International Bible Ministry to The Nations Magazine

Steps to Nowhere
Pagan Religion
Dead Churches
Complacent Christianity

F.B. Meyer’s Secret on Winning a City page 4

Poor Little Gypsy Boy page 10
Recently, as I was traveling from England to Scotland, I stopped at a rest stop. This stop had no service of any kind—no gas, restaurant, or facilities. The one thing that caught my eye was an ancient stone staircase, leading from my level to...well, NOWHERE. Perhaps there once was a house or residence at the top of those stone stairs but an observer would never know it now. These were steps to NOWHERE.

Today's world is like those steps. Millions of people are living out their days as a mere existence. They work, eat, sleep, and then they eventually just die with no goals accomplished. Millions follow pagan religions that offer no hope. In Bali, Indonesia, Mary and I followed a group of women bearing platters of food on their heads down a lonely path and watched them place their food at the feet of stone idols. Then they departed, believing the idols would consume their offering. Millions the world over bow to statues which cannot hear, speak, or move—steps to nowhere!

Religions that offer no hope are steps to nowhere. On the island of Bali, Mary and I saw crumbling brick gods—at every crossroad—in every back garden. In Singapore, we saw a giant Buddha being REPAIRED (not very impressive—a god who must be repaired). We saw a giant sleeping Buddha, again not impressive—a god who is asleep.

On a plane flying into Germany, Mary sat beside a young woman who was a government scientist. The girl was petrified of flying but she had a refuge—a little fuzzy toy chicken—her good luck chicken. For comfort, she rubbed it and rubbed it as the plane was landing (not very convincing).

None of these gods or other gods of the earth can offer their followers a personal relationship. However, our God and Savior Jesus Christ reveals Himself to Believers in a loving, personal way.

Peter wrote, Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps (1 Peter 2:21). Ah—if you follow HIS STEPS, those footprints will not lead you to NOWHERE but to life and peace both now and for eternity. THOSE STEPS will be STEPS TO Somewhere!
It has been this author’s privilege on a number of occasions to speak at Melbourne Hall in Leicester, England. This great church was once pastored by Dr. F. B. Meyer. I will never forget the awesome feeling of standing behind the same pulpit and on the very spot where Meyer stood and preached for so many years of his life. I wish that I could have known him but Leicester made him more real to me than ever before.

In Leicester, I preached in his church, saw the cornerstone that he laid, and walked the streets that he walked. I identified with Meyer in Leicester. I had moved to Leicester to assist in the planting of a new church and to reach the people for Christ. The Pastor of the church at the time, Pastor Paul Bassett, was a great encouragement to me. One hundred years before, Meyer lived in the city for the same purpose. In Leicester, he poured out his soul to those in darkness. Meyer, writing about his ministry in Leicester said:

One of the most popular legends of Brittany is that relating to an imaginary town called Is (pronounced Iss), which is supposed to have been swallowed up by the sea at some unknown time. There are several places along the coast, which are pointed out as the site of this city, and the fishermen have many strange tales to tell of it.

According to them, the tips of the spires of the churches may be seen in the hollow of the waves when the sea is rough, while during a calm the music of their bells ringing out the hymns rises above the waters.

Similarly, as it has always seemed to me, amid the submerged masses, deep down at the bottom of the ocean of human life, there are yearnings and desires for a better life that ring sadly and perpetually. It has been the aim of my life to listen for these, and where I have detected them, to present the only answer—the love of God in Jesus Christ our Lord.

F. B. Meyer had at one time pastored in York. It was there that he met D. L. Moody. Moody and Sankey had arrived from America to discover that the two men who had invited them to England were both dead. Fredrick Meyer, a local pastor, met Moody and invited him to preach. He then introduced Moody to other pastors. Soon the powerful preaching of D. L. Moody swept through the whole country with thousands of conversions. D. L. Moody imparted to F. B. Meyer a love for souls and evangelism. Meyer wrote:

From the beginning of my ministry, I had desired to reach the large masses of the people that are outside our churches…. This desire was deepened during my pastorate at York, where…Moody and Sankey, not...
then so famous, spent about three weeks with me, preaching those sermons and singing those hymns.²

When Meyer assumed the pastorate at Victoria Road Baptist Church, a large church in Leicester, he met stiff resistance to his ministry of evangelism. Victoria Road was a society church with paid pews. Those with wealth were assigned special pews. The working class disliked the pew system with its class and money distinctions. The affluent members of Victoria Road had little interest and some disdain for common people without class.

