God has a spiritual, global healthcare plan. Simply stated, we are to Go...into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature (Mark 16:15). It can seem overwhelming as we consider the task of promoting God’s saving health among all nations. It is encouraging to see those who have surrendered to full-time missionary service. However, in comparison to the earth’s population, the number of laborers is miniscule. What Jesus emphasized while He was on earth is still true today, “The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few” (Matthew 9:37). So, with such a small number of laborers and such a large harvest, how can we indeed promote God’s saving health among all nations?

First—and foremost—there must be an earnest prayer for God’s help. Our 2021 theme comes from Psalm 67:2. In Psalm 67:1, the Psalmist prays, God be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause his face to shine upon us; Selah. The thought I would like to emphasize is simply this: there is no way we can effectively promote God’s saving health among all nations (Psalm 67:2) without God’s mercy, God’s blessings, and God’s face shining on us (Psalm 67:1). We must plead for God’s enablement and power as we proclaim the Good News about the Great Physician. Too often we trust in personalities, programs, plans, and/or promotions to accomplish the Great Commission. Only God can save souls. Without His help, all human efforts are meaningless. One of the good things that has come from the recent worldwide pandemic is a greater dependence on God. Most of the old standby methods of reaching people became obsolete during the height of COVID-19. Thus, many of us were forced to “think outside the box” and by faith trust God alone for results.

Second, there must be an eager promoting of God’s way. It is imperative that we continually proclaim to a world infected by the Sin Virus that they...
must personally meet with the Chief Physician, take His certified prescription, and accept the complete payment He has made. Obviously, it is important that we use every means possible to spread this message of hope. In particular, we are to preach His Word because it is by the foolishness of preaching that God has chosen to save them that believe (1 Corinthians 1:21). In addition to preaching, we are to commit...to faithful men God’s way of sanctified living so that they will be able to teach others also (2 Timothy 2:2). When a missionary leads people to Christ, that is addition. But when those new converts are trained and they lead others to Christ, that is multiplication. In a word, this is called discipleship. Discipling new believers involves helping them understand that receiving God’s cure for sin (justification) leads to a life of separation from sin (sanctification). We are to teach them how to live a healthy life, which involves daily spiritual disciplines and exercises. Although this is not always easy for new converts (or old converts), the fact remains that the only way to live an abundant (healthy) life is to live according to God’s Word (God’s way). Jesus said, “I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly” (John 10:10b). Please take some time to read the articles that follow this editorial, which emphasize the importance of discipling believers so they can teach others also.

As we earnestly pray for God’s help and we eagerly promote God’s way, the result will be eternal praise for God’s goodness. Psalm 67:3–4 gives the exhortation, Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee. O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth. Selah. God will ultimately receive eternal and global praise. Philippians 2:10–11 reminds us that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Since God wants everyone to be saved, it is no wonder that we are to promote God’s saving health among all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues (Revelation 7:9). The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all (every creature) should come to repentance (2 Peter 3:9). God will have all men (from every nation) to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth (1 Timothy 2:4). Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men (Psalm 107:8, 15, 21 & 31)!

The Lord’s Global Healthcare Plan requires God’s sustaining help to promote God’s saving health, which culminates in God’s supreme honor. Let us earnestly and continuously plead for God’s power to eagerly and effectively promote His saving health as we anticipate the day He is eternally and globally praised for His goodness!
The key to long-term church planting efforts on the mission field lies in the training of national pastors. Sufficiently trained national pastors are what allows for autonomy for churches started by missionaries. As well, national missionaries involved in the church planting effort will multiply the number of churches planted. It is thrilling to see how the Lord uses nationals in these ways.

When the Fundamental Baptist Church of Bingerville, Ivory Coast, opened in June 2000, one of its first visitors was a teenager named Toussaint COULIBALY (koo-lee-bah-lee). Toussaint accepted Christ in the first few months of the church’s life and immediately began working with the children’s ministry. Toussaint’s testimony resulted in the salvation of his father, Sapané (Sah-pah-nay) COULIBALY. Sapané had become an alcoholic and had lost his job at age 47. Holy Spirit conviction as well as a clear testimony from family members brought him to Christ. He was baptized into the membership of the Bingerville church.

At that time, I was teaching classes at our Bible institute in Anyama, located about an hour and 15 minutes from Bingerville. I began teaching those same classes at our church in Bingerville. Sapané immediately enrolled and began ministerial training. He did not mention to me at that time that he felt the Lord directing him back to his village to start a church there.

When I opened another Bible institute in Grand Bassam in 2003, Sapané enrolled there and continued his training. His work in those two Bible institutes resulted in four years of Bible training. In 2005, he began an internship at our Bingerville church where he was instrumental in the pastoral, medical, and village ministries. Although he was among the oldest in our church at that time, he was certainly one of the humblest and wisest of our members. His work in our church was invaluable and his insight and advice were extremely helpful to me.

In March 2008, Sapané had arranged for us to travel to his village in the far north of the country to preach at his father’s funeral. Zanpliedougou (zah-nah-play-doo-goo) is 450 miles north of Abidjan. The trip entailed travel through rebel territory and the Lord allowed us to arrive safely. There were 60 people who accepted Christ by faith after two hours of preaching on Thursday evening and then Friday evening. The village chief asked us to appoint a missionary to lead these new converts, and the village gave us land for a church building.
We returned to Bingerville and presented the opportunity to our church. The Bingerville church voted to plant this church in the village of Zanapledougou. Since Sapané had completed institute training, a three-year internship, and had demonstrated to the Bingerville church that God had given him the talents and abilities necessary to pastor, our church voted to authorize Sapané to move back to his village and begin the work of planting the church. At that point, he was 55 years old.

