

# The Seeker

*“Seeking the Souls of Men and Pointing Them to Christ”*

*A Publication of*  
**International Bible Teaching Ministries**  
**International College of the Bible**

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Dear brethren,

Greetings to you all in the name of our Lord Jesus. As you can see our Newsletter has a new look. For the past few months Jimmie and I had talked about having a new Newsletter and he came up with this design and we came up with the new name, “The Seeker”. I also want to remind you of the ***Jimmie B. Hill Memorial Library Fund***. We are asking that congregations and individuals give funds so we can purchase good books for preacher training schools in Africa. The New Hope Road church where Jimmie served as an elder has agreed to receive these funds. Their mailing address is P.O. Box 1334, Dacula, GA, 30019. Inside each book we will state the book is given in memory of Jimmie.

Just a few days ago IBTM completed five years of work. During the past five years we have led 10 mission trips overseas and are about to depart for the eleventh. During these mission efforts we have seen 291 baptisms and 1,099 restorations. When we count the results from our graduates and current students who have reported to us we have had 1,190 baptisms and 1,193 restorations with 36 new congregations being established and 97 men graduating from preacher training schools. We currently have over 200 enrolled in our Distance Learning Program. Brethren, much good is being done because of your prayers and support of our work.

One of the projects we are currently working on is building a new church building on the school property at Siamafumba School of Biblical Studies in Zambia. There is a need for this congregation to exist near the school so the students can be a part of a local congregation while they are in school. This church building should cost around \$16,000.00. Earl Alverson, who preaches at the Plainview congregation in Sparta, TN, is helping with the fund raising efforts for this new church building. We have already raised \$2,500.00 and given it to the brethren there to begin construction. These brethren will do much of the labor themselves which keeps the cost down. If you would like to help with this you can send funds to the address below and mark for “New church building Zambia”.

In just a short time Carolyn and I will be in Malaysia for a mission trip. We also plan to make a short visit to China. Please keep us in your prayers that we will have a good and safe trip.

Sponsored by *Rock Valley church of Christ*

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We are seeking to raise funds for our “Work Fund”, which is the day to day operation of IBTM. We are in need of raising an additional \$2,000.00 per month for our 2013 budget. We plan to start printing 5,000 Tonga song books and another 100,000 Gospel tracts in the next few weeks. We also have the need to print some of our BCC material in hard copy for the people in Africa who wish to take the courses but do not have access to the internet.

Brethren, if your congregation would put our work in your 2013 budget for any amount it will be greatly appreciated. Our thanks to the individuals and congregations that support our work.

In Christ,  
Ronald D. Gilbert

### *Harvest Record*

Baptisms	1,190
Restorations	1,193
New Congregations	36
New Schools of Preaching	1
Online BCC Students	5,270
ICOTB Students	207
ICOTB Graduates	42

### *From the Inbox*

*“Thank you for helping me to understand so many things that were away from my knowledge but now I can say I’m proud to receive this blessing from your teaching and I am ready to go forward in my study with you, this will keep me to walk in the way that the Lord has made for me and also to serve him as he wanted. May the Lord bless you for what you doing for his kingdom.”*

**BCC Graduate from South Africa**

### *Internet News*

IBTM/ICOTB just celebrated its 5<sup>th</sup> birthday, but the Internet part of that work is really only in its second year. I remember the spring of 2011 when I finally felt like the websites were ready for the search engines and released them. I scoured Google several times over the next few weeks to see where we would be. I don’t remember how many millions of results popped up, but I do remember our location - not there. I know because I read every single page. A few months later I tried again and was relieved to see that we had made page #57. Progress, but not much. I certainly don’t read that far if I google something.

I didn’t think about it again until last week. On a whim I searched for Bible correspondence course sites . . . and was stunned when Google displayed IBTM on page #1. Just like an old theme song, we’re moving on up!

Our websites are definitely growing in outreach. Since these have been made public more than 180,000 visitors have come. Since our emphasis is teaching the Good News and so many of our visitors come from cities outside the USA where English is not their first language, I have striven to keep the website format simple and easy to read. So, I am excited by every sign that we are touching lost souls. Already 10 of our online students have reported being baptized as a result of the study. Several of those immediately established a congregation in their home since there was not one in their area, resulting in even more new babes in Christ. And we are just getting started.