Meyer wrote:

I had noticed what large crowds gather in public halls and theaters to hear the simple preaching of God’s Word; and I often wished that the time might come when I could preach regularly in a building where all the seats were perfectly open and free to all comers, early attendance alone giving a claim to the same position.³

Meyer’s efforts to lead the church into evangelism antagonized the class-conscious members and were blocked by the same. Victoria Road Baptist Church with its paid pews and social status were steps to NOWHERE!

In May 1878, Meyer resigned as pastor of Victoria Road Baptist Church. However, there were a number of members who had been touched by Meyer’s effort to reach others. Relating to this, Meyer wrote the following:

A number of friends gathered round me and proposed that I should begin preaching to the people in a public hall, the Museum Buildings. Very shortly, the place became crowded on Sunday evenings, even to the adjacent room, where people would sit to hear, though they could not see the speaker. Large numbers also professed conversion, and joined the little church.⁴

On a cold evening in March 1880, about 300 persons gathered to dedicate a piece of ground to God on which a new church building would be erected. In July the memorial stones were laid and on July 2, 1881, the new church, Melbourne Hall, opened its doors for the first service. The building would seat 1,300. When the pews were filled, chairs were placed in the aisles, bringing the capacity to 2,000. The church had 80 workers and sometimes ministered to 2,500 in Sunday school. I lived in his city. I walked in his steps. I preached in his church. I would love to have known him.

Through his years in Leicester, F. B. Meyer poured his heart into the city. He was a practical and “people” person.

²Ibid., 21.
³Ibid., 21.
⁴Ibid., 22.

The Welford Coffee House

F.B. Meyer would meet prisoners at the gate of the prison upon their release and bring them here. He would feed them and bring them to Christ.
During the same years, the old church, Victoria Road, which had rejected Meyer’s evangelistic leadership, grew weaker and weaker. Finally, to survive, the church merged with another Baptist church in the city, leaving their large and glorious building. Today, a cult group uses the building, while Melbourne Hall continues to flourish.

Through his years in Leicester, F. B. Meyer poured his heart into the city. He was a practical and “people” person. He developed a prison ministry that changed many lives. He had noticed that when men were discharged at the prison gate on Monday morning, many of them whose families did not meet them returned to the beer house across the street from the prison. There they would begin again the cycle that had led them to prison in the first place.

Meyer made it his business to wait at the prison gate for these men. He offered to take them to the coffee house instead of the beer house. There he would feed them and witness to them of Christ. Hundreds were converted in this way. He would encourage them to sign a pledge not to drink again. The great problem that these former prisoners faced was that of employment. No one wanted to hire an ex-con. Eventually, Meyer organized business enterprises to give these men work. First, there was the F. B. Meyer Firewood Merchant. With Meyer’s name attached, people bought the wood readily. This was followed by the Window-Cleaning Brigade. Commenting on this enterprise, Meyer wrote:

It was said, a little unfairly, that a man must get into prison before I would do anything to help him... After considerable cogitation, I bought a ladder or two, some pails, and started one or two men on the job of window cleaning. Cards on which my name was printed, which guaranteed their respectability, were left from door to door, to be followed up a day or two after.5

On the same line, and to give employment to the same class, I started the Messenger Brigade. This was intended more especially to help old men who were no longer fit for laborious work. We began with four, in different parts of the town. They stood at certain spots, waiting to be sent on errands, to be called in to black [polish] boots, or do any odd jobs about the house. They wore a specially-made hat with my name in the front, and were paid so much per quarter of an hour, or per quarter of a mile, keeping all they earned.6

On Saturday evening, he and fellow Christians would go through the streets of Leicester looking for people to help. Many overcome by drink would be helped home and given a Gospel witness. On one occasion,
when Dr. Meyer preached at a small chapel, a man approached him. The man shook Dr. Meyer’s hand and kissed it.

F B Meyer, commenting on this wrote: “I confess that it made a choking sensation come to my throat.” The man was one whom Meyer had “met at the gate” of the prison. He was now redeemed and was an active Christian. Dr. Meyer had not only saved his soul but had also saved his life.

F. B. Meyer was foremost a preacher but he was also a public campaigner against sin. He sat on the city council and was partly responsible for closing 400 immoral places.

