

# Missionary Spotlight

## Missionaries to Brazil - Bill and Sharon Smith

### Times have changed since 1971

We were approved as missionaries to Brazil in July of 1971. After 12 months of deputation, we had 70 plus churches that supported us from \$5 to \$25 a month. Traveling for hours each day en route to meetings and mission conferences with no air conditioner in our car, we arrived with our slide projector and screen, anxious to present Brazil and our desire to reach the country to which the Lord had called us. We were young and very nervous about meeting all the new people, but what a blessing it was! Many of these people are still in contact with us today.

Today, it takes several years to raise the necessary financial support to be able to go to the mission field. Although \$5 a month helps financially, much more is needed to keep missionaries living on the foreign fields. Better equipment is needed to present missions to churches. Praise Lord for air conditioning in cars!

Arriving in Brazil in October of 1972 on the Brazilian Airlines that flew only once a week from the States, we were very happy to see other missionaries at the airport to meet us and help us get settled. The missionaries we stayed with lived outside the city. There were no lights at night unless they used the diesel powered generator. We were scared of all the spiders and bugs we saw those first few days, but after a few years they were not so scary.

Today, this land is surrounded by factories, businesses, and high-rise apartments, as well as other housing developments. It is also the location of the Bible Baptist Institute started in 1973 to train national men and women in the Word of God. We feel privileged to teach some classes twice a year at this institute. Several of the pastors serving in our state of Roraima have graduated from the Bible Institute.

Married in 1970, approved as missionaries in 1971, and arrived in Brazil in 1972, we have spent most of our married years in Brazil. Some say we are adventurous, and I guess we are; but when you are young, life is an adventure. When you serve the Lord in the place He has called you to serve, there are always great adventures.

*Then* - We lived in a wooden house with a thatched roof and wooden floors.

*Now* - We live in a brick home with modern conveniences (water, lights, etc.)

*Then* - We lived on a small boat measuring 6' x 27' and used it for travel.

*Now* - We have a 15 year old station wagon with air conditioning.

*Then* - We were the only U.S. missionaries in 2 of the 4 towns we lived in.

*Now* - We have other missionaries with which to fellowship in the city of Boa Vista.

*Then* - We only received our mail every 3 months and phones were scarce.

*Now* - We have high-speed internet, but regular mail is still slow.

*Then* - We ate a variety of animals and fish when we were able to find some to buy.

*Now* - We have super markets and all kinds of food to buy.

*Then* - We were healthy and able to eat and do just about anything.

*Now* - We have a few aches and pains but no major health problems.

### We have changed since 1971



Times have changed, we have changed, but *God has not changed*; and we praise Him for allowing us to serve in Brazil these past 40 years. We are looking forward to seeing more Brazilians saved, baptized, and working in the churches here.

Brazil was considered the Sleeping Giant back in 1971. The Gospel was not very well known in the northern part of the country. Now some 40 years later, we have churches established and in their own facilities with national pastors. Some are even sending Brazilian missionaries to other countries to win the lost. Please pray with us that more couples will be called of God to take the Gospel to the Regions Beyond.

Because of your prayers and financial support, we are able to live in Brazil and start indigenous churches. Please pray for the First Bible Baptist Church in Novo Airao, Amazonas; Bible Baptist Church of Caracarai, Roraima; Anchor Bible Baptist Church and Bible Baptist Church of Carana in the city of Boa Vista, Roraima. We praise the Lord for the people in these churches and for the national pastors that lead the churches. We are now starting another Bible Baptist Church in a new neighborhood in Boa Vista, Roraima. We are anxious to see this small work grow and become another Independent Baptist Church.

May God bless each of you as you serve the Lord.



## A Word From The President

Dr. Jerry Siler

### DO WE NEED TO BE COMMITTED?

The 2011 Spring Fellowship Meeting at the Raymond Barber Conference Center in Fort Worth, Texas, was both inspiring and challenging. The Monday night banquet was a real blessing. Dr. Tom Sexton filled in for his brother, Dr. Clarence Sexton, who was recovering from major surgery. Bro. Tom also spoke at the Crown Southwest/Fort Worth School of the Bible graduation ceremony. We are very proud of our graduates and grateful for God's blessings upon our school.

The fellowship meeting was well-attended, and we were blessed by soul-stirring, heartwarming music. After fifteen messages on the subject of being committed, Dr. J. C. House, our last speaker, admitted that he was about ready to be "committed" himself. What preaching we heard! After Dr. House concluded the last sermon, I was convinced that the fifteen messages I had heard in the previous three days were obviously calling me to be "committed" as well. I left for Dayton, Ohio, convinced that I had just witnessed some of the most Holy Spirit

inspired messages that I had ever been blessed to hear.

Especially pleasing to me was to sit and hear from some of the Norris alumni that were present. There were a good number of alumni, and their influence and involvement is key to our fellowship's future. I am proud of Bro. Robin Webb, the new vice president of the IBSI, and Bro. Mark Brown, the alumni president. It is my prayer that God will use them to continue to rally our Norris alumni.

I would like to give special recognition to how beautiful and well-maintained the buildings and property of the IBSI are. The Crown Southwest team of Dr. Dan Knickerbocker and Bro. Mark Fowler, along with Bro. and Mrs. John (Shirley) Peeples, our mission director and secretary; and Mrs. Charlotte Wyler, the fellowship secretary, are all very dedicated and diligent for the cause of Christ.

