



L.A. STORY



TOM
JONES

DOUGLAS
JACOBY

DR. MARK
OTTENWELLER

LUISITO
ESPINOSA

Glory



A Kingdom Pictures Release "GLORY" A KINGDOM NEWS NETWORK PRODUCTION

Featuring: FRANK & ERICA KIM • MIKE & ANNE-BRIGITTE TALIAFERRO • SAM & GERI LAING
GORDON FERGUSON • CURT SIMMONS • RODEL GONZALEZ • JERICK DEPERIO
LARRY JACKSON AND EYE 2 EYE • "BUD" CHILES AND HOPE FOR KIDS • DPI



Church of Christ

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A KINGDOM PICTURES RELEASE

KNN

PRODUCED BY AL BAIRD

DIRECTED BY ROGER LAMB

SCREENPLAY BY MARYANN ROSE & MARCIA LAMB

PRODUCTION DESIGNER EMILY BRINGARDNER



Editorial

By Al Baird

KINGDOM MILESTONES	
COUNTRIES PLANTED	89
NUMBER OF CHURCHES	242
SUNDAY ATTENDANCE	118,164

LA SUNDAY ATTENDANCE	
1/7	8,720
1/14	9,365

Glory

"But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone. In bringing many sons to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the author of their salvation perfect through suffering."

Hebrews 2:9-10

Glory – God has it and we want it. That sounds like a condemning statement, but it is just a simple truth. Think about it. Certainly God has glory; no person or thing in the whole universe is his equal. And we all want glory. That can either be good or bad depending on why we want it and where we look for it. Jesus intends to bring his children to glory. I want that; don't you? The problem is we want the result without the process.

We have just celebrated the Christmas season which should call our attention to the process – God humbling himself to be born in a feedtrough for cattle. Gloria and I received a new Christmas album that quickly became a favorite – *Good News* by Kathy Mattea. The most impacting song on it for us is "Mary, Did You Know?" One of the lines in that song is "Mary, did you know that your baby boy has come to make you new? This child that you've delivered will soon deliver you." I've had a lot of time to observe little children in the last few weeks. All of our kids were with us for the holidays, but the best part was playing with our only grandchild, two-year old Kiara. At 6 a.m. each morning she would knock loudly on our bedroom door, yelling, "PAPA, PAPA!" She is a joy (and a challenge). Life is simple and exciting for her. Then, last week Gloria and I went with Steve and Keri for Keri's ultrasound. She is in her

twentieth week of pregnancy. It was incredibly exciting to see my grandson on TV. There was no such thing as an ultrasound when Gloria was pregnant; technology has come so far. But babies are still the same – totally helpless. Yet, Jesus humbled himself and came as a baby. Just like Jesus, we must learn to obey and get our priorities right.

I am concerned about the number of selfish decisions that are being made in the Church today. Disciples commit to place the Kingdom above personal priorities (Matt. 6:33), but I see people making moves based on better pay rather than Kingdom needs. I see leaders upset because they are asked to lead a situation that may not have as high a profile as before, even though it is best for the Kingdom. I see disciples grumbling because they feel they should have a "higher-powered" discipler. Brothers and sisters, God's modern-day Kingdom has grown so phenomenally because we have sought to bring glory to God. For it to continue to grow we must keep and increase our focus on God and self-denial; he will give us all the glory we need.

From all accounts the Super Regional workshops started 1996 in a great way. Sessions for ministry staff, Family Group Leaders, Bible Talk Leaders, and all disciples helped raise our vision for the new year. I have heard many of you say that you are glad that 1995 is history and are excited about the prospects of 1996. Southland

Super Region Leader Bruce Williams is to be commended for his openness in his speeches about the shortcomings in his own life. One brother said that a leader being that open with his life was even more proof that we are in the true Kingdom of God. Others said that Bruce's candor inspired them to be just as open with their own sins.

Know the Word

Dedication to reading and studying the Bible will be a hallmark of the new year. Two events ensure this. First, on December 17, Douglas Jacoby taught the book of James to 10,000 of us in the Los Angeles Convention Center. But Doug did far more than teach lessons; he inspired us to dig deeply into God's Word every day. Second, the entire church together with interested friends is studying either the older First Principles class or the brand new Second Principles class. Kip McKean developed the Second Principles class as an intense eight-session course on the Old Testament and taught it to the entire staff in November and December.

Many excellent books that will help in our Bible study and daily Christian living are available through DPI (Discipleship Publications International). Further information is given about DPI on page 5. We deeply appreciate the Boston Church for sponsoring this ministry.

In this issue of *L.A. Story* we introduce a new section, "KNN Frontline." So much good news is happening in the church around the world that it is hard to keep up. "KNN Frontline" will give you a few choice morsels in each issue.

My prayer is that 1996 is the best year so far in your life and in God's Kingdom. And to God be the GLORY! ■



▲ Michaelangelo, *Creation of Adam*, Sistine Ceiling, 1511.

