7. Dr. Frederick Price, Los Angeles pastor, was a main speaker. His testimony of healing will appear in the September VOICE. 8. Rear Admiral Robert Baughan, U.S. Navy, is president of the Military Officers Christian Fellowship. He said, "I bank heavily on the leadership of Christ, and on His strength and the transmission of His wisdom, to help me." 9. Pat Robertson, founder of Christian Broadcasting Network is also a radio/television personality and author. 10. Sgt. Major C. J. Nairn, U.S. Army, testified, "Two years ago, after suffering 24 years with incurable asthma, I was suddenly delivered. The next day, when the Pentagon doctor informed me my chest was clear, I told him that Jesus had healed me." 11. Iverna Tompkins, former pastor now involved in a traveling charismatic ministry, was Ladies' Luncheon speaker. 12. John Andor, newly-appointed overseas director for FGBMFI, left for Brussels after convention to set up Fellowship's Continental Office.
Lee Buck, Senior Vice President of Group Marketing for New York Life Insurance Company, whose testimony appeared in VOICE last month, is another prominent businessman who set his priorities straight.

Men, I challenge you to make God number one in your life, and then He'll become number one in America. And when we start doing that—getting our priorities straightened out—God will lead this nation back to her former glory.

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Conventions and Rallies

ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI
August 6-9, 1975
Chase Park Plaza
Claud McCulley/Walter Moore, Co-Chmn.
R.R. 1, Box 282, Arnold, Missouri 63010

BOISE, IDAHO
August 7-9, 1975
Rodeway Inn
James Howell/Mr. Nikkel, Co-Chmn.
517 N. 19th, Boise, Idaho 83703

CENTRAL NEW YORK
August 13-16, 1975
Hotel Syracuse, Syracuse, New York
C. Fred Lawrence, Chairman
16 Burgett Drive, Homer, New York 13077

CALGARY, ALBERTA, CANADA
August 14-16, 1975
Calgary Inn
Karl W. Balzum/Carroll Vance, Co-Chmn.
P.O. Box 1057, Calgary, Alberta, Canada T2P 2M7

SOUTH BAY (CALIFORNIA)
August 15-16, 1975
Holiday Inn-Torrance, Calif.
Peter Congeliiere, Chairman
30636 Palos Verdes East
Rancho Palos Verdes, California 90274

HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA
August 20-23, 1975
Hershey Motor Lodge
Dr. Jack Herd/Leo Nehrt, Co-Chmn.
120 Mine Road, Hershey, PA 17033

DETROIT, MICHIGAN
August 20-23, 1975
Troy Hilton Hotel
Joe Ninowski/John Ninowski, Co-Chmn.
28575 Greenfield, Southfield, Michigan 48076

DALLAS, TEXAS
August 26-30, 1975
Statler-Hilton Hotel
Bill McGill/Jim Warner, Co-Chmn.
P.O. Box 626, Carrollton, Texas 75006

FRESNO, CALIFORNIA
August 28-30, 1975
Rodeway Inn
Les Lile/Enoch Christoffersen, Co-Chmn.
2607 N. Rowell, Fresno, California 93703

JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI
September 4-6, 1975
Holiday Inn Downtown
Dr. Wm. R. Keller, Chairman
314 N. Magnolia Street, Laurel, Mississippi 39440

DELWARE VALLEY, PENNSYLVANIA
September 11-13, 1975
George Washington Motor Lodge
Angelo Ferri, Chairman
P.O. Box 182, Newtown, PA 18940

VINGINIA BEACH, VIRGINIA
September 25-27, 1975
Cavalier Oceanfront
E. Leroy Gason/Robert S. Harvey, Co-Chmn.
4720 Thoroughgood Drive
Virginia Beach, Virginia 23455

SOUTHERN OREGON
September 26, 27, 1975
Holiday Inn, Medford, Oregon
Jerry Lausmann, Chairman
P.O. Box 1608, Medford, OR 97501

For July conventions and rallies, see June issue