

AMNSWERS

**To Some
Important**

QUESTIONS

**INDEPENDENT FAITH MISSION
Greensboro, North Carolina**

Would you explain some of the background of Independent Faith Mission?

Harry Truman was president of the United States in 1950, the year that Independent Faith Mission was incorporated. What began in the heart of a pastor in Michigan has been blessed and used of God.

IFM was established to reach the lost. The vision began in the heart of Pastor Carl Standridge (Pastor of Dexter-Joy Baptist Church, Detroit, Michigan at that time) when he visited Italy following the Second World War. Devastation met him as he saw the cities of Europe. The destitute children touched his heart as they begged for help. The physical setting spoke to him of a greater spiritual need. When Pastor Standridge returned to the United States, he began to share what the Lord had shown to him. There were two years of prayer, disappointment, and persistence before a board was formed and IFM became a reality as a mission agency.

Prior to the formal organization of IFM Pastor Standridge's son, Bill, had sailed to Italy to begin missionary work. Fourteen months later, in November 1950, Bill returned to the States for the organizational meeting and approval as the first IFM missionary. Bill and his wife, Maria Teresa, are still serving the Lord in Italy. Their ministry has been blessed with a solid church in the city of Rome which is actively reaching other Italians with the Gospel. Two of their sons, David and Steve, are now serving with IFM in Italy. In addition, Bill's books and articles concerning the Roman Catholic Church have been of help to churches and people throughout the United States.

As the years have progressed, God has blessed IFM with some of God's choice missionaries who are now faithfully serving Christ or working to establish ministries on nineteen or more different fields.

IFM was established to stand without compromise upon the great truths of the Word of God. Pastor Standridge lived during a time when the old line denominations in America became apostate. He clearly saw the Scriptural imperatives of separating from this unbelief. In obedience to the Word of God, he left a denominational church and established a new church which had no part with this apostasy. He believed that the Word of God was clear regarding the necessity of separation from unbelief and in obedience he stood without compromise for the Word of God and testimony of Jesus Christ. IFM continues to stand unashamedly in this position today.

IFM was established to provide an agency of trust for the sending of our best to the mission fields of the world. As fundamental separated churches were established Pastor Standridge saw the need for an agency through which to send missionaries. There were few missions which took a separated position on the fundamentals of the faith at that particular time. He knew that if newly established Bible-believing churches were to be consistent a mission agency would be needed that would not compromise. As a result IFM came into existence.

IFM has continued to provide service to churches through which they can send both their people and their funds for the work of world missions. There are signs that the missionary force being sent from the United States is dwindling. But the work of God is not complete and IFM will remain true to the purposes for which it was established. Today, IFM has been blessed with a number of second and even third generation missionaries. By God's grace and with His help IFM will continue to attract and serve a quality of missionary who shares the beliefs and philosophies of days gone by and that are consistent with the Word of God.

What is the position of Independent Faith Mission?

IFM is...(A) Independent; (B) Fundamental; (C) Baptist; and (D) Local church honoring. In days of apostasy we stand 100% upon God's Word and the fundamentals of the Faith once delivered unto the saints (Jude 2). We stand in opposition to the ecumenical movement, neo-evangelical movement, and the charismatic movement. Our history demonstrates a strong separated position in obedience to the Word of God (II Corinthians 6:14-7:1) both in this country and on each mission field.

