

WMAF
Newsletter

Defender

World Ministries to the Armed Forces

1999

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER

1999

by John Bruner

I surrendered my life to Christ on February 17, 1974, in a Sunday evening meeting at Hickory Chapel (former name of North Shore Baptist Church). The following Friday I was transferred to Norfolk, Virginia, for temporary assignment to the USS Inchon. In mid-June of 1974, I reported to Bainbridge Nuclear Power School. While out walking one day I came across a building with a sign out front that read "Servicemen's Christian Home". I walked up the driveway to find out more and met Alice's mother and father who welcomed me in for supper. They told me about Jack and Alice Edge and their burden for servicemen. As Jack and Alice were away on vacation, her parent's invited me to join them for church the next morning. I accepted the invitation and attended services at Maranatha Baptist Church in Elkton, Maryland, the next morning. Later that week, I was finally able to meet Jack and Alice.

After getting acquainted, Jack asked me to join him for prayer for the base. I obliged him and soon struck up a friendship with another sailor, Tom Holiday, from Ohio. I invited Tom to church where he heard the Gospel and gave his heart to the Lord. Soon, in addition to praying with Jack whenever we were over at the Servicemen's Home, Tom and I began to pray for the base. Before long, another fellow joined us for church, then another and another. As many of these guys heard the Gospel, they surrendered to the conviction of the Holy Spirit and gave their lives to Jesus Christ. Tom and I began to go door to door in the barracks, asking the fellows to join us for church and sharing the Gospel whenever we had the chance. By late August, all the vans and cars that we had been using were full for the 40-minute trek to church every Sunday morning and nearly as full for the evening service run. I even purchased a car to help haul more fellow students to church and it was full the first Sunday I had it. As the Lord added others to our fellowship, more vehicles were also added. Alice will attest that they were averaging 30 to 40 for Sunday dinner each Sunday for quite awhile through those months. In addition, they served meals to several of us during the week when we would escape the rigors of the base to do our studying in the quiet confines of the Servicemen's Christian Home. Bible reading and discussion were always part

of the supper hour and often convicting, encouraging and enlightening conversation would go into the night. Jack always had time for us sailors and never discounted our questions and spiritual needs that were so important to us at the time. He was always willing to provide a ride to and from the base if needed and often served as a sounding board and an encouraging voice in the discussions that would take place in the parking lot before he dropped us off for the night.

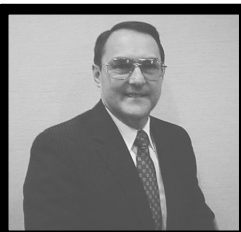
Through the years, I lost track of Jack and Alice but recently with help from a friend in North Carolina, I was able to contact them. It so happened that they were planning a trip north to visit family in South Dakota and so we invited them to stop by on their way. What a reunion!

During our visit, I learned some fascinating things about Jack and Alice that I had not known before. For instance: Jack and Alice were called by God to set up a Servicemen's work at Bainbridge in 1952 and served Him there faithfully until the Navy closed the gates in the late 1970s.

Jack and Alice had not had any visitors to the Servicemen's home for several long months prior to my stumbling across their driveway in June of 1974. In fact, the base had moved so many things out of Bainbridge that, by then, there had been an unusual dry spell at the Home. Because of this, they had taken a vacation to seek the Lord's Will about several offers from churchmen in other parts of the country to move the work to their churches. During that vacation, God spoke clearly to them that He had called them to Bainbridge and hadn't changed His mind. They were to serve Him there until the gates were locked for good or He called them home. They had said "yes" to God and were returning when I was meeting Alice's parents and being introduced to the work there. God was about to light a fire in people's souls at Bainbridge and neither of us had any idea what we were in store for.

Today, Jack is as faithful to the Lord as he ever was. He hasn't changed in appearance much in the last 25 years, and his wit is as sharp as ever. He has slowed a bit in activity. Alice is recovering well from her second by-pass surgery in 10 years. Despite the snow on the roof, she is as spry as ever and if there's any change to her heart at all, it is only that it's bigger than it already was.

