

Lifting Up The STANDARD

“When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him” (Isaiah 59:19).



Challenging And Encouraging God's Remnant To Remain Faithful

Monday, June 29, 2015

This Is My Story (Part Three)

“My Adventure In Christian Living”

It Was Time To Start Another Church

1974 Begins The FaithWay Adventure.

The previous church we started, we turned over to someone from the Hyles organization who ended up destroying it. This time I determined we did not need to pay someone to destroy it, if that was going to happen, I could do it myself for free.

I gave my employer two week’s notice, and my wife and I and our two little children started FaithWay Baptist Church with no income; however, we had a verse. “*My God shall supply all your need*” (Philippians 4:19).

Still Going To The Pastor’s School at Hammond

I was determined not to let my experience with Jack Hyles stop me from building the fastest growing church in Canada. I continued to go to the Pastor’s School in Hammond every year for three years after the college incident. Hyles knew every trick in the book to grow a large church and I wanted to know how to do it. The problem was that his book of tricks and the Bible had absolutely nothing in common.

My wife and I purchased a seventy-two passenger bus and started knocking on doors and people started to come. Within one year, we were

averaging 242 in Sunday School and had nine buses.

We Had The Gall To Call It Church



We used one carnal method after another to get people to come. One week we had Snoopy and the Red Barron land in a helicopter.

Another time we had seven Santa Clauses in the morning service all arguing who was the real Santa Clause. We were eating live goldfish and throwing pies in peoples faces. We learned it all at Hammond.

The thing about all that trash is it works if your goal is to get a crowd. I had about forty in my adult Sunday School class, however, it was a different forty every three months. These people had prayed a little “*vote for Jesus minus repentance prayer*” and actually thought they were saved.

Someday I will answer to God for presenting what the Bible calls “*another gospel*” and so will every other so-called soul-winner who will lead people to think they can simply pray a little forgiveness prayer, and be on their way to Heaven. Jesus said, “*I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish*” (Luke 13:5).

The Christian School Adventure

The radio program was now being broadcasted every day, we purchased a building, and put a full page ad in the local paper stating we were starting a Christian School in September. We did not have a program, or a teacher, however, we had a God-given burden to start a Christian school.

My wife and a lady that had been saved only three months were our first teachers in the school. We soon outgrew the building, and purchased another property that had a house and a barn. We used the house for the school and renovated a barn that was in the backyard for our church services.

Soon the town authorities came by to tell us we could not have a church in a barn. I suggested that Jesus was born in a barn and it was a good thing we didn't have all their minimum standards or we would never have had Christmas.

They did not appreciate my sense of humour. They told us also we could not have the Christian school in the house. They agreed to let us finish out the school year with the promise that we would not be there in the fall. The following year we rented an empty government school on Hilltop Street, in the Ajax area.

Something Was Very Wrong!

I was beginning to realize that something was wrong. All that was happening was exciting, however, it was not Scriptural. We were still promoting the church with the carnal, worldly promotions we had learned at the Hyles Pastor's school in Hammond.

About that time, God brought Dr. Jim Phillips into my life. He was the pastor of FaithWay Baptist Church in Ypsilanti, Michigan. It was once

considered the fastest growing fundamental church in Michigan. Dr. Phillips had previously been hooked on Hyles, and had used all the tricks in the Hyles book to draw a crowd. He told me that one day he had an attendance drive with a man who called himself bird man. He had a bunch of trained birds.

Dr. Phillips came to his auditorium that morning and saw all these birds flying around, and expelling feces all over the pews and the people, he thought, **“What am I doing?” “This has to stop!”**

Dr. Phillips and I became good friends as we compared our adventures in unscriptural stupidity. We also lost a lot of friends as we began to openly oppose the carnal unscriptural methods taught at First Baptist in Hammond, Indiana.

What Did I Really Believe?

I decided I needed to determine what I believed. I knew what Jack Hyles believed, but what did I believe? I took the next five years to figure it out. During that time, I did not go to any exciting *“how to do it meetings,”* **I went to the Word of God.** I determined to find out what I believed about *the local church, evangelism, Christian education, separation, missions, and every major Bible doctrine,* and **how** God tells us to do **what** He has commanded us to do.