Meyer’s advice to young ministers was:

To mix freely with the people; to visit systematically and widely; to study men as well as books; to converse with all classes and conditions of men: always on the alert to learn from some fresh pages of the heart.  

I lived in his city. I walked in his steps. I preached in his church. I would love to have known him. God moved me a step closer to that dream by sending Mrs. Edna Knight to our church. Mrs. Knight had at one time been a member of a church pastored by F. B. Meyer. Edna was near 90 years old when she discovered our church. She had been attending another church in the city. One morning on her way to church, she walked by our church, heard the singing, and ventured in. Lifegate Baptist Church was what she had been searching for. Later she

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7Ibid., 56.
told me that she had known Dr. Meyer and had taught a Sunday school class at his church. In a recorded interview that this author had with Edna Knight some years ago, she related the following:

“During the First World War when I was about 16 years old, I attended F. B. Meyer’s church. That was when he pastored at Westminster Bridge Road. During that time, I taught a Sunday school class at the church. When the war ended, Dr. Meyer held a special service to honor those who had fought for our freedom. The British and American flags were displayed in the church that day. There was a special place where the American soldiers were assigned for seating. All the soldiers marched in taking their places. It was a touching service. I expressed a desire to become a member of Dr. Meyer’s church. Although I had been converted some years earlier, Dr. Meyer took nothing for granted. He took me by the hand, looked into my eyes and asked, 'Are you sure? Are you really sure that you have received Jesus Christ into your life?’ Of course, I was, but I always remembered those words spoken to me by F. B. Meyer. To him, following Jesus Christ was far more than simply becoming a member of the church. Dr. Meyer was very much a gentleman in the pulpit and out. He was always so earnest, very sincere, and genuine.”

Amazingly, Edna Knight had been a member of both F. B. Meyer’s church and also G. Campbell Morgan’s church at different times. I asked Edna:

“Mrs. Knight, when you sat under the ministry of these two great preachers, Dr. F. B. Meyer and Dr. Campbell Morgan, what did you feel?” She replied, “I felt the Spirit of God. They made me glad that I had come. It has been long ago but I can still remember the spirit of those meetings. I will tell you how long it has been. I was on my way to Dr. Meyer’s services one Sunday and saw on the placard at the newsstand these headlines, THE TITANIC HAS SUNK! I can still see that headline. Everyone in London was in shock over this.”

Continuing the conversation, I asked, “Mrs. Knight, you are 90 years old. Just for the record, let me ask how active you are able to be in the ministry of your church?” “I attend Sunday morning, Sunday evening, and Wednesday evening and go out witnessing on visitation each Wednesday morning,” was the reply.

At 90 years, Edna Knight continued to live the life for Christ instilled in her as a child by Dr. F. B. Meyer. F. B. Meyer died in 1929. As his body was carried out of the church, the congregation sang the “Hallelujah Chorus” and F. B. Meyer moved out of his church…for the last time.

I lived in his city. I walked in his steps. I preached in his church. I would love to have known him…and now...

I think I do.
Your friendship for the un-reached nations of the world and for the servants of God is priceless. In reality BIMI is an organization of FRIENDS—friends working together to share the Good News of Jesus Christ. What can you do?

ADOPT A COUNTRY.
Survey the list of names at the end of this article and ask God to lay a country on your heart. Pray for that country. Gather data on the need. Ask God to send men and women there to evangelize.

SPONSOR THE 100+NATIONS MINISTRY and the ITERNATIONAL BIBLE MINISTRY. Pray for James and Mary Ray as they head up these ministries.

Friends of this ministry receive the NATIONS MAGAZINE and other reports to keep them informed on their ministry as friends.

— Graham & Melinda Forbes, BIMI missionaries in Central England
(Black Country, Birmingham)

The God of the Whole World

Hi Dr. Ray:

Recently, I was given financial support from BIMI 100 Nations Ministry for my medical missions trip to Kenya. I wanted to give an update on how the trip went. BIMI missionary Becky Pope was also with us.

We worked with a local missionary and church to advertise the free medical clinics that we would be holding. The number of people who showed up for each day of clinic was shocking! There were doctors and nurses available as well as a physical therapist (my dad), an occupational therapist, two dentists, and an optometrist. In total, we saw 2,288 patients in just 4 1/2 days of clinic.

