

FULL GOSPEL BUSINESS MEN'S

VOICE

04-82

PEACE MAKER





ROBERT H. STEBBINS
CAPTAIN OF POLICE

PEACE MAKER

Robert H. Stebbins
Captain of Police
City of Santa Ana, CA

Stebbins, you cops are going to change the way you're doing things ... or we're going to burn this city down!"

The menacing voice belonged to Michael Lynem, minister of information for the Black Panther party. I was working race relations for the Santa Ana Police Department in reaction to the riots of the mid-1960s, and if ever there were a man I considered my #1 enemy it was Lynem. He and I virtually lived to make each other miserable.

Dressed in black leather jackets, their eyes hidden behind dark glasses, he and a partner had burst unannounced into my office.

It would take a lot more than his threats to intimidate me. Rising slowly and deliberately from my chair, I forced my words through clenched teeth. "Michael, we're going to blow you off the face of the earth!"

I considered myself to be indestructible, a man capable of accomplishing anything I set my mind to do. I had

only one soft spot. My kids.

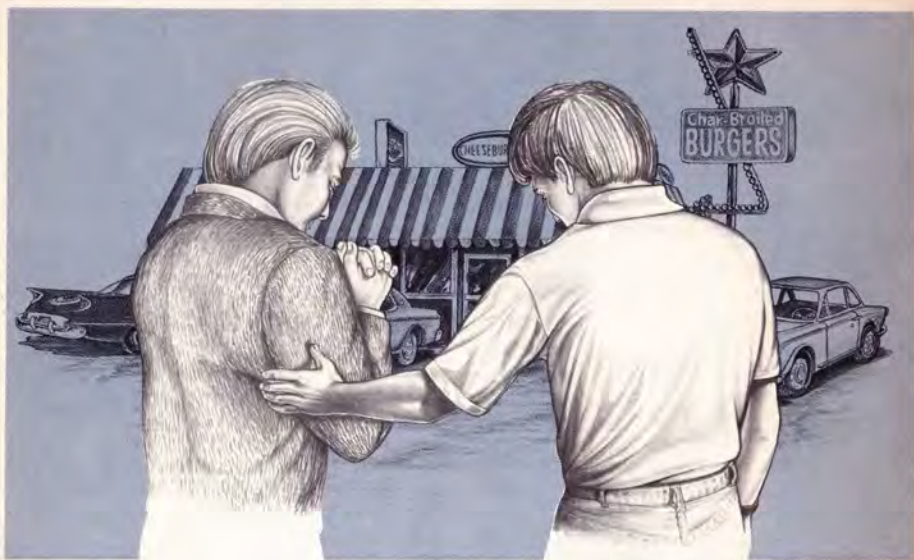
Thirteen years before, I had gone through a particularly traumatic divorce. Because the children were only 11 and 13 years old, it wasn't possible to explain to them my reasons for leaving. But as a father, loving those children, it really hurt me to think they might only see me as deserting them.

By the time my son Steve was in his teens he had become heavily involved in drugs. A friend of mine had a son who had died from an overdose; I was scared to death that the same thing would happen to my boy.

Then one day my ex-wife phoned me to say that Steve had become a "Jesus freak." I wasn't sure what that meant, but I knew it just had to be better than what he had been. At least now I wouldn't have to worry about finding him on a slab in the morgue.

Following his experience with Jesus, I watched Steve's life do a complete turnaround. Instead of detesting what he was as I had before, I found myself beginning to admire him, secretly envying the peace he seemed to have found.

Never once did he preach to me—I guess he knew me better than to do that—but during the Christmas



All at once it didn't seem important who saw me.

holidays of 1976, Steve gave me a small paperback book entitled *Mere Christianity*, by C.S. Lewis. The only reason I read it was because he had given it to me, yet as I read I became increasingly aware of just how far from God I really was.

I had condemned my son because of his drugs while at the same time I was masking my own severe drinking

problem. I swaggered through life like a man who had the world by the tail, yet inside I felt as though I were being torn apart. I needed what Steve had and I knew he could tell me how to find it.

So on March 31, 1977 I stopped by the little hamburger stand where he worked. As we slowly walked out to the parking lot, I haltingly confessed

FULL GOSPEL BUSINESS MEN'S VOICE (ISSN #00428264) is published monthly (with the exception of August, which is combined with the July issue) for \$3.50 per year by FULL GOSPEL BUSINESS MEN'S FELLOWSHIP INTERNATIONAL, a worldwide evangelistic fellowship of Christian businessmen, P.O. Box 5050, Costa Mesa, California 92626, U.S.A. Incorporated January 2, 1953 as a nonprofit religious corporation. Second-class postage paid at Costa Mesa, California and at additional mailing offices. All rights reserved. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to VOICE at above address. April 1982 issue.

my need to him.

"Look, Dad, either you're ready or you're not. Which is it?"

Self-consciously I looked around. What if some patrol officer drove by and saw me, head bowed, praying publicly in a parking lot?

Then all at once it didn't seem important who saw me, or what they thought about it.

"I'm ready."

They say that life begins at 40. I can vouch for that. The changes that took place within my mind and heart seemed so dramatic, so exciting, that there were plenty of times I probably should have used some of the restraint my son had shown me. In the beginning I rather "came out of the shoot like a stallion" with my Christian witness.

But it's hard not to get excited, especially when you hear about miracles of transformation like the one about which former Santa Ana mayor Lorin Griset phoned me.

Lorin had received a letter from my old enemy Michael Lynem just before Christmas 1979. "Bob," Lorin said, "I want to read you some of Michael's letter."

"I went to jail for the last time February, 1979," Lorin read. "I received Christ as my Lord and Saviour March 12, 1979 while at the reception center in Chino. I was really full of hate and bitterness toward everyone. . . . All I had to read was the Bible and paperback testimonies about how God was changing people's lives. . . .