We hold to the Christian Faith as expressed or revealed in the Word of God, including these essential doctrines:

1. Verbal, Plenary Inspiration of Scripture: We believe that the complete written revelation of God is the sixty-six books of the Holy Bible; the center of true Christian unity; that those books were God-breathed through holy men of old, resulting in their verbal and plenary inspiration in the original manuscripts; that these books are therefore infallible and inerrant; and that God has preserved His Word without error through the centuries as the supreme, literal and authoritative standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions shall be judged. Through the faithful, careful translations of godly linguists, men of all nations and languages may have access to God's authentic Word. (Psalm 119:160; II Timothy 3:16,17; II Peter 1:19-21)

2. God: We believe that there is only one living God, the Infinite Spirit, Creator, Sustainer, and Sovereign Ruler of all things, eternally existing, and revealing Himself in three Persons as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, each with distinct personal attributes and functions but without division, perfectly equal in nature, essence, and being. (Deuteronomy 4:39; 6:4,5; Psalm 83:18; Isaiah 46:9; Matthew 28:19; I Corinthians 8:6; Revelation 4:11)

3. Christ: We believe that Jesus Christ the eternal, only begotten Son of God, is totally God and totally man. He was incarnated by means of the Virgin Birth, lived a sinless life, and He died by shedding His blood for the remission of the sins of mankind. He rose bodily from the tomb and now exercises a high priestly ministry in heaven. (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18-25; John 1:18; 3:16; I Corinthians 15:12-20; I Timothy 2:5; I Peter 1:18,19; I John 2:1; 5:20)

4. Holy Spirit: We believe that the Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Godhead, equal with God the Father and God the Son and of the same nature; that He has been active from eternity; that He is God's agent in the world today; that relative to the unbelieving world He restrains the evil one until God's purpose is fulfilled; that He convicts of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; that He bears witness to the Truth of the Gospel in preaching and in testimony; that He is the agent in the New Birth; that He indwells, seals, baptizes, endues, guides, teaches, witnesses to, sanctifies and fills the believers. (Genesis 1:1-3; Matthew 28:19; 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 1:35; John 14:16, 17, 26; 15:26,27; 16:8-13; 3:5,6; Acts 5:30-32; 11:16; Romans 8:14, 16, 26, 27; Ephesians 1:13-14; 2:18; 5:18; II Thessalonians 2:7, 13; Hebrews 9:14; I Peter 1:2) We believe that the Holy Spirit sovereignly bestows spiritual gifts on believers for the purpose of glorifying Christ, evangelizing the lost, and edifying believers. We believe that the apostolic sign gifts were for the purpose of authenticating the Gospel message in the early church, and were temporary gifts. Thus we reject the authenticity of the modern Pentecostal and charismatic movements. (Romans 12:4-9; I Corinthians 12:4-11; 13:8-10; II Corinthians 12:12; Hebrews 2:3,4)

5. Return of Christ: We believe in the pre-millennial, pre-tribulational, imminent return of Jesus Christ to rapture the Church which is the body of Christ. We believe that Christ will also return following the Tribula-

tion to establish a literal one thousand year kingdom upon the earth. The final judgment of Satan and those who are lost will follow at the Great White Throne judgment. (I Corinthians 15:51-53; I Thessalonians 4:13-18; 5:1-6; II Thessalonians 1:5-10; Revelation 5 - 19)

6. Satan: We believe that Satan was a created, holy, subservient Cherub who fell as a result of his pride and rebellion. He became the author of sin and the cause of man's fall, is now the wicked "god of this age", ruler of a demonic hierarchy, and "accuser of our brethren." He is destined to eternal judgment in the Lake of Fire. (Isaiah 14:12-14; Ezekiel 28:12-18; II Corinthians 4:4; Ephesians 2:2; Revelation 12:10; 20:10)

7. The Lostness of Man, Necessity of New Birth, and Maintenance of Good Works: We believe that man was created by God, in His image, to worship Him, fear Him and enjoy fellowship with Him, but through Adam sin entered the world and all human beings are now sinners by nature, choice and action, spiritually dead and incapable of contributing in any way to their salvation. (Genesis 1:26, 27; Ecclesiastes 12:13; Romans 3:23, 5:12; Ephesians 2:2,3) We believe that man receives the gift of eternal life through faith alone in the person and work of Christ, on the basis of grace alone, without any merits or works, either before or following salvation. At the moment of spiritual rebirth, he becomes a new creature, spiritually capable to witness, overcome sin, and to honor and worship God. He is called to live a holy life through the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit. (John 3:6; Galatians 5:16; Ephesians 2:8,9; Titus 2:11-14)

