



# Thinking It Through

P.D. Bramsen

## Preaching Without Being Preachy

*"You are the salt of the earth. But what good is salt if it has lost its flavor?...  
You are the light of the world...Don't hide your light under a basket!" (Matthew 5:13-15 NLT)*

Recently I attended a six-day conference. The keynote speaker began with these words: "We have a passion for the written word. That's why we're here."

It was perhaps the most intense conference of my life. The schedule went from 9 AM to 11 PM or later. Each day included plenaries, panels and seven hours of workshops. But, for me, it wasn't the schedule that made it so intense. It was the people I hung out with. It was their hopeless worldview, their foul language and their spiritual blindness.

It was a secular writers' conference. The keynote speaker was not talking about the written Word of God. He was talking about fiction and nonfiction books.

Let me tell you about the last day.

I listened to a New York Times bestselling author masterfully tell a short story, a story that offered no hope beyond the grave, telling us that Earth is to be one day incinerated by a fiery comet. A key line was, "So what does it matter? What does anything matter?" After his speech I bought one of his novels and stood in line to have him sign it. Then I asked him if he would do me the honor of accepting one of my books. Without hesitation he accepted a personalized copy of "One God One Message." A natural exchange.

In the morning workshop I sat between two women: on my left, an older Jewish lady who doesn't think Christians have any business proselytizing; on my right, a young mom writing a memoir about the abuse and addictions of her childhood. The mom wanted to know more about Africa. She asked to see a copy of "One God One Message." She left with it. A natural witness.

In many of the workshops we were asked to read from a book we are presently writing. After reading several pages, everyone then critiques your work. In four workshops I read from "King of Glory" (an illustrated gospel book, now available). Once, after I read the book's first five pages, a writer commented, "I didn't feel preached to at all." The workshop leader added, "I agree. I felt a little nervous when he started reading, but I didn't feel it was preachy."

I attended an afternoon workshop for writers of children's books. A lesbian led the class. Wanting to teach us to think below the surface when developing a character in a novel, she led us through a writing exercise where we had to write about our own life experience on three different levels and read aloud our responses. I wrote how Christ has changed my life for time and eternity.

After the workshop I spent time with an agnostic, suicidal lawyer who, earlier in the week had taken an hour and a half to tell me his tragic life story. I had mostly listened, resisting the urge to give him "One God One Message," not wanting to be considered preachy and turn him off. (Just as there are wrong and right ways to share the gospel, so there are wrong and right times to share it.) But on the last day he gladly accepted the book and promised to read it. The time was right.

That evening, I dined with an atheist. He too left with a book.

Each day was sacred. I felt as in touch with the Lord at this conference as I have ever felt sitting in a Bible conference or in a pew. As one in the world, but not of it, the intense spiritual darkness of it all caused me to sense my total dependence on God as I looked to Him for sensitivity, wisdom and boldness.

As disciples of Christ, we are called to be salt (bring out the true flavor of life, create thirst) and light (expose the darkness, show the way) in a purposeless age. Christ has given us purpose, but are we purposeful in connecting with the lost? Are we asking the Lord to show us how we can connect with unbelievers in a natural setting; those who may be turned off to church, tracts and clichés? Perhaps He will direct you to attend a secular conference or join a group or activity in which you share a common interest with the lost.

As we abide in Christ, walk with Him in integrity, holiness and love—and as we stay in close communication with Him and grow in our passion for the true written Word, He will give us abundant opportunities to be salt and light in a dull and dark world.

Without being preachy. ■

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COVER PHOTO: Cambodian Woman ©iStockPhoto.com/Photomorph

# God at Work in Cambodia

by Myung Sub Kim



It has been exactly three years since I arrived in Cambodia with a nervous heart and with a dream that God entrusted in me. At that time, I felt like a dried rod that couldn't do anything. However, God reminded me of Aaron's cane that bore much fruit by God's amazing power. Yes, it was God who made it to bear fruit, and I was so sure that He could do the same thing in my life. I was full of assurance that God is able to do anything to fulfill the dream He gave me.

