

International Teaching Ministry of Douglas Jacoby



International Bible Teaching Ministry Update 2005 Issue 06

"Challenging men and women of faith to think"

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NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2005 INTERNATIONAL TEACHING MINISTRY UPDATE

This is the last update for the year 2005. Starting in 2006, bulletins will be sent quarterly. This sixth and final update features a travel report (Toronto, Lagos, and Abidjan), new publications, the International Bible Teaching Ministry financial statement, "Greek Week," changes to the website, a special new AIM program (open to all), and more.

I. TRAVELS AND 2005 SUMMARY

What an amazing year 2005 has been! Worldwide I have seen at close hand the growth in spirit, faith, and even numbers which seem to be returning in so many congregations. Although I know I do not have all the "answers" people are looking for, I do know where the answers lie. The way forward is not necessarily the way back; God's word has the answers and surely these are the paths prepared for us to walk in. We may not all agree on every detail, but we must fight for one another's rights to search out the scriptures and make the decisions we believe correspond with the will of God. I will strongly support the rights of my brothers and sisters to study, decide, and act, even if they are not the decisions I would make. This I believe is key to unity. What I have become ever more convicted of is this: True unity is not agreeing on everything; it is staying connected even when we do not agree. With this in mind, I believe 2005 has been a year of spiritual maturing for many churches.

In 2005 I was deeply honored to visit 26 cities worldwide. The common purpose of all these teaching trips:

- * To promote biblical literacy
- * To build unity
- * To provide doctrinal assistance to churches and church leadership groups.

The final trips of the year were to Toronto (Canada), Lagos (Nigeria), and Abidjan (Cote d'Ivoire). Faith is alive and well in all these cities. For example, when I was in Abidjan, Guy Feumba, the brother of lead evangelist Blaise Feumba, was baptized. In fact, over 110 persons have become Christians in the last 8 weeks in the West African nation of Cote d'Ivoire (the Ivory Coast). The spirit of worship and faith was electric in Abidjan--despite the many challenges and distractions of the still unresolved civil war.

In Nigeria AIM, our ministry training school, was launched, with 40 participants from Nigeria, Guinea, Sierra Leone, and the Gambia. (This is in addition to African students already in the program from Kenya, Ghana, the Ivory Coast, and South Africa.) The churches are so eager to learn, and I was thrilled to be able to spend eight days in Nigeria (40 hours of teaching plus another 30 hours of Q&A and appointments). I taught on leadership, the Gospel of John, church history, and Christian evidences. To illustrate the positive spirit of learning among the West African brothers and sisters, let me quote from some of the letters received:

NIGERIA: " We thank God for the way he has set out to use you to inspire us to stay in the battle of winning souls for him. Our being grounded in the Bible is a giant step toward actualizing this dream. God will provide the much needed support for this ministry... We have received incredible support from the U.S. churches. I am most thankful for the opportunity for in-depth biblical training... [which will] deepen my knowledge of the word of God and also facilitate proper teaching and preaching."

GUINEA: "I am thrilled that your [financial contributions] have allowed me to undertake the distance course of biblical studies (AIM). On behalf of the whole church in Conakry (Eglise Chretienne de Conakry), I thank you for remembering the souls of God's people in Guinea... I hope to be matured, to stand with boldness and conviction as a teacher and preacher of the word of God. This opportunity is the challenge I know I need in order to lead without fear,

shame, or timidity."

THE GAMBIA: "... I want to thank you for the opportunity to receive much needed theological training. This is an opportunity I can never let go, because it calls me to grow in my knowledge of God's word. As with Mary and Elizabeth, my heart leapt for joy as soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears with the news of the scholarship! I am so happy, not because I am intelligent, committed, or even prayerful, but because God has called me to always be a student. It is a thousand times thanks and even more I offer to you and God for your generosity..."

SIERRA LEONE: " With a heart full of joy I write to thank you for the financial help we received from you for the AIM Programme. It feels so great to know that we have a family who cares and are eager to see the truth preached in our part of the world. The AIM week in Lagos was a wonderful experience and a real eye-opener, not only for me, but for all of us who had the opportunity to be a part of it. How would it have been possible without your kind and giving hearts In light of that, I and the Freetown church thank you..."

IVORY COAST: "... heartfelt gratitude for your coming all the way from Atlanta to Africa for us your brethren. I even feel like you came specially for me! I cannot stop sharing the perspectives you brought at such a time this: perspectives about the movement, the ministry, the Bible and theology, and even life as a whole..."

The Canadian visit was especially encouraging, with attendees from Montreal (Quebec), Halifax (Nova Scotia), and many other cities. I taught a lesson for leaders from eastern Canada ("Ten Questions for Leaders," such as "Do we still believe in repentance?" "What about baptism?" "What is lukewarmness?" "How should we all be connected?") But most of the teaching that weekend was in the area of Christian Evidences (archaeology, astronomy, etc). Although located in North America, the culture of much of Canada is more European than American, and I appreciate the frankness and no-nonsense approach to faith exemplified in the lives of so many Canadian brothers and sisters. I have no doubt that they will continue to go from strength to strength.

Following is a brief summary of the International Teaching Ministry in 2005.

