

WORLD

t h e **GLS** c o n n e c t i o n

reviews



A ministry of
the GARBC

Challenges 2007

Since 1973, Gospel Literature Services has been supplying printed materials to ministries around the world. A major part of what we do is to provide English-language Sunday School curriculum to underdeveloped ministries in both the United States and 27 other countries. The cost of shipping these materials is about \$50,000 annually.

Author Thomas L. Friedman wrote a New York Times best seller titled *The World Is Flat*. Friedman contends that the unprecedented developments in technology over the last few decades have changed forever the way we do business—and I might add, the way we do ministry. What are the implications of using new technologies?

One implication: Web-based digital formatting. Today many countries have the capacity to download materials from the Internet and to have them printed locally. One of our goals for 2007 is to provide Sunday School material in a Web-based digital format. We may need to assist with printing costs in some places, but the potential for supplying more material at less cost is wonderfully inviting.

Another implication: translation of curricula. Have you heard the phrase, “the browning of America”? It refers to the thousands of Hispanics who have flooded the United States and continue to enter this country in search of a better life. How many people could be reached if we could produce Regular Baptist Press Sunday School curricula in Spanish? Are we prepared to reach out to this first generation of immigrants

who speak only the language of their origin?

Looking further, we must not be content with Spanish. If we could translate the material into French, it would impact much of Africa. Even though Africa has been the beneficiary of much missionary activity for decades, there is a dearth of doctrinally sound educational material, especially for children. Going one step further we need to press to translate the material into the Russian language. Most Central and Eastern European congregations have little or nothing to help them fulfill the mandate for educating their children.

The enormity of the challenge does not lessen our responsibility. My best guess at this point is that it will cost approximately \$400,000 to

translate five years' worth of materials into three foreign languages. The scope of the project will include the three-year rotation of children's material, the four-year rotation of youth material, and five years of adult material. The goal will be to make all the curricula available in a downloadable Web-based digital format. Do not forget that the Great Commission encompasses the whole world. Are you willing to step up your commitment to reaching the world? Make a contribution to GLS and mark the gift, “Translation Fund.” For all eternity you will be glad you did! ■



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Ministry in Haiti

Haiti is the poorest nation in the Western hemisphere and one of the most densely populated countries in the Americas. It lies just 50 miles east of Cuba and 800 miles southeast of Miami. Deb and I arrived in Haiti on Wednesday, August 16, and left on Monday, August 21. From the moment we landed, we realized we were definitely in a Third World country.

At the Airport

Deb and I were first struck by the chaos, even in the airport. Porters tried to insist on taking our bags. It was hard to negotiate the crowd just to get outside. After we stepped out the door, the chaos was magnified by erratic traffic patterns, blowing horns, and scattered dirt and litter.

We were met at the airport by two pastors, Pastor Predestin and Pastor Sanousse, and a lawyer named Wallenson, who was our driver. The men were excited to greet us, and we were very glad to see them. I had corresponded with Pastor Predestin many times, but had not met him before. The only glitch at the airport was that our luggage did not arrive with us. In fact, Deb's suitcase arrived the next afternoon, and mine came a day after that. Since airplane passengers could not put liquids, gels, or pastes in their carry-ons at that time, we were without any toiletries at all. So we had no change of clothes and no toiletries. That presented some challenges because we were ministering in over-90-degree heat and 100 percent humidity!

Our Accommodations

When we arrived, we were taken to a guesthouse, which was acceptable, though not without issues for us Americans. Just outside the room was a sign, "Electricity is very scarce in Haiti, so please turn everything off when you leave." The room was lit by a six-inch fluorescent tube. To read at night, Deb and I had to huddle around the light. The room had a window air conditioner, which came on about 9:30 p.m. and went off about 6:00 a.m. It was a great help. Mounted on the ceiling was an oscillating fan, which had one speed—gale-force wind, which is why Deb slept with the sheet over her head.

Off the hallway was a bathroom that also had a sign: "Water is very scarce in Haiti, use sparingly." It also said, "Don't drink the water. Use the filtered water in the jug to brush your teeth. Stay safe." To shower, we had to get wet, turn off the water, lather up, and then turn on the water to

rinse. One afternoon as I was showering—without hot water, of course—I got all lathered up, but someone turned off the water, and it did not come on again that afternoon. Needless to say, I dried the soap off and prayed for rain. As inconvenient as those things were, they were blessings compared to the overwhelming poverty of the people around us.