8. The Resurrection of the Saved and the Lost: We believe in the bodily resurrection of all mankind, the saved to eternal life, and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment. We believe that the souls of the redeemed are at death absent from the body and present with the Lord, where in conscious bliss they await the first resurrec-

tion when spirit, soul and body are reunited to be glorified forever with the Lord. We believe that the souls of unbelievers remain after death in conscious misery until the second resurrection, when with soul and body reunited they shall appear at the Great White Throne Judgment and shall be cast into the Lake of Fire, not to be annihilated but to suffer everlasting, conscious punishment. (Matthew 25:41, 46; Mark 9:43-48; Luke 16:19-26; 23:43; John 5:28, 29; 11:25, 26; II Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23; 3:21; II Thessalonians 1:7-9; Jude 6,7; Revelation 20:4-6)

9. The Local Church and Christian

Ordinances: We believe that all believers during the dispensation of the church age make up the body of Christ. This church is demonstrated by the local assembly which is an independent, self governing body, not to be bound by an ecclesiastical hierarchy, however cooperation with other churches of like mind and faith is in accordance with the New Testament and honoring to God. The church is described as the center of preaching, teaching, discipleship, missionary work, ministry, fellowship and discipline. We believe that there are two ordinances administered by the local church: (1) Baptism by immersion as testimony to a believer's faith in the death, burial and resurrection of the Savior; (2) the Lord's Table which is a memorial service whereby the bread and cup call to the memory of the believer the broken body and shed blood of Jesus Christ for our sins. (Acts 2; 11:26; 13:1-3; 14:23; 15:4; Romans 6:3-6; I Corinthians 11:17-34; Ephesians 1:22, 23; 3:1-12; 5:23,24; I & II Timothy)

10. The Security and Priesthood of

Believers: We believe that all true believers are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ forever. Every born-again person is a part of the 'Royal Priesthood' before God and therefore having direct access to God through Christ is responsible to worship God without a human mediator. As a priest before God, each believer is responsible to "rightly divide"

the Word of Truth, to serve God by offering acceptable spiritual service and to represent God to a lost and dying world. (John 10:27; Romans 8:1,38,39; 12:1; Ephesians 6:10-18; II Timothy 2:15; Hebrews 10:12-24; I Peter 2:1-10)

11. Ecclesiastical and Personal Separation: 'We believe in Biblical separation, that it is the natural outgrowth of the holiness of God and is directed both to the believer and to the church (Psalm 99:9; Habakkuk 1:12, 13; I Peter 1:13-16). We hold that all believers should live in such a manner as not to bring reproach upon their Savior and Lord. We hold that separation is commanded by God from all religious apostasy (departure from the Bible and from the historic Christian faith that "was once delivered unto the saints"), all worldly and sinful practices and associations (Romans 12:1,2; II Corinthians 6:14-7:1; II Timothy 3:1-5; I John 2:15-17; II John 7-11). Separation is necessary for purity and stability. Thus we will maintain, by God's grace, a position of separation from liberal, apostate churches, missions and organizations as represented by such groups as the National Council of Churches, the World Council of Churches, etc.; Roman Catholicism; cults; the Charismatic and Pentecostal movements; the New Age movement; from New Evangelical churches, missions, evangelists and organizations (such as the National Association of Evangelicals and its related ministries, etc.) with their compromise of Biblical principles and disobedience to God's commands of separation. (Acts 20:25-31; Romans 16:17,18; Galatians 1:6-9; Ephesians 5:11; Philippians 3:17-19; II Thessalonians 3:6, 14, 15; I Timothy 4:1-7; 6:3-5; II Timothy 2:19; 4:1-5; Titus 1:13; 3:10,11; I John 4:1-3; Jude 3, 4; Revelation 18:4)