What a joy it was to worship with them again and to discuss
continued on pg.3



From the Pulpit: Message and Bible Study

by Rev. Joseph P. Howe

Title: PLEDGED TO CHRIST

Scripture: Galatians 2:16-21



A great pageant was held many years ago, long before the Super Bowl extravaganza was ever imagined. A great stadium was built to hold this special event. Thousands of people jammed the stadium around the sides and across its infields to be a part of one of the world's greatest spectacles.

Through the pitch black darkness marched the first of a long line of torchlight paraders. The great column of soldiers marched abreast in ranks winding their way through the crowd to a prescribed place in the center of the crowded stadium. It was breathtaking to all who viewed it. It was an unforgettable lifetime experience to those present.

When all participants were in place, the bands stopped playing and the crowds muffled down to a hush. The quiet stadium rang out with trumpet fanfare as a spotlight centered on a figure at the far end of the stadium. A man walked with two others in the spotlight to the podium and issued the oath of office to the officers of his army. Unnoticed by the many swept away in the spirit of the moment was the pledge these officers made to the person of Adolph Hitler himself.

American service members take an oath to defend our country and its way of life when we begin our military service. We pledge our allegiance to the Constitution of the United States of America. Our soldiers pledge themselves to the Constitution and the people of this great nation and not to the President, or Governor, or Mayor of a town. The German military pledged themselves to the person of Adolph Hitler who left all constitutional principles behind.

When I gave my heart to Christ, however, I pledged my life to the Person of Christ. Unlike Adolph Hitler, Christ is the Son of God, the Creator of you and me, and has every right to demand a personal commitment to Him. We must ask ourselves, to whom, or to what, have we pledged ourselves? Our future depends on it. Paul, the Apostle, then says (vs. 20), *"I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live."* Interesting isn't it? I am crucified but I live. That sounds like a contradiction, doesn't it?

Paul meant that by pledging himself to Christ and accepting Him as his Savior, his old life died and now he lives because of the eternal life that God gave him when he received Christ into his heart. As the desire and love for Christ grew, the former way of life lost its appeal. He became dead to his old practices because God replaced the old desires with new ones. His former plans gave way to the Will of God and a better way of life in Christ. The former life of sin has died and he is alive!

There are many young military persons that will die before they are thirty years old if they don't change their course of life. I have been there and seen it. That which starts out in fun becomes a monster out of control. Many people will not outlive their lifestyle unless they change. If they don't take it to the cross of Christ and let it die, they will be hopelessly lost. Paul says that the old man died yet he is alive! That's victory!

How glorious is the message that *"Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me"* (vs 20). I can't fix myself up nor conjure up the desire to change, but I can pledge my life to Christ. Christ forgives me and lives in me and empowers me to live free from the old life. Now that's a message we all need!

All of us must stop and take inventory of our lives every so often. In that inventory of life it is imperative that we identify to whom, or what, we have pledged ourselves. Life's activities are pointed in the direction of our allegiance, out of which comes our future. We may not intend to inhibit our future, but the one to whom we are pledged may not have the same ideals. Their lack of ideals does make a difference in our lives.

Do you need to change? If you do, I am convinced that Christ is the answer!
Pledge your life to Him.



Study This!

BIBLE STUDY

Galatians 2:16-21

PRINCIPLE: What do you see in these verses? Write down the Bible principles that are most important in the passage.

PLAN: Write down the ways you can live these principles during the next 24 hours.

PRACTICE: After 24 hours, write down your progress. Your victories become your testimony and your defeats become your prayer requests.

Need Help? WMA795

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what great things God has done in our lives. To fellowship around the Word of God once again with Jack and Alice was a blessing that just a few weeks before I never could have imagined happening again this side of heaven.

While so many limit God to certain forms of expected blessing, I have been so richly blessed throughout my life. I just thank that Lord that He was able to use me as a young Christian in Bainbridge, Maryland, and pray that I can still be an effective tool of God throughout the remainder of my life. God wants to fellowship with us on a higher plane, if only we are willing to follow Him there.