The Zanapledougou (Zanaple) church opened in January 2009. The following year we had a groundbreaking ceremony there where many chiefs and visitors came from surrounding villages. With time, the Zanaple church began reaching out to nearby villages, including Mambiadougou and Léraba, to bring the Gospel to those villages. Every time I would visit with the Zanaple church, Sapané would wear me out going from work to work, even though he was ten years older than I.

Throughout our fifth and sixth terms, Sapané began attending seminary classes at our seminary where he took graduate classes. He continued his pastorate at the Zanaple church and continued to oversee its growth and ministries. It became remarkably clear that the institute training and internship experience that Sapané had received had been put to good use. Under the authority of the Bingerville church, Sapané was bringing the Zanaple church along to eventual autonomy.

As we prepared for our return to the field for our sixth term, we received the sad news that Sapané had fallen ill to cancer. It took him quickly. He passed away and was buried before we could return to the field. This has been a crushing blow for me on many different levels. It is extremely difficult for me to see to the continuing of the work there without him.

Yet, I traveled to Zanapledougou for the first time since our return the third weekend of April this year. The chief of the village is emphatic about our continuing the church. We still have our land and building, and we are still welcome to evangelize as we wish. We met with the church and began the plan for continuing without Sapané. It was so evident to me how the Lord had used Sapané to evangelize this village and plant a church there. He will forever be remembered among our people.

Pray for us as we continue the Zanaple work that the Lord would supply a new pastor. We need someone who is capable for the task, who has received the necessary institute training and internship experience as Sapané did, and who can work with the people in their language and culture.
Although a goal of missions is to establish indigenous, local churches that can financially support their own fully trained and equipped pastor, is there a way for Christians in America to get involved without causing a dependency on outside resources? How can caring Christians effectively partner with missionaries in order to help national pastors without hindering the indigenous process?

Let me start by saying that each mission field is going to be a bit different. The way we do things in third world countries will be much different than second or first world countries. I do believe there are principles of missions in the Bible that definitely work for every missionary in every field, but there are methods that will differ from field to field.

There must be accountability and oversight in place for the national leadership with regard to finances, just as missionaries and pastors in the States need to have someone to whom they answer. Accountability is vital for all of us!

In the 25 years we have planted churches in Uganda, we have found great success by helping our Ugandan churches on a reciprocal basis. Here is how we do it:

Once there is a group of saved and discipled believers in an area, we encourage them to look for a piece of land that one of the members can donate or that I can help them purchase.
The African Christians are then responsible for making the bricks—about 25,000 by hand, using the local soil. When the bricks are ready, I purchase the cement needed to put up the walls and they provide the sand and gravel. The believers are responsible for either purchasing or harvesting the timber needed for the roof. When I see the timber is cut and ready, I purchase the corrugated roofing. All of the labor is done by this group of believers. Throughout this process, the people understand that I am only helping them. This creates an attitude of ownership and gratitude—not one of entitlement. It is their building with their sweat, blood, and tears in it, and they do an amazing job!

These Christians are learning that they can go to God just like we do to get their needs met. There is not an American God who can and an African God who cannot. They are enjoying the blessings of God through their own efforts and through the financial help of others. They are seeing that God can and does answer their prayers.

I think we learn the principle of working together on a reciprocal basis from God Himself. The majority of His promises are only applicable IF we do what He has commanded first. We do our part, and God does His.

Our purpose is to establish indigenous Baptist churches pastored by national men. This is a church that is locally built, locally governed, and locally supported. Without this goal, they will never survive past the foreign support given to them on that monthly basis, and God will never become real to them or to their churches.
A major aspect of world missions is the training of national leadership. It has been said that to have lasting success one must have successors. Without trained leaders to carry on the work, missionaries are limited. Trained national pastors multiply the effectiveness of a missionary and are a vital part of fulfilling the Great Commission. The result is not only addition but also multiplication of churches.

“Where did you find these people to train for ministry?” I have been asked this question many times. Obviously, to train people one must have people to train! We ought to desire our missionaries to have an abundance of trained leaders on their respective mission fields. Some struggle to find those willing to be taught. Below are nine principles God has shown me and has engraved on my heart.

When I began deputation, I felt clueless as to how to plant churches in Africa. I knew I was called to be a church planter. God impressed upon me the need for African leaders to preach and lead the churches that would be started. I asked many people to pray that God would call laborers.

Koffi Antoine, one of the men I trained in the Ivory Coast, noticed that each missionary had a Bible verse on his prayer card. Mine was Matthew 9:36–38. He stated it was like a prophecy. He said that everywhere I started churches men would soon be called to preach. He said it was God’s will for me to have several men called to preach.

The first principle is to pray to the Lord of the harvest (Matthew 9:36–38). Jesus wants leaders even more than we do. We have not because we ask not. The harvest belongs to Jesus. He is the Master, the Lord of the harvest. He wants laborers in the harvest. He said to ask Him to send forth laborers. If this is neglected, then we will never reach our potential in the training of leaders.

Koffi Antoine, one of the men I trained in the

Ivory Coast, noticed that each missionary had a Bible verse on his prayer card. Mine was Matthew 9:36–38. He stated it was like a prophecy. He said that everywhere I started churches men would soon be called to preach. He said it was God’s will for me to have several men called to preach.