While the medical care we provided was temporal, it opened huge doors to getting the Gospel to many lost souls. God is still using the local believers there to win more people for Him.

I realized how good we truly have it in America. I know that sounds like the cliché thing to say after going on a missions trip, but my eyes were truly opened to that. I realize how great my lack of gratitude has been.

God really showed me just how big He was. He is truly the God of the WHOLE world, not just of America. I cannot thank you all enough for your financial and prayerful support. The trip was truly an experience of a lifetime and I think about Kenya and the relationships I made there so often. My heart is aching to get back.

In Christ,
Noelle Thomas
Emmanuel Baptist Church, Newnan, Georgia (presently a student at Bob Jones University)
Gipsy and Tilly knocked on the doors and asked the people if they knew which one was Mother’s grave. The grave was pointed out to them, and they stood over it, weeping for a long time.

Groby is a nice quiet village on the outskirts of the city of Leicester in England. My husband and I lived there for five years and consider it a special time in our lives. The houses in the village and the surrounding area were neat and tidy, and the gardens (as the British call their yards) were well kept. Because of the cool, wet summers, the grass was always green, and the flowers bloomed beautifully throughout the summer months. The people were reserved but always kind and polite.

About three or four times a year something happened that seemed to disrupt the peaceful flow of the village. THE GYPSIES ARRIVED. There was a huge open field a short distance from our house, and it proved to be the perfect place for them to call “home” for a few weeks. They set up “camp” overnight and by morning, the once open field was full of caravans. There was no running water, no electricity, and no sanitation facilities. With the frequent rainfall in England, the “camp” soon became a very unpleasant sight. Most private landowners knew that by the time they could obtain an eviction notice, the travelers would have moved on to another destination.

In spite of the unpleasantness of the “Gypsy Camp,” I could not look on the Gypsies with contempt as some of our neighbors did because I knew that they were souls for whom Christ died. Also, I knew the story of Gipsy Smith.

Rodney (Gipsy) Smith was born March 31, 1860, in Epping Forest near London. His birthplace was not a hospital, a clinic, or a house but a Gypsy tent because his parents Cornelius Smith and Mary Polly Welch Smith were Gypsies. Even though the Gypsies were not religious and knew little about God and the Bible, they had their children christened because at the christening their births were registered at the parish church.

Cornelius Smith supported his family by making baskets, clothes pegs, and tin ware and by repairing cane chairs. Gipsy reported that before his father’s conversion he “found” the willows for the baskets and the wood for the clothes pegs. He said, “Gypsies only buy what they cannot ‘find.’”

The Gypsy women and children sold what the men made, but the women also were fortune tellers. In his autobiography Gipsy Smith

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wrote, “The Gypsies themselves do not believe this; they know that fortune-telling is a mere cheat, but they are not averse to making profit out of the folly and superstition of gorgios.”

Gorgios is what Gypsies called people who were not Gypsies.

As Gypsies, the Smith family was always on the move. They traveled in the counties of Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk, Cambridge, Bedford, and Hertford. Gipsy said, “I had no education and no knowledge of Gorgio civilization, and I grew up as wild as the birds, frolicsome as the lambs and as difficult to catch as the rabbits. All the grasses and flowers and trees of the field and all living things were my friends and companions.”

While they were traveling in Hertfordshire, Gipsy’s sister became ill. His father quickly headed for the nearest town to find a doctor. Gipsy wrote, “The doctor mounted the steps of the wagon and leaning over the door called my sister to him and examined her. He did not enter our poor wagon. We were only Gypsies.” The doctor informed Cornelius that his daughter had small pox and that they had to leave town immediately. He sent them to Norton Lane, which was about one and a half miles away. The father left his wife and four children in the tent while he took the sick child to the wagon to care for her. Within a short time, another child had small pox, so now there were two patients to care for.

Polly prepared food and put it on the ground between the tent and the wagon. Her husband collected it and took it to the sick children. Polly’s heart was breaking for her children. She feared that they would die and she would not even be with them. Every day when she delivered the food, she got a little closer to the wagon until one day she came too close, and she became sick. The doctor told Cornelius the
sad news that Polly also had smallpox. Cornelius now had three patients and realized that he could no longer keep the family separated, so he brought them all into the wagon. Within a few days, Polly delivered a little baby. The baby only lived a short time.

