



the REAPER

VOL. 66, NO. 1 | Spring 2021

NO LONGER BLINDED

2 CORINTHIANS 4:3-4

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF SOURCE OF LIGHT INTERNATIONAL MADISON, GA

Source of Light Ministries International is an independent, faith mission that exists to bring people of every nation, language, and ethnicity into a mature relationship with Jesus Christ and into fellowship with a local church family.

SLM is a world-wide, disciple making, church planting ministry that uses the medium of Bible lessons for all ages in both printed and electronic format to achieve its goals. The International Headquarters in Madison, Georgia, its Discipleship Training Branches (DTB), and Associate Discipleship Schools (ADS), distribute lessons throughout the world.

Representatives and Missionaries of SLM are available to present the ministry to churches, missionary conferences, and other groups. Contact the **SLM PR OFFICE** for scheduling.

For information visit us at:
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the REAPER

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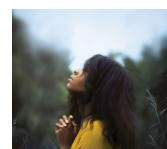
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Diana Simumpande
2 Corinthians 4:3-4

Corrections & Clarifications

For the latest version of **the Reaper** go to sourcelight.org/reaper



Blinded but Not Blind

Letter from the Editor

A number of years ago I arrived at my destination in Asia and sat at the airport waiting for my ride. Quite often I am not exactly sure who I am meeting, but usually someone is holding a sign if we haven't met. I walked around trying to make eye contact with people in the arrivals lounge, hoping that someone would match my gaze with a clear "you must be Ron" look. But after two hours of this, nothing.

I logged into my phone that had all the contact information for my host and even rechecked our correspondence. Everything seemed to be lined up and it appeared that both sides knew the arrival information. So, I attempted to make a call, only to be sent repeatedly to voicemail. In desperation, I left multiple messages, wrote a few emails, and sent some texts. After another half hour went by with no reply, I hailed a taxi and had him drive me to the closest hotel,

and then to the next nearest hotel that wasn't super sketchy.

Finally settled in my hotel room, I was just about asleep when, five hours after I had arrived, I received a phone call, with an incredibly apologetic missionary on the other end. He had apparently sent an email letting me know that he and his family had come down with the flu and gave me the information for a hotel and how to get to it. Unfortunately, in his sickness and haste to write me that email, he failed to notice he forgot to send it. He set up the reservation, gathered all the necessary information to make my arrival go smoothly, wrote the letter, corrected his incorrect grammar, formatted it, double checked that all the information I needed was in it, then neglected to send it.

But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing,

Make your light shine so bright that others are attracted to its warmth before they can see its glow.



Blind Woman in Bihar, India - Photo by Tori Doughty

whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord ... 2 Corinthians 4:3-5 NKJV

Inseparable from the word Gospel in verse 4 is the "messenger or herald" in verse 5, identified as we who "preach," who deliver that Word, who are commissioned with the message of salvation.

Printing in 120 languages... what would be the point to print and store them on our shelves in our warehouses? The potential in

those lessons is not them falling off a shelf, hoping the wind might catch them, then they float across seas and oceans, picked up off the shores of foreign and distant lands, to make their way into the hands of those whose eyes are blinded to the Gospel. The only hope, whether in printed form or in word, lies with those who can deliver it.

Paul challenges these Corinthians with the indictment that yes, there are some who won't respond to his message, which his critics have charged him with previously. But more concerning is that those who don't respond are not blind, but blinded, and potentially left in that condition by messengers who haven't delivered the light.

Romans 10:14 — *How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?*

Brothers and sisters, if we have the message of the Gospel, we carry the obligation to be its messengers as well. We must share the light and make sure its glow is perpetuated.

"The gospel is only good news if it gets there in time." - Carl F. H. Henry



SLM Directors Praying Over Front Line Missionaries in India – Photo by Ronnie Barnes



One Day's Walk

by Kimberly Thigpen

Let light shine through your life, and let it be the fuel to our action!

So, let's discuss your light. Is it bright enough for others to feel? Is it veiled? Is your light intentionally and actively carried to those who cannot see?

This **Reaper** is dedicated to the stories of people whose sight has been restored to the Gospel, from our missionaries' own personal experiences, who go to the frontlines of ministry around the globe with the Good News.

To witness the blinded see light for the first time is the goal of our

ministry and the most exciting part of it. Often it takes years of dedication and commitment to plant seeds and water, and allow the warmth from the reflection of the Light in our lives to draw these people in. It is hard work, but the most rewarding work we could be involved in.

It is our hope that these stories will encourage and challenge you to join us in support and prayer for the SLM work that is going on around the world, and will be a challenge to you as well to be and share the Light with a world that could see if they were just shown it.



After years of serving as a church planting missionary, **Dr. Ronald J. Barnes Jr.** now serves as the CEO for SLM.

Follow me [@RonBarnesJr](#)

The village sits at the top of a mountain, remote from the world, a day's walk—up—from a town. As missionary W. D., who has served with Source of Light for 40 years, puts it, "For people like me it will take more time as we are not used to walking up so fast."

Separate from other people and resources, the village suffers. W. D. and his fellow missionaries traveled to the village and found, "The whole village was suffering with skin diseases. The Lord placed a burden in my heart to help them, and I took one doctor and one nurse with medicines. We started helping them by applying medicine to their skins with our own hands and started knowing them and identifying ourselves with them. Slowly this relationship developed through the years."