In the beginning, I was just so excited to explore the Cambodian culture, the people and to learn the Khmer language. I was just so thankful to the Lord for giving me this amazing opportunity to love Him and serve Him in Cambodia with all my heart, all my soul and all my might (Deut 6:5). Even after having a motorcycle accident and suffering severe pain, God allowed me to thank Him for this accident. Then, thieves came to my house twice and robbed me of my purse and camera. I'm just thankful that the Lord protected me from them.

A few days later, I went up to the rooftop early in the morning to have fellowship with my Lord. At that time I saw a rainbow and then another rainbow in the sky. I was so happy to see this twin rainbow in Cambodia. Then, God reminded me of Noah and the rainbow, and He promised me "I will not allow thieves to come again." What a beautiful promise and consolation from the Lord. Since that day, no thieves have come again. It is His promise!

It is His  
work and He will  
establish it  
in His time...

As my time in Cambodia approached one year, I started to feel a little anxious, as I did not know what to do next. What kind of work did the Lord have for me? A kindergarten ministry? An orphanage? Something else? I was in much prayer seeking His will and His clear guidance. During this time, the Lord led me to study Khmer Literature at the Royal University

of Phnom-Penh, and now I thank God so much for leading me to study there. It improved my language skills greatly and I better understood the campus life of Khmer students, which helped me develop relationships with other students. During this time, God slowly but very clearly showed me what He wanted me to do!

## Children's Ministry

About two years ago, God introduced me to a missionary couple from Korea. When a short-term medical missions team arrived, they asked me to help translate. There were about 12 doctors and helpers. This is how God led me to my current working place. When I visited with the missionary couple on their mission field and saw them teaching children under a mango tree, I screamed: "This is what I want! Lord, please grant me an area like this!"

Actually, God had prepared a place already. With His guidance and with their help, I visited a place called "PraekTakov" and I started to pray: "Lord, give me this mountain," (Joshua 14:12) everyday. I also started to make a survey and investigated the area. During this time, I met many children and residents, trying to acquaint myself with them. Next, I met the mayor of the town and later, the mayor of the district. I told them that I would like to help the poor children learn English and Korean. In October 2010 I had a meeting with the mayor of the town, mayor of the district, two young men from the education department and some others. In this meeting, they agreed to not only let me teach English and Korean, but also the Bible! Yes, Lord, You did it again!

The children in this area are very poor. They walk barefoot and their faces and bodies are so dirty and painted with dust, tears and runny noses. I started to meet with the poor children regularly. In the beginning there were 20 to 30 small children gathering together... now there are about 200 children. I start-





ed to teach them the creation story, Christian songs, memory verses, etc. It is so much fun to teach them even though it is draining. Now, I teach them about Jesus—who He is and what He did when He was in this world. For the most part, the children were slow to understand, therefore, we needed to repeat the story again and again. Of course, I also preach the gospel almost every time. They need time to understand, and some days I would invite them to receive Christ as their Savior and Lord and counsel them individually. A few children are so good at memorizing the verses, and they are able to recite all the memory verses. It makes me so happy. They are so precious in His sight, and to my sight too.

One day, I visited a student's home. Her name is Kimhong, a seventh grader and she is the best student in the meeting. She can memorize all the verses without any error and she wins my heart. I presented the gospel to her and her brother while at her house. Both of them understood the work of Christ on the cross, but I did not invite them to receive Christ yet. These two are the best students in memorizing the verses, and answering the questions. Then Kimhong asked me: "When will there be our church?" This question just struck me and I asked her why she asked it. She said she cannot understand the Bible lesson because the small children in front are loud, therefore, she wants to learn in groups divided into small children and big children. Her question just struck my heart and I started to pray for a large place to meet with the children. In this area, there was no building I could rent to use for a children's meeting. I then encountered several people who asked me to buy the land and build a building for the children to meet in. What was the Lord telling us? Lord, thy will be done!

## Supplying Water in Elementary and Middle School

When I first came to visit this school, I found out that there was no well, which meant no water for the children that were sweating. I thought I would help supply water by digging a well there. This, however, was a problem as the water underground contains Arsenic, which is poisonous, and cannot be drunk or touch a body as it causes skin diseases. The only way to supply water to the school was to transfer water from the Mekong River, which was quite expensive. With much prayer, however, it was done and the school now has water to drink and to wash with. They were so joyful and thankful for this project. I was also so happy to see their thankful faces.