It was obvious to Cornelius that Polly was dying. Cornelius sat beside her bed and asked her if she thought about God. She replied that she did think about Him, but when she tried to pray, she thought about all that she had done and felt that there was no mercy for her. Her husband assured her that Christ had died for her sins and that God would forgive her.

Cornelius had been in prison for a short time and while he was there, he heard a chaplain speak about Christ and how He died to save sinners. Since Cornelius could not read or write and had no Bible, his knowledge was limited to what he could remember of the chaplain's sermon. Cornelius, overcome with sorrow, went outside the wagon to weep. While there, he heard Polly singing,

I have a father in the Promised Land,
My God calls me I must go,
To meet Him in the Promised Land.

When Cornelius asked her where she learned the song, she replied, “Cornelius, I heard it when I was a little girl. One Sunday, my father's tents were pitched on a village green and seeing the young people and others going into a little school or church or chapel—I do not know which it was—I followed them in and they sang those words.”

Gipsy’s mother sang the song repeatedly, and then she told Cornelius that she was not afraid to die. She said she felt assured that God would take care of her children. On Sunday night, Cornelius knew that Polly was sinking fast. He sat beside her bed all night and Monday she died. When told of her death, Gipsy said, “I remember falling on my face in the lane as though I had been shot and weeping my heart out and saying to myself, ‘I shall never be like other boys, for I have no mother,’ and somehow that feeling has never quite left me, and even now in my man’s life, there are moments that mother is longed for.”

Before Polly died, she asked Cornelius to promise her that he would be a good father to the children. He made that promise, but soon realized that he did not know how to be good. He prayed every morning and night that God would help him to be good. He earned money by playing his fiddle in beer halls. While he was playing, Gipsy was passing the hat for the collection. Being in the beer halls did not help him to be good because he was tempted to drink and he yielded to that temptation quite often.

Cornelius was in great sorrow, but he was also under great conviction by the Holy Spirit. After a woman innkeeper read a portion of Pilgrim's Progress to him and his two brothers, they decided they wanted what Pilgrim had. Cornelius met a road worker who was a Christian and asked him where he could find a Gospel meeting. The worker invited him to Latimer Road Mission. While the congregation was singing “There is a Fountain Filled with Blood,” Cornelius, under great conviction, fell to the floor unconscious. Within a few minutes, he jumped up and shouted, “I am converted; God has made a new man of me.” His brother Bartholomew was converted the same night as Cornelius and his brother Woodlock was converted soon after Cornelius and Bartholomew were.

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5Ibid., 30.
6Ibid., 31-32.
7Ibid., 62.
The Smith brothers were all musical, and after becoming Christians, they formed an evangelistic team and sang and preached all over the country. William Booth, founder of The Christian Movement that later became The Salvation Army, was a great encouragement to the Smith Evangelistic Team.

Cornelius’s five children saw the change that salvation had brought to their father’s life and they all accepted Christ as their Savior. Gipsy was converted at the age of 16. He could not read or write, but after his conversion, he had a great desire to learn. His first books were the Bible, an English dictionary, and Professor Eadie’s Biblical Dictionary. His brothers and sisters laughed at him because he did not know how to read them, but he carried them under his arm everywhere he went. It did not bother him that they laughed. He just said, “I am going to read them someday, and I am going to preach too.”

Gipsy taught himself to read and write, and he did preach. He preached his first sermons to the turnips in the turnip fields. While he was out selling his wares, he looked for opportunities to share the Gospel. He was on good terms with the women in the village. Sometimes quite a number of them would gather in a neighbor’s kitchen, and he would sing and preach to them. Soon, he was known as the “singing Gypsy boy.” As his reading skills improved, he memorized great portions of the Scripture.

When he was only 17 years old, William Booth invited him to be an evangelist with his Christian Mission and he joyfully accepted the invitation. Gipsy looked at his Gypsy clothes and decided that since he was going to be a preacher, he should look like one. He went out and bought a frock coat, a vest, and a pair of striped trousers. He commented, “I will not say that I felt comfortable in these clothes because, the reverse was the truth. I felt as if I had been dipped in starch and hung up to dry by the hair of my head.”