Years. Not days, not months. Bringing light into this village was not a quick process, like turning on an

electric switch. More like the slow, imperceptibly-increasing light of a sunrise, the missionaries returned again and again, committed to loving like Christ, offering not only truth, but themselves.

Remember when Jesus encountered a leper in the Scriptures? Everyone else backed away, fearful of catching the deadly disease. Fearful of contamination. Fearful of their own mortality. Jesus healed the leper, but reading the account in Matthew 8 brings to light an action even more extraordinary. Jesus touched the leper. Touched him before He healed him.

While he was still a leper, Jesus listened to him, talked to him, reached out and touched him. That person had not been touched since the diagnosis that condemned him to a life of rejection and solitude. The law of Moses declared him unclean. His future held nothing but death.

Then Jesus came. With Him came an impossible acceptance, a fear-conquering hope, a healing beyond just the physical. Jesus offered the impossible. And it was so. Healing and hope came for the leper. Light shined forth to everyone who saw it, and spread to those who heard of it.

Like Jesus, these missionaries traveled far to a land darkened by sin and hopeless. Like Jesus, they approached. With their hands, they treated the diseased. They placed themselves alongside the lost.

Like the leper, the people were changed. If one were to hike the trail to this village now, they would find a place of great light. As the missionary says, “the whole village came to the saving grace of the Lord and the village now is a Christian village.”

The leader of the tribe, S. N., believed in the Gospel of Jesus Christ and was saved. W. D. baptized him. The tribe’s leader is now also its pastor, overseeing the church the missionaries planted and built. The tribe has no written language, but S. N. translates basic SLM lessons and teaches them to the youth and the children, raising up the village’s next generation in faith.

The light spreads. This tribe is not keeping the hope and light of salvation to themselves. They are spreading the good news to

neighboring tribes and continuing the pattern they were shown.

Missionaries brought Jesus to them. They are taking Jesus to others.

May we follow their example, and do our part that more people can hear, and be transformed.



But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. Proverbs 4:18



Kimberly Thigpen, author of 35 books under the name Kimberly Rae, is the wife of SLM’s Chief Financial Officer.

Testimonies from Source of Light Associate Schools Around the US

- ◆ **New Jersey** – “Most of our students live in NYC. Some have expressed fear and concern . . . since the restrictions . . . by the virus. They seem to appreciate the Bible lessons more than ever.”
- ◆ **South Carolina** – “We have students in two local county detention centers . . . and one gentleman who has continued since 2014—no longer incarcerated.” Isn’t that great? What a lifeline these Bible Lessons can be for anyone!
- ◆ **Illinois** – “A number have responded; they are grateful for the studies during this pandemic.”
- ◆ **Kentucky** – from one of the students: “Jesus was actually God here on earth. He made many sacrifices. If He could sacrifice so much . . . my troubles seem trivial when I think of what He went through.” Trenton, age 15.
- ◆ **New York** – “With school not being in session (for COVID-19) . . . lots more kids mailing in lessons . . . heard from a grandmother who has enjoyed helping her grandchildren do their lessons. They are from a broken home and she is striving to lead them to salvation.”
- ◆ **Ohio** – “Man saved June 1, 2020—enrolled in our mailbox club (ministry) same day.”
- ◆ **Tennessee** – “Since 2010 until 2020, we have had 755 people that have come to know the Lord (professions).”
- ◆ **New York** – “In 2017, I had nearly 100 students, then many prisons began refusing to allow mail from ‘Christian’ organizations. Now I have about 30–35 students—but, (PTL) more time to write them long letters when necessary.”
- ◆ **Mississippi** – from one of the students: “I love the lessons! Do you know of any other methods I can also use to share Christ with others? I want to tell as many as I can!”
- ◆ **Georgia** – “A student, now in college, gave a lesson to my student and read the lesson with her. It was encouraging to see how my older student has grown spiritually and wants to share God’s Word with younger children.”

A VEILED GOSPEL

by Ron Barnes

Berti was a student in our first English outreach in Hungary. He was a grumpy old man who never prepared, never participated, and always seemed uninterested in the English lessons and the Bible devotional I would share each class. In fact, he was usually a distraction in the classes and my teacher would often complain. I was often tempted to give him his money back because he wasn't learning, and worse, was preventing the others from learning. They too would complain to me about him saying, "he is the hardest, meanest, grumpiest Hungarian man" they knew.



Teaching English as a Inroad for the Gospel
-Photo by Ronnie Barnes

But I let him stay in the classes. Even though he still wasn't really learning, and still disruptive, I sensed the classes were good for him. If nothing else, it was a social outlet.

He continued in the classes for the following four years.

One day, I was meeting with our national partner, Szozo, at a coffee shop down the road from my home, when I got a phone call from my wife. Brenda told me Berti was sitting at our gate in his car, crying, and wanted to know if I was home. I shared this with Szozo and we were both shocked. Szozo too knew him well, as he was my partner in starting the ministry in our town. The "hardest, meanest, grumpiest Hungarian" was sitting in my driveway crying. So of course, Szozo said, "Let's go!"