12. Creation: We believe the Genesis account of creation as being a literal historical account of the direct, immediate creative acts of God. It is neither allegory nor myth. We believe that the triune God, by a free act and

for His own glory, without the use of existing materials or secondary causes, brought into being in six literal days by the word of His mouth the whole visible and invisible universe, including all life, "each after its own kind", by direct act and not by the process of evolution; that man was created by a direct work of God and not from previously existing forms of life; and that all men are descended from the historical Adam and Eve, first parents of the entire human race. (Genesis 1 & 2; John 1:3; Colossians 1:16, 17)

We believe in the independence of the local church and our purpose is to act as a "bridge" between the local church and its missionary. We are not the "end in itself" but are acting as a "branch" of the local churches to assist them in the work of spreading the Gospel to the ends of the world. We believe that we can be of beneficial service to the missionary and freeing him to give maximum attention to the work on the field.

We believe that the work of the missionary should be centered in evangelism; establishing local New Testament churches; and training of nationals to carry on the work of the local church. We are glad to see the use of modern tools such as radio, literature, etc. to help reach the people. But we believe these tools must be used carefully so that they do not become an end in themselves. We believe that the establishment of local New Testament churches should result from the missionaries' work.

We believe New Testament Christianity is centered in the local church. The Bible commands us to reach the whole world with the Gospel (Matthew 28:19,20; Acts 1:8). This began early in the history of the church when the believers who were in the church at Jerusalem were "scattered" and began establishing new churches (Acts 8:1). Soon the church at Antioch began giving of her own to help in the establishment of other local churches (Acts 11:19-30; 13:1-4). The sen-

sitivity of the church at Antioch to the Holy Spirit (Acts 13:2), the sending of proven men of spiritual leadership (13:1), and their direct participation in this missionary venture (13:3) are principles for the church today. The Spirit of God confirmed this missionary outreach (Acts 13:4) and the power of God was evident in this new ministry. The local church was reproduced (Acts 14:23) and the missionaries reported to their sending church on the progress of the work (Acts 14:27). As in the early New Testament example, we hold that it is the local church which sends the missionary.

World population is exploding and the task before us is increasing. Unless men, women, boys and girls hear the Gospel and accept Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour they will be lost and spend eternity in hell (Romans 6:23). God has given us the responsibility of reaching our generation with the precious Word of God. If we consider world population alone, this is the greatest opportunity and responsibility in history.

Missions should be one of the great priorities of the local church. This is accomplished by: 1. sending of her own youth across the world; 2. by the support of missionaries who are being sent by other churches of like belief; 3. by faithfully praying for these and other missionaries. We recognize that a church can not support every missionary who comes to their church. Upholding missionaries in prayer is also critical. Every church can support many more missionaries in prayer than it can support by financial means. IFM will be happy to provide regular prayer letters of missionaries for the use of the local church.

What about establishing new fields?

We believe that God calls individuals and we are open to prayerfully consider the opening of new works. In processing of candidates, we try to keep a tender heart to what

God is trying to do in individual lives, and to weigh each applicant in this light.

How can I apply to go as a missionary?

There is a great need for additional missionaries. Every field is asking for help so that the work can continue to move ahead. Population is expanding on most fields far more rapidly than the number of new missionaries who are volunteering to go.

We will be happy to talk with you and provide information so that you can give prayerful consideration to where the Lord would have you serve. The first step will involve a phone call (336-292-1255) or letter to the mission office letting us know of your interest. We then can begin working with you as to the next steps in this process.

We realize that sometimes it may be years before a formal application is ready to be completed. However, we can be of help during those years by getting to know you and providing current information.

If you believe that God may be leading you to the mission field, we would be happy to be of help to you.

What type of summer and short-term missions programs does IFM offer?