The FaithWay Baptist College of Canada Adventure

In 1983 God laid it on my heart to start the FaithWay Baptist College of Canada. However, there was a serious problem. We had never been able to sell the original property and we were facing a serious debt by this time. We had been surviving with one nostril above the water for over five years. How could we start a college?

We Prayed For Three Things.

First, we prayed for a *faculty*, I knew nothing about how Bible colleges operated. I remembered Bob Jones Sr. saying, “*You can always hire brains.*” If we were going to start a college we must have some people who were capable of teaching in the college.

Second, we prayed for *facilities*. We needed a place to house the college.

Third, we prayed for *finances*. Plain and simple, we needed to get out of debt and we needed money to start the college.

A Fifteen Round Main Event

Do to my ridiculous and unscriptural “*fly now pay later philosophy*” we had bordered on bankruptcy for several years. There is a thin line between *faith* and *foolishness* and in the area of finances I operated on the foolish side of the line. If we were going to have a college, this would have to change. I decided to have a fifteen round main event with the Devil. I told the Devil we would be out of debt in fifteen weeks or I would quit the ministry. (I don’t talk to the Devil much, but when I do I call him smut-face.)

“We’re Fighting Back!” “We’re Praying And We’re Paying!”

I put a banner across the front of the church that said “*We’re Fighting Back!*” Across the back was a banner that read, “*We’re Praying And We’re Paying!*” It was a Friday morning when I finished the banners and had them in place. I stood in the auditorium thinking about the people coming on Sunday and my announcement about being debt-free in fifteen weeks.

It was then that the Devil really began to do a number on me. I started thinking, am I crazy? What if it doesn’t happen? I was looking at the banners I had just tacked to the wall. I was almost ready to tear them down.

I reached for my Bible and it opened at Psalm 20:5 that says,

“In the name of our God we will set up our banners: the LORD fulfil all thy petitions.”

Hey, Smut Face. Can You Read?

I held up my open Bible and yelled at the Devil. I said, “*Hey, Smut Face, can you read?*” I said “*in case you can’t let me read it to you.*” It says, “*In the name of our God we will set up our banners: the LORD fulfil all thy petitions.*” I said, “*Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us*” (Romans 8:37). I said “*Smut Face, You Lose!*”

Our church family started meeting every morning at 6:00 am for fifteen weeks. We prayed for specific bills each week. That is, we did not just pray for money, we prayed for a specific amount of money each week to pay specific bills. The total debt was around \$80,000.00. God took care of it during those fifteen weeks. I could tell you many stories, I will share just a few.

The first morning we met to pray, shortly after six o'clock the phone rang. A lady on the phone asked this question, “*Does your church need money?*” I said “*yes.*” She said, “*my husband has phoned me from work and said we should send you money.*” These people had previously left our church very disgruntled. They didn’t come back to the church; however, they sent money every week during the fifteen weeks.

Another time a lady phoned and said that a woman in a seniors home north of Toronto, was trying to contact us. She said all she knew was that the church was north of Ajax somewhere, it had a school and needed money. We got her address and went to see her. As it turned out, she was blind. I asked how she heard about us and she said “*there is only God and I in this room.*”

I asked if she had heard our radio program and she said “*I do not have a radio.*” She gave us seven

hundred dollars that day that made up the amount we were praying for that week. Over the next few years she sent thousands of dollars to help with the church and the college.

Another time we received a phone call from one of the businesses in the area that we owed several thousand dollars to. I promised the man that they would have the money by the end of the month. We received some money but with only one day to go before the end of the week, we were short of meeting our goal.

My assistant pastor said that he had figured out if he and I did not take our pay that week we would have exactly the amount of money we needed to pay the bill. Quite often we had turned our pay back in; however, I did not think we should do that this time.

The next morning there was an envelope on my desk from someone who did not attend our church. In it was the exact amount we needed to make up the funds to pay the bill.