Out and About

Haiti has between 80 and 85 percent unemployment. Everywhere the streets are lined with people selling their fruit, vegetables, trinkets, and anything else imaginable. They sit like beggars along the road and sometimes approach vehicles in the street.

Our Ministry

Our purpose in going was to encourage and provide some teaching for the pastors and wives of the Association of Evangelical Baptist Churches of Haiti. Deb and I conducted a pastors and wives conference for three mornings, about eight hours of teaching. Approximately 40 pastors and 20 wives attended. The topic of the conference for the pastors was the faithful servant, based on 2 Timothy 2:1-6. I basically taught them an inductive approach to Bible study, walking them through the basic steps of observation, interpretation, and application. They were eager students and were appreciative of the opportunity to learn and interact concerning the Scriptures. Each morning session ended with a Q & A time that was open-ended in its subject matter.

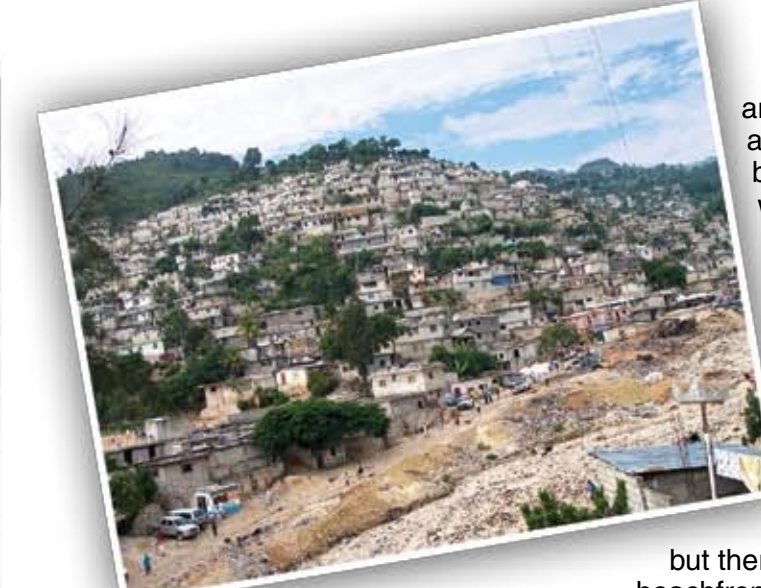
Simultaneously, Deb was meeting with the pastors' wives. Her morning topics included the virtuous woman of Proverbs 31, the importance of a method of studying God's Word, and prayer. The ladies enjoyed making a bracelet they could use as a witnessing tool. A pastor's wife recognizing the need to disciple the women of her church, requested a dozen Bibles, which were sent to her a few weeks later.

On Thursday and Friday evenings I preached evangelistic messages at two churches.

The first church had been built on the side of a hill in a shanty town. We Americans would look at that hillside and assume it was a landfill. It was strewn with garbage. A few pigs were rooting around, as well as some nanny goats and skinny dogs. The area looked like a place where water had washed away part of the mountainside, leaving just a rock ravine.

Lightning was flashing as we made our way up the ravine, and Deb felt especially nervous. Then, just as we stepped into the church, the monsoons let loose. The church, which was approximately 20 x 30 feet, was sheltered by a tin roof. The room was lit by two dim lights powered by a generator. The church had a sound system cranked up with an electric guitar, small keyboard, and drum set. The people sang at the top of their lungs.

The roof leaked in about 30 places in that small room. Since there was water dripping everywhere, Deb said to me, "Don't touch the microphone." But the warning was to no avail, since both the translator and I were handed mics. Everything we did was translated into either French or Creole. For some reason, the first night it was Creole; the next night it was French.



are located downtown and are surrounded by masses of people, without the basic necessities of life, eking out an existence in absolute filth and garbage.

The beach itself was a surprise. It was not a beach for walking.

People could get into the water, but there was no sand or beachfront. To access the water, we walked through a restaurant and paid some money. We didn't get in the water, as it was quite murky and uninviting.