WMAF goes to Korea...

November 5 - 15, 1999

Rev. Joseph P. Howe, Director of WMAF, and **Rev. Michael Marshall** will travel to South Korea, preaching and meeting with friends of WMAF. The services will include members of the Armed Forces of South Korea and the United States stationed in Korea.

Details to follow...

COMING SOON!

OPERATION REACHOUT

Northland Baptist Bible College, Tabernacle Baptist Church of Lebanon, Missouri, have joined together with WMAF in a special project called *Operation Reachout*. Tabernacle Baptist Church and Northland BBC are putting together the Bible courses consisting of five levels of accomplishment. The last level is a college accredited Bible course transferable to any Bible school and all courses will be free of charge to our military members.

WMAF is providing the spiritual support and extension ministry for *Operation Reachout*. This is the most exciting ministry breakthrough that I have ever been a part of. It has never before been attempted in military ministry. Service members will be able to access the program by mail or the Web site.

Stay tuned for developments...

Mail Call!

Rec'd 9/1/99

Thank you for the support.

CW4 A R
Aviation, Bosnia



E-mail

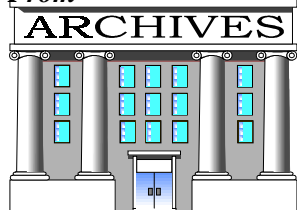
E-Mail 8/24/99

Dear Rev. Howe and WMAF,

I have just received the June/July/August edition of the Defender and want to thank you for your faithful work for the Lord. I truly miss your sermons and the wonderful fellowship you have there. I am currently on the last leg of our very successful deployment aboard the USS Theodore Roosevelt. Know that you are being prayed for and that your reaching out is being noticed by many. Thank you and God bless. Your co-worker. In Christ,

S D
USS Theodore Roosevelt



From*Anecdotes from history*

by
**Rev. Michael
 G. Marshall**

THE CHAPLAINCY IN VIETNAM

The long and distinguished history of the military chaplaincy is well-known. The Vietnam war provided an avenue for ministry to the troops that only chaplains could provide. Dunnigan and Nofi have written concerning chaplains: "They also serve as unofficial ombudsmen, a means by which the troops can clue-in higher-ranking personnel to problems without creating breaches of the chain-of-command...."

At the beginning of the Vietnam war only 1,300 chaplains were in the army and approximately the same amount in the Navy which provides chaplaincy for the Marines and Coast Guard. In a few short years (1968) the number increased by fifty percent. Of this number, there were 300 chaplains serving in the Army and 112 Navy chaplains with the Marine Corps. The number of Air Force chaplains in Vietnam at this time is unknown.

The involvement of chaplains alongside the troops in the field is evident by their casualties. Many times thought to be stationed out of harms way, the statistics show differently. Approximately, a dozen were killed in action and approximately a hundred wounded. Of these casualties, three chaplains were awarded the Medal of Honor in Vietnam. Only one of the three lived to wear it.

(Adapted from "Dirty Little Secrets of the Vietnam War, by James F. Dunnigan and Albert A. Nofi)



Give one to a friend!



Help is on Line!

For pastoral help, e-mail
WMAF95@aol.com
 Web Site Soon:
www.WMAF95.org



Watch for it!

Sign Up A Friend

You may have a friend in the military that would like to be a part of our worldwide ministry. Please, send us their name and address below and we will put them on our list referred by you.

Write your name here:

Name _____

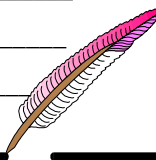
Write your friend's name here:

Name _____

Address _____

City State Zip _____

Phone _____



The **WMAF Defender** is a bi-monthly newsletter, published by World Ministries to the Armed Forces, ministering to military people around the world. Dedicated to the cause of Christ, the salvation of souls, and the discipling of Christian military members everywhere. The **WMAF Defender** is solely supported by the offerings and donations of those interested in this outreach.

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