They all had an inner peace. . . . I went to chapel just to get out of my cell. During one of these trips I raised my hand and asked Christ into my life. I haven't been the same since."

As Lorin read the letter to me I could only weep to realize that God had done the same for Michael as He had for me.

Later I wrote to Michael, telling him I'd heard he'd become a Christian. I told him I would like to hear from him, but I never really expected an answer.

Three days later I received his reply: "I just received your letter about 30 minutes ago and I couldn't wait to write you back. 'There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.' According to this scripture and others, you and I are children of God, sons of God. That's exciting. A police captain and an ex-Black-Panther police hater are brothers! Only the power of Jesus Christ could bring this about."

I am so grateful that Jesus Christ paid the price for us, humbling Himself and being obedient all the way to the cross. "For Christ himself is our way of peace. He has made peace between us . . . breaking down the wall of contempt that used to separate us. . . . Then he took the two groups that had been opposed to each other and made them parts of himself; thus he fused them together to become one new person, and at last there was peace" (Ephesians 2:14,15, LB). □

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HE GOT HIS MAN

Bas Groeneweg
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada



With outward impassiveness, I watched the doctor make his skillful incisions into the unidentified body on the table. The autopsy was nearly finished.

"This chap is in perfect health," the doctor intoned dryly. "Nothing at all wrong with him. Except he's quite dead."

As a proud young member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police I'd seen my share of death and suffering. In order to insulate myself against the harsh realities of life, I'd developed a crude, vulgar, seen-it-all attitude.

This man had been just another middle-aged, homeless drifter, with no family, no origin, no destination. The top of his skull and most of his vital organs had been dispassionately removed for examination. Only the empty container was left, the decaying remains of a wasted life. No deposit, no return. If my face showed any emotion, it was simply one of sardonic humor at the futility of life.

Yet behind my mask I thought to myself, "Am I really any different than he? Is my life any more meaningful than his, merely because I have a

steady job? Could I wind up on that same table when I'm 42?"

I was 20 years old when I joined the RCMP in 1952. Like most recruits, I was idealistic and enthusiastic about becoming a member of the legendary police force that "always got its man." Although I grew up in a Christian home where there was daily

any situation. I did my best to live up to this image. Nonetheless, professional police work often disturbed me. I felt we were processors rather than protectors.

As a cannery processes fish or a mine processes ore, we processed people. We arrested them, searched them, testified against them, released



prayer and Bible reading, regular church attendance and genuine belief, when I left home I was happy to be free of the stifling influence of religion. I tried attending church now and again, but always felt like an outsider.

Further, I quickly discovered that there were two kinds of people generally unpopular with my colleagues: teetotalers and "religious." A young policeman was to be cool, tough and reckless—able to handle himself in

them—"due process of law." The problem was, our product kept coming back.

Meantime, when we were off duty some of us did the same things for which we arrested people. We drank too much, got high, chased women and generally raised a ruckus. Five large beer parlors at Prince Rupert, B.C., where I was first stationed, kept us well supplied with liquor.

On the job the assembly line of pet-

ty crimes, assaults, sudden death, drunkenness, reports and patrols continued to roll. On every hand I was confronted with the irony of our situation. The world around me appeared to stagger along totally without God.

Early one afternoon in August, 1956 while waiting for a beer parlor to open, I spied a Bible for sale in a department store. I was always the one to like a crowd and enjoy company. This day I was feeling particularly lonely. I bought the Bible, a Revised Standard Version with a soft imitation-leather cover and gold-leafed edges. It felt clean and crisp and rekindled memories of the coun-

did not feel a sense of purpose for themselves.

Memories of the years I had spent in church, Sunday school and family worship now took on new meaning as I read, "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth . . ."

"...but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment. Therefore remove sorrow from thy heart, and put away evil from thy flesh" (Ecclesiastes 11:9,10).

Without drama or fanfare, I decided it was time for me to return to God. In my heart a transaction took place, one that would forever change my life.

I had seen so many lives wasted.

try church of my childhood.

I took the Bible aboard the patrol boat (I'd been transferred to the marine division) and spent my free time leafing through its pages. When I came to the third and fourth chapters of the Gospel of John, as though by divine appointment, Jesus began talking to me through those delicate pages. Just as He had spoken to Nicodemus and the woman at the well, Christ was promising me peace in a world at war with itself. From that day on I spent more time reading the Bible and less time in the beer parlor.

The book of Ecclesiastes fascinated me. Over and over I read the words, "all is vanity." I had seen so many lives wasted because people

Gradually I withdrew from my drinking crowd, quit smoking, and cleaned up my gutter language. There were moments of failure, but there was no doubt that God had re-entered my life and was changing me.

In 1958 I transferred to Ottawa and began teaching Sunday school in the church I joined. I married a fine Christian girl in 1959, and the Lord soon blessed us with two daughters. The Christian life I had once rejected became the center of our home.

Then in 1973 I witnessed the startling transformation of one of the young corporals who worked with me. My wife and I visited regularly with Vic and his wife and we knew them quite

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THE FIGHTER

Billy Trejo, San Pedro, CA

Walking through the imposing corridors of Lompoc Prison, I battled back the bitterness and hatred that surged through my heart. It was less than a year since four of these inmates had stabbed my brother to death in his cell, just 72 hours before his scheduled release. I was here to share my testimony at a meeting of Convicts for Christ. With me was Jim Tucker, prison ministry field representative for Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International.

Jim must have sensed my unrest. He placed his arm around me kindly and smiled. "Hey, Billy, the Lord is with you," he assured me.

The meeting was still in progress when I decided to step out on the patio to get some coffee. As I walked out of the room I noticed five

chicanos strolling with that distinctive jailhouse walk in my direction.