We sped home and found him exactly as described. This proud man in melted, teary pieces in my driveway. We brought him in my house and tried to pry what was wrong out of him. He told us his story of leaving our English graduation party "on cloud nine," and calling his estranged son in an attempt to begin to reconcile with him. He had heard my message on the "prodigal son" that night and decided maybe it was time to start straightening out things with his own son. He invited his son to visit the next day, but his son rejected his invitation and denounced that Berti was even his father. Berti sat devastated, drinking through the night and decided that he would end his life.

Knowing that if he killed himself in his home, because he was a recluse with few to no friends, someone probably wouldn't find him there for quite

some time. He decided to overdose at the end of his driveway, in a busy neighborhood where someone was sure to find him.



Berti the Skeptic - Photo by Ronnie Barnes

He drank some more, swallowed a handful of drugs, and fell asleep. Then, he awoke. He looked at his phone; he had been there for three days. The fact that he laid there out in the open for three days and no one bothered to check on him, compounded with the fact that he couldn't even kill himself right, sent him deeper into despair. He was truly at the lowest point of his life and began to drink again and create other scenarios that would guarantee his successful suicide.

Then he remembered my words from the graduation; the words I said to my students every week in my devotional during the English classes, "They might not believe what I have to share, but they can believe this, that God loves them, and so do I, and we will both be there whenever they need to call on us."

So here he was at the lowest moment in his life, ready to see the light. He had already felt its warmth for many, many years and dismissed it. But now he was ready to accept it. The devil's veil had been removed, and the light of the Gospel began to shine in his life. And he too began to radiate the light, as those who knew him at his worst began to feel the warmth of the testimony of his changed life.

But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord . . .

2 Corinthians 4:3-5 NKJV



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A NEW LIFE REVEALED THROUGH THE NEW LIFE IN CHRIST SLM COURSE

by Karunakar and Sumita

Bhagati was possessed with an evil spirit and she was very sick for many years. She and her husband went to many temples of idols and also to many good doctors seeking help. In desperation, they sought help at large hospitals, but she was not healed. Then Bhagati heard about the Lord Jesus and went to a church that preached about Jesus and His healing power. She believed in the Lord and was healed.



House Church Gathering – Photo by Ron Barnes

After that her husband and son also believed in the Lord, but without having clear salvation knowledge. She was going to many churches, but was unable to understand all of the things that were taught. Finally, when Bhagati and her family contacted us, we sent them three copies of **New Life 1**. All three had their own booklet to study. A while later, they called us and told us that if they

could have found our address many years ago, they would have already learned many of the truths contained in NL-1. They had been taught many wrong things which they came to realize after reading this course. Bhagati and her family now have a clear knowledge of Jesus and an understanding of salvation. They are witnessing to others and three have become believers in the Lord.

They live in Burdwan and have been calling us every week for fellowship. But that area is very far away from us, and we cannot get there with a vehicle. Please pray for the spiritual growth of Bhagati, her family, and the three new believers in that area. Also, pray for a worker who can go every week to disciple them and provide some fellowship.

Like Bhagati, and her family, 92 people have come to the saving knowledge of Christ during this pandemic from March until October 2020. God is doing this great work through personal evangelism and through the SLM lessons. Two other families at Howrah threw their idols away and it filled a truck! They are reading their Bibles, but someone needs to go and teach them truths and help them to understand the Bible.



KJ is the SLM Director for the Northeast Zone of India and is a Pastor and Evangelist.

Serving at Source of Light: We are a little different.

Source of Light operates slightly differently than other mission agencies. We have a number of different avenues that people can take to join us in serving.

Retired:

Many who join Source of Light have become familiar with the wide variety of ministries we are involved in, and choose to spend their healthy retirement years productively by serving God at SLM. Instead of golf and fishing full time, these retirees come and carry out a number of essential roles.

Rowley Hayner came to SLM after having volunteered with a few ministries following an early retirement. His experience and gifts lent themselves to him serving as the Associate School Coordinator for the United States and serving in the Orders Department, to help these Associate Schools with guidance in purchasing and utilizing the materials.

Transitioning Missionaries:

Occasionally the field of service for missionaries changes and they often desire to continue to serve as missionaries. Some need to change their field due to health, age, transitions on fields, etc., but are not exactly sure where to serve

next. SLM provides a soft landing for these transitioning missionaries. We have a wide variety of needs, typically something for every type of missionary. These missionaries can even stay with their current mission agency through a “seconding agreement” between ministries. They can continue toward retirement and under their agency’s insurance, accounting, and retirement programs, while continuing to serve full time in ministry. Or they can switch entirely to SLM.

Char Mattocks and her husband served faithfully for 30 years with Biblical Ministries Worldwide in New Zealand and Fiji. Char has continued for the last 22 years serving in the Orders Department here at Source of Light Headquarters, while still with BMW.

Scotte Staab and his family served with ABWE for 21 years in church planting and leadership development before they needed to return to the United States to address some family health issues they couldn’t get cared for in Romania. Five years ago, Scotte joined SLM and became a Regional Director, using the skills and experience he gained as a leader and missionary overseas.