Summer missionaries will be considered those who desire to work with missionaries on the field during their years of education. The summer missionary will extend for a period of no more than eight weeks except under special arrangements. All summer missionaries will be approved by the mission in consultation with the field. The raising of all expenses will be the responsibility of the summer missionary. Evidence of medical insurance must be provided to the mission of-

office. Application should be made at least three months prior to the projected departure date.

Summer missionaries will be under the authority and supervision of the field council and/or missionary with whom they are working. Matters which would require discipline should be handled by the field council in coordination with the mission and the sending church.

IFM will not be responsible for any debts incurred and will not be liable for any activity or the results of any conduct which violates the policy or practices of IFM of the field council.

Short term missionaries will be considered as those who want to be involved in a ministry and go to the field for a minimum of two months to a maximum of twelve months. The short term may be renewed for an additional term of no more than one year with approval of the field in consultation with the home office. Under normal conditions, someone who desires to stay on the field after a two year period, will apply to the mission as a missionary. Visitors to a field need not make short term application. A visitor would be defined as someone on a temporary visit and not being directly involved in the ministry.

A short term application will be provided for those who express interest. The application will be completed and returned to the mission office for processing at least three months prior to the time of leaving for the field. Under normal conditions where funds will need to be raised, a longer period of time will be necessary. Approval will be granted on recommendation from the field and as a result of meeting with a missionary of that field, the mission office or a board member. All matters in the IFM mission manual will apply once they are approved as a short term missionary.

Application should be made to allow enough time to raise the financial support which will be needed on the field. The amount of support needed on the field will be

established by the mission office in council with the field. All support will be sent through the IFM mission office to be receipted and verified and will be handled under the same financial policies as found in the IFM manual. Sufficient support should be raised and verified prior to leaving for the field. The mission should not be expected to carry deficits. IFM will not be responsible for any debts incurred by an approved short term missionary. Evidence of medical insurance must be provided to the mission office or the applicant(s) shall be added to the mission medical insurance program at the prevailing costs.

All short term missionaries will be responsible for their own prayer cards. The mission office is available to give advice and help. Short term missionaries will provide a mailing list for their prayer letters to the mission office. They will be responsible for communicating with their donors on a periodic basis from the field. Regular prayer letters to their entire mailing list should be mailed to the mission office for reproduction and mailing no more than three times within a year.

Short term missionaries will be under the authority and supervision of the field council. Their areas of responsibility within the work shall be defined by the field council or missionary with whom they are working. They may at the discretion of the field council sit in on field council meetings but may not have a vote. Matters which would require discipline should be handled by the field council in coordination with the home office and the sending church.

How is an IFM missionary supported and where does that support go?

Independent Faith Mission is dependent upon God through the free-will offerings of God's people. The regular monthly support of local churches and interested friends, is criti-

cal to the work of the mission.

Independent Faith Mission has a **TOTAL SUPPORT PLAN** designed to enable each missionary to do the work to which God has called him. The general plan for support for each missionary is the same, but many factors are studied (such as varying living costs from field to field) to make the plan realistic in each instance.

PROVISIONS OF THE MISSIONARY'S SUPPORT PLAN:

Each Missionary's **TOTAL SUPPORT PLAN** is divided into categories so that the supporter, the missionary, and the Board can understand clearly what is needed. Every month the missionary's funds are distributed in the following way.

The **PERSONAL ALLOWANCE** is the major portion of the money each missionary receives and is spent as he sees fit, to provide food, clothing, and personal needs.

A **HOUSING ALLOWANCE** has become necessary on many fields to cover the costs in renting an apartment or house. This will vary according to the field and area.

The **PERSONAL WORKING FUND** is to be used for expenses necessary to the work he is doing, including such things as public transportation, car expenses, language study, telephone, postage, literature, etc.

The **MISSIONARY FUND** is deposited by the board in a savings account for;

- (a) transportation costs to return home for furlough,
- (b) insurances,
- (c) education of children,
- (d) approved medical and dental expenses not covered by medical insurance,
- (e) and taxes.