A meeting was called with the mayor of the town, the mayor of the district, the school principal and vice principal and some teachers. In the meeting the principal of the middle school officially thanked me for supplying water for the children. Of course, I said that it was not me but God who worked through





many Christians to supply the water, therefore, thank God. I then had an opportunity to witness, by explaining how God blessed Korea to become a country that can now help other poor countries. I also said that I hope and pray that Cambodian people will believe in Jesus Christ and become a country like Korea. The majority of Cambodians love the country of Korea and want to go to Korea to work. Thank God for this opportunity to witness for Him! Please pray that this project would stir hearts of many souls to receive Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Also at this meeting, I was asked to help 33 kindergarten students that are extremely poor. The students needed shoes and school materials. I felt burdened, as I just finished the water supplying project and was asked to help with another project. God started to work right away, however. When I shared this with a missionary, I was told of a project going forth called, "Sharing Love of Shoes." I immediately contacted Doug and Ho Sook Neiswender (*Missionary Prayer Handbook* Day 9) in Korea to order 200 pairs of shoes for children via the Internet. Doug also provided school materials they had received from Ho Sook's sister. God's timing is perfect! The Lord took care of their request in only one day and I did not have to worry about it at all. Wow, He is a wonder-working God. Thank you Lord!

Doug and Ho Sook worked very hard to order shoes, get them packed and bring them to Cambodia. In early July we distributed them to the children, who were so happy to receive them. The teachers, mayor of the town and district also expressed their gratitude. There was an opportunity for a retired missionary to the Philippines to share the gospel.

### Student Ministry—Grace Center

I had a ministry for students in my heart and prayers for a long time. When I started it at the beginning of this year, no students showed up for the first two weeks. It was quite disappointing, but I continually prayed and waited for God's leading. Then, after two weeks, a student showed up, and two more students attended three days later. Now, seven to eight students attend regularly. I named the place "Grace Center" and here we teach English to college students. In the beginning, they were a little bit skeptical, but now they opened their hearts and express their gratitude and are willing to help me any way they can. Praise the Lord. Right now we are trying to develop a strong relationship with them, which will allow us to share the gospel with them later.

When the new college year starts, I am going to have some female or male students live in "Grace Center" as there are two rooms available. Please pray that the Lord would give me wisdom and understanding to choose either female or male students and also which ones. I also need wisdom to manage this ministry well. Please pray that precious souls will be gained through this ministry. Lord, thy will be done!

### Needs for the Children's Ministry

We know we should continue this children's ministry, but how? We all know how important primary Christian education is—I do not have to emphasize that here. I would like to enlarge the children's ministry through Sunday school first, then Lord willing, start a kindergarten class. Before, I was hes-





itant to start a kindergarten class because I did not know where we would send the children for further Christian education after kindergarten. We found a solution, however. After graduating kindergarten, we invite the children to Sunday school and continue to teach them the Bible and educate them according to the Word of God. Lord willing, we can grow the school system and continue Christian education through high school. It is not an easy task, but with God, everything is possible.

We are in need of a building to meet in for a more effective children's ministry. We are having trouble finding a building to rent, however. We currently spread mats on the ground where children can sit, however this has reached a limit. Because we have no building, we cannot divide the classes into small groups or do coloring activities with the children. I knew the most effective way for us to hold a children's ministry was to build a building for all these uses and purposes. God led me to meet several people who were able to show me land

for sale. The mayor of the town also showed me land that was free. So far, this land is the best

suitable area that I have seen. What is amazing is that I never asked to be shown land for

sale. It is God who started this work. Please pray God's will will continue to be done in this children's ministry. "The preparations of the heart is in man, and the answer of the tongue is from the Lord," Proverbs 16:1. "Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established," Proverbs 16:3. "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass, and as I have purposed so shall it stand," Isaiah 14:24.