Volunteers:

Merle and Shirley Rice moved to Madison to be closer to their daughter, Brenda, and their son-in-law, Ron, Director of SLM. Over the years, they have come to love the ministry of SLM; they themselves used the materials with their children growing up. They volunteer in many areas, handling clerical work, odd jobs, and even have utilized Merle's technical skills to repair our older printing equipment. They have no required hours; they just live nearby and are always ready to help departments in need at a moment's notice.

Career Missionaries:

Ronnie and Bayleigh Barnes joined SLM right out of college, looking for a place to serve the Lord. They probably fit the more traditional mold of missionary, raising support and starting out in a career of missions. Ronnie serves as the Coordinator of Media Outreach and Human Resources, and uses his business degree almost daily in his responsibilities in administration and outreach at SLM.

You see, there isn't just one way to serve at SLM. We need all kinds of missionaries and accept them from a variety of backgrounds and experiences.

If you or someone you know might fit this profile, contact us at hr@slmin.org, or call us at **706.342.0397**, and someone will guide you through potential service with SLM.

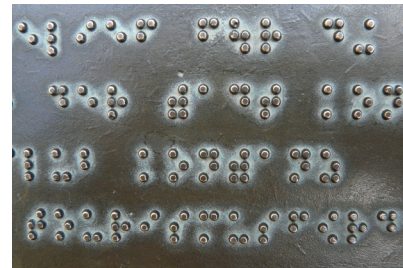
Opportunities to serve as:

- ◆ Receptionists
- ◆ Accounting
- ◆ Graphic Artists
- ◆ Data Entry
- ◆ Designers
- ◆ Office Administration
- ◆ Social Media Influencers
- ◆ IT
- ◆ Marketing
- ◆ Discipleship
- ◆ Small Engine Repair
- ◆ Field Administration
- ◆ Construction
- ◆ Pressman
- ◆ Carpentry
- ◆ Apprentice Pressman
- ◆ Maintenance
- ◆ Braille Transcriber
- ◆ Landscaping
- ◆ Warehouse Personnel

BLIND, BUT NOT SPIRITUALLY

by Jim Tilson

It all began with a blind man from Delaware. His name is Blake. "I met Marda in 2011 through an Online service used to share braille materials. We began communicating through email after I sent her some braille books. I have been passing on "Our Daily Bread" to Marda for the past several years." When Blake started the SLM Bible study lessons in the spring of 2020, he asked permission to send those lessons to Marda once he had finished. At age 67, and



living in Texas, Marda had spent a lifetime in and out of many churches and religions—Pentecostal, Baptist, Catholic, Mormon, Universalist, etc. All this time, she was searching for the truth. Yes, she was physically blind, but more importantly, she was spiritually blind also. As she studied the first book of *My New Life in Christ*, she came to the realization that the truth was not found in a church or

religion, but in Jesus Christ. When asked at the end of lesson two if she had ever received the Lord Jesus as her Savior, she answered "Yes, on July 8, 2020." Her spiritual blindness had been lifted!

The story doesn't end there. A few days later, in a phone conversation with her sighted sister, Marda shared her testimony of how Jesus Christ had forgiven her of her sin. This began Dee Dee's search for the truth. Dee Dee went to a local church on a Sunday, and with their help accepted Christ as her Savior. Siblings, one blind and one sighted, were for over 60 years spiritually blind, but now both can spiritually see!

SLM provided the lessons; Blake took an interest in his long-distance friend; the Holy Spirit did the work in Marda's heart; Marda shared her testimony so her sister could experience salvation also. To God be the glory!



Jim Tilson is a certified Braille Transcriber and the Director of the SLM Braille Ministry.

TO THE BLIND OF THE WORLD



Braille Paper Partners Campaign

Each box of braille paper (\$31) contains 1,000 sheets of specially punched fan-folded paper designed for braille printers (embossers). Each box can produce 15 daily devotionals, 22 monthly Sunday school lessons, or up to 68 Source of Light Bible lessons. One box can also produce 2 complete hymnals. These materials are being used by the blind in the USA and in multiple English speaking countries.

At the present time over 600 sight impaired individuals are being helped spiritually. Many of our blind readers are pastors, missionaries, church music directors, and Sunday school teachers. One month's supply of paper is \$1,100.

Would you consider a donation to help the physically blind be freed from spiritual blindness and then disciplined into mature believers?

Donate:

1 Pallet \$1,100

10 Boxes \$310

5 Boxes \$155

1 Box \$31

Other \$ _____

Contact Us:

Mail: 1011 Mission Rd,
Madison, GA 30650-4908

Phone: 706.342.0397

Email: accounting@slmin.org

Online: sourcelight.org/donate

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GLOBAL OUTREACH FUND



Source of light
INTERNATIONAL

Source of Light International in Madison, Georgia operates and ministers to each of its missionaries without any administrative fees charged. We rely solely on gifts and regular donations in the same way as any of our missionaries, purely by faith. In order to continue to operate this way, we are asking God, by faith, to raise up new individuals, churches, and foundations to support the work of the home office through the Global Outreach Fund.

Would you prayerfully consider partnering with SLM through the Global Outreach Fund?

LIGHT SHED IN THE DARKNESS TO THE UNREACHED OF BOLIVIA

by Miguel Sanchez

Bolivia is a country with many ethnic groups and languages, rich in history and unique customs in each region, and one of a few South American countries with yet many unreached people groups.