A striking thing about the people is that they are, for the most part, clean and nicely dressed. The majority of the ladies wore dresses, which seemed to indicate a cultural bent toward modesty.

Friday night it rained as well, but we were in a more substantial structure. It, too, was located in a shanty town area. The church had a little drummer boy, maybe seven or eight years old. He kept the rhythm, but when he noticed I was watching, he added some extra drum rolls. That night I started to preach by candlelight, but the breeze from the storm blew the candles out, so I had to preach without notes. That night the pastor's son shared with me his desire to serve the Lord, perhaps someday as a pastor. He requested that I send him a study Bible since he had no Bible of his own. That was a desire I was glad to fulfill.

The Beach

Saturday after the morning sessions, a couple of the pastors, Wallenson, Deb, and I went to the beach. That was an interesting experience. We went through downtown Port-au-Prince, where I saw the worst filth I have ever seen. In contrast, the president's house and other government buildings are beautiful. They

Traffic Haitian Style

Traffic in Port-au-Prince is unlike anything I had ever seen. I never saw a stop sign, yield sign, speed limit sign, or any other traffic sign. Most cars were banged up in more than one place. Our hearts were frequently lodged in our throats as our driver zoomed around. Pedestrians have no rights there. So our driver would drive through a crowd, just honking the horn. Another unique feature of traffic in Haiti is the form of public transportation called tap-taps. They are typically a small Toyota pickup with a topper and benches on each side of the truck bed. Six people ride on each side, plus as many as can hang on the back. The larger trucks sometimes mount a model airplane on the top, and that means they are express tap-taps, which go to other cities.

Sunday Services

Sunday we ministered in two churches. In the morning we were in a tin-roofed church in a shanty town. When we arrived, a couple of minutes late, a young lady was teach-

ing a class for all ages. She would stop and make the class repeat what she had said. The children, even four- and five-year-olds, sat with the adults for an hour and a half of teaching with no break. The children were attentive and well behaved. When the teacher concluded, the pastor got up, reviewed what she had taught, and went immediately into the morning service without a break. The people praised and worshiped and enjoyed lots of special music; then I preached. The worship service lasted two hours. We started at 8:00 a.m. and finished at 11:30 with no breaks.

Sunday evening I preached at a church that was probably the most established church in the region. Pastor Wagner began the work in 1987, and God has greatly used him. That church had about 175 people out for the Sunday evening service.

IPFBM

The purpose of our trip was not just to conduct a conference for the pastors and their wives. I was there representing the International Partnership of Fundamental Baptist Ministries (IPFBM) to see how we could help the ministry in Haiti. Pastor Predestin and his wife, Amy, are true servants of the Lord. He is the president of the Association of Evangelical Baptist Churches of Haiti. I found Pastor Predestin to be a man of vision who is well respected by the other pastors. He gives great leadership to their association. Every morning he would walk an hour to meet us at the guesthouse; then in the evening after the driver dropped us off, Pastor Predestin would walk the hour home. On Sunday afternoon I met with the board of the association of churches. The men expressed great ap-

preciation for the partnership and laid out for me their plans for the future. They asked if I could come back in February to teach a seminary class for their pastors. I can't, but I have arranged for someone else to go.

The pastors have several dreams for their ministries:

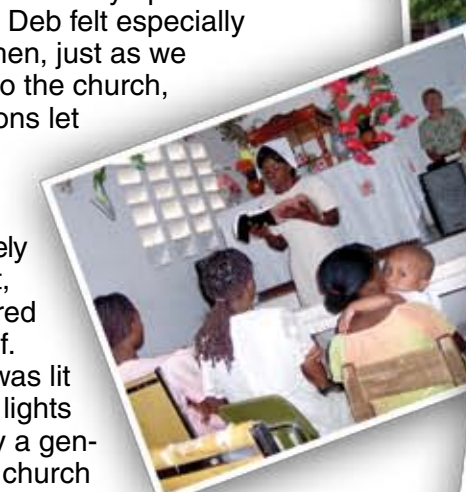
- Having a mobile medical team come a couple of times a year to help believers and to be an outreach tool for their churches
 - Leadership for a youth camp that they try to run during the Haitian days of Carnival
 - Help in church construction.
- Some of the churches have no building in which to meet, and others have buildings in such bad shape that they need major reconstruction.
- Further Bible training.
- These men have been called by God, have solid Biblical convictions, yet are in need of further training.
- Adoption by North American Churches.