The second principle is that missionaries need to be faithful in that which is least (Matthew 25:21; Luke 16:10–12; 19:17; Hebrews 3:2). They must activate their gifts and callings as they are used for the Lord. It is like a new credit card—one must activate it. In the ministry, God will not work through the inactive. Missionaries need to faithfully use their training and spiritual gifts and to daily be filled with the Holy Spirit.
We have a national missionary, Francis, serving in Mali. We have three works in that 10/40 Window country that is 90% Muslim. The country is so dangerous that most mission agencies have withdrawn. Our main church typically had 150 adults and that many children before COVID. The pastor was trained primarily by Francis. Francis is from Burkina Faso. He moved to Ivory Coast for work when he was in his 20s. He was saved through one of my village churches and was soon called to preach. Francis worked as a foreman at a banana plantation. For five years I drove 36 miles each day to pick him up after work and take him to Bible institute classes and bring him home after class. We drove through floods, riots, and roadblocks where police were looking for bribes. It was tedious, tough, and expensive. It was worth it. For 19 years he has been faithfully serving God. BIMI has no missionaries living in Mali; yet, we have a good foundation to build on from which we can reach souls in that Saharan country. Francis goes before the government to help maintain our paperwork to operate in Mali. He plans to start two new churches as more men are trained. He preaches weekly on three radio stations, reaching into the homes of thousands. I keep in contact with him through internet, phone, and occasional visits. If we did not have a trained preacher there, the works would have died long ago.

We must be sure to train missionary candidates to faithfully pour their lives into each new convert. If we neglect to disciple infant Christians, who will God send to us for training?

Third, a leader must study his ministry. He needs to analyze it, meditate on it, and give it fully unto God. The ministry is not his; it belongs to God. It is crucial to get advice from experienced pastors and missionaries. Writing down what God shows them is a great help.

Fourth, trainers of leaders must discern who is serious and who is not, who is called of God, and who is not. They will encounter men of quality and character, and they will encounter deceivers, covetous men, and opportunists. Leaders need God to filter out those who are not committed and faithful.

Leaders may have a modern-day Timothy, Titus, Judas, John Mark, Demas, or Gehazi. God can help them to have discernment if they ask Him for it. But He may allow a Judas to come in. “Product in” does affect “product out.” They must patiently work with the faithful ones. Leaders must look for the potential (Proverbs 25:13, 19; 2 Timothy 2:2). Some faithful men may not be the “sharpest.” Sometimes the sharp ones use their abilities for their own gain and many trainers of leaders have been deceived and hurt. Missionaries must seek character.

Some who are striving to train men for the ministry have wasted a lot of time, money, emotions, and labor on men who God knew were not serious. God expects us to be discerning stewards. Churches must not only give to support missionaries but also pray for God to give them discernment. God has delivered me from some bad situations purely due to the prayers of saints in churches who support me.

The fifth principle is that we produce kind after kind. What we are will be a key factor in what we produce. Those who train others must be teachable, obedient followers of Jesus themselves to faithfully teach others what they have learned. We produce who we are.

Jérémie, a man whom I trained, said, “I am going to start three churches in my village and neighboring villages.” I said, “Whoa, Rome was not built in a day.” He said, “But you did it.” Most of the men I have trained have a burden for church planting.

Principle six is that those who would train leaders must have a shepherd’s heart. The Lord refers to His followers as sheep. He is the Good Shepherd. Those who train other believers and leaders are under-shepherds. The key to training leaders is to have a shepherd’s heart. Shepherds lead rather than push. Good shepherds will follow The Good Shepherd. They will lay down their lives for the sheep. Hirelings will flee when things get tough, inconvenient, costly, frustrating, or seemingly fruitless. Leaders ought to be like the Good Shepherd. They should give the men they are training responsibility and opportunities to serve others and see their zeal, compassion, love, service, and sacrifice or lack thereof. A good trainer of leaders will live it, preach it, teach it, and teach others to do the same. See the example of Pastor Sadock in the next article.
Seventh, **knowledge and experience are both necessary.** Some have zeal without knowledge, and others have knowledge without zeal. The goal is to have both intertwined in the lives of the ones being trained.

Well structured, clear, and deep Biblical teaching of the Scriptures is foundational knowledge. The trainer of leaders must be sure that those whom they are training are soundly taught. This, of course, demands that they are capable of teaching and know the Word of God themselves. This demands reliance on the Holy Spirit and the Scriptures. 1 Corinthians 8:1 warns that knowledge *puffeth up.* Without love and humility, some have been puffed up after having obtained knowledge. A man who does not know the Scriptures and principles of God’s Word is not fit for the ministry nor is a man who knows the Bible but is not submitted to God and serving others.

Trainees need outside the classroom experience, doing hands-on training in as many aspects of the ministry as possible. They should serve as the trainer observes. They should be shown by example how to win souls, make visits, counsel, solve problems, plan, troubleshoot, and so forth.

After the men graduated from the college, I had them teach a Bible college class for experience. I sat in the back observing and reserved ten minutes of class time to complete and explain what I felt was lacking or unclear. This way the graduate gained great experience, but the students did not miss vital truths that would have been neglected due to inexperience. Then in private, I would give advice or instruct the graduate.

Principle eight is that **men being called to the ministry is a sign of a healthy ministry.** One should be asking some serious questions if they never or rarely have people called into the ministry.