Leoncio with some of the SLM courses
-Photo by Miguel Sanchez

The last little town where I went to visit some Christian brothers in their homes, and resume the services on their premises, is El Palmar, 10 to 12 hours of travel by bus. In this place lives brother Leoncio (the one with the two books in hand), born in the Guaraní ethnic group, a student hungry for the Word of God.

The life story of Leoncio before partnering with SLM was very sad.

He was widowed, alone, and unable to understand the wonders of God in the Word, because he knew of no one to teach him or to provide him with literature for growth. But he was always looking to serve God.

He was a man who did everything possible to win souls with his little knowledge. His life experience with Christ was his only training, with his own testimony.

It was Leoncio who got his brothers to help serve and build the church in El Palmar. I knew of his commitment and leadership well; I managed the roof of the new construction, while he and another brother assembled the structure. He has never wanted any recognition for himself; he does not like them to know what he is doing, because he firmly believes everything he does is for the Lord Jesus Christ. I can personally testify that the El Palmar brothers do not even know that he personally fully financed the roof.

He became a self-supporting missionary 13 years ago, following the example of other missionaries who were visiting distant towns like those in El Palmar.

Many years ago, we met with Leoncio, and when we introduced him to the Source of Light materials, he was overjoyed. Finally, he could be trained and challenged in the Word of God. He immediately began using them for his personal study, for his teaching

and preaching ministry in La Abra, and at home.



Miguel at an outdoor church gathering
-Photo by Miguel Sanchez



Church built by Leoncio and the brothers
-Photo by Miguel Sanchez

As he continued to learn through the lessons of Fuente de Luz (Source of Light in Spanish), his eyes were opened and his joy was so evident that now he is constantly learning and teaching all the lessons, both to the brothers in El Palmar and to the neighbors in different cities who do not know Christ. He is a faithful companion in the ministry in El Palmar. For me, he has been a welcome support in the ministry in this region, since I am unable to visit as often as I would like.

Leóncio receives no support, only the affection of his Christian brothers, who take care of him with their food. To support himself in the ministry, he works with his hands repairing bicycles. He buys them very damaged and after repairing them, he sells them. He is a man similar to the apostle Paul. He lives quite simply, caring for a brother's house, and he lives alone. He has no family, only his Christian family, which keeps him quite content.

At this time, El Palmar is experiencing a very sad and needy reality. First, it hasn't rained in quite some time and the drought is very acute. Because of this, many wild and domestic animals are dying. Secondly, forest fires are a very big concern; we look forward to a rain that will put out the fires. This is the reality of many towns in the southern sector of Bolivia, including Tarija where I live. We are breathing a lot of smoke in the city.

We ask for your prayers, and please do not forget to pray for Bolivia and for me, Pastor Miguel Sánchez Vacaflores.



Miguel Sanchez
is the Source of Light
Branch Director for
Bolivia.

World Wide Bible Institute

Christian Growth SL-116 Assignment by Caroline Kido

Takashi is a 44-year-old man who lives in the country near the Japanese Alps. He is tall, slim, and has an athletic body, plus a certain determined look on his face that some may confuse with simply looking irritable.



Takashi in his Kendo competition uniform
- Photo by Caroline Kido

You see, Takashi grew up being disciplined in the mastery of Kendo (modern Japanese martial arts, fighting with bamboo swords and armor) from an early age. He grew quite strong and won many Kendo games. As his fame spread throughout the prefecture, so did his pride. Takashi had an insatiable thirst for Kendo; it was on his mind 24 hours a day. That all changed when he converted to Christianity. He soon learned that bowing to any God other than God Almighty was a sin.

It was customary for Kendo players to bow to an idol on the wall after a Kendo game. He felt sorry to God after continuing the practice for some time and finally made the decision to stop playing Kendo. He thought his years of “discipline” were over, but actually, little did he know it was all about to begin.

The Holy Spirit convicted him that it was not good to have such a passion to “beat” people. A desire to be the strongest and therefore heap up lots of praise and attention from others.

His Kendo mentality meant that at work he treated almost everyone or anyone who opposed him as a threat, as an enemy that needed to be beaten.

Over time, he learned from the Holy Spirit that he had a lot of changing to do. Takashi wasn't one known for his patience; he had a quick temper and would raise his voice often at his children. At work, he was unsociable and couldn't tolerate people whose opinions differed from his.

He carried a lot of unrest within him, and often took it to the Lord for encouragement in deep meditation and prayer. Slowly he began to grow spiritually. He learned that he couldn't change by his own strength, that this required a higher power than himself, not just sheer willpower.

He also learned that being weak meant being strong in the Lord. So he tried to give up the temptation to be strong in every given matter, but to first seek God's kingdom, and not simply make his own judgments.

Then his desire to fight kicked into full life. After this realization and after many hours of sadness, wallowing in self-pity over his failures to be holy, did he then start to discipline himself rather in godly matters. No longer did he view others as his enemies, but instead his own flesh, the old man. The old Takashi.

The Holy Spirit had opened his eyes to the great sacrifice Jesus made on the cross in his place. How could he then turn around and betray his Friend, who gave himself for a weak and bad sinner? So he immersed himself in God's Word each day, learning the tactics and movements of his enemy.