Our Opportunity

Our Association (GARBC) is postured to minister to many different segments of the Body of Christ. It is overwhelming to think of the many expressions of God's grace that we enjoy. We have so much, and not because we have done anything to deserve it. To whom much is given, much is required. If you would like to have part in this ministry of gospel influence around the globe, send your contribution made payable to:



1300 North Meacham Road
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Togo Hymnal Project



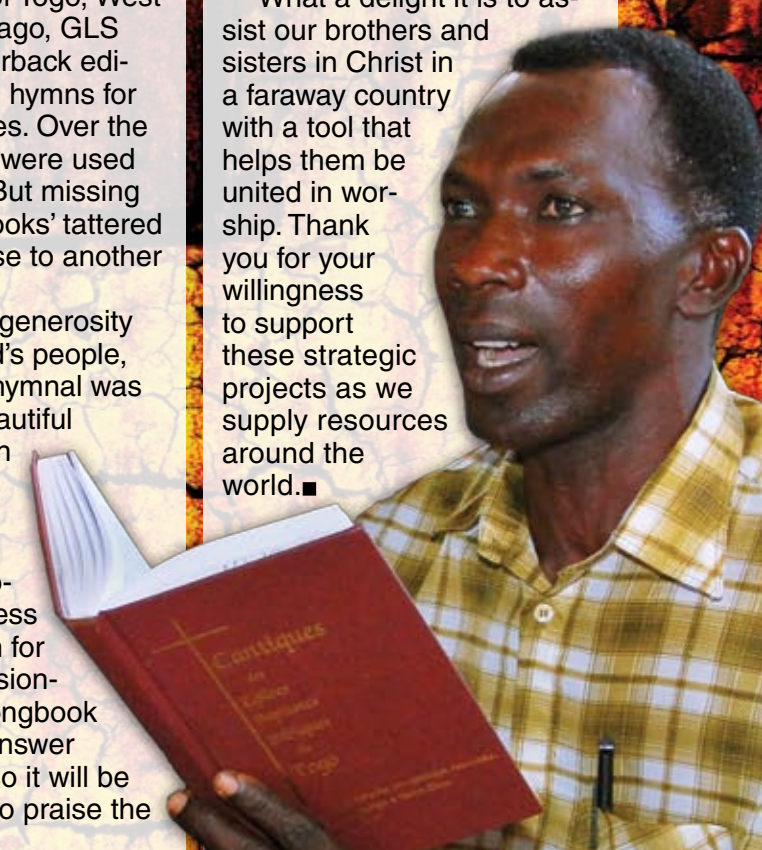
The continuing debate over worship styles has introduced tension into many congregations across America. I thought it was an American phenomenon until I talked with a worship leader in South Korea. He told me that Korean churches have traditionally used the pipe organ for accompaniment but that Korean young people are tuned to a more contemporary sound. I had not realized that this discussion traversed into other cultures. It makes me think how much the devil must enjoy seeing the church divided over preferences in the vital area of worship. The Scripture reminds us that the Father seeks worshipers, that worship is a mandate for today, and that it will be the believer's occupation for eternity. If we all had our hearts right, we might be able to solve this worship

issue. What a delight it was to help the people of Togo, West Africa. Six years ago, GLS published a paperback edition of songs and hymns for Togolese churches. Over the years, the books were used enthusiastically. But missing pages and the books' tattered condition gave rise to another request to GLS.

Thanks to the generosity and vision of God's people, a French/Kabye hymnal was produced in a beautiful hardbound edition that should provide many more years of service. The Togolese people express their appreciation for this gift. One missionary said, "This songbook is an incredible answer to much prayer, so it will be great for people to praise the

Lord with us for His bountiful graciousness!"

What a delight it is to assist our brothers and sisters in Christ in a faraway country with a tool that helps them be united in worship. Thank you for your willingness to support these strategic projects as we supply resources around the world.