Gipsy traveled to the mission headquarters in London and one of the missionaries met him and took him to the Langston home where Mr. Booth had arranged for him to stay. He arrived in time for the evening meal and for the first time in his life, he had to sit at the table and use a knife and fork, but he was humble enough to admit his limitations to his hosts and asked for their help in learning. Gipsy Smith was the 36th missionary with the Christian Mission.

He took part in meetings and did visitation. His reading abilities were limited and if he had any leisure time, he used it to improve his reading. He spoke in outdoor meetings and sometimes in indoor meetings. Promoted as “Rodney Smith the Converted Gypsy Boy,” he spoke to large congregations and never had a meeting without conversions.

Gipsy married Annie Pennock, who was one of his converts, on December 17, 1879. Gipsy described Annie as a beautiful, unselfish Christian to whom he owed much of his success in the ministry. Annie died at the age of 79 while Gipsy was preaching in America.

There are five Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John and the Christian. Most people will never read the first four.

- Rodney “Gipsy” Smith

The Christian Mission was reorganized as the Salvation Army. Although Gipsy did not feel comfortable with the Army, he remained a part of it until he was dismissed after five years of service. In recognition of their ministry among them, in a public gathering, some kind-hearted friends presented Gipsy with a gold watch and Annie with a five-pound gift of money.

Gipsy and Annie accepted the gifts, and for this, they were dismissed because the Salvation Army had rules against accepting gifts. Gipsy felt that he was treated unfairly, but still he had words of praise and thankfulness for Mr. Booth who had given him his first opportunity to serve as an evangelist. Gipsy Smith became one of the greatest evangelists of all times. He traveled around the world, singing and preaching the Gospel. He preached to hundreds of thousands of people during his lifetime. He never preached a Gospel meeting.

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8Ibid., 85.
9Ibid., 99.
without there being converts. He was a Methodist, but people from all denominations loved him. He preached to the rich and the poor, the educated and the uneducated, and the aristocrats and the common people.

David Lloyd George, who was at one time the British Prime Minister, said, “Should I ever be lost in the wilds of Western America or in the Australian bush where they never heard of British politicians and I didn’t know what to do, I would find the nearest squatter’s or miner’s hut, knock on the door, and say: ‘I am an old friend of Gipsy Smith.’”

He preached to the British troops in France during World War 1, and for this, King George VI made him a Member of the Order of the British Empire. The motherless little Gypsy boy, who never went to school, touched millions of lives around the world, and even though he became famous, he never forgot his heritage. He had a great love for the Gypsies, sought them out, and ministered to them wherever he went. Gipsy Smith died of a heart attack on board the Queen Mary on August 4, 1947. It is said to have been his 45th trip across the Atlantic.

It had been more than 80 years since Gipsy placed his sister Tilly’s small hand in his as they started on their journey to see Mother’s grave. Father had pitched the tent three miles from the Norton church where she was buried. They started out early in the morning. With the church spire as their guide, they wondered through fields and waded through ditches of water until they reached the churchyard. There were some little cottages nearby, so Gipsy and Tilly knocked on the doors and asked the people if they knew which one was Mother’s grave.

Everyone in the village knew the sad story of the Gypsy mother dying and the little children left behind. The grave was pointed out to them, and they stood over it, weeping for a long time. They gathered primrose and violet roots and planted them on top. The women in the cottages who were watching the poor Gypsy children weeping brought them food. They stayed until the afternoon and when the children knew that they must leave, they knelt down and kissed the grave. As they were going through the gates, Gipsy said, “I wonder if there is anything I can do for mother?” He suddenly remembered that he had a gold-headed scarf-pin, which someone had given him. Rushing back to the grave, he stuck the scarf-pin into the ground as far as he could and hurrying back, he said to Tilly, “There, I have given my gold pin to mother!” It was all he had to give. Then they went home to the tents and wagons.

The little Gypsy boy could not know that someday he would give mother a gift far greater than a gold scarf-pin. He would give her a son whose life was fully dedicated to God. A son who would preach the Gospel to millions of people around the world. A son who would see thousands come to faith in Christ. A son who would never forget his dear mother or his Gypsy heritage. Seemingly, the whole world had been made rich by the…

Poor Little Gypsy Boy!

10 Ibid., Back Cover
11 Ibid., 37.
A stirring story on DVD of a young couple who challenged the impossible and set the stage for all that Baptist churches are doing today in missions. Follow their very footsteps with James Ray.