To everyone who has continued to support the Hill Mission Fund so that I can continue this Internet mission work – *thank you!* I appreciate it more than I can say.

In Christian love,  
Linda Hill

## How Far Is It From 2.5 Million to 1 Billion?



Ronald D. Gilbert

According to the book, *2012 Churches of Christ In The United States*, published by 21<sup>st</sup> Century Christian, the number of congregations of the church of Christ in the USA is 12,447 with 1,209,176 members. It is very difficult to know how many New Testament Christians there are in the world today. For the sake of this article let's just suppose there are 1.2 million Christians in the USA and 1.2 million outside the USA, for a grand total of 2.4 or even 2.5 million New Testament Christians in the world today. The world population is just over 7 billion. Now just suppose that 2013 is the year when the Lord's Church really gets busy with world evangelism and we double in one year. Now there would be 5 million New Testament Christians in the world. Now suppose that everyone is fired up and they say we can do better. So in 2014 we grow from 5 million to 20 million. How far is 20 million from 1 billion? What if the Lord's Church could be 100 million by 2020? How far is 100 million from 1 billion not to mention 7 billion and by 2020 the number could be 8 billion or more? Brethren, the task before us is one of monumental proportions. There is much work to do!

But sadly brethren, when we look at the statistics given in the book mentioned earlier instead of our numbers growing since 1994 there has been a loss each year in the number of New Testament Christians in the USA. At the beginning of 2012 we had over 300 fewer churches of Christ in the USA than we did in 1980, and over 50,000 fewer Christians than we did in 1980 as well.

Brethren, it is time that we make world evangelism our top priority.

Jesus said, "*the fields are white unto harvest.*" The task before us is almost like the whole state of Texas is planted in tomatoes and they are all ripe and only two men show up for picking them! Two and a half million is a long way from 1 billion not to mention 7 billion! Please join us and other faithful efforts to take the Gospel of Christ "*into all the world.*"

## Memorials

Donation given in memory of **Jimmie B. Hill**

*Harry & Rosemary Jenkins*

*Floyd & Willie Lou Bates*

*Robert & Mary Martin*

*Adrian Church of Christ*

## WANTED: TEACHERS

IBTM now has more than 5,000 students from 148 nations enrolled in the online Bible correspondence course program. Of these, a few are Christians wanting to grow in knowledge. Others have embraced denominational error and are offended by truth. But most are simply seekers, looking for the way to heaven.

IBTM also now has more than 100 teachers working in this study program – but we need more. The more teachers we have to teach, the more students that we can reach. Our volunteer teachers grade lessons, answer questions and encourage their students to keep studying God’s word, all by email. It is a work that requires patience, commitment and a love for lost souls. But occasionally it is also a work that gives our teachers the joy of knowing that someone they have never met face-to-face has put on Christ as a result of their efforts.

If this sounds like a work you want to be a part of, please let us know.

## You Can Be A Missionary!

- ***You can be a missionary in person.***
  - Invite family and friends to your home congregation
  - Open your home for a Bible study or watching a Bible DVD.
  - Participate in door-knocking efforts.
  - Keep a supply of salvation tracts and find opportunities to give them.
  - Print personal business cards that give the plan of salvation and/or the IBTM website for a Bible study
- ***You can be a missionary by mail.***
  - Insert an offer for the IBTM online Bible correspondence course into bill payments or postage paid envelopes.
  - Add a signature to emails directing others to the IBTM courses and tracts.
- ***You can be a missionary by the media.***
  - Advertise the free IBTM online Bible correspondence course.
  - Submit information about church special events for the community news.
- ***You can be a missionary on the Internet.***
  - Create a blog or website to teach the gospel.
  - Link blogs, social networks and web pages to the IBTM website.
  - Volunteer as a Bible correspondence course teacher with IBTM.
- ***You can be a missionary by partnership.***
  - Support the work of IBTM

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