There was another serious problem. I had no idea how to run a college. I had never attended a Bible college, how could I be the president of one? Dr. Jim Phillips was the president of a Bible college in his church and offered to help me get FaithWay going. At his own expense, he travelled all the way to Canada's west coast looking for students.

Together, we travelled in a beat up Volkswagen van to the east coast. It was an interesting trip. The heater didn't work and the pop we had in the van actually froze.

God Sent The Staff

We had more doctrinally solid Bible college professors asking me if they could come and help, than we had positions to fill. I told them I could not promise any of them any money. They came on those terms.

We were only a month away from beginning when a beautiful very large home with a maids

quarters attached, was made available to us. It was only a half a mile from the church.



We needed about fifty students to pay the bills. We started with eight. This meant there was no possible way of making it financially. We announced to the students that we had a no-debt policy. On paper, we would be going behind one thousand dollars a week. I said, if we do not pay the bills, we close the school. My advice to the students was to get serious about prayer.

I was the pastor at FaithWay Baptist Church for five years after we started the college. We ended every year debt free. God took care of the yearly expenses of over \$52,000.00 because the students were serious about prayer.

The Local Church Ministries Adventure

Things were going well. The church had no bills, people were getting saved on a regular basis, the philosophy of ministry was now in line with the Word of God. It was then that the Lord began to move me to turn the church over to my assistant pastor and travel the country of Canada to encourage pastors and their people in the many small churches in our land.



We purchased the unit pictured here and left on our first trip to help encourage small churches in Canada. We had a guaranteed income of only \$300.00 a month. It was costing us about \$1000.00 a week to travel across the country.

We were going to small churches that usually had less than fifty people on a good day.

Since an adventure is a *“bold and unusual undertaking with risk or danger”* we could certainly classify this part of our lives as an adventure.

We travelled from coast to coast more times than we can remember; however, the bills were always paid on time. *“To God be the glory great things He hath done.”*

We heard about a small group of people in Alberta who wanted to start a church. We felt led to help them get it underway.



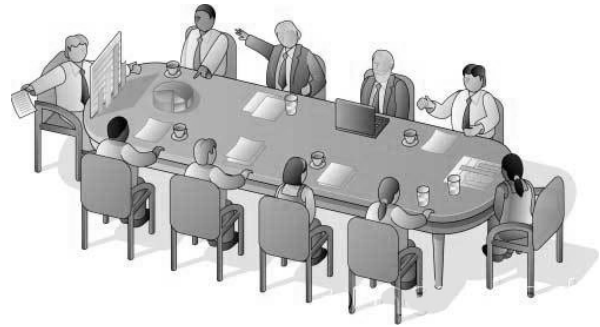
Once again, God blessed and we were able to purchase the building and the house pictured here. Recently, a missionary contacted me to tell me he was a young boy who came to our church when we were in Alberta. He said it was through our ministry there that God called him to the mission field. He and his family are now missionaries in South Africa.

Once again, this church was turned over to my assistant pastor and we resumed our travels across the country to encourage the faithful pastors and their people in our small churches; however, this time our meetings would be different.

The Need For Encouragement

I sent a bulletin across Canada indicating we had designed some special meetings to fight discouragement. I thought I might hear from one or two churches and then schedule other meetings around them. To my surprise I heard from every province in Canada with requests to please come.

This time we decided against the normal so-called revival services. We had previously conducted hundreds of *sing, pray, sing, announcements, special music, preach, and everyone walk the isle meetings*. This time we designed meetings simply to encourage the faithful.



I suggested to the pastors that they simply announce the meetings. I also suggested they not waste any money on flyers. All we wanted was the faithful which is usually about ten percent of the church attenders. The faithful will not need to be coaxed to come.

We set up tables, gave everyone a pad, a pen, and a cup of coffee. I announced that we would hold the meetings for about an hour and simply discuss what they were discouraged about.

Most people felt like failures because they were small in number. I said *“let’s discuss it and see if we are failures.”* I said *“If we are failures I’m going to quit the ministry, take the motorhome, and go camping on the week-ends.”* I suggested, *“If we are not failures we need to quit whining and start shining, and get on with our God-given responsibilities.”* The meetings were tremendous. They usually lasted until ten or eleven o’clock each night.