Fear gripped me. Did these guys think I had come to avenge my brother's murder? Or did they just want to kill me for being Tommy's brother? I braced myself for the attack, and in my mind I was back on the streets of Lincoln Heights in East Los Angeles where I'd first learned to fight for my life.

Tommy and I both ran with the Clover Gang when we were growing up. East LA didn't know us very well at first. Then a newspaper published the names of the top 10 gangs and we were near the bottom. We were so insulted we stepped up our lawless activities so we'd be sure to be #1 on the next list.

Tommy went on to spend the next 19 years in crime and drugs, and prison became his second home. I was more fortunate. My uncle Julio Flores was a member of the California Boxing Commission, and he took time not only to show me the fundamentals of boxing but to help me understand that I could be tough without being a street bully. I started boxing amateur bouts and eventually fought my way to the peak of amateur pugilism, the Golden Gloves championship. My career record was 87 bouts with only 11 losses.

Boxing kept me from a life of crime but it couldn't keep me out of trouble. One night I went to a dance with my whole family, and as we were leaving a gang of 25 thugs jumped us. As I fell to my knees with three stab wounds from a car antenna I heard someone growl, "I'm going to kill him!"

Still on one knee, I yanked a pocket knife out of my pants and plunged it into my attacker. He ran down the street screaming. Another man was trying to kill my uncle with a big switchblade; I stabbed this one too. Another thug came at me, and as we wrestled we wounded each other.

Somehow we broke free and I went to my mother's house to recover from my wounds. The next morning I heard that one of the men I stabbed had died. Four days later when the police came for me I surrendered voluntarily. I knew I would be charged with murder and might spend the rest of my life in prison, but I just couldn't see

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The Three-fold Purpose of Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship

1. *To witness to God's presence and power in the world today through the message of the total Gospel for the total man, and by this to reach men for Jesus Christ, especially those having the same social, cultural or business interests as the person doing the witnessing.*

2. *To provide a basis of Christian fellowship among all men everywhere through an organism not directly associated with any specific church but cooperating with all those of like mind, and to inspire its members to be active in their respective churches.*

Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International does not start churches. Rather, we desire solely to be a service arm to existing ones.

3. *To bring about a greater measure of unity and spirit of harmony in the body of Christ, where members are united in a common effort for the good of the whole body.*

HOW TO START A FULL GOSPEL BUSINESS MEN'S CHAPTER

Requests come in daily to start new chapters. If you have this burden laid on your heart and see the vision for your community, write for complete information to:

Chapter Department
FGBMFI
P.O. Box 5050
Costa Mesa, CA 92626

living as a fugitive.

The police were amazingly supportive. I spent many fearful hours in a jail cell, but the district attorney finally determined it was a case of self-defense and the murder charge was dropped. I cried when I heard that. One of the officers hugged me and said, "These are the cases I like—the ones with a happy ending." That night my mother and I went to church and I was very grateful to God. Doctors who examined my wounds were amazed that my liver and kidneys had not been pierced, even though one of the cuts was 11 inches deep.

Soon, though, I faced another cri-

doctors released me from my sickbed. I was completely healed by the power of God.

But still I resisted Him. I visited Julio and Alice often, usually after a good, fortifying dose of booze. One day I met a fellow named Big Mike at their house. "Hey, brother, I love you," Mike said, putting his big arm around me. I resisted the impulse to punch him out. I just said, "Yeah, pal," and walked out.

A short time later I married a girl named Erma. She started going to a Bible study with my sister-in-law Marie, and one night I decided to go along. Big Mike was there, and he

I knew I might spend the rest of my life in prison.

sis. I contracted valley fever, an often fatal disease about which doctors knew very little. I was very fearful. A friend of mine had died at age 38 of the same thing, and he looked 60 years old just before he died. I was spitting up several ounces of blood each day.

While I was in the hospital two Christian friends, Julio and Alice Maes, came to visit me. They asked me if I wanted to accept Jesus but I said, "No, I'm not ready yet." I did let them pray for me to be healed, and the whole hospital seemed to be watching as those two prayed with me.

Two months later, the astounded

walked up to me.

"Billy Trejo," he smiled, opening his Bible. "I'm praying for you." He showed me my name, underlined in his Bible. All of a sudden it was like I didn't see Big Mike, but St. Peter, standing at the gate of heaven with the Book of Life in his hand. And I didn't want my name taken out of there.

Finally, a few days later, I laid down my gloves and quit fighting God. A Christian acquaintance at the shipyards where I work led me to the Lord. God began to change me immediately and my co-workers saw it. Some of them made fun of me, but they couldn't deny they were working with

a new Billy Trejo.

I started praying hard for my brother Tommy, serving time at Terminal Island. He was paroled to a Christian home for drug addicts, and after the brothers there prayed with him and read the Bible to him night after night, he was wondrously saved.

I rejoiced at having a blood brother who was also a brother in Christ. But



Tommy was on the street only a short time when he was picked up on an old drug charge and sent to Lompoc Prison. There in the days before his violent death he was a dynamic witness for Christ.

At my brother's funeral I questioned God. Tommy could have been such an effective testimony to God's saving grace. As I cried before Him it

seemed the Lord spoke this to my heart:

"Why are you crying? I've answered your prayer and Tommy is with Me. Now what are *you* going to do for Me?" I stopped weeping from sadness and began praising God and crying from sheer joy.

But now, back in the prison where Tommy died, the bitterness returned. And here I was, facing five men who perhaps wanted to kill me.

They were right in front of me now. One of them raised his arms in my direction. The big hands came down on my shoulders.

"Hey, brother, God bless you!" he shouted. "Hope to see you again real soon!" The other four men hugged me too, and wished me well. As they walked away, I literally cried with relief and asked God to forgive me. That was a turning point for me. The walls of hate came tumbling down, and I told the Lord I would dedicate my life to Convicts for Christ. Since then He's opened countless doors for me to help reach men in prison with His great gospel.