It was a spiritual battle he was learning to fight, not a physical one. He became thankful that Jesus Christ gave Himself in his place. He had a new life now in Christ and no longer wanted to operate under the rules of his flesh.

Takashi is not a perfect person and he knows he never will be in this lifetime on earth. However, he is

aware that he cannot live any longer for sin, or for himself either. His daily joy is knowing that Christ lives in him, and he need not be in bondage to his flesh anymore.

Every day, he presses on towards the goal, that heavenly prize, not like the past, where he would beat his body for a medal, for recognition. No, he now fights the “good” fight.

I chose Takashi for my character sketch because I have lived with him many years and have witnessed the changes that the Holy Spirit has wrought in him. I have seen his battles with the flesh, his impatience, his selfishness, his pride. I am thankful that he is able to encourage me with the things that he has learned.



Caroline Kido is currently a WWBI Online Student and language teacher. She and her husband reside in Japan with their 3 children.

MDS Course Stories

Javier – Spanish prisoner

I am fighting against the evil spirits. I have submitted to God and He reprimanded me because I am no longer of the world. I know God loves me and I am saved. (He was sent study pages on overcoming in spiritual warfare.)

Geofredo – Spanish prisoner

(He and two others started the lessons together in January 2019, and were saved through the lessons. He wrote the following.) God bless you. I am so happy to be a student at the Source of Light School. When I return to my country, Venezuela, I will give testimony of how these lessons have changed my life. Glory to God in the name of Jesus Christ.

Alcibar – Spanish prisoner

(Back in 2015) I accepted Jesus as my Lord and Savior after 3 days in jail. Before, my life had no meaning; my one idea was to do myself harm, wanted to take my life. Though no one had a solution, thanks to God someone told me this was not the end. He asked if I believed in God and I said yes, told me to pray and ask God for strength to trust. This is a beginning of a new life with God.

(Now) I love to study the Word of God and then meditate like I am really inside of it. I was a very impatient and angry man and when someone did something, I did the same back to him. Now I am just the opposite; when they do things to me, I bless them and help them without any desire of being rewarded. My life in Jesus gave me a 180-degree change and it has much meaning and is worth it. How many times I have betrayed Jesus with my disobedience, seeing it as something little without taking into account what He did for me. When I believed that I was alone behind bars, He was the first to come to my rescue. I have failed Him, but He is marvelous and has not failed me. He is always faithful. How can I not fall in love with Him? I was dead, but now I have life and I know that I will live forever with Him. Since I accepted Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior, everything has changed. God Himself has given me people to tell them His Word—by mail, telephone, and right here in the prison. I am constantly sharing, even with the officials. God is always in control and only He knows who to put in our path to tell them the Truth. Thanks to God for everything and thanks to you and everyone there.

“I JUST WANTED TO BEAT UP THE CHAPLAIN”

by Guillermo Salazar



Guillermo with Marcellus and his wife and son – Photo by Guillermo Salazar

Since entering the Christian chapel inside the prison, Marcellus believed he was in charge and his decisions were final, and in spite of the long years he lived in crime and then in prison, he had still not learned to distinguish right from wrong.

He had heard the Gospel, but Jesus was not yet his Lord and Savior. That's why he tended to twist the Gospel the way he thought it should be. He continued his twisted thoughts and conspired to attack the pastor, the chaplain of the prison.

Marcellus began at an early age to commit different crimes, until he had to go to jail to pay for them. Inside

the prison, he heard the Gospel and understood it in his own way through the influence of other evangelical Christian groups in the prison.

When he began to listen to the prison chaplain, he told fellow inmates that he did not understand him, that the pastor did not like them either because he preached so strongly the Gospel that he would raise his voice vehemently, seemingly not out of love. He had seen similar preaching on the streets before prison, and from the mouth of other preachers who eventually entered to preach there too in prison.

Marcellus felt that preaching ought to be with the “strength and power of the Spirit,” which he did not see in this shepherd. His discomfort grew within him to such an extent that he



Guillermo with Marcellus and another inmate transformed by the Gospel – Photo by Guillermo Salazar

thought of rebuking and beating this preacher. He said to others, “That shepherd makes me want to beat him up because that Word is not of God.” He wanted me to believe his way.

For Marcellus, the Gospel of Christ was still undercover, the “clarity” of the Light of the Word had not come to him, and it was hiding from him (2 Corinthians 4:3–4). But God, in His infinite mercy, revealed Himself to Marcellus through the quiet study of the Scriptures, the Bible studies of Fuente de Luz (Source of Light Chile) and the classes that we gave weekly. Gradually, the veil that prevented him from seeing clearly the Light of Christ began to disappear. The Biblical lessons of Source of Light made him see and understand what the Lord wanted to reveal to him and much more.

For Marcellus, things were not as he had come to believe on his own. It was his practice to resolve conflicts with science, physics, and with

violence, all in the flesh. This was why so often he thought to attack the preacher. Thankfully, something held him back. No doubt it was the power of the Holy Ghost.

It was only when Marcellus stopped to pay more attention, to reflect on what he could hear of the preacher that he realized that the pastor did preach the Word of God. And so it was that within a few days he truly converted to Christ, and was able to approach other Christians he trusted to tell them that he had changed his mind about the pastor.