We could tell many exciting stories concerning every church we visited; however, suffice it to say people were greatly encouraged. We travelled on this trip having meetings every night and Sunday services for over seven months and finally, totally exhausted, we took a break.

After several warnings from our doctor telling us this lifestyle would kill my wife, we decided we needed to pray about what we would do next as we travelled on in our adventure in Christian living.

I determined I would like to start a church in Toronto. This time, I would raise the support needed before starting; however, God had a different plan.

The FairHavens Adventure

My plan was to move back to Ontario in the spring, set up a home there, and raise the support necessary to begin another church. We still had a motorhome to get rid of and so I decided to bring it to Ontario and put it up for sale hoping it would sell over the winter months.

I stopped at a little church in Sarnia, Ontario for the Sunday services. They were without a pastor and a preacher friend and I went out for supper on Saturday night. He spent most of the time trying to convince me to become the pastor of that church. I informed him in no uncertain terms that that was not going to happen. This time, I was going to raise the necessary support before starting a church and then start it in Toronto.

Three Green Lights

The pastor asked me what it would take for me to know it was God's will to take the church in Sarnia. I told him that I would need three green lights. One from God the Father, one from the Son, and one from the Holy Spirit.

I explained that God the Father is in charge of the circumstances of life. We call it "*the providence of God.*" I further explained that the Son is the Word. The Bible says "*the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.*" I explained that the Trinity is always in total agreement. Therefore, concerning the will of God, the Spirit, working with the Father, and the Word, will guide us "*into all truth.*"

My friend said well, the church at Sarnia needs a pastor. Could that not be a green light from the Father? I said, "*perhaps; however, I would also need conformation from the Word and the Holy Spirit.*"

I preached in that little church the following morning and it was very obvious that God was working in my heart about taking the church. I announced that we would have a prayer meeting that afternoon. We would pray specifically concerning God's will for whoever should be their pastor.

I was hoping it would not be me. We had started other churches without an income and I didn't want to do that again.

One of the pastors who was at the prayer meeting read some Bible verses before he prayed. When he read those verses I wondered why he had chosen that portion of Scripture.

We were praying for direction. Why was he reading from Isaiah forty-three? Why not choose one of the Psalms or Proverbs?

He read,

"But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine."

What's that got to do with us seeking God's will? Then he read,

"For I am the LORD thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee."

About that time I began to think there would be no green light from the Word; however he then read,

"Fear not: for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west."

The hair stood up on the back of my neck. I had goosebumps. This was a very bright green light from the Word. I had just driven over 2000 miles from "*the west.*" The seed (the beginning) of all my ministries had begun in "*the east.*"

The Word hit me like a thunderbolt.

“Fear not: for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west.”

I asked the pastor who read that portion of Scripture why he chose it. He said he didn't choose it. He was reading through the Bible again and that happened to be where he left off. He said it was his manner to read the Bible before he prayed and so he simply read from where he had left off. He said he thought verse five was for me.

Sunday night was another service where God was obviously directing things. The Holy Spirit confirmed it. I was to take the church in Sarnia. I left that night with the key to the building in my pocket. I was the new pastor of the church.

Halfway between Sarnia and Toronto, I stopped in a service center and phoned my wife who was in Alberta. I told her I was pastoring a church in Sarnia and wondered if she would be interested in moving there.

I phoned her again the next day and told her I had rented a truck at Calgary, I told her when I would arrive, and said *“have the furniture packed and the dog ready. I will see you then.”* Her astonished answer was *“you were serious about the church in Sarnia!”*

We rolled up to the church with a truck load of furniture and no place to unload it. A pastor friend went with me to



a real estate office and I enquired about a house for rent in the area. They said they had one. If I

r e m e m b e r correctly the rental price was 1,200.00 a month with first and last in advance.

I told him I would pay 600.00 a month and no first and last month in advance. The real estate

man laughed. I reminded him he worked on commission and had nothing to lose by calling the owner. He reluctantly agreed, called, and the owner agreed to the monthly rent; however, he said he wanted first and last in advance. I said *“tell him we have a deal.”*

I had about forty dollars to my name at that time. I asked the preacher that was with me if he had the funds available so we could close this deal. He said he did but he would need it back before the end of the month to pay his rent.