Finally, **training others is a God-given responsibility.** Jesus asked Peter: *Lovest thou me?* If the answer is yes, then *feed my sheep* (John 21:15 and 17). Basically, Jesus was saying, “Peter, I have a question for you and based on your answer, I have a mission for you.” If we love Jesus, we should feed His sheep. The books of first and second Peter show how seriously Peter took that conversation! Every believer who loves Jesus should be helping in their local church to disciple and edify Jesus’ sheep and lambs. Our churches in America must produce missionaries who do just that.

In conclusion, part of our obedience to the Great Commission is to teach *them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you* (Matthew 28:20). I hope these few thoughts will help many in their quest to do just that. May the Lord empower us to focus on helping each believer to reach his full potential for Him. If the missionaries we are sending and supporting will do these things, there will be an increase of trained laborers working alongside them, accelerating the fulfilment of the Great Commission in our generation.
Mark 16:15 states: And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

How can we go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every person? At face value, it seems like an impossible task. However, we have a God who can do the impossible. This command is a work we cannot do alone; therefore, we are to support the missions program of our church to help fulfill this task of reaching a lost and dying world with the Gospel.

We have been missionaries in Uganda, East Africa, for 25 years. During this time, the Lord has allowed us to see many people saved and to start multiple churches as well as a Christian...
school and Bible college. Our desire is to reach the multitudes with the Gospel and to see hundreds of churches started. However, we cannot do this on our own. This is why we work together with other missionaries and national pastors to train Christian leaders through the Bible college. We are currently training men and women from Uganda, Rwanda, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. We plan to start a second Bible college next year in Northern Uganda to train people from South Sudan.

One of the reasons we need to train national leadership is the multiplicity of languages. In just the few countries mentioned, there are about 200 different languages and as many different tribes and cultures. I know people who can speak four or five languages, but I do not know of anyone who can speak 200 or more languages! Thus, it is essential for us to train leaders from the different countries where we minister.

In Uganda, there are multiple tribes in the surrounding countries that not only have different languages but also have their own customs and/or culture. It takes time for a foreigner (missionary) to learn a new language and culture. This is especially challenging when there are 55 different tribes and languages in one country! How can we reach this country with the Gospel when we struggle to speak just one of the languages? The solution is to train national leadership. Many of the people of Uganda as well as ones from the surrounding countries speak three or four different tribal languages and are familiar with the customs too. So, by training national leaders, we can reach more people with the Gospel.

A good example is Pastor Sadock who is from Rwanda. He escaped to Uganda during the Rwandan genocide. Tragically, as he was escaping, his brother was shot and killed right beside him. Years later, Sadock came to visit our church in Kampala, Uganda. He got saved and was one of the first graduates from East Africa Baptist College. Pastor Sadock worked with us as an assistant pastor and taught in the Bible college. Then after about a year, he said God was calling him back to Rwanda to minister to his own people. This meant he was going back to witness and minister to some of the people who may have been the ones who killed his brother and who had tried to kill him. We talked for some time, and he said that he understood this, yet God was calling him to go.

Pastor Sadock has been back in Rwanda for several years now. He did not have to go to language school nor struggle to learn the culture. He already knows the culture and speaks several of the languages. He was able to get directly into ministry by starting Bible studies and preaching points. He has also been buying time on a radio station and preaching the Gospel. It was through his radio ministry that
he led John to the Lord. He then trained John in the ministry, and they started a preaching point in John’s village.

In November 2019, Pastor Sadock invited me to come and preach the Charter Service for their first church in Rwanda. The pastor of this church is John. My wife and I were amazed to look out over the crowd of about 250 people and realize that this was fruit from the ministry of training national leaders. God helped us train a man who in turn trained another! There were several saved and baptized at that service, and over 70 adults signed the charter and became members of the church.

After that service, Pastor Sadock showed us a location in the capital city of Kigali where he will soon start another church. There are several other places around the country where they are preparing to start new church plants.

It is very difficult for a foreign missionary to go to Rwanda because the government mainly wants businessmen to come to their country. However, Pastor Sadock was able to go and preach in Rwanda because that is his home country. Because we trained national leaders, we now have churches in Rwanda!

Our national leaders plan to start a training center in Rwanda to train more leaders, and they also plan to start a radio station. Pastor Sadock turned in paperwork to the government, and we now have permission to “legally” start Baptist churches in Rwanda. This may even make it easier for foreign missionaries to come into the country. This is all being made possible because of training national leaders.

What seemed like an impossible task of going into all the world to preach the Gospel now seems possible! We can make a difference by following the Biblical examples of winning souls, giving to missions, and training national leaders.

Editor’s note: The Pridgen’s daughter, Jennifer Bundy, was one of the new missionaries accepted during the 2021 Candidate School (see pages 18–19).
Training national leadership has been at the core of our 22 years of ministry in Kenya. During the COVID-19 lockdowns of 2020, we were able to see how necessary the training of national leadership is. Below are a few excerpts from our January/February 2021 prayer letter.

“Blessing in Disguise — In 2020 we transitioned our main Bible college into satellite branches in many local churches due to the COVID-19 lockdown and restrictions. Each of these locations has been meeting weekly throughout the 2020 school year, and we were excited to have 12 new students enrolled in 2020 for a total of 25 active students at seven different locations during the locked down year.

Blessing Beyond Measure — In preparing for 2021, we talked with many of our pastors and decided to fully advertise the Local Church Bible College option for the new school year. Now we currently have 80 active students meeting at 12 different church locations, and these students are coming from 30 churches and Bible studies scattered throughout the villages around Kisii and Kisumu!

