

held at West End Church of Christ in Nashville. David Fleer of Lipscomb University was one of the speakers. The closing prayer was led by Rhonda Lowry, wife of Lipscomb University President Randy Lowry. After the closing prayer a Disciples of Christ French speaking African-American vocal group performed with bongo drums.

Instrumental music in the worship. A woman leading prayer in the assembly. Two colleges among brethren implicated in the proceedings. Compromises with Christian Churches/Disciples of Christ. Do you not see why this issue of *The Spiritual Sword* is dealing with “change” in the church? These events would have been shocking to our fathers and mothers, our grandparents, and our brethren fifty years ago. ***“But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ” II Cor. 11:3.*** (Spiritual Sword, 1511 Getwell Road, Memphis, TN 38111, Vol. 41, No. 2 ,January 2010, p.7). You might consider ordering copies of this issue from **(THE SPIRITUAL SWORD)** for every family in your congregation.(J.W.)

THE BANGALORE DEBATE

The Bangalore Debate on the question of church support of homes for orphans and congregational co-operation in evangelism is available on two DVDs for \$3.50 to cover the cost of the DVDs, the packaging and postage. Order from:

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BULLETIN BRIEFS

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**“AND THE COMMON PEOPLE
HEARD HIM GLADLY”**

(Mark 12:37).

The above picture represents a new phase of training men to preach in South India. These brothers are examples of “the common people” of Indian villages, who are learning how to win souls for Christ and how to plant churches. Their educational level runs from the sixth grade to high school graduation. They are being trained by graduates from our three-year preacher training schools.

These brothers are enrolled in what we call a Paul/Timothy training program, which was began last year to train more workers in village congregations. Altogether there are 230 such students in 105 villages; classes are taught from 6:00—8:30, three nights a week: Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays. The local preacher, who is a graduate of one of the regular schools of preaching (SOP), as noted, does the teaching; using class materials that are used in the regular schools. Neither the teachers nor the students in this program receive any support from the U.S.A. They work at day labor to support their families and attend classes at night. We do provide them a meal of beans and rice each evening and a bicycle after they have successfully completed the school year.

Besides these, who are studying in the 105 villages, * we have by the grace of God (that's not just a cliché) twenty-three other Bible schools where men are being trained to preach "*the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus the Christ*" (cf., Acts 8:12).

Most of these schools are located in India's most southern state, Tamil Nadu, but there are four in the state of Kerala,

which lies west of Tamil Nadu; two in Arunachal Pradesh, which is about 1,800 miles north of Tamil Nadu and joins hard to China on the north and to Myanmar (Burma) on the east; one in Dibrugarh, Assam; and one in Shillong, Meghalaya. Altogether there are at this writing 719 brothers enrolled in all these preacher training programs.

Of the 1,500 plus brothers, who have graduated from the regular schools of preaching over the last twenty years, fewer than fifty are receiving foreign support. This they receive because of fulltime work with the schools or in areas where schools are soon to be set up. Our major focus is to encourage the brothers to be tent making preachers (Acts 18:3; 20:34-35).

**The term “we,” refers not just to the 3 Americans, Don Iverson, Garry Jones and myself, who initiated these schools, but to a far greater extent the faithful native brothers who work in all the schools, except the one in Shillong, N.E. India.*

For this latter school a number of other American gospel preachers come to India from one to three months each year to teach as we use English as the medium of instruction; among these are Mark Bass, Grove City, OH; John Chowning, Ft Wayne, IN; Robert Laux, Camden, TN, Brian Pitts, Woodbury, TN; Billy Simmons, Jefferson, GA; Ernest Underwood; DeFuniak Springs, FL; and Scott Richards, Jonesboro, GA, who is presently there on a long term basis to direct the school.

The major aim of this work is to obey the Spirit's order:

“And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also” (Two Timothy Two Two).

As may be perceived from the above this work amounts to a virtual addiction to the training of men to preach the blessed gospel of Jesus our Lord, but that is not the bottom line.

BICYCLE CAMPAIGN

The bottom line is the planting of sound local churches of Christ that will be upholding the truth (I Tim. 3:15) when we are dead. There are about 1,300 of our graduates preaching in such churches in Tamil Nadu alone, not counting students.