The **FIELD FUND** is sent to the field treasurer to meet the budget which has been approved by the missionaries on the field to cover the costs of projects such as literature, evangelism and other ministries.

Group **MEDICAL INSURANCE** is obtained for each missionary to help offset the astronomical costs of medical and health

care. This program is valid world-wide.

A **RETIREMENT FUND** is established by each missionary and deposits are set aside each month toward this account.

GENERAL FUND. Each missionary gives ten percent of his income to maintain a home office in the U.S.A., which handles receipts for the missionary's donors, the printing and mailing of his prayer letters and the purchase of equipment and hiring of personnel who can free the missionary to give his full time to the work on the field.

SPECIAL FUNDS. According to the needs of each family and the peculiar conditions on the field, the missionary may be authorized to establish special funds for Equipment, Education, Outgoing, Field Projects, or other special needs.

MISSIONARY CARRY FORWARD PROVIDES FOR CHANGES IN MISSIONARY SUPPORT NEEDS:

No matter how little might be received in any one month for a missionary, IFM will deposit the normal allowances. This may require advances from the General Fund which are to be paid back as the giving resumes to a normal level. Should deficits continue it will be the responsibility of the missionary to return home and raise additional funds.

There are always emergencies, spiraling costs, dollar devaluations, and donor losses. Any amounts received in any one month above the total basic needs are set aside in the name of that missionary as a carry forward in his account. In this way, an unusual drop in his income in a future month can be immediately covered or emergency funds are available to cover extra expenses in any category of the support plan.

Missionaries often find that God has already supplied for emergencies, special field projects, equipment, and other needs through the existence of the carry forward.. It is always a blessing to see God supplying the financial needs for the missionaries. This is the reason that the IFM Board sets a minimum

TOTAL SUPPORT PLAN for each missionary (without which he can not depart for the field), but does not set a maximum.

THE GENERAL FUND PROVIDES SERVICES FOR THE MISSIONARY THROUGH THE HOME OFFICE:

The General Fund is a separate account which is maintained for the operation of the Home Office. This fund comes from the contributions of the missionaries and the support of churches and friends. While the handling of the missionaries' finances is an important part of the work of the Home Office, Independent Faith Mission provides a host of additional services for the missionaries. All of these are designed to keep them free to do the work which God has called them to on the field.

One of these services is the prayer letter ministry which includes the preparation, printing, mailing and maintaining of correct addresses. IFM has been able to save the missionary much time and outside expense by providing the prayer letter ministry to him at no additional cost.

The Home Office makes every effort to provide these services efficiently and yet with the highest possible standards. It is our conviction that the work is done for God's glory. IFM works to provide the highest possible level of service to each missionary and their churches.

So, what should I do?

Every Christian needs to be involved in the cause of missions and the task of reaching the world with the Gospel.

HERE ARE SOME SUGGESTIONS:

PRAY - You can receive prayer letters from missionaries through your local church or the mission office. Then use these as a guide in praying faithfully for one or more missionaries.

GIVE - You can support the missions program of your local church. Be sensitive to the needs of your missionaries, their works, and the mission board. Often God has burdened hearts and used churches and individuals to meet special needs through special gifts.

GO - Consider God's call to missions personally. Weigh God's will for your own life. Commit your all to Him and allow Him to use you in the work of reaching the world with the Gospel.

ENCOURAGEMENT - Cards, letters, church bulletins, cassette tapes, and other such items are of great encouragement to your missionary and should be sent directly to the missionary on the field. Remember that it may take several weeks to reach them and additional time should be allowed at Christmas for cards to reach the missionary. We suggest that you contact the missionary by letter, phone, or e-mail before shipping any package. Please feel free to contact the IFM Home Office for updated addresses or help.

CONTACT US - Please contact the IFM Home Office if you have any questions we haven't answered in this publication. We are here to assist you and provide counsel for any missions related question. You may call, write or e-mail us!

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