TALKING TO GOD

By Tom Jones



He told them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field..." (Luke 10:2)

Jesus never uttered an unnecessary word. He never gave an unimportant command. Here he describes in clear terms what must happen if the harvest is to be brought in: Those who have taken up the work must devote themselves to prayer. They must ask the Lord of the Harvest. They must seek him. They must knock at his door. They must get from him what they cannot find in themselves. If they don't, they will most certainly fail. If they do, they cannot fail.

No Obstacle Too Great

Prayer is not the only important thing needed to bring in the harvest; it is just the most important thing. It is that which supplies the power for everything else. Obstacles are many for those working in the harvest, but there is not one that cannot be overcome with prayer. Fear. Intimidation. Insecurity. Lack of knowledge. Language problems. Rejection. Illness. Opposition. Government interference. Deportations. All these and more have been overcome through fervent, persistent and faithful prayer. Look around you – the examples are everywhere.

At the end of the 20th century the seemingly impenetrable Communist Iron Curtain came down, and disciples were made by the hundreds and thousands. And why did it happen? It was neither diplomacy nor negotiation. It was neither a frontal military attack nor a clandestine intelligence operation. It was prayer! Disciples for years had been eager to go there. Many had prayed daily about it, and the Lord of the Harvest, who is also the Lord of the Nations, heard those prayers and answered. Nothing is too great for him. Nothing is impossible for him. If it is his will, and if we want it, and if we ask - it will be done. Not always on our timetable. Not always the way we envisioned it, but it will be done. Be sure of it. Take it to the bank.

Suppose for a moment that you are God. Nothing is more in your heart than the desire that all men and women be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth. You look down and see a group of disciples, and they have taken on your heart. They are grateful for their salvation, and they want to share it more than they want comfort,

fame or success. Daily you hear their prayers. Night and day, in fact, you see them on their knees asking that you give them strength and power and yes, more workers so the work can be done. And you are God. You are not a god. You are not a demi god. You are Almighty God. Now what do you do? The newest Christian knows the answer to that one. God will answer. In some way, at some time he will answer. And things will change and the harvest will be brought in. As long as he is God, this will happen – and from everlasting to everlasting he is God!

If there are faithful disciples on earth who want the will of God more than they want anything else in life, and if they cry out to God – they cannot fail. The entire world will be evangelized. Disciples will be made in every nation. "Jesus is Lord" will be proclaimed in every tongue under heaven. Do you believe it? Why would you doubt it?

From Frustration to Faith

Efforts to bring in the harvest often stop because the workers run into a problem or a frustration. The problem begins to look larger than the mission, and frustration influences them more than faith. They grow disheartened and then weary. They lose their fire and their joy. They may stay with the work, but it becomes a grind. Like a coach who has no confidence, like a mother who considers her children a burden, like a teacher only doing it for the money, they are in the space where they are supposed to be, but they will not make a difference except to pull others into their malaise.

Here is something I like about Jesus: He tells the truth. He admits that there will be problems. He describes the major one: the job is immense, and the workers are few. Millions were alive when Jesus spoke those words, and he had a handful of yet-to-be-converted workers. But while there is realism in his assessment, there is absolutely no despair. None. Not a drop. For Jesus every problem was an opportunity for perseverance. Every frustration was an opportunity for faith. Yes, the workers were few. It did not look as though there were nearly enough to get it done, but people of faith are born for moments like these. God's power shines the brightest when the chips are down and the odds are long.

"Yes, the challenge is enormous, but God is God. Therefore, pray," Jesus would say. Don't faint. Pray. Don't back away. Pray. Don't stop. Pray. Don't ever give up. God does not want to hear our excuses; he wants to hear our prayers. So pray. Pray, because God will hear. Pray, because God will answer. Pray, because it links you with God, and God never loses. . . .

Do you wonder how the gospel will go into all Asia and China and Europe and all of North America and Africa and South America and all Australia and the Middle East and into all the island nations of the world? Here is how: Disciples in all those places will face long odds – even "insurmountable" odds – but they will pray, and they will plan, and they will work, and they will pray more. They will never give up, and by the power of God, they will overcome one obstacle after another until every nation, city and village has heard that Jesus is Lord. . . .

So here is what it will take: Every disciple must become a prayer warrior. I decided recently to pray every day for the gospel to be spread into all nations by year 2000. Is there any good reason why every disciple reading this book should not make the same decision? What would Jesus do? Let's pray for neighborhoods as well as nations, for leaders of nations, for mission teams, for kingdom leaders and for more zealous workers. Let's show God how serious we are about getting all the help he will give us. If we will, we cannot fail. ■

(Reprinted by permission from The Mission, Randy and Kay McKean, eds., DPI, 1994.)

LISTENING TO GOD

By Douglas Jacoby



Live and let live, some people say. But how can you live apart from God? You can't! We need him; he is the source of life. Have you ever stared into those posters with the hidden 3-D pictures and seen the image suddenly come into clear view? What a surprise the first time it happens! Similarly, it is incredible what the magic eyes of faith can see!