To add an extra incentive to soul winning among these brothers some from the States periodically go over to participate in "on the job" training. For example Don Iverson has just led a three-week campaign for Christ in the southern portion of Tamil Nadu. It ended February 12th and resulted in 272 souls being baptized and six new congregations being planted. Among the converts were two denominational preachers; one of whom was Pentecostal, who was baptized with his wife. The number of converts averaged 12.4 per day and

brother Don estimated that the cost was about \$9.50 per soul won.

Since he worked the southern portion of the state we are planning a more concentrated campaign lasting only three days (April 2-4). It will be a bicycle campaign and involve 920 preachers and students working intently to win souls and plant new congregations. Virtually all these brothers are tent making preachers and earn, as day laborers, between \$2.00 and \$3.00 per day, to support themselves and their families..

To encourage them we will pay them \$10 for the three days to off set their loss of daily wages. This means the support for 920 brothers will be \$9,200.00. This means that you may support one or more of these brothers at \$10 each for the 3 days.

Above I told of providing bicycles for these brothers. Of the 920 we have already purchased bikes for 680 of them, which means before the end of March we must provide bicycles for the remaining 240. Providing a bike for one of these gospel preachers is like buying a car for a student preacher here. A bicycle costs \$65, thus you may buy one for a brother and pay him for three days as an evangelist for a total cost of \$75.

As I seek to get you involved in this campaign to bear fruit to God, I remember that Paul wrote a similar request to the saints in Philippi saying it is, “*Not that I seek the gift, but I seek fruit that abounds to your account*” (Phil. 4:17, NKJ).

SPECIAL TRAINING SCHOOLS

Besides the schools to train preachers we have two special schools: 1) A two-year Bible Training School for young women, These young sisters (the average age is 19) are not being trained to be preachers, but to be good Christian wives and mothers and to teach women and children; 2) A Home and Bible School for the blind and deaf.

AN EXAMPLE OF PREACHER TRAINING WORK

Note: The Gandhigram School of Preaching (SOP) is two years old and is located in the mountainous state of Arunachal Pradesh, which borders both China and Myanmar (Burma). The local church has elders and the SOP meets in their building. Sixteen students graduated last year and there are presently 18 enrolled; all married. It is a four-day walk from Gandhigram to the nearest bus line. It is conducted by two brothers that graduated from our school in Shillong: Simeon and Nguophosa. Here is their latest report,

Evangelism work for the month of January 2010

1. Ngwazakha village:

A gospel meeting was held here for one day. In it we preached boldly the word of God and converted six souls into Christ. The local members are very glad because the Lord added in His church. And after the meeting we visited some houses, even to those who refused to received our preaching in the meeting

2. Burma:

In the month of January we also visited in five villages in Burma: Goto, Sadi, Nalon, Khaxi and Namula and distributed the Lisu tracts and the beautiful New Testaments in the same language. The people were very good to us and they loved to hear of the New Testament church and the Gospel of Jesus. Five were baptized, two men and three ladies.

3. Gandhigram.

Locally we are visiting house to house and having many debates and discussions with those of the Christian Church every day. One old man from that church was baptized into Christ.

4. Aim for 2010.

We already had discussion meeting with the church elders for 2010. The meeting resolution have passed as follows:

- 1) Yearly three times for gospel meeting.
 - 2) Every month one time to Burma.
 - 3) Bible study on Wednesday and Saturday at church building.
 - 4) Weekly one time visiting village to village.
 - 5) Our aim is to establish another 7 congregations in 2010.
- Please remember us in your prayers.

REPORT FROM “THE GREAT COMMUN- ION”

Alan Highers, Editor, *Spiritual Sword*

“We stated in the October 2009 issue of *The Spiritual Sword* that some were promoting “The Great Communion” on October 4, 2009, to promote unity between Christian churches, Disciples of Christ, and churches of Christ.

“One such service was conducted at the Moody Coliseum at Abilene Christian University. The song before communion was performed by a choir with instrumental accompaniment. The President of ACU participated in the *Waldron Mission Fund* service.

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