Blessing Abundantly — We thank the Lord for God’s faithful men whom He has put in these churches and their commitment to train their people. We have worked with most of these pastors for more than 10 years and have been able to train them personally. We are renewed with a new passion of hope of what the future holds for this part of Kenya. We thank God for His fruit which remains! In John 15:16 Jesus says, “Ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain.”

Following many of the examples of Paul has helped in the ongoing training of national leadership. His methods are time-tested and they have been proven to work in many countries around the world.

In the book of Acts, Paul is recorded as establishing churches in four provinces of the Roman Empire (Galatia, Macedonia, Achaia, and Asia) in little more than 10 years. Because
his work was fully accomplished, he could then plan a missionary journey to the West without worrying about the churches that he had established. He left them with everything that they needed to know to be successful. He was intense and committed to that group of people while he was there. His example of his last words with the Ephesian members in Acts 20:20–27 shows us exactly how he worked with them on a daily basis: *I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publickly, and from house to house, testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. . . . I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.*

The passage in 2 Timothy 2:2 also helped me formulate our beginning effort to make a foundation that would allow God to work in the lives of the nationals in His time. *And the things that thou has heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. There are four generations of leaders here: Paul to Timothy to Faithful Men to Others.* I had a desire to see the ministry continue to future generations.

It was my goal to help the national leaders understand everything that I had received from others in my life. Those things that led me to commit my life to the Lord took time and a process of influence from others. It will take that same time and process with them to learn and apply the same principles to their lives. For many it will take longer because they are first generation Christians.

This process of leadership should always be rotating, moving, and active in order for it to run like a well-oiled machine. In order to keep this from becoming stagnant, every generation must continue learning from someone, and they should always have someone to teach. Every kind of responsibility of leadership should be encouraged and discipled in the process. Every expectation should be inspected to ensure that it has been carried out.

Without fail, there will be those who quit, fall into sin, get tired, or have circumstances in their lives or families that will hinder them from being leaders. It has to be a never-ending process. When one person is hindered from moving forward, there are others to carry on the burden of the training. Something we have taught our men is that this process
is much bigger than any individual. It is all part of a larger plan that God has to reach the world for Christ.

To be successful Biblically like Paul, the culture of how things are done must change. In order to change the culture in the ministry, it has to start with developing young people more intensely. The adults will take more time and have conflicts from time to time. Children will be youth; youth will be adults. One must start teaching leadership qualities early and he will see the best results in the years to come. One needs to give leaders-in-training opportunities to lead where it will stretch them and exercise what they know a little at a time.

There are many things that a person learns and sees in hindsight because it is the only way that it is clear. I have learned the following things regarding training leaders, and there will be more to come in the future:

- I cannot lead everyone. Everyone will not be willing to follow me.
- I need to not be a stumbling block to their growth. I must understand that people develop at different growth rates.
- If I have a problem “getting through” to someone, then I pass them off to someone else who is trained, and the gap is bridged for their development to continue.
- I have learned that in a different culture, I am not always right. There are other ways to apply the Word of God in different cultures.

In the last 10–12 years, we have seen many of our pastors developing leaders who are teaching others. This culture of training leadership now has produced several churches that are not just existing, but they are growing and taking the Gospel message to villages around them. The pastors have been trained and they want their people to be trained and members to be developed into leaders too. Some still need encouragement, but many are using their own leadership abilities and are helping others to do the same. We are so thankful for the nationals whom we are working with here in Kenya!
We Are Back!
Candidate School 2021 Marks a Return to Normal
By Dan DeLong, BIMI Candidate/Deputation Director

The pandemic is just about over and we completed our first in-house Home Office Candidate School June 7–11. What a great blessing it was to have all the missionaries on the BIMI campus! Our theme “Promoting God’s Saving Health Among All Nations” was on full display as God has led our Year One and Year Two missionaries to Australia, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Ethiopia, Germany, Ghana, Honduras, Ivory Coast, Malawi, Mexico, Military, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Philippines, Republic of Ireland, Romania, Sahara Initiative, South Africa, Uganda, Ukraine, and USA.

Please join me in prayer for all these candidates as they start their journeys on deputation. The United States is not the same and the world is not the same as it was two years ago. God’s “Saving Health” can and will turn the Sin Virus around through the lives and works of these missionaries.
2021 Candidate School

Stephen Barrett
BRAZIL

Tim & Jennifer Bundy
ETHIOPIA

Eric & Jessica Curtis
MALAWI

Joel & Vivian Dye
UGANDA

David & Lily Johnson
BRAZIL

Jeff & Becka Johnson
BRAZIL
Continuing a Legacy
The 2021 Candidate School enjoyed the presence of the second and/or third generation missionaries pictured below.

**Left to right:** JJ & Allison Spillman, Andrew & Shawn Canavan, David & Lily Johnson, Brandon & Kathy Lane, Seth & Susana Lunday, Stephen Barrett, Jeff & Becka Johnson, Joshua & Bethany Furan, Roxanne Ribeiro, Tim & Jennifer Bundy
Clearly, in order to carry out all parts of the Great Commission, the missionary must be involved in indigenous church planting. Much could be said concerning the philosophy of church planting and training nationals. What is obvious, however, is that indigenous church planting requires trained leadership such as pastors, evangelists, teachers, musicians, administrators, etc. All must be well trained Biblically and practically to continue and multiply the ministry of the missionary. Usually, there are no Bible colleges or institutes in the place where the missionary labors. Often, if there are schools, they are quite liberal and not at all fundamental. Therefore, it becomes incumbent upon the missionary who wishes to obey the Great Commission to provide quality training so that the work can become indigenous and continue when he has to leave the field.