In the same way, it's only by intently looking into the "perfect law that gives freedom" (James 1:25) that the Scriptures come into sharp focus, losing their apparent two-dimensionality and turning out to have (at least) three dynamic

Love the Word of God, lose yourself in it, let it dominate the horizon of your mind...

dimensions. And as the Scriptures are illuminated, the abundant life God offers suddenly looms into view, then overshadows and, at last, totally absorbs the man or woman of God. Everything changes, looks different. "Life to the full" becomes reality.

Fantastic! Life to the full: What an offer! Who, after tasting this life, after tasting how good the Lord is, could turn it down? Ah, but many do. Just as the life of the disciple requires discipline, the concentration demanded by mature and intensive Bible study is considerable. Is it really worth it? Ask anyone walking with the Lord, anyone aglow with the Spirit. The answer always comes back: "Absolutely yes!" "When your words came, I ate them" was Jeremiah's free admission (Jeremiah 15:16).

Exploring is magical. Where do we go from here, you ask. On to further responsible study,

whether you are a preacher, teacher, or beginner. Love the Word of God, lose yourself in it, let it dominate the horizon of your mind and loom larger and larger until, just like being in the front row at the cinema, the divine screen is all you can see. You will be dazzled, thrilled, deeply touched and energized. The Word will totally absorb you – and vice versa! So explore the Word, experiment and be exhilarated!

Do I Have To Study On My Own?

Why not just take the minister's word for it? And why study so intensively? Is all that hard work really necessary? Well, as one convinced that every disciple has a personal responsibility to give 100% to master the Bible, let me reply. Why should we do our best in Bible study?

God commands it! (Acts 17:11; Deuteronomy 17:19; Psalm 119:1-176)

Jesus, our model, exemplified the type of inquiring mind that means so much to God.

You can't borrow someone else's faith; you have to work out your own salvation. Watching someone else work out doesn't make you more fit.

Studying gives potency and punch to your evangelism. Consistent study increases your competence, confidence and credibility to outsiders.

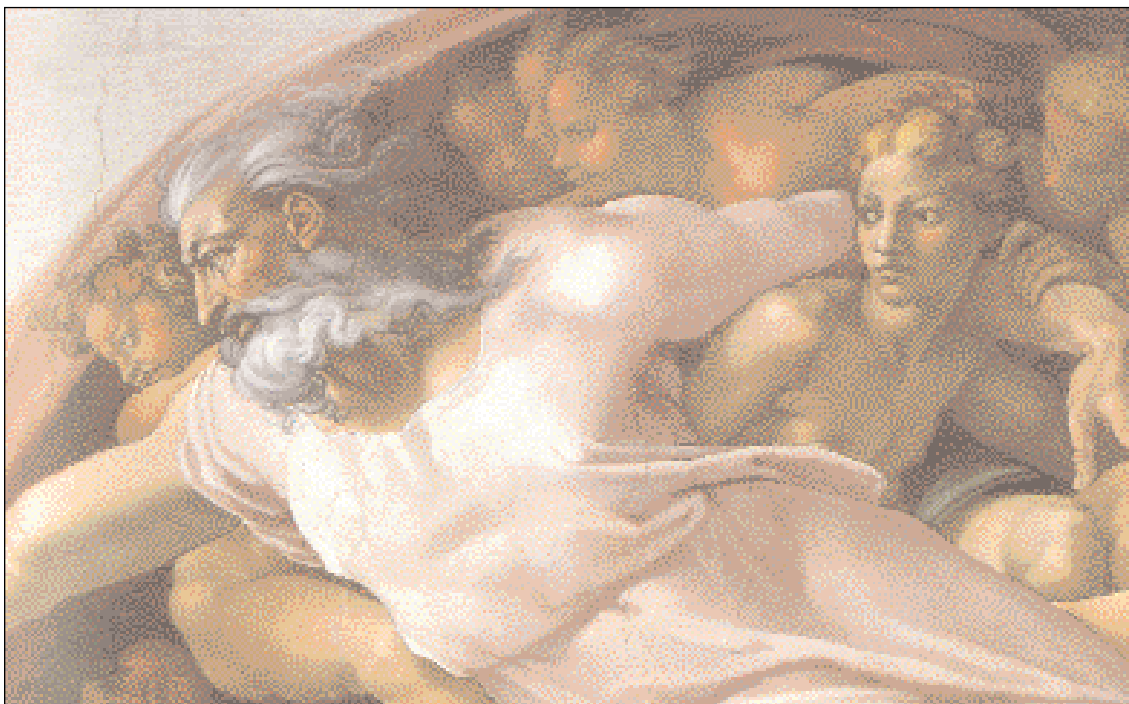
Leaders can be wrong. No one has a monopoly on the truth; we all have things to learn. You may just discover something that will transform the Kingdom of God! And even if leaders are teaching