I truly thank God with all my heart for His wonder work, help and guidance that brought me this far! Again and again I say to my Lord: "Lord, I cannot do anything by myself. Without your help I am useless as a dried rod." I bow down especially when I feel really weak and then God fills me with His power, the Holy Spirit. It is His work and He will establish it in His time, and HE will receive all the glory that is due to Him!

Would you please pray for the Lord's work in Cambodia? Your prayer availeth much! James 5:16. ■

**"Commit thy works  
unto the Lord, and  
thy thoughts shall be  
established."**

Proverbs 16:3

## DON'T MISS THE 41ST ANNUAL CMML FALL CONFERENCE

**Saturday – November 12, 2011** (Note: 2nd Saturday)

**Lincroft Bible Church**

790 Newman Springs Rd, Lincroft, NJ

**10:00 AM to 3:00 PM** (Coffee at 9:15 AM and Lunch provided)

**"The Middle East...Saying What is Not Said"**

**Paul Bramsen – Senegal**

**Brian – Special Areas**



**Bring your family!** We're providing a Children's Program for ages 6-12 featuring Bible-teaching ventriloquist Nate Thomas from South Carolina. A class for ages 2-5 and nursery care will also be provided. Children will return to parents during lunch.



**Please RSVP to CMML by November 4, 2011**

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*Myung Sub Kim was commended to the work of the Lord in Special Areas in 2008 by Grace Chapel in Tenafly, New Jersey.*

**Page 3:** Children praying. **Page 4 (from top):** Meeting with higher-ups from PraekTakov; The container that holds 10,000 liters of water; Tita, the oldest grandchild of the ex-mayor, reading Bible verses, Doug preaching the gospel at a big meeting. **Page 5:** The regular meeting—children growing in number. **This page (from top):** Meeting with children; The grandchildren of the ex-mayor—they are poor, but so smart in memorizing verses and retelling Bible stories; All together after distributing shoes and school supplies to children.



by Patrick and Sherry Coleman

**B**ecause I was 10 days old my first Sunday in church, my earliest memories of missionaries begins at a very early age. Included in those memories is a missionary to Peru who came to our Daily Vacation Bible School when I was 6-years-old with a blow gun and a boa constrictor skin that was 20-feet-long (at least it seemed that long to a 6-year-old boy). He placed a dart board on one side of the room and hit the bull's eye with the blow gun from the other side of the room. So vivid is that memory that over 50 years later, I remember the name of that missionary: Jerry Russell. Every child in that room wanted to be a missionary!

The "romanticism" of missions was instilled in me at that point of my life. The thought of living in the jungle, hunting my food with a blow gun and looking for big snakes was exciting. Of course, that was not the only thing that brother Russell did, but that got my attention. The other "stuff" did not come into focus until later years when he would return and share about the training of church leaders, discipleship of young believers and building churches and schools in rural Peru. Still...he hit the bull's eye with a blow gun!

One of the key phrases I would hear from missionaries over the years was "we are trying to work ourselves out of a job." This, again, was a phrase I did not fully comprehend until I had the opportunity to sit with a missionary and ask him what that phrase meant. He explained that the purpose of missions was to fulfill 2 Timothy 2:2 where Paul instructed Timothy: "You have heard me teach many things that have been confirmed by many reliable witnesses. Teach these great truths to trustworthy people who are able to pass them on to others." (NLT)

He told me that one of the biggest problems he saw on the mission field was the inability (or unwillingness) to release the work into the hands of godly local believers. He said it was like building a beautiful house and refusing to remove the scaffolding when you were finished. Nobody can see the house because they were always looking at the scaffolding. The work

is not officially complete until the scaffold is removed, but some people are reluctant to remove the "scaffolding" of local ministries in other parts of the world.

This is not a new concept. Anthony Norris Groves (1795-1853) attempted to avoid this problem in pioneer areas by guarding against any form of dependency from the start. He encouraged indigenous initiatives. He was an advocate of indignity rather than indigenisation.

Two of the saddest statements we ever heard came from both a missionary and a national church leader when the missionary left his field of ministry after several decades of service. The missionary lamented that there was nobody left to carry on "his" work and the national asked, "Why didn't you teach us?"