Training national leadership is one of the best ways a missionary can “multiply” himself on the mission field. For example, if a missionary can reproduce himself in the lives of 20 others, he has “multiplied” his potential ministry twentyfold.

The first BIMI missionaries arrived in Europe in 1962 and since then our numbers have grown and the countries in which the missionaries have worked have increased. Today, we have 90 missionaries laboring in 21 of the European countries. Throughout the years our missionaries have not only evangelized and planted churches but also endeavored to train national leadership to take the church plants on to multiply themselves by sending out their own missionaries.

Unfortunately, we do not have a complete record of all the training efforts of our missionaries through the 60 years of our presence in Europe. However, to the left is a list of known Bible institutes and/or colleges that have been started. Some of these have continued until today, others have not. We praise the Lord for the good work that has been done and still is being done by our faithful missionaries.

Collectively, these training institutions have graduated more than 200 men and women prepared for ministry. From these graduates, at least 250 churches have been started in countries all across Eastern and Western Europe. At least one of these colleges, the one in Romania, is under the direction now of West Coast Baptist College in Lancaster, California, and continues to offer training for both national workers as well as missionary young people who want to remain in Europe for their college training.

The mission and the method have not changed. If we are to follow the New Testament pattern of establishing indigenous churches, our missionaries must continue to provide quality Biblical and practical training of nationals. Thank you for praying for our men and women who are laboring in Europe.
13 POSTER SET

To view and purchase the posters, go to www.bimi.org/posters
I just wanted to mention a few things about the way I have trained nationals and put men in leadership. Each missionary has his own methods of training that works for his country, culture, and people. For me and the fields where I have labored, I have found that after a young man has surrendered to preach or to full-time service, it is best to give him an opportunity to just do it! There does have to be some training in what to do and what not to do. I train men by example, through study, with books, and by one-on-one.

Oftentimes, a missionary will not let his national “in training” teach or preach on a regular basis due to the fact that he just does not know what to do and he may make a lot of mistakes. However, on many occasions, the national can do a better job due to the culture, language, and acceptance of the people.
Baptist International Bible Institute (BIBI) was founded in Atlanta, Georgia, in 1985 by Dr. Grant Carter and Pastor Dan Tibbs for the purpose of training inner-city church planters and church leaders in Black America. In 1989 I became the Director after 13 years in the West Indies, the last seven years teaching at Bluewater Bible College. It was there I saw the great need for training church planters and pastors.

BIBI has now trained hundreds of preachers, missionaries, evangelists, and Sunday school teachers. Well over 50 graduates of the institute have planted or restarted fundamental, Bible-preaching Baptist churches. Also, almost 100 graduates are now assistant pastors and church leaders, in addition to over 200 others who are Sunday school teachers, deacons, and children’s workers.

This last year was especially challenging when it looked as though BIBI would close for a year due to COVID-19 concerns. The student body was totally against in-person classes. We were met with a problem but God provided the answer. We began the September semester online using the GoToMeeting platform and it proved to be more than successful to meet the local students’ needs. The great surprise and blessing is that we enrolled three new students outside of the Atlanta area: one in Nashville, Tennessee, one in Centre, Alabama, and one in middle Georgia.

The next semester begins in September 2021. Our plan is to have in-person classes at BIBI. We will continue online classes with GoToMeeting, and we plan to stream on Facebook and YouTube. We can now enroll students from anywhere in the world! After 36 years of Holding Forth the Faithful Word, we begin a new and an exciting adventure. To God be the Glory! What began as an insurmountable problem that threatened to close BIBI has become a shower of blessing with so many opportunities and possibilities.

Editor's Note: Brother John Ridings is a decorated Vietnam veteran and has served in missions in church planting since 1972 in Peru, the United States, and Mexico. He has buried two wives and a daughter on the mission field.
Even before we knew about the COVID-19 pandemic, I would hear comments from those who claimed to be in the know that America had become a post-Christian nation. With the arrival of this most recent pandemic, church ministries across our nation and around the world have had to navigate and operate under regulations, mandates, and lockdowns. It has been an extremely difficult time for churches and Christians. Mix this with the current political climate in America and the unrest across our nation and it becomes easy to think we might be living in a post-Christian nation called the United States of America.

As we travel in our ministry with BIMI and the Reseeding America Ministry, I am starting to challenge churches and Christians about the opportunities that we have been given to reach our nation. So many people are filled with fear. The pandemic gave us much to be concerned about, but the Word of God addresses fear. *For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind* (2 Timothy 1:7).

This is a Bible promise that needs to be shared with our fearful nation.

I believe there are people all over this great country who have been impacted by current events and are looking for answers and truth concerning their future, their families, and their finances. I recently spoke with a young man who checked me into my motel room and his comments were an open invitation for me to share the Gospel. As we talked, he said, “I don’t know what to believe anymore!” Many across our land are probably thinking those very same thoughts. As Christians we have something real to believe in. We have something worth sharing. We have the Word of God!