After wrestling with an internal conviction, he mustered up the courage to confess to the chaplain, what he had planned to do in the past. He repented, asked forgiveness from God and from God’s servant. He publicly acknowledged his intentions and declared that he realized that what he was hearing was truly the Word of God. He realized this because

he was studying and comparing the preaching with the teachings he heard from the Scriptures.

Soon after conversion, he was released in 1996 and was baptized in 1998 in the river Allipén. He married Norma in 2002 and today they have 2 children. As a family, they serve the Lord and in prison ministry.

His ministry began in 1998 as an assistant pastor and with the ministry of the Prison Center (CECAR) in the city of Temuco, Chile. In 2009, I assigned him as a volunteer chaplain in that prison. Additionally, every Friday he has a radio program (late night) in the city of Temuco where, along with other ex-convicts, he shares testimonies and the preaching of the Word of God.

Inmates of nearby prisons hear his program, and many who leave prison contact him to greet him and tell him about their Christian experience where, like Marcellus they saw the Light of the Word of God.

The Gospel was hidden for Marcellus, but he came to understand it according to 2 Corinthians 4, and now shares it with many people through the various means that the Lord allows him to spread.

Currently Marcellus is 54 years old. Together with his wife, they have a

small business selling nuts. He is a pastor and the chaplain of the Nueva Imperial jail.

We thank God that, like Marcellus, there are other former inmates who have known Christ as their personal Savior. Some are now missionaries, others are pastors, or Bible teachers, and others have their Christian homes. To the Lord be the glory. Amen.



Guillermo Salazar has served as a Pastor, Prison Chaplain and the SLM Chile Director for many years.

MISSIONARY SPOTLIGHT

SPOTLIGHT W. D. CENTRAL INDIA

In His Own Words...

I was brought up in a family where my father was a pastor and mother was also in full-time ministry. This gave a foundation about the knowledge of Christ and the Gospel. But I did not receive Christ as my personal Savior until I was doing my post-graduate study in the field of engineering.

I was called into the ministry and joined SLM in 1981. God blessed me with a prayerful and a born-again Christian as my wife. She is a graduate in commerce and is a great source of support for me in the ministry. Now she is retired from her employment and is fully involved in ministry along my side. We are blessed with two sons and their wives. I am grateful to the Lord that my whole family is involved in the ministry of the Lord in various capacities.

I love to be involved in all kinds of ministries. Though church ministry is my priority, I always love to do missions in the remote areas of the country. I started church planting and evangelism in forest areas where there is no church, and the Gospel has not been preached. The innocence of

those people and the love they show towards us is unbelievable.

There are some external forces I cannot mention in this document—the people who stop us reaching these people in the remote areas. Me and my wife receive threatening calls from unknown numbers telling us not to preach or share the Gospel.



In spite of these situations, I am always fond of ministering in forest areas. It is a joy to reach people with the good news of our Lord. There is no other thing which can give me that joy, happiness, and peace. To live is for Christ but to die is a gain. This is what I believe and try to work towards.

Please continue to pray for us and our ministry.

MISSIONARY SPOTLIGHT

SPOTLIGHT M. B. PAKISTAN

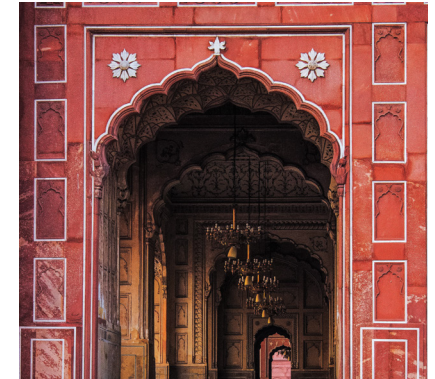
M. B. cares about his people, the people of Pakistan. “God showed me the miserable condition of His people in Pakistan physically and spiritually.” M. B. felt a deep call to plant churches and raise up believers who would become missionaries in his country. After praying for years for specific ministry direction (while serving), he discovered Source of Light’s website. He initiated the connection, and then he and his wife saved for over a year to make the trip to the Philippines for SLM training in 2011. “And that,” he says, “was the greatest, very important, blessed, and happiest time for us. What a great joy!”

The following are his words:

“We won hundreds of souls by distributing the SLM material. We introduced the printed material to the principals of many Muslim public and private schools, denominations, churches and ministries, and all of them showed interest to apply these materials to their institutes.

“God brought a great revival in many villages and cities of Pakistan. There were many threats that started to come by calls and letters to us,

because the booklets and the Bibles were distributed, and the material reached to the Muslim leaders and the Islamic schools. Muslim leaders and even the terrorists accepted our Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior.



“Then suddenly, a terrible incident took place. Our stitching unit, that was our big source of income to support our ministries, was destroyed by some fundamental Muslims and it affected our all work in Pakistan... we had lost all things and had no funds to carry on. Many organizations offered us many attractive things and offers of huge funds to restore all projects, but God had fixed our hearts in SLM International because we had experienced the power of the faith, the SLM material, and the true fellowship of SLM international family. We believe that SLM Pakistan will win Pakistan for His glory and Pakistan will be saved.”