This DVD should be shown in every Baptist church. Use it in Sunday school and church services. Great to show before upcoming mission conferences. (Also included — David Brainerd, John Eliot)

For credit card orders, go to www.bimi.org/resources
(click on History of Missions & Heritage DVDs)

If paying by check, use the attached envelope in this magazine.
Where in the World Is Latvia?

The Baltic nations have suffered, not only at the hands of Russia but also at the hands of Hitler—more so, however, from Russia. When the Russians invaded in 1944, one hundred thousand people were sent in freight trains to Siberia. The suffering was unimaginable. A freedom museum has been established in Riga, the capital of Latvia. It is touching and sad to go there. Read below the words of a Latvian poet describing the horror.

They came in the darkest hour of the night.
They tore us out of our beds, our homes, and our land.

They tore us apart, men from women and children.
They herded us into cattle cars, behind bars.
They denied us food and water.
They drove us toward living death.

Lucky the child, the old, and the sick who died quickly and were left by the wayside.
We who remained were to die slowly
On the barbed wire islands of the Gulag.
We no longer were human; we became numbers.
We were forced to work without food and rest.

Our companions were hunger and death.
Our bones piled up on the frozen ground of the Tundra.
Only a few, years later, could traverse the miles toward home.
Only a few returned, broken, and saints—

Who had gone through hell and had lived!

Pray for missionaries for the Baltics states: Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia. The door is open and the need is great!

Contact Ed Hembree, BIMI Europe Director, for more information. Speak with him at BIMI 423-344-5050.
By Dan Truax

In the Sahara Desert where we worked as missionaries, we learned from the nomads how the desert people discover the nearest source of water when they are dying of thirst in the desert. The desert people will turn a camel loose. The natural inclinations of the camel gives him the ability to find the nearest source of water to drink.

When the camel is about to disappear over the horizon, the desert people mark the direction that the camel took and they will send one man riding another camel behind the lead camel. Soon the first camel will lead all those people following to the only source of water in that entire area of the desert.

We read in John 4:14 “But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.” The world is full of people who need to be directed, who are dying spiritually of thirst, and who are wandering toward death in the desert of sin to the source of the water of eternal life. Horatius Bonar had it correct over 150 years ago when he wrote:

I heard the voice of Jesus say,
“Behold, I freely give
The living water: thirsty one,
Stoop down, and drink, and live.”
I came to Jesus, and I drank
Of that life-giving stream;
My thirst was quenched,
my soul revived,
And now I live in HIM!
– Horatius Bonar

(Photo of Dan taken on his birthday in 2007 by James Ray at Tabernacle Baptist Church in Greenville, South Carolina)
I was a missionary bush pilot in northern Canada when I received one of the big scares of my life. I was taxiing for takeoff from a frozen lake in sub-zero weather when the ice gave way beneath the plane’s skis. I applied power but it was too late. Water and ice came smashing up over the cowl against the windshield! I knew I had to get out immediately. I unbuckled the seat belt, banged the door open, and forced myself out under the wing into the freezing water.

Climbing onto the thin ice, I laid out flat and squirmed slowly until I had snaked my way 100 feet or so from the plane. Then, when I thought it was safe to do so, I stood up and looked back. To my surprise, the plane had not sunk to the bottom of the 90-foot deep water! The tail and wingtips had caught on the ice. By this time, my clothing was frozen stiff. Then I remembered my survival kit, including a waterproof matchbox, was in the plane. “I guess some lessons have to be learned the hard way,” I told myself.

As I hurried toward the shore of the lake, I could not help but think of the three pilots who had gone down when their planes had broken through the ice the year before. I thought too of my many conversations with experienced bush pilots when I began flying in Canada in the ’60s. They explained that there could be undetectable thin spots caused by underwater currents and warned me of the danger of hitting a large unseen snowdrift when trying to land in poor visibility.

They filled me in on “whiteouts,” glassy water landings, and the method of preheating engines in the bush in 30 below temperatures. From what they told me, I thought they must have experienced many narrow escapes. Having flown mostly in the southern states, I had never heard stories like these. “If you fly in the North long enough,” they said, “you will have a few of your own to tell.” At that moment, I was wondering if I would have a story or be a statistic. With the help of a woodcutter, I was able to get home safely late that night. I enlisted my son Jim, Kim Meyering, and Dale Kuipers to help salvage the plane.