I fought God hard all my life, just as if I were in the ring with Him. If that's what you're doing, let me tell you, it's a fixed fight. God's going to win! It might be with love taps, or it might be with a knockout punch, but He's going to win.

Take the advice of someone who knows. Take off the gloves and get in God's corner. He hasn't lost a bout for me yet, and He wants to take us all the way to the championship. □

News headlines may continue to scream divorce, violence, broken relationships. But when people from all over the world come together at the Anaheim Convention Center in southern California July 6-10, 1982 you'll see a startlingly different picture of the family, marriage, and harmony among men.

You'll see God's picture. It's showing at the 30th Anniversary Celebration of Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International, in a week for your whole family to remember.

It's packed full of dynamic, unforgettable events for every age—God's message of hope for a troubled time, brought by His men for this hour, a tremendous assemblage of Christian speakers and leaders... testimonies, encouragement and ministry by

leading laymen from around the globe... anointed music... seminars...even sidetrips to southland recreation spots and a major-league ballgame.

Families are coming together in Jesus... to vacation, worship, praise, learn and grow... then to take God's renewal to our world. Let Him count on you.



C
T



Among our speakers (clockwise from top left)... Kenneth Copeland, Dr. Paul Yonggi Cho, Mario Murillo, Jack Hayford

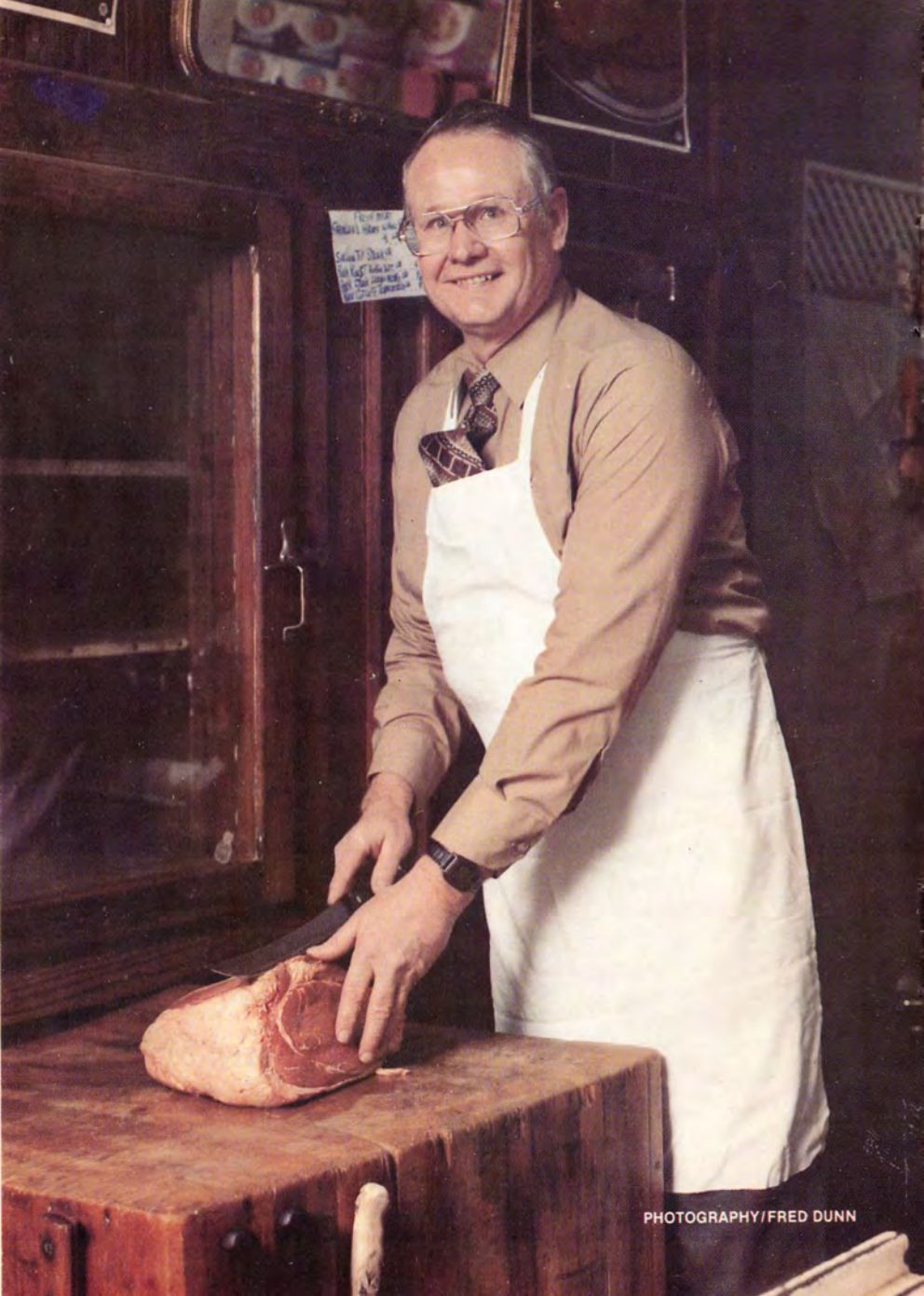
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COMING TOGETHER

1982 World Convention
 of FGBMFI
 Anaheim, California
 July 6-10, 1982



Cured Meat
Sliced
All Day Long

PHOTOGRAPHY/FRED DUNN

ON THE BACK SHELF

Bernard Welch, Parnell, MO

The divorce papers had been served, and suddenly I was alone in a city populated by millions of strangers.

My wife and I had been married for 10 years, but slowly the spark destined to hold our marriage together had been extinguished. We had recognized something was wrong and knew we had to do something about it, so for the last five years of our marriage we tried everything we could think of: parties, travel, all kinds of excitement. We had even purchased a beautiful new home overlooking the

sparkling blue Pacific.

But any joy was short-lived. On the day the divorce was actually finalized my question lurched toward heaven: "Where were You when I needed You?"

I had always believed I was a mature Christian. I grew up in the Catholic church, was baptized as an infant, attended religious education classes all through my youth and mass every Sunday for 30 years. By the time I reached manhood I believed sincerely that I had fulfilled all the requirements for being a good

Christian. Eternity was the least of my worries.

In retrospect, I see that my spiritual life was far from being in order; my priorities were drastically out of balance. All the things I held in high esteem only served to alienate me further from God. Money, education, security, the world's social standards—these were the most important

myself, and that was the beginning of my spiritual healing. For the first time I saw clearly that salvation is a gift of God and that there is no way by which mere human beings can ever earn what the Lord gives us freely.

With my eyes opened to the light of Christ, a burning pain of remorse struck my heart as I realized how much hurt I had inflicted on my wife,

I excused the changes I saw in myself as being the result of business pressures.

things in my life. God took a back seat to them all. Yet I was never truly satisfied.

After my divorce my life seemed devoid of all meaning. I sought hopelessly for answers within myself. Finally I decided to stop attending mass. With angry tears I prayed, "God, I've tried to live a good life but I've failed. I quit! I give up trying . . ."

As the words left my mouth a still voice from within said, "Bernard, it's about time you gave up. Now let Me help you." I knew I was hearing the voice of God.

I had taken great care always to be in control of my life and I felt I had earned my salvation. Before the Lord could put my spiritual life in order He had to show me what a proud, self-righteous man I was. Jesus reached out and helped me to step down from the pedestal on which I had placed

family and friends. With deepest sincerity I asked God to forgive me for all I had done and all I had failed to do. I stood to my feet now—a new creation in Christ, born again—this time to be the man my Creator had intended me to be.

Night after night since the divorce I had climbed into bed only to toss and turn in restless sleep. Now my days ended with a feeling of true inner peace.

I became active in church again, eager not only for our weekly Sunday meetings but for any opportunity to serve the Lord. I had grown up believing that the God I prayed to was far away in heaven. Now I knew He lived within me, and our relationship grew stronger and more personal with each passing day.

I wanted to experience all that God had for me, and I felt there was some-

thing more. But it took me two more years to discover the source of that "something more."

One day as I knelt in prayer asking the Lord to give me the gifts of the Holy Spirit, wisdom, knowledge and understanding, He began to move on me in a very unique and wonderful manner. I had never heard of the baptism in the Holy Spirit; all I knew was that the Lord was revealing Himself to me in a powerful way.

After that experience I found God's truth being poured out on every page of the Bible. I never could seem to understand it before. Now I could scarcely put it down. These were actually true stories about real people who had learned the will of God through triumph and tribulation, and I could relate what I read to my own life.

Thinking that being independent would free me to follow more easily the will of God for my life, I moved to Missouri and purchased a small business. But owning and operating your own business is not an easy matter. I got so wrapped up in the day-to-day workings and problems of my store that gradually the Lord was again relegated to a back shelf. Although I excused the changes I saw in myself as being the result of business pressures, the peace and love He had provided me slowly began to ebb from my life.

Thank God that He doesn't give up easily on His children. One day He sent a minister to my store. "God has sent

me to talk to you," he announced.

"This must be one of those cases I've heard about—fanatics," I thought to myself. As politely as I could, I let him know I was doing fine without his help. Nevertheless, he spent two hours sharing Jesus Christ and praying with me. Before he left he gave me a copy of *Voice* magazine.

Later as I flipped through the pages I saw that the men in its true stories were very much like me, except for one thing: they had received the Holy Spirit in a way I had never heard of outside of the second chapter of Acts.

The minister helped me find a charismatic prayer group of my own denomination, where I came to receive my heavenly language—a new way to pray and praise God.

That was 14 years ago, and God isn't finished with me yet. He continues to correct me, to guide me, and to lead me into living a holier life.

Through divorce I was left alone, but through the grace of God I found a new love, Jesus Christ and His family. I have joined the body of Christ—Spirit-filled Christians of many denominations—who love me in return.

To every lonely man, woman and child I say, "Sing unto God, sing praises to his name: extol him that rideth upon the heavens by his name JAH, and rejoice before him. A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows, is God in his holy habitation. God setteth the solitary in families: he bringeth out those which are bound with chains" (Psalm 68:4-6). □

They called me the man with **The Product Nobody Wants**. But with God at the helm, my dream became a multimillion-dollar testimony to the Lord's faithfulness.

Imagine working for a company where you and 500 other employees start each day with a chapel service. Well-known guest speakers and musicians and sometimes your fellow workers are featured in each service. At lunchtime people don't talk about the weather and football nearly so much as they talk about Jesus. Throughout the day you hear folks speaking about the importance of

do just that. But what kind of company?

One day I took my car to a mechanic to have the windshield wipers fixed. He told me I needed a new wiper motor. Wincing at the price, I asked, "What about a rebuilt motor?"

"No such thing," the mechanic said. "They only come new."

"Maybe this is the basis for my new company," I thought to myself.

That night I studied the workings of my burnt-out wiper motor and announced to my wife Fran, "I think I can do it!" She leaned over and gave me a kiss. "For 30 years, Mike, I've

THE MASTER REBUILDER

God's leading in their personal and professional daily lives.

No, this is not fantasy. It's daily reality for the folks who work with my son and me at M. Cardone Industries. And for me it's the realization of a lifetime dream.

But 11 years ago a lot of people thought my wonderful dream was a mirage. I had just retired at age 55 as president of a very successful automotive rebuilding company. I had watched the business prosper and expand for 35 years and everyone expected me to retire and enjoy myself.

But all my life I'd dreamed of owning my own company. Now I was convinced that it was God's will for me to

believed you can do anything."

But when I started calling auto parts dealers, I got quite a different reaction. Instead of a kiss I got what is sometimes called a kiss-off.

"Rebuilt windshield wiper motors, Mike? There's no market for them. You might as well rebuild horn buttons."

After a day of that kind of rejection I was ready to give up the idea. But my son Michael, Jr. gave me a good talking-to.

"Dad, you've always taught me, 'Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.'



The Lord has it worked out. Trust Him.”

My conversation with Michael reminded me that I had been trusting the Lord for more than 40 years and He hadn't let me down yet. I was saved at 14, baptized in the Holy Spirit at 15, and God has had full possession of my life ever since. I was still in my teens during the Great Depression, and work was hard to come by. But as I relied on the Holy Spirit to guide my life and remained faithful to commit my finances to Him, He met all my needs.

As I tithed from my meager resources I found God kept giving back more. The more I gave, the more He

returned. I learned early on that when we put God first in everything, He provides for us beyond our greatest expectations. That principle guided me through 35 years of successful business.

Now I wanted a company of my own where God could have absolute control, where I could prove once and for all the truth of II Chronicles 26:5: “... as long as he sought the Lord, God made him to prosper.”

Convinced that this was God's will, we opened our rebuilding shop in a store basement February 8, 1970, my fifty-fifth birthday. That morning and every morning began with group prayer.

Our first products came off the line gleaming like new, but as I went from distributor to distributor I was met with the same discouragement. "I've already got 200 new units in stock, Mike. I never get calls for *rebuilt* wiper motors. It'll never sell."

Trying one last approach, I offered to supply them with motors at no risk, 100-percent guaranteed. And I began running ads in automotive journals.

Orders started coming in—slowly at first, but before long our assembly line was really moving. As car owners discovered they could buy a rebuilt wiper motor for half the price of a new one, orders began to pour in. Soon we were hiring more people, and to each new employee I emphasized that all we did was for the glory of God, so each product must be perfect. Our reputation for quality grew and so did our business.

One night while we were on vacation Fran and I got a call from Michael. Our plant had burned down. It looked like the end.

But God was still in control. Within 24 hours we had a new building, and the move was actually a blessing because we had outgrown our previous plant.

With more space, we began rebuilding other car parts: distributors, master cylinders, power-steering pumps, blower motors, and power-brake boosters.

The company's growth was phenomenal. But amidst the pressures of a burgeoning business I'd failed to

notice that the morning prayer meetings, begun when there were only six of us, had gradually been allowed to wither away. I knew that wasn't God's will, so we began again, this time with morning chapel services for all the employees.

In Japan, companies try very hard to make workers feel they are part of a large family. That is the atmosphere we also try to promote at M. Cardone Industries by giving everyone opportunity to make suggestions, to voice complaints freely, and even to discuss personal problems. The big difference is that our center of focus is not our company, but Jesus Christ.

Today a dream built on *The Product Nobody Wanted* has become the reality of a 600,000-square-foot plant serving approximately two million customers coast to coast. God has allowed me to realize my dream of having a company which puts Him first in every decision.

And as I watch the damaged, greasy, dirty parts come in for rebuilding, then see those same parts roll off our assembly line, new, shiny and better than ever, it's a constant object lesson in the life-changing power of Jesus Christ. Even when our lives and dreams are broken, filthy, ready for the junk heap, "all things become new" at the hands of the Master Rebuilder.

Have you put Him first in your life? If you haven't, do it right now. Believe me, He'll do things that will surprise, and delight you the rest of your life. □

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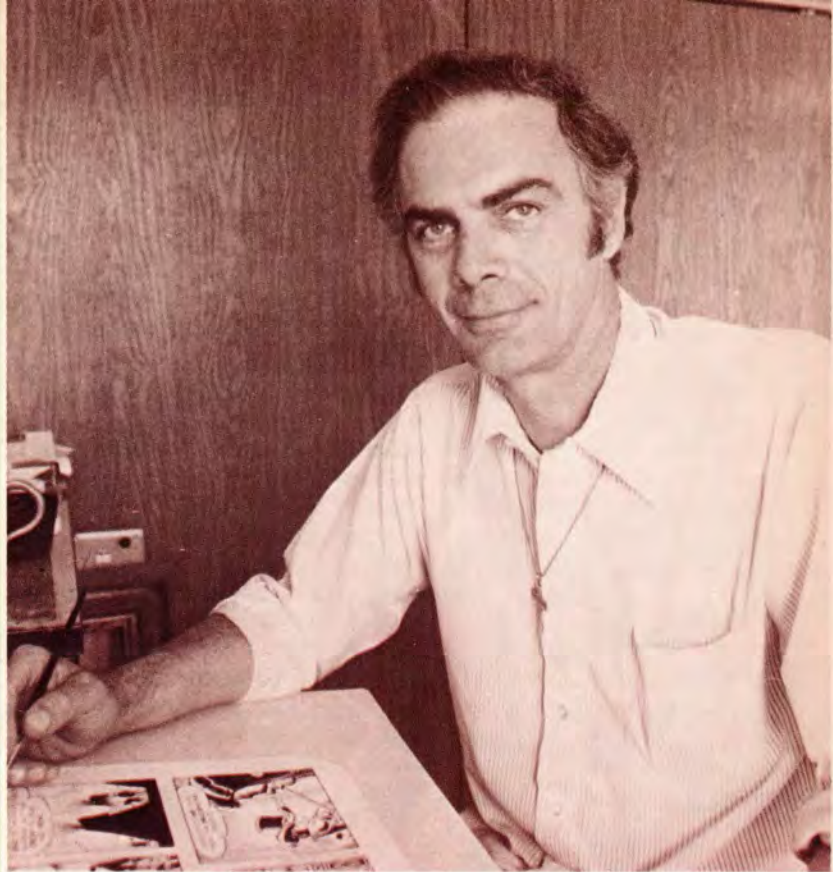
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“draw, pardner!”

Stan Lynde, Red Lodge, MT

For many years a .45 revolver had been a standard prop in my internationally syndicated comic strip, “Rick O’Shay.” Now, standing on the porch of our beautiful Montana home, I was about to use a .45 to kill the man who was both my worst enemy and my god: Myself.

A furious blizzard raged around me, mirroring the agonizing storm in my heart. As I raised the pistol to my head I could dimly hear my wife Sidne begging me to put down the gun.

It was New Year’s eve, but 1977 held only threats for me. Divorce, bankruptcy, and the loss of my beloved comic strip seemed inevitable.

I put my thumb on the hammer.

It was true that at age 45 I had nearly everything I thought desirable. Fifteen million readers all over the world read "Rick O'Shay" every day and thought Stan Lynde must be one of the happiest, most fulfilled people in the world. I was healthy, had achieved some fame, lived in a handsome log home on five acres of my favorite part of the country, had a beautiful wife and children. My neighbors in Red Lodge thought I had it made. The mail each month brought fan letters, requests for autographs and speaking

As I grew older, though, I stopped looking to God for guidance. When I prayed, it was to say, "This is what I want, God. Help me get it."

By age 24 I'd already been married and divorced once. I served a stint in the Navy, then began pursuing my lifelong dream of producing a syndicated comic strip. I achieved that goal at the age of 26. "Rick O'Shay" was born, and his list of client newspapers grew steadily.

I married again, returned to my home state of Montana, and continued developing my own form of reli-

LATIGO



by Stan Lynde

engagements, and checks from the Chicago Tribune/New York News Syndicate.

But behind the glamour of my public image there lived a lost and unhappy man whose god—*self*—had failed him.

I see now that it never had to be that way. My godly mother raised me to know the Lord and the message of salvation through Jesus Christ. I attended Sunday school and even served as president of the state Baptist Youth Fellowship for a year.

gion centered around *me*. Ironically, I considered myself a Christian; after all, I was a middle-class American, wasn't I, and at one time could recite the 10 commandments! I could discuss the Bible at length (although I'd never read much of it) and tell anyone who would listen where it was wrong. I went to church three or four times a year and was always happy to point out where the preacher was in error.

Convinced I knew all about spiritual matters, I'd studied Greek mythology, read a lot about reincarnation and

astrology, had my personal horoscope cast, and for good measure had seen every Jesus movie Hollywood ever made. Organized religion wasn't for me, though. I was part of the "Mountains-Are-My-Chapel, Skies-Are-My-Sermon" congregation.

Occasionally I had nagging doubts about the hereafter or whether I had really found true happiness and fulfillment. Not really liking what I saw in my life, I didn't dare look it over too closely, but swept doubts under the rug and pushed on to find The American Dream and The Good Life.

most people realize. First a script is produced, with drawing instructions, almost like a film strip. Then preliminary pencil drawings are done, followed by the pen-and-ink finished art. Even with the help of an assistant, I found myself working 10 to 12 hours each day, sometimes six days a week.

I blamed the news syndicate for Rick's lagging sales and tried to get them to improve the situation. Meantime, all my relationships suffered. I was drinking more than ever and conversations with Sidne almost always became bitter arguments. Finally, the

LATIGO



by Stan Lynde



My second marriage ended in divorce. A year later I married again. About that time, trouble began to develop with "Rick O'Shay." After more than 10 years of increased popularity and critical acclaim, the strip seemed to have peaked out in new sales. My income began to fall far short of my family's needs. As our indebtedness increased I worked harder and harder and spent less and less time with my wife and family.

Doing a daily comic strip requires much more time and energy than

possible loss of the comic strip, imminent bankruptcy, and alienation of my family brought me to the moment when I held a revolver to my head while the rest of America was celebrating a new year.

But as my finger tightened on the trigger I was overcome by a sudden, horrible, deep sense of evil. It was as though a pit were opening beneath my feet. I could actually smell the sulphur and hear inside my head demonic laughter. Just as I prepared to carry out the ultimate act of selfish-

ness I saw Sidne's horrified face and heard her pleading with me to stop. Realizing she still loved me, for one fleeting moment I thought of someone besides Stan Lynde. I lowered the gun and followed Sidne into the house.

But the storm within raged on. Sidne and I separated. Our home was sold and bankruptcy still seemed inevitable. I gave up "Rick O'Shay" and suffered as I saw my creation change under the guidance of other hands. "Rick O'Shay" was the same as dead for me and, because the comic-strip character was so much a part of my own identity, I felt dead too.

At last I was forced to face the truth about my god. He was a failure. The "rug" under which I'd swept my sins for 47 years was too lumpy to ignore any longer. Desperately I turned to the God of my youth. My prayer was short and honest: "Jesus, help me."

Amazingly, after all those years of smug religiosity and unbridled selfishness I now discovered that Jesus had been waiting lovingly for just this moment. From that day when I surrendered my will and circumstances to Him, He began to repair a lifetime of self-inflicted damage.

Soon Sidne and I were back together. She had been reared in the church, too, and when she saw how God was transforming me she readily committed herself fully to Jesus. About the same time, Field Newspaper Syndicate made me an offer which led to the creation of my new comic strip, "Latigo." It is growing in popularity,

perhaps in part because "Rick O'Shay" had been taken out of syndication about three years after I gave it up. Although the two characters are greatly different, in many ways I feel that the old Rick has been "born again," just like me. I drew "Rick" under my own guidance, but "Latigo" is a gift from God, and I ask for His direction in doing every strip.

Not long ago, the Holy Spirit gave me a definite command: "Witness and testify." One result was the introduction to the strip of a character named Jordan Rivers, ex-con-turned-preacher. His presence in "Latigo" gives opportunity for a very direct evangelistic approach. Surprisingly, though I expected some adverse reaction, all the response has been positive. Praise the Lord!

God continues to move with His healing power in my life. Sidne and I became very active in our church and in the Young Life youth ministry. We have both received the baptism in the Holy Spirit, as have two of our three sons, and recently I became a member of Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship.

I used to think that my "mountain-top religion" was just fine. But the mountains make no demands on you. You can go up there and ignore Jesus' commands to feed His sheep and to serve and love others. I no longer look to the mountains for my salvation, but to The Rock, Jesus Christ.

So, if you're wondering where "Rick O'Shay" is these days . . . he's been born again! □

HE GOT HIS MAN

(continued from page 9)

well. He was a brilliant fellow and a good worker, but he didn't try hard to get along with people. He could be extremely unpleasant with little difficulty.

Then suddenly he changed. When he told me that he'd received the baptism in the Holy Spirit, he was so enthusiastic, the changes in him so evident, that I became interested enough to read the books he gave me and to attend a couple of meetings with him.

Although I went forward to receive the Baptism at the first meeting, nothing much seemed to happen at that time. But just as it had been with my Christian renewal, as I studied the Scriptures relating to the work of the Holy Spirit my Christian walk took on a new vitality.

It was Vic who later introduced me to Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International, of which I became a member.

In 1975 I helped organize a Christian police fellowship in Ottawa. One of our first speakers was Ernie Hollands, a former criminal who spent 25 years in the penitentiary before letting Christ take over his life. I could hardly believe that he could have done all the things he said. His face radiated warmth and love, and kindness oozed out of him. I had an opportunity to read his record; it verified all that he had said.

About this time I got another surprise in the form of French-Canadian

mountie Paul Donelle, a Roman Catholic. Paul had a rough, tough exterior and a very closed mind. He was the last man I'd ever want to talk to about the Holy Spirit. But one day he came into my office, laid his hand on the Bible on my desk and asked, "Do you read this for the French" (meaning for practice in studying the language), "or for real?"

"Both," I replied warily, expecting ridicule.

"Praise the Lord!" he exclaimed. For a moment I thought he was making fun, but then I saw something different in his eyes.

"What's happened to you?"

"I've received the baptism in the Holy Spirit," Paul replied, grinning from ear to ear. "I just had to share it with someone!" A few months later I, too, received my heavenly language.

No one is exempt from the need for a Saviour, or from God's grace. Cop or criminal, we're all, like that dead man on the table, empty shells of nothingness . . . until Jesus steps in.

In my case, God finally got His man. Has He captured you yet? If He hasn't, my advice is to stop running and turn yourself in. It'll be the most unusual arrest you've ever seen. For when you accept Jesus, you're cleared of all charges and set eternally free. □

If you have a testimony that will glorify God and bring others to Jesus through Voice, you are invited to request guidelines from the Editorial Department, Box 5050, Costa Mesa, CA 92626.

SIX SCRIPTURAL STEPS TO SALVATION

Men still cry, "What must I do to be saved?" The Bible provides a clear answer.

1. ACKNOWLEDGE: "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). "God be merciful to me a sinner" (Luke 18:13).

2. REPENT: "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3). "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out" (Acts 3:19).

3. CONFESS: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Rom. 10:9).

4. FORSAKE: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord . . . for he will abundantly pardon" (Isaiah 55:7).

5. BELIEVE: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16).

6. RECEIVE: "He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (John 1:11,12).

Why not make your eternal decision right now:

"Lord Jesus, I believe You died for my sins and I ask You forgiveness. I receive You now as my personal Saviour and invite You to manage my life from this day forward. Amen."

Write us to tell of your decision. We'll send you a booklet, "Now That You've Received Christ." Our mailing address: Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International, P.O. Box 5050, Costa Mesa, CA 92626.

Full Gospel Business Men's

VOICE

Volume 30 Number 4
April 1982

P.O. Box 5050, Costa Mesa, CA 92626
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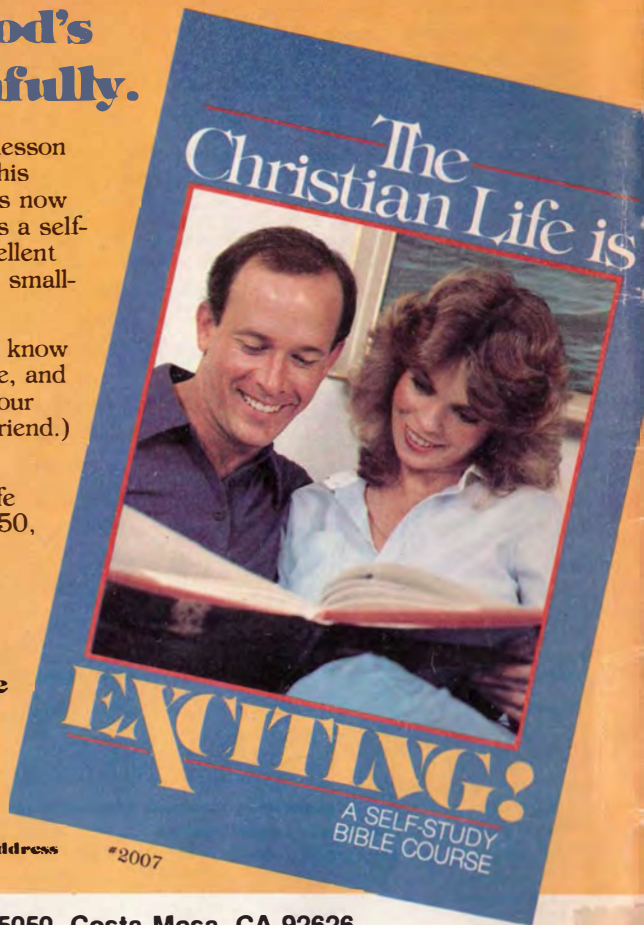
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