PRAYER

- ◆ Source of Light Headquarters has many requests from their Branches around the world for literature. The hunger for these easy-to-understand materials is growing annually. It is our hearts' desire to not only improve our digital resources, but also to continue to serve the massive amount of people who still do not have the means to access digital resources. The literature budgets were received and calculated for 2021. The material requested will cost \$194,547. How will Source of Light meet those needs? By prayer and faith. Please pray that God burdens people's hearts to give to the literature needs of Source of Light.
- ◆ Please pray for Source of Light's Togo National Director, Sika Yawo. He has gone through some intense trials in recent months, even to the point of having his life threatened. Pray for God's protection and wisdom for him as he ministers.
- ◆ Source of Light's missionary in Singapore, Florence Lim, was in lockdown away from home due to the virus. There was a water leak in her home while she was away that caused massive damage. Please pray that the damage will be repaired and for strength for Florence in handling the transition in housing that was needed to have the repairs completed.
- ◆ Pastor B., who ministers with Source of Light in a sensitive area of the world, has a great burden for a village of 2,400 people who are hungry for the Gospel. He would like to send two pastors to this village, but he needs \$600 a month to fund the mission project. He will also need two motorbikes (\$1,900) for these pastors. Please pray that God will meet these needs.
- ◆ SLM Liberia needs to register their SLM Branch as a non-profit in Liberia. They need \$350 for the registration process. They also have plans to build a 9-classroom school building. They have been renting up to this point. Having a school building of their own would save them monthly rental expense. They are trusting that the Lord will provide \$46,831 for this project.
- ◆ Sanjeeb Sahu, serving with Source of Light in India, would like to start ministries in the states of Rajasthan, Jammu, and Kashmir. Please pray that the Lord will help him find 3 suitable evangelists to work in these areas and that the Lord will provide the finances to support them.
- ◆ Brian Thompson, Director of the Madison Discipleship School, asks us to pray that God will resolve some difficulties that they are having with getting lessons to students in prison.
- ◆ Steve Bastow, who serves in the Kansas SLM Branch, asks us to pray that they will be able to get more contacts with chaplains and program directors in detention facilities.
- ◆ Daniel Sappor, Director of Source of Light Ghana, has a new missionary, John Adams, who is now leading the work in Tamale. Please pray that God will provide for John's monthly support.
- ◆ Uganda SLM Director, James Byakika, would like to expand his work in Uganda to reach more people. He is praying that God will increase his support by \$1,300 monthly and provide \$1,450 for a motorcycle for his assistant.

PRAISE

- ◆ Source of Light Headquarters praises the Lord for a local business who recently donated a massive amount of office furniture to the main office in Madison, Georgia. It is enabling administration to weed out some outdated furniture and replace it with beautiful, up-to-date furnishings that will better serve our staff.
- ◆ SLM Ghana has been praying that God would provide the funds for a used pickup truck. God recently answered their prayers with a donation that enabled them to buy a new pickup. It will be a great tool in their ministry.
- ◆ Source of Light praises the Lord for the innovative ideas that He has given our national directors for ministering in their fields of service during this season of COVID-19. We also thank the Lord for His protection over our field and office staff. We have only had a few illnesses thus far, and we praise the Lord that those infected are recovering well.
- ◆ Source of Light Kansas praises the Lord for a gift of \$1,000 that was recently given to their Branch.
- ◆ Praise the Lord for Philippine Source of Light missionary, Charlie Notarte, who despite longstanding illness, continues discipling people. He works in jails and with the local police force.
- ◆ We praise the Lord for our elderly staff, and our many volunteers, who faithfully serve at Source of Light Headquarters. They are such an example of faithfulness and are vital to the work.
- ◆ Joe Homontowski, our SLM Branch Director for Canada, shared that they were not able to do any of their regular fundraisers for their ministry this year due to the situation with the virus. However, God gave them the idea of planting canola. Sixty acres were planted. Funds were raised for the fertilizer and the seed was paid for out of the harvest. It was harvested in September. They expected 50 bushels an acre at a price of \$10 a bushel. God multiplied the harvest to 55 bushels an acre and they received \$11.20 a bushel. Praise God for his abundant blessings on their ministry.
- ◆ Pastor B., who works in one of our fields in a sensitive area of the world, shares that his team recently had the opportunity to minister to a group of people who were drug dependent. They spent 3 days and nights with them, provided food for them, and shared the Gospel. Thirteen of the people accepted Christ.
- ◆ Sanjeeb and Anita Sahu, missionaries with Source of Light in India, reported that 28 unreached villages had been reached with the Gospel. They are also rejoicing that the Hindi translation of the SLM **See & Do** course for children has been started. They also praise the Lord for the motorcycle that the Lord provided for an evangelist in Nepal, and for the computer He provided for the office in Delhi.
- ◆ Source of Light's national missionary in Haiti, Claudy Jean Baptiste, praises the Lord that they have been able to establish a new Associate Discipleship School that is serving 100 students. He reports that the students really appreciate the lessons and are eager to share them with their churches and friends.

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Let's remember His words...

Lay not up for yourselves treasure on earth ... but lay up for yourselves treasure in heaven ... for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. (Paraphrase Matthew 6:19-21)

...for in heaven we will be glad we did.

Yours for the harvest,

Dr. Ronald J. Barnes, Jr.
General Director

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