Christianity is what shaped our nation and made her great. We were a nation founded on Christian and Biblical principles. Many of our cherished values were shaped from Scripture. Revisionist history will deny this fact but past American presidents did not deny it. The following quotes from past presidents are amazing!
“The teachings of the Bible are so interwoven and entwined with our whole civic and social life that it would be literally impossible for us to figure to ourselves what that life would be if these teaching were removed.” —TEDDY ROOSEVELT

“America was born a Christian nation. America was born to exemplify that devotion to the elements of righteousness which are derived from the revelations of Holy Scripture.” —WOODROW WILSON

“American life is builded, and can alone survive, upon . . . [the] fundamental philosophy announced by the Savior nineteen centuries ago.” —HERBERT HOOVER

“This is a Christian Nation.” —HARRY TRUMAN

Perhaps we need to think of our nation differently. Instead of thinking we are a post-Christian nation, maybe we should think of America as a Pre-Christian Nation. Recent surveys show that we are at an all-time low when it comes to church attendance and belief in any religion in America. If Christianity is what shaped our nation and made her great in days gone by, then let us commit ourselves to a renewed effort when it comes to church planting and proclaiming the Gospel in these United States.

Let us ask God to raise up preachers of the Gospel and missionaries who will preach to win the lost in our beloved America. May God help us to see the great opportunity to proclaim and preach and reach the lost right now in our homeland. The Psalmist reminds us that the God of Heaven is still on the throne: *For God is the King of all the earth: sing ye praises with understanding. God reigneth over the heathen: God sitteth upon the throne of his holiness* (Psalm 47:7–8).
About two years ago, a young man came to visit our church. After the service, I spent time talking with him and found that he had bought a Bible at a bookstore and began to read it. As he read, God convicted his heart, and he trusted Jesus Christ as his Savior. He found our church online and attended a service the following Sunday. He wanted to know more about God. I began to meet with him that week on a regular basis for discipleship. He was excited to learn more about what it means to be a Christian.

He talked with his girlfriend about Christ, and she also trusted Jesus as her Savior. Both began coming to every service. I met with them every week for discipleship for about six months. As they learned and grew, they began to understand there were some decisions they needed to make to please the Lord. Unfortunately, they were not willing to make those choices, and they stopped coming to church for over a year. I was disappointed and felt like I had failed in helping them.
A short time later, another young man began coming to church. He had a difficult background and was dealing with mental issues and suicidal thoughts. I began to meet with him, and we went through the Gospel, and he claimed to be saved. We continued through other discipleship topics, and I thought we were making headway.

I thought, “I have another chance to do this right!” Sadly, after a few months of discipleship, he stopped meeting with me. He would not answer my calls or emails, and he would not come to church. I have only seen him once since, and he seems to have no interest in letting God change his life. I was so sure that I could help him, and once again, I thought I had failed.

I knew that it was up to these individuals to choose to live for the Lord. I knew only God could produce real change in their hearts. I knew this in theory, but it took discouragement to help me understand this in practice. I became discouraged at my apparent failure and lack of results with these two young men. Through these experiences, I learned the hard way to leave the results of ministry efforts up to God. True success in ministry is determined by the Lord and not by what I perceive to be a success.

One Sunday night just a few months ago, the first young man unexpectedly showed up to our service. He said with tears in his eyes, “I want to live for the Lord.” He had decided to stop living in sin and live for the Lord. He has been more faithful to church and is growing. It has been a blessing and an encouragement to see what God has done in his life. God continued to work in the first young man’s life even though I could not see it! God’s Word does not return void, but it accomplishes the work God intends.

In ministry, we ought not measure our success by our expectations, but we must leave the results up to God. We must simply walk in the Spirit, allow Him to use us in His way, and depend upon Him to do the work that we cannot do. Did my ministry efforts produce results or failure? That remains to be seen when we get to heaven.
The North Shore of the St. Lawrence River in Quebec, Canada, will always hold a special place in our hearts. Cherished friendships were forged, lingering memories were made, and countless miles were traveled. For almost six years, our family served the Lord there in faith, trusting Him to bring forth fruit in His time. With approximately 500 miles of coastline dotted with 31 small fishing villages (several of them remote villages off the road system), ours was somewhat of an itinerate ministry. Although most of our time was devoted to planting seeds of the Gospel in largely unprepared soil, the Lord did grant several special discipleship opportunities.

One such individual was a single young man who stayed in our village during the work week. What a privilege it was to invest in this young man during this crucial time in his life! Together we followed a Biblical discipleship study specifically geared for encouraging young men in godly living. We engaged in edifying discussions, usually accompanied by iced tea, hot chocolate, and a generous helping of my wife’s mouthwatering cookies. Seeing him grow and mature spiritually was something I looked forward to each week. He was taking positive steps forward in his walk with the Lord. I still remember the cold, wintry day in January when he stood at our door and shared the news that he had been transferred. Though his move left an empty spot in our hearts, what a joy it was to us a few years later when our paths crossed again! He was involved in his home church, married to a Christian young lady, and on the verge of becoming a father! The Lord had continued His work of discipleship in this young man’s daily life long after our weekly discipleship studies had ended.

Another individual comes to mind—this time a young lady. She also was on the North Shore for work purposes, but she was located in a
remote village 380 miles from us. During an evangelization trip to her village, a friend and I placed Gospel literature on the door of the place where just a few days later she would move in. When she contacted us to share her desire for Christian fellowship, the obvious obstacle was the distance between us. But God is not limited by distance! Soon, my wife began a Bible study with this young lady via Skype. What a privilege it was for them to study the book of Philippians together, to apply its truths to their daily lives, and to encourage one another in the Lord. The only challenge was how to share tea and cookies via Skype! After several months, our whole family took an evangelization trip to her village and had the pleasure of meeting her in person and enjoying a meal together. Before the young lady moved back to her hometown, she shared with my wife that the Lord had put on her heart to go on a missions trip. Together, she and Rebecca prayed for the Lord to open doors for her to go, and He did. She was thrilled to take this next step in following the Lord by participating in an overseas missions trip, and she and Rebecca rejoiced together for all that the Lord had done for her and through her.