He gave the man a cheque and on the way to the car he asked me if he was going to get the money back before the end of the month. I said *“I don't know, it depends on your prayer life.”*

We were able to refund him his money in time. To God be the glory, the new phase of our adventure was underway. What are the odds of traveling 2000 miles and having a house empty and ready to move in at half the asking price? Actually, there are no odds. God's work done God's way will not lack God's support.

The Highest Unemployment Rate In Canada

Sarnia was blessed with the highest unemployment rate in the country. For the first five years I was pastoring in Sarnia we had no one in the church with a full time job and the mortgage company was about to foreclose when a cheque arrived in the mail enabling us to pay the mortgage in full.

Hills And Valleys

We have been in Sarnia for twenty years. We have seen many hills and valleys. We love the mountaintop experiences; however, it is in the valley where everything grows. In one of those valleys I wrote the following poem.

Down In The Valley

Down in the valley, help me to know,
That I'm in the place where You want me to grow.
I want to climb to the mountain above.
But You keep me low, because of Your love.
You know that nothing, on the mountain will grow.
It's just a rock, all covered with snow.
Down in the valley, You've taught me to know,
That I'm in the place where everything grows.
Thanks for the mountain, and thanks for the snow.
And thanks for the valley, where You let me know,
That flowers and grass and things that are dear,
Grow down in the valley, where it becomes clear,
That You keep us there, because of Your love,
So, help me forget the mountain above.
Then if for a season, I'm up for a time,
Bring me back down, that growth might be mine.

Our Greatest Outreach Ministry

FairHavens Baptist Church is a small church and probably always will be. Our website is not a commercial to lure people in. Everything we stand for from morals to modesty is on our site.

In this age of apostasy, most professed Christians refuse to pay the price to live like the Bible commands us to live; however, God has some faithful Christians who have not bowed the knee to Baal.

As of the first of June, 2015, 27,801 sermons have been downloaded from our [audio website](#) . Also 55,310 have been viewed on the site. We also are kept busy with correspondences from our [church site](#).

Conclusion

Shortly after I was saved, I read First Corinthians 1:27 that says, "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty."

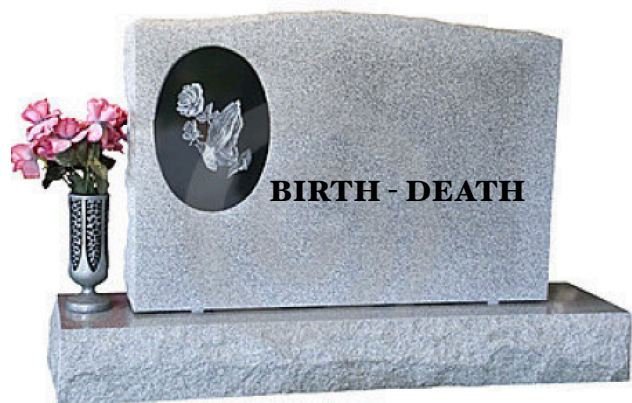
I concluded that statement put me at the front of the line. God could use me because He is more concerned about the "I will" than the I.Q.

My service for the Lord began with two growling german shepherds who really didn't want me doing what I was doing. Later, I read in Philippians 3:2 that I should "Beware of dogs." God is not referring to german shepherds, he is referring to people who will try to stop you from doing God's will. Don't let it happen.

Early in this book I mentioned that I had wept until I had no more power to weep. My adventure in Christian living has not been all sunshine and roses. There have been four times when I have wept until I could weep no more. I can relate with "David and the people that were with him lifted up their voice and wept, until they had no more power to weep" (First Samuel 30:4).

David and his men had a great victory after they had this time of weeping. God does not use anyone who is not broken.

The dictionary says an adventure is "**a bold and unusual undertaking involving risk or danger.**" With that definition in mind, I can say my Christian life has been, and still is, an exciting adventure.



Life is a short dash between two dates. Make it an adventure in the service of the Lord.