With that thought in mind, we have worked for two and a half decades to teach, train, disciple and prepare church leaders and ministry leaders to take ownership of the work of the Lord in our part of Zambia. When leaders are recognized, we support, facilitate and equip them with the tools they need to "teach these great truths to trustworthy people who are able to pass them on to others."



Felix Muchimba speaking to students at MMM VTC Kafubu Block campus.



# "Building His kingdom...removing the

Albert Katandula was born in the Belgian Congo (later named Zaïre then Democratic Republic of the Congo) and came to Zambia many years ago as a refugee. At the age of 70 he came to me and said, "There is no church in Mwaiseni Township." He was an elder in an assembly in a neighboring township, but he said it was some distance away and people could not walk that far especially in the rainy season. I told him I would be happy "to help" him start a new church. We worked together, but he was always in front of the assembly. Today the assembly at Mwaiseni is reaching people in their community with the gospel.

Benson Chomba came to me a few years ago with the same dilemma: "There is no church in Buntungwa Township where I live." Again I said, "Go start a Bible study. I will come and help." He was hesitant, but today the assembly in Buntungwa is reaching out to their neighbors with the marvelous news of the gospel.

Gilbert Simwanza and Goodson Matanda had moved to a farming community after retirement from working "in town." There had been an assembly in that village a few years ago, but it simply ceased to exist due to a lack of leadership and interest. These two men asked if I would consider coming to teach them and the few believers who were in that small community "what the Bible says" about everything. I smiled at the word-

ing of the request, but every Wednesday I travel to Kafubu Block (the center of four farming villages) and spend an hour or two with these men and the growing congregation. I have emphasized that I am there at THEIR invitation—not as the "bishop" of the church. The vibrancy of this small, rural assembly is a joy.

Two institutions that were started by missionaries many years ago are now under the administration of godly local Christians. The Gospel Literature Outreach (GLO) Discipleship Training Centre is headed by Felix Muchimba as director and Simon Banda as his assistant director. "GLO Centre" was founded by assembly missionaries from Australia, New Zealand and Europe. As Felix and Simon were recognized as capable leaders, they were invited to assume the management of GLO and have broadened the scope of training beyond the goals of the founders.

Today GLO Centre has students from several African countries as well as a couple of European countries. Graduates have returned to their home assemblies and have been recognized in positions of leadership. Others have gone as missionaries from their local congregations and supported entirely by assemblies in Zambia. The scaffolding was removed!

Felix Muchimba has written a book entitled "Liberating the African Soul" in which he explains that Africa "still suffers from a dependency on the Western way of doing church." All too often the scaffolding has not been removed.

The Mobile Mission Maintenance (MMM) Vocational Training Centre was founded by cooperating missionaries

both Brethren and Baptist assemblies from Australia and New Zealand. Originally the scope of MMM was simply to support missionaries in their building and mechanical needs. Local believers were hired and trained both in construction skills and in Bible truths to work alongside the missionaries.

Gradually the need of a training center became evident and finally Leonard Mutono—one of the first graduates—was recognized as a leader. Leonard was invited to join the leadership team and ultimately the missionaries placed the directorship entirely in Leonard's capable hands. That first graduating class had nine graduates. Last December the MMM Vocational Training Centre graduated



Left: Children at Vacation Bible School.

# scaffolding...marveling at His workmanship!"



97 young people in areas of study including brick laying (the first area of focus for that first class), carpentry, building contracting and tailoring.

The MMM Vocational Training Centre has expanded to three other campuses in the Copperbelt Province reaching out to people who live in rural areas too far away to travel to class every day. The students are being trained in life skills and life changing truths of the Word of God. The scaffolding was removed!

This scenario has been repeated all over the world for 2,000 years. The missionaries who took the gospel to Europe left a legacy of training. When the "new worlds" were being "discovered" by Europeans, Christians took that message of hope and eternal security to the nationals (we no longer call them "natives") living in those places.