Dr. Willie Weaver, outgoing president, and Rev. Jim Pointer, outgoing vice president, could not be elected because of three-year term limits. They have been very sacrificial and have provided great leadership during their time in office. We are truly grateful for their service.

I am especially thankful for all the retired pastors, evangelists, and Christian workers who are a part of our fellowship. Their presence offers a wonderful source of knowledge, encouragement, and godly

example. It is always motivating to me personally when I see that, in their retirement years, these men have not quit, retreated, compromised, or gone AWOL. They remain committed!

My pastor, the late Dr. Gerald O. Fleming, was among the founders of this fellowship in the mid 1980's. He truly looked forward to making the trip to Texas every May and October for the fellowship meetings. (As a side note, may I add that he always left me behind... but, rest assured that I'm not bitter about that.) He would come back home fired up, inspired, encouraged, and motivated – and then he'd work us half to death! Pastor Fleming made me realize that having "friends in the fight" is a great blessing.

I was able to spend some time with Bro. John Peeples at the meeting. I was too cheap to rent a car and he showed compassion upon me and volunteered to transport me during my stay. During those times, I saw and felt his vision and burden for the mission agency of our fellowship. His heartbeat is our heartbeat. "The mission of the church is missions." Please pray for Bro. John and the collective IBSI missionary family we have. Let's also pray that we can enlarge our fellowship, our mission family, and our school.

Do we need to be committed? (Apparently some of our members think so!) Fifteen messages at the fellowship meetings should get the job done – right Dr. House?

## Fifth Year of Service to the Great State of Texas

...and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren

I John 3:16



Dr. Daniel D. Knickerbocker  
Director of CSW/NS

We had a great graduation with Pastor Tom Sexton, Pastor Clarence Sexton's brother. He did a fine job and was thrilled to see what God has done and is doing in Texas. One of our graduates is planning to work with a pastor in Utah to help plant churches among the Mormons. Another graduate is waiting on the Lord for opportunity to work as a youth director. Two of our students were one year students in our Foundations for Life program. They

have returned to help their pastor in the children's ministry.

Crown Southwest celebrated its fourth graduation in Texas. We have graduated students now as youth directors, and a children's church director, and have a missionary couple going to England. Some are seeking the Lord's direction in their lives, and are waiting for doors to open for ministry.

We are very excited with the prospect of this coming year. There are plenty of local churches in Texas where our students can serve. One of the great things about Crown Southwest is the opportunity for the students to help pastors. There are some that really need help. This past year one student helped by playing piano for a church that did not have a pianist. Their song services were transformed. This student was able to help in the youth

department and by picking up people for church. I called the pastor and asked if he wanted that student to return for another semester and asked how he has done. The pastor said, "If he had not been helping me I think I would have quit. Please send him back for another semester." These churches help our students in many ways and deeply appreciate their service.

We offer Bachelor's Degrees in pastoral, youth, and missions. We have a one-year program as well. Pray for us as we seek to train the next generation in the heritage of the servants of the Lord.

If you have any students who are considering Bible college, please direct them our way. You can contact Mark Fowler by calling 865-661-7302.

Representing Christ through Truth, Friendship, and World Evangelism

## Encouraged to Continue



Pastor David Grice  
Lighthouse Baptist Church  
(Alumni Vice President)

The May 2011 IBSI Conference was a real blessing. Everyone I spoke with came away from the meeting having been encouraged to continue serving the LORD with all his heart. There were many reasons that this meeting was so successful.

First, the preaching was straight from the Bible and right on the mark. Most of the messages stayed close to the theme "COMMITTED." Different preachers, from different parts of the country, young and old, brought messages about the importance of having a commitment to the will, the Word, and the work of God.

Those who love preaching were thrilled, challenged, convicted, and encouraged. It's hard to remember a year when the preaching was any better.

Second, it was wonderful to see so many of the alumni who were able to make the meetings. Although many had surgeries, church events, building projects, and other duties preventing them from coming to the conference, there were still a great number of alumni there, many who haven't attended in years. It is really encouraging to see so many preachers who were trained at the Norris Bible Baptist Institute or Crown Southwest/Norris Seminary still hard at work, serving the LORD, preaching the Gospel, feeding God's sheep, and planting churches around the world. Praise the LORD for those who have "stayed by the stuff."

Finally, there was a great spirit throughout the conference. It is really easy

for this type of conference (with so many different personalities) to take a negative turn... and it just didn't happen. Even the business meeting was pleasant and positive (and really short!). It is amazing to see "Crown guys," "IBFI guys," and those of us who are much more independent, just getting along and agreeing that Christ is worthy of our love, our commitment, our service, and our all! Would to God that we could all maintain that mind-set, and set our hearts on the work of Christ!

Thank you to all those who worked so hard to make the conference happen, including those who prayerfully prepared and preached the messages that we needed to hear.

Bro. David Grice  
Preaching the TRUTH, in LOVE, on FIRE!

## NEWS & EVENTS

**IBFI Fall Fellowship** Dearborn Heights, MI Oct 11-13, 2011  
Faith Baptist Church, Pastor Barry Bedwell

**Crown Southwest** Begins Sept. 7, 2011

**Fort Worth School of the Bible** Crown Southwest

**Master's Degree (Extended Studies)** Norris Seminary



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