

The Seeker

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

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

January 2016

Volume 5, Number 1

Dear brethren,

Greetings to you all in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Our work continues to grow, great things are happening for the cause of Christ around the world. Indeed 2015 was a great year for **IBTM!** The Lord continues to bless our work with great results. Some of the great things that happened in 2015 were:

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|--|---------|
| Baptisms reported | 3,034 |
| Restorations reported | 3,210 |
| New Congregations established | 55 |
| New Schools of Preaching started | 1 |
| Schools of Preaching assisted | 11 |
| Bible Correspondence Course students to enroll | 5,928 |
| ICOTB – new students to enroll | 43 |
| ICOTB – students to graduate | 20 |
| Gospel Tracts printed and shipped | 228,800 |
| Books sent to Schools of Preaching | 18,537 |
| Bibles & New Testaments sent to Africa | 5,063 |
| Bicycles purchased for preachers | 62 |
| Computers for Schools of Preaching | 2 |
| Mission Trips completed | 2 |

There were several building projects we were able to help with in Tanzania, Zambia, Kenya, Ghana and Uganda. A new church building was completed in Tanzania which is also being used as a class building to train faithful Gospel preachers and a new church building was built in Zambia. We also helped raise funds to purchase a much needed replacement truck for the work in Livingstone, Zambia. And we purchased several tons of corn to aid victims of the drought in Zambia.

These are just some of the great things you helped us to accomplish this past year.

Brethren, we need your help again in 2016. A large part of our expense each year is postage. During the year we send many tracts, Bibles & New Testaments, books to preacher schools, BCC lessons and other Bible materials around the world. Most of the places in Africa where we are working are not close enough to the ocean so that we could send a container to them. During 2015 we could send printed items to Africa through the post office by m-bag for \$5.00 per pound and they would arrive in about 2 weeks. We also found a company near Atlanta, GA, that could send m-bags by sea to Africa then when they arrive in Africa they send them through the mail. This cost us \$3.98 per pound. Starting in February 2016 there will be an increase in postage and we will be paying \$4.59 per pound for the m-bags by sea. We will have to wait to hear from the Post office in the USA to see what our increase will be with them. We currently have a large shipment of Bibles & New Testaments ready to ship. This shipment is 2,452 pounds. By mailing this before the increase we will pay \$9,758.96. After February this same shipment will cost \$11,254.68, an increase of \$1,495.72 for a shipment of the same weight.

We are getting ready for our Africa trip in August. We are currently printing 200,000 Gospel tracts and 18,000 BCC booklets to ship to Africa. I hope we can ship much of this before February's price increase in postage.

We want to thank all our supporters, congregations and individuals, each of you are very special to us. As the Lord blesses our work and it continues to grow we are in need of finding new supporters for our work. Brethren, please consider putting our work in your budget for 2016, this would help us greatly. If you would like for me to come to your congregation some Sunday night and give a slide presentation about our work I would be happy to do so. To those congregations who are currently helping our work, if you could increase

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your support just a little for 2016 it would help us greatly.

Please continue to pray for our work. Thanks again for your support of our work. It is our prayer for you that you will have a great year for the Lord in 2016. Please continue to help us as you can to take the Gospel of Christ “*into all the world*”.

In Christ,
Ronald D. Gilbert
Director of **IBTM**

Things You Helped to Accomplish

| | |
|----------------------------|--------|
| Baptisms | 5,629 |
| Restorations | 6,664 |
| Congregations Established | 140 |
| Schools of Preaching Begun | 5 |
| BCC Students | 21,998 |
| ICOTB Students | 391 |
| Preachers Graduated | 236 |

Internet News

January means that our current websites and our Bible correspondence courses both have now been online for 5 years. So, I just glanced through some early editions of **The Seeker** and old stat sheets to see what kind of progress we have made. My, how things have changed!

THEN: By the end of that first month we had 10 online teachers ready to go – and 7 students. Our websites also saw 541 visits from 18 different nations. But how any of those folks found us is a mystery to me. Search engines can give millions of websites in response to a query but those first few weeks **IBTM** wasn't showing up in any of them. I know. I read through every single one looking for us. A couple of months later I was elated to find us on page #57 of Google – still way too far down the line to be useful but at least it was progress.

NOW: Our online study program has 135 online teachers who have assisted the more than 20,000 students who have enrolled. Plus, we have a new postal program and close to 2,000 more students are studying the materials in printed form with the

help of a postal or local teacher. Our websites have recorded more than 1 million visits from folks coming from 233 different nations to read more than 3 ½ million pages of Gospel materials. And when I do a search for Bible correspondence course sites **IBTM** is generally on the first page – often the very first website after the paid ads.

As John Wayne said in a western somewhere, “No brag, just fact.” But I’m pretty happy about the growth we have seen.

So, where do we go from here? Hopefully, to reaching more souls with the Gospel. Online, postal, or in person 22,000 students sounds amazing to me, until I remember that there are now more than 7 billion people in the world. So, we still have a huge mission ahead of all of us. If you would like to be more involved with **IBTM** we could certainly use your help. Naturally, we need financial support and dedicated teachers – we can do little without those. But there are other ways you can help us as well, such as:

- Tell others about this work.
- If your congregation has a website ask that it link to our **IBTM/ICOTB** websites.
- Create your own blog or website to teach others the gospel then link it to **IBTM**.
- Print personal business cards giving the plan of salvation and info about our **IBTM** online Bible study, then distribute them.
- Print a salvation tract from our website to insert into your bill payments or as filler for those postage-paid envelopes.
- Pray for our work.

2015 was an absolutely incredible year for **IBTM** and all the glory goes to God for that. But now we have a brand new page to fill. Let’s make it a good one for the cause of Christ.

In Christ,
Linda Hill

Jimmie B. Hill Memorial Library

Donations to this library should be sent to:
New Hope Road Church of Christ
PO Box 1334 • Dacula, GA 30019