When Sherry and I were married 14 years ago we both realized that we had hundreds of books that we had used over the years for our own study and preparation for ministry. We bought a building in downtown Luanshya and created The Christian Resource Centre. The Christian Resource Centre library and reading room has been a place where local church leaders can come and study, ask questions and find answers from God's Word. The lecture hall has been used by Christian ministries to teach leaders in various aspects of the Lord's work including Child Evangelism Fellowship, Encounter Evangelistic Youth Ministry and Evangelism Explosion—all with African leadership!

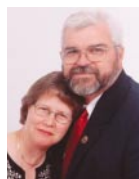
Just within the past few weeks was the transfer of leadership at Fellowship Chapel (an English-speaking assembly in Luanshya) completely to national leadership. We have been a part of this congregation for 14 years and will continue to worship there when not speaking at other venues, but the every-

day oversight will be in the capable hands of Zambian believers who have a strong desire to grow and expand that ministry.

The most recent development is that I was invited to go with brother Simwanza (from the Kafubu Block Assembly) to Mukolwe, a village area about 20 miles (30 kilometers) from Luanshya to start a new church. The first meeting was July 24th—just seven days from my 26th anniversary of arriving in Africa in 1985. The work continues!

Removing the "scaffolding" is a necessary part of building His church. Not all the church leaders do things the way they are done in America, Canada or Europe, but we are not in America, Canada or Europe. We are in Africa and when the scaffolding is removed we see the beautiful church that God is building for His honor and glory. Removing these "scaffolds" allows the believers in Africa to worship God as well as preach and teach His Word and yet retain the African way of worship and the use of music.

Building His kingdom...removing the scaffolding...marveling at His workmanship! ■



*Patrick was born and raised in the Los Angeles area of California and has served in Lubumbashi, Zaire, (now the Democratic Republic of the Congo) and in Luanshya, Zambia since 1985. Sherry was born and raised in a Jewish home in New Jersey before coming to know the Lord Jesus Christ as her Savior at the age of 17. She came to Zambia in 1990 to administrate a correspondence Bible school and teach religious education in local schools. They met in Luanshya and were married in 1997. They are both commended by Bethany Bible Chapel in Silverton, New Jersey.*





# UPFRONT REGARDING SALERNO, ITALY

by Joseph & Loredana Antignani

*"The religious indoctrination has brought the Italians to a conviction that nothing is free, not even salvation!" This brings them to often say, "what does God want from me," instead of saying "what do I need to do to be saved?"*

The Lord has entrusted us with a challenging, difficult, but rewarding ministry to the Italians. The influence of the secularized religious entity, the Roman Catholic Church, could not be left in the background of this discussion. It is the absolute protagonist and determining factor regarding the influence it has to the Italian's manner of living—in politics, religion and in the development of each individual's conscience. Whether one is faithful or not to their religion, it has left a devastating effect to the image of who our God is for them.

Religious arrogance and religious extortion is a cocktail mix that has devastated the integrity and honor of each individual. We are all broken and need the Lord's grace to be restored. The Italians are broken, like any other people, in a devastating but non-apparent manner. They are led to believe that the only way to restoration is through a mediator, and the religious requirements that this mediator requires. The problem arises when the individual discovers that the requirements of the mediator is open to interpretation, and often engulfed in spiritual mysticism and superstition.

This is when opportunism and abuse (and the enemy) raises its ugly head. This is no longer the God of grace, but a God of secular/religious extortion which is the biggest plague in Italy. It pours out from their religion, and into their business world through intimidation, and then pay-offs. They have to endure this from organized crime (Mafia), and/or those who often represent the authority (politicians), that use the very same methods. From a North American perspective this is horribly seen, but the Italians in this region that I am describing cannot conduct themselves any differently as this runs deep into the social religious cultural context of each individual's life and conscience. This particular type of religious upbringing has affected their daily living in a negative way, as everything has a price! For the normal Italian, it is a foregone conclusion to always seek a mediator (or to pay) to resolve problems or get around the lengthy bureaucracy. The system is set up to encourage this and is an inevitable conclusion that if you don't know someone important, you can't move on, or get anything done. Sadly, it's not who you



From top: Salerno, Italy;  
Assembly meeting in Salerno;  
Assembly building in Salerno.  
Page 11: Amalfi coast, Italy.



know, but who you pay. You can imagine when we speak of salvation and free grace. This is impossible for the Italian to contemplate, because *nothing is for free*.