Back at the accident site, we spread large beams around the aircraft. These provided footing for the long poles we used to form a double A-frame from which we hung a chain hoist. To prevent the aircraft from being crushed by the fast-forming ice, we used a chain saw to keep it cut back.

On the fourth day, we lifted the plane out of the water and let it down on the ice and boards. We immediately drained the tanks and crankcase and removed and wrapped the radios and instruments. After that, we tied the plane to tow lines behind a couple of snowmobiles and towed it across the lake and up to a clearing on the shore. There, after building a house of 2x4s and wrapping heavy plastic around the plane, we kept it heated for three days and nights to thaw it out. I camped out with it during this time.

I knew the plane would have to be flown out on the lake because the thick bush and rough terrain would not allow us to transport it any other way. We poured in fresh oil, installed the necessary instruments, fueled up the tanks, and added a hot battery. What a thrill it was to hear that Franklin engine roar into life!

I taxied the plane out on the lake and headed her into the wind. As I fed the power, she lifted off and soared into the sky like an eagle in flight. I flew 100 miles to Red Lake, Ontario; I thanked the Lord for bringing both the plane and me through this ordeal without damage or injury.

Such experiences made bush flying in northern Canada exciting. Airports were few and far between so lakes had to provide our “runways” in winter when we used skis and in summer when we used floats.

I am daily thankful to the Lord that after all these years of flying, I am still alive. I am also grateful for my wife, Reba, and for her willingness to work with me in the North. Before we were married, both of us believed the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We were so grateful for the Lord saving us that we made up our minds to spend our lives serving Him in missionary work.

During a church missions conference, a man stood and asked Reba a question he thought would put her on the spot. “Mrs. Cofield, when did the Lord call you to be a missionary?” As she put her hand on me, her answer was “When I married this man.” The pastor later told me those were the most profound words of the conference.

I have been asked more than one time “Why did we go to Canada?” My answer was the love of Christ constrains me.

For more information about the Far North, contact Tony Bulawa, Far North Director of BIMI, 423-344-5050.

1Reba Cofield went Home to be with the Lord on December 1, 2000.
Hi Brother Ray:
I would personally like to thank you for *The Nations Magazine* that you send me. In this edition, “Whosoever” and the article about Philip Bliss were a special blessing and an encouragement to me. Also, thank Mary for her wonderful article about Charles Weigle.
—Larry Haney, Mission Coordinator
Lakeside Baptist Church, Clearwater, South Carolina

Dear Dr. Ray:
I am reading your book *Incredible Journey in the Steps of Greatness* right now. It says that you do speaking engagements at times about your journeys and the events you write about. I would be interested in being on a mailing list or being notified of some of your lectures.
—Kevin Elliott

Dr. Ray:
May God bless you in your work for our Savior and Lord. Count me as a sister in Christ.
—Lula Mae Wright, Hendersonville, North Carolina

Dear Brother James and Mary:
It was such a blessing to receive *The Nations Magazine*! We love it! Such a blessing! We look forward to it. Also received your letter celebrating 50 years of missions. That blesses us as our hearts are on missions all these years and have been our priority in ministry.
—Pastor Bob and Margie Archer, Navarre, Florida

Dear Dr. and Mrs. Ray:
I want to thank you both again SO MUCH for the time you spend preparing *The Nations Magazine*. This magazine is a treasure to me. We have Dr. Charles Weigle’s choir books at church with his personal life stories included in them. When I opened *The Nations Magazine* we just received at Victory Baptist Church, I saw an article in there about him and could not wait to read it along with the Philip Bliss and D.L. Moody stories.
—Terri Hamm, Victory Baptist Church, Macon, Georgia

Dear Brother James and Mary:
There are times when I wish I could put in words what is in my heart. You have helped and inspired me beyond measure. I just finished *Embracing the World* again and your *Nations Magazine*. I am thankful and blessed to be friends.
—Garland Cofield, Retired missionary to the Far North, founder of Camp of the Woods, Canada

Dear James:
Thank you for your recent issue of *The Nations Magazine*. The layout was beautiful. The information was extremely helpful and very interesting. I have never seen the picture of D.L. Moody you used on page four. This is the first time I ever saw an image of Lucy Bliss, page three. Great job my friend. Let’s finish strong.
—Dr. Clarence Sexton, Temple Baptist Church, Powell, Tennessee

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