- 100 days of teaching around the world (Ghana, China, the Philippines, Great Britain, Greece, Jamaica, Canada, Nigeria, the Ivory Coast, Russia, the Ukraine, and the United States (Atlanta, Athens, Minneapolis, Jacksonville, Los Angeles, San Antonio, Ann Arbor, Detroit, Dallas, Orlando, San Diego, Harrisburg, and Seattle).
- AIM (the ministry school)-- 120 students from 27 nations learning how to handle the Scriptures effectively: East Coast U.S. --commenced January 2004; Philippines --commenced September 2005; Nigeria -- commenced December 2005; West Coast U.S. --commencing April 2006; 2006 hopes: Ukraine/Russia, United Kingdom, and three other nations. Please pray for the school to expand, and the need for biblical training is acute worldwide.
- The 11th annual International Teachers' Seminar: Athens, Greece.
- Website: New material every day of 2005. Active writing correspondence with Christians in nearly 100 nations. Writing and recording ministry: books -- 3 first editions, 2 revised editions; audio -- 5 sets (32 lessons in all).

The first speaking trip of 2006 will be to Los Angeles, Singapore, Auckland, and Sydney (January)

II. NEW PUBLICATIONS

Shining Like Stars will appear in a significantly revised 4th edition in a few days. Why a new version of this book? To cite the opening paragraph: The first edition (blue) of Shining Like Stars was published in 1987. Substantial revisions were made for the 1990 (yellow) edition. In the same way, massive editing preceded the release of the millennial (spiral bound) edition in 2000.

Once again it is clear that extensive revision is in order. If you have read any of the earlier versions, you will notice a host of changes. Some are significant corrections of a theological nature. As my understanding of God's grace has deepened, I have seen many deficiencies in the earlier editions, especially in their overly mechanical approach to evangelism and reliance on human wisdom. Other changes are simply the cutting away of the superfluous or the polishing and sharpening of the dull. A good amount of new material has also been added, in part to set forth the rationale for personal Bible studies with non-believers, and in part to clarify a number of unfortunate impressions from certain sections of the earlier editions. In short, a new edition was sorely needed.

Finally, the first new audio series that will be recorded in the New Year is: What Happens After We Die? I will send out a notice once it has been published.

III. AIM UPDATE and TAKE AIM!

The Athens Institute of Ministry is now operational in West Africa (40 students), the Philippines (37 students), and Georgia (22 students). In addition, there are another 25 students in 21 other nations, for a total enrolment of over 120. Our first graduating students completed the two-year course in November 2005. Congratulations to Herv• Fleurant (Denver), David Laing (Columbia), Delano Stewart (Tallahassee), Kevin Thompson (Athens), and Bronson Taylor (Tampa)!

At this time, ALL SESSIONS ARE AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE ON DVD . You may order Series A (N.T. Survey, N. T. Interpretation, Holy Spirit, Apologetics, O.T. Survey, O.T. Interpretation, World Religions & Denominational Doctrine, and Church History), Series B (N.T. Leadership, Music & Worship, Campus Ministry, Counseling & Psychology, the Minister's Spiritual Life, the Minister's Family Life, Missionary Faith, Race Relations, Eldership, etc), or various combinations of the two series. Each full series has approximately 65 hours of teaching. (The Q&A sessions that followed the original classes have been removed; otherwise they would have been 80 hours long each.)

These series are offered without personal supervision, class interaction, and examinations; accordingly, the price has been significantly reduced from the normal rate. In addition, no application process is necessary. The name of this

opportunity is " Take AIM ." Details are available at the website. [Note as of Jan 2007: a year delay means that this material is available only 31 January 2007. Sorry.]

IV. NEW DAILY FEATURE FORMAT

New daily feature scheme: The 2005 format was Prayer Points, Bible Quiz, Quiz Answers, Bible Tips, Q&A, Q&A, and Family Circle. Remember, there is new material every day! The 2006 plan is as follows:

- Sunday: Prayer points (featuring a different nation each week)
- Monday: Bible Quiz (?bullet quizzes? throughout 2006)
- Tuesday: Word builder (learn new, interesting words relating to Christianity)
- Wednesday: Apologetics (evidences in support of the faith)
- Thursday-Friday: Q&A (questions sent in through the website at "contact")
- Saturday: Church History (important dates of the first two millennia).

V. GREEK WEEK

A number of you have expressed interest in a week of New Testament Greek instruction. I am quite excited about this, and was thrilled at the enthusiasm level many indicated in emails to me, and also during AIM Session VIII. The dates for Greek Week are 10-15 July 2006 (in the Atlanta area). The purpose of Greek Week is to introduce you to the language (beginners), and to firm up grammar and translation skills (all others). The basic tools of N.T. Greek study will also be presented (lexicons, grammars, TDNT, etc). This will be of special interest to those who want to go deeper into the Word, including teachers and preachers. Men and women, younger Christians and older Christians, staff and non-staff -- anyone who can physically attend the classes. (There is no distance learning option, however.) Come one, come all!

If you would like to take part, REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN. To register, please send your deposit (non-refundable, non-transferable) in the amount of \$50 to 1070 Carrie Lee's Place, Watkinsville GA 30677. Please include your email address. The total price for the program (\$300) is due May 1st. (Late fees may apply for those joining after this date.) If you pay in full by 2 March 2006, you will receive a \$50 discount -- send just \$250!

VI. FINANCIAL NEEDS

Thank you for all your support in the past year; it made a massive difference for the effectiveness of the international teaching ministry. Your help is much appreciated (and much needed).

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Thank you once again for all your prayers and help in 2005. Special thanks to the hard-working motor of IPI, my friend and partner Toney Mulhollan. Thanks also to my colleagues in AIM, and also the very supportive North River Church of Christ (Marietta, Georgia).

The next regular update will be sent in about three months. (Intermediate notices may be sent out from time to time throughout the year.)

God bless and Happy New Year to all!
Douglas Jacoby