This renders the justice system very unfair, as anyone who is rich and powerful rarely goes to jail, and if they do it is for a very short time. For example, certain politicians never go to jail. Certain pedophile priests in Italy also never go to jail—they just get hidden away in a monastery and sometimes get sent directly to another church. The Italians rejoice when justice is done in this area in the U.S., because it just doesn't happen here. This is all because of the same reason: when people get into trouble, they seek *who they can pay* (a mediator or middleman). Because the system and conscience is set up this way, this means there are many middlemen or mediators that are ready and willing to be paid.

The irresolvable garbage problem in the region of Campania is confirmation that the problem is not isolated to a handful of individuals who decide the fate of this region (where Naples and Salerno reside), but to each individual that has this manner of using intimidation, opportunism and abuse to receive what they require, which is just normal for them! If everyone seeks their own benefit, it is unlikely that they put their heads together to seek out a solution that would benefit the community as a whole in this region. It is just their way of seeing things. For example there is a saying regarding this, "What is mine is mine, what is everybody's is nobody's." What is "everybody's" refers to any public facility—a park, school, etc. Some could think that this attitude is simply egoism and isolated to people that live in ignorance. We can attest that in our apartment building, which consist predominantly of bank managers, lawyers, school teachers and other professionals, that nothing changes as the problem is profound. In our apartment building grounds residents break every rule possible: leaving their garbage in the parking lot, squeezing more than one car into the already crowded parking lot and leaving even dog remains in the parking lot. "What is everybody's is nobody's".

At the apartment building, Joe would often clean up other people's messes and scold (nicely) those who leave their dog remains. Slowly, the embarrassment got the better part of them and things have gotten much better. This manner of living in collaboration with one another has given us many opportunities to evangelize to our neighbours, demonstrating that it is possible to live in a community in harmony. Joe, the Canadian, is not any better than the Italians in any way, he just had the privilege to grow up in country where there is not a state religion that controls and conditions everything. Joe, having an Italian background (from this very region) has a deeper understanding of what has been mentioned and has analyzed his conduct in the past (even if he was born and raised in Canada), and his very relatives in Canada that had these tendencies mentioned. The only solution is a life surrendered to Christ.

If North America understood the true essence of this reli-

gious context, we are sure more people would pray intelligently for missionaries in Italy. Many have said that they believed Italy to be a Christian country. We have good evidence to declare this is not the case.

Times have changed in Italy and the only way to get to the hearts of the Italians is to win their trust by loving them. Loving them means to love them expecting nothing in return. The Italians don't have many people they can trust, so this is a great opportunity for our light to shine forth and bring truth and life into this incredibly spiritually-dry country. Often it is said "a way to a man's heart is through his stomach." Here we say, "the *only* way to the Italians' hearts is through their stomachs." Dinners together is the most important evangelistic tool we use.

There is encouraging news regarding the assembly in Salerno. After years of establishing the foundations of this group, there is growth and some recent conversions. The Lord is working despite the resistance to the Word of God. Joe had a

recent meeting with one of the most loved and popular mayors in Italy, Mayor Salerno Vincenzo De Luca of Salerno, who gladly received our request for a large abandoned building belonging to city hall. To have this sort of meeting directly with the mayor of Salerno is not usual, but we believe the Lord guided all as we were able to also share our desire to contribute to the well-being of the city through lives that are transformed by the Lord through the work we can do in this building. Mayor De Luca appreciated this.

We shared little about the ministry in Salerno and much about what makes up an Italian from southern Italy. If this does not get conveyed, we believe the rest will not be taken seriously. There is a great spiritual battle in southern Italy and we need your consistent payers before our Master. We are finding the battle is not always just in Italy, but also in North America, as the true spiritual state of Italy is often misunderstood, therefore missionaries are not always understood. ■

**"For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God."**

*Ephesians 2:8*



*Joseph & Loredana Antignani were commended to the work of the Lord in Italy in 1997 and 1999 by Granville Chapel in Vancouver, British Columbia. They have two children, Joshua, 11 and Celeste, 8.*