Although the Lord led our family almost two years ago to relocate to a different part of His harvest field in Quebec, our thoughts occasionally wander to the seeds planted in the North Shore soil. We are confident that God’s Word is never planted in vain. What a joy it would be to see the Lord call someone there to continue the work, to plant more seeds, to water the seeds, to disciple believers, and in His time, to see a harvest of souls saved and churches established in those villages! Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest (Matthew 9:38).
George Wisner (99), retired BIMI Missionary, went Home to be with his Lord and Savior on Thursday, December 24, 2020. George Wisner had been a missionary in Brazil for four years before he joined BIMI in 1963. He served in Brazil for more than 50 years before his retirement in 2014. During his years in Brazil, he helped to establish many churches.

BIMI Associate Missionary Bill Ferguson (85) went Home to be with the Lord on February 19, 2021. Bill's wife, Elva Ferguson (82), went Home to be with the Lord on January 19, 2021. Bill and Elva joined BIMI in 1996 as Associate Missionaries working with CLAIM. Brother Ferguson worked on many CLAIM projects, helping missionaries in the Caribbean and at many other locations. One missionary in Cayman Brac wrote Brother Ferguson thanking him for “having raised so much money to buy all the expensive things down here, plus, bringing the things with you for the work and the maintenance of the men while here.” In addition, Bill spent time on the BIMI campus working on building retirement housing for missionaries or making himself available to do whatever tasks were needed.

Missionary Larry Barrett (74) went Home to be with the Lord on January 26, 2021. Larry and his wife, Lydabelle, joined BIMI in 1974 and began to serve the Lord in Brazil. Brother Barrett passed due to complications of COVID-19. Larry and Lydabelle had celebrated 51 years of marriage last year and have served the Lord in Brazil with BIMI for 47 years.

BIMI Retired Missionary Zane Abbott (78) went Home to be with the Lord on February 23, 2021. Zane and Burma Abbott joined BIMI in March 1976. Brother Abbott was called as a church planter to Canada where he established two churches. While preparing to start a third church, the Mission asked him to go to Japan to relieve a missionary. He served the Military Ministry in Japan for 19 years. The Abbotts were able to build a church building and establish a good work in Iwakuni, Japan. Zane and Burma retired in January 2009.

Missionary Lois McClure (78) went Home to be with her Lord on Friday, March 5, 2021. Bill and Lois McClure joined BIMI in February 1975 and surrendered to the Military Ministry in the beginning years of that ministry. They served three years in the Azores and ten years in Spain and ten years with the military in the United States. Bill and Lois moved to the ARM ministry in August 2012 and worked in VA homes and hospitals in North Carolina.
Missionary Emeritus Keith Ford (90) went Home to be with the Lord March 28, 2021 (Keith’s wife, Jane, went Home to be with the Lord on January 30, 2015). Keith and Jane joined BIMI in 1973. They served as missionaries to the deaf for many years in Jamaica and started a deaf school. The Fords were instrumental in teaching sign language to others who in turn worked with the deaf. Many deaf have been saved through their ministry in Jamaica and in the States. In recent years, he was very involved in preaching and teaching at the Chattanooga Rescue Mission.

BIMI Retired Missionary Virginia Barrigar (90) went Home to be with the Lord on April 16, 2021 (Virginia’s husband, Howard, went home to Heaven in 2013). Virginia was granted Emeritus status in March of 2021. Howard and Virginia Barrigar had been organizing churches in Brazil for nine years before they joined BIMI in 1968. They served in Brazil for over 30 years. Howard and Virginia served in the southern region of Brazil, which is considered one of the most difficult. Most of the people in this part of Brazil are German or Italian immigrants and considered some of the hardest groups to reach. God greatly blessed their labors and they are credited with helping to establish eight Baptist churches in and around the State of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil.

Retired Missionary Helen Hughes (76) went Home to be with the Lord on Wednesday, May 5, 2021. Helen and Don Hughes joined BIMI in 1971. They first worked in the Mariana Islands and helped start a church in Guam. From Guam the Lord led them to serve in South Korea where they started the Central Baptist Church of Daejeon. The government would not renew their visas; thus, Don and Helen worked with a military pastor in Hawaii for two years. Through much prayer, they felt God was calling them to work in the country of England. They served in England for 18 years and established Calvary Baptist Church of Peterborough. Due to unforeseen health issues, Don and Helen had to return to the United States where they worked with a church in New York under Reseeding America. Don and Helen moved to ARM in 2015 and retired in 2016.

Jack Moorman, BIMI Emeritus Missionary (79) went Home to be with the Lord May 31, 2021. Jack and Doretha (Dot) Moorman joined BIMI in 1966. After two years as missionaries in England, the Lord directed them to South Africa. The Moormans were the first missionaries with BIMI to serve in South Africa. They served in Africa from 1968–1988 and during this time they established five churches. After serving in South Africa, Jack and Dot Moorman returned to England and established a church in a suburb of London.

Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints. Psalm 116:15
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