One of our goals at Gospel Literature Services is to use media to equip missionaries and nationals with media tools to reach the world for Christ. One request that we have undertaken is to help Hispanic men train for pastoral ministry.

Here are some statistics that will help you understand the need for assisting missionaries and churches in reaching the Hispanic people group:

- *Spanish is the second language used worldwide as a vehicle of international communication and the third used as an international language of politics, economics, and culture.*

- *About 330 million people in the world speak Spanish as their first language.*

- *The demand for Spanish courses has doubled worldwide in ten years.*

- *Spanish is the official language of 21 countries.*

- *In the United States, 13 percent of the population speak Spanish as their first language.*

- *More than 37 million Hispanics reside in the United States alone.*

We have seen the need to assist Baptist Church Planters' Hispanic ministry by helping to create a tool to train Spanish-speaking men for the ministry. We are developing a 10-course curriculum that will move a young disciple further along in his journey to becoming the pastor of a Hispanic church. Each college-level course is 20 hours long. And all of the courses are being put on DVDs so that Hispanic men can train at home. ■



The first word in our name "Gospel Literature Services" emphatically announces the most important news that mankind will ever receive. Our mission is not to distribute just literature, but "gospel" literature. The gospel is that Jesus Christ, God's Son, died on the cross for our sins and that He rose again as the proof of His claim to deity.



Christmas is a hollow celebration apart from the redemptive story of Jesus Christ. If your search for meaning in life has left you empty and without satisfactory answers, we commend to you Jesus, the central figure of the Christmas story. The Bible says, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Timothy 1:15). By simple faith in Jesus Christ as your Savior, you can receive God's gift of eternal life. "The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:23).

The Christmas season fills believers with wonder and amazement. How can we fathom the depth of love that caused the eternal God to become a babe in arms? With that same infinite love, Jesus Christ pressed on to Calvary and purchased our redemption with His precious blood. We sing, "Hallelujah! What a Savior!"

With the close of this calendar year, Deb and I complete our first eight months of leading the international ministries of the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches. I feel humbled, overwhelmed, and privileged all at the same time. In these eight months I have met with pastors in Korea, Haiti, and China. The same grace of God that reached out to us continues to draw men and women, boys and girls from every nation unto salvation. I recently said to Deb that God must really love the Chinese people—He made so many of them. The truth is that He loves the whole world, and it's a world of over 6 billion. Deb and I count it a privilege to travel throughout the United States and to many other countries representing our Lord, as well as our associa-

tion of churches.

If you are unacquainted with the Hindal family, I will give you a brief introduction so you can pray for all of us as you feel led. Deb and I have three daughters and a son; they are all married to wonderful Christian spouses. Jeff and Jodi Demerly (our oldest daughter) along with their three children (soon to be four) have just completed their second two-year term as missionaries with the Association of Baptists for World Evangelism in the country of Slovakia. Bob and Lori King (our second daughter) serve as associate pastor and wife at the Hill Country Bible Church in Austin, Texas. Their four children range from ages eight to one. Adam and Becki Scouten (our third daughter) live in Scranton, Pennsylvania. Adam is a student at Baptist Bible Seminary, and Becki is the associate director of admissions at Baptist Bible College. They are active with the youth and a women's resource ministry in a church plant in central Scranton. Andrew and Trish Hindal (our son) reside in Clarks Summit, Pennsylvania, where both are working. They participate in the children's ministry

at Parker Hill Community Church. Andrew recently enlisted in the Marine Corps Reserves and will begin basic training at Parris Island, South Carolina, in early January. We are grateful for the evidence of God's grace in our family. We covet your prayers as we are scattered in God's service.

We wish each of you a Merry Christmas and the blessing of God upon the New Year. As the years pass and as we observe the developments in our world, we are reminded of our Lord's promise to return. "We shall all be changed, in a moment in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump. . . . Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air" (1 Corinthians 15:51, 52; 1 Thessalonians 4:17).

I so greatly appreciate your involvement with us in Gospel Literature Services and the International Partnership. As I try to peer into 2007, I'm continually faced with the reality that the opportunities are limited only by the funding. The eternal value of souls legitimizes our sacrifices. May our passion for Christ motivate us to do all we can, and may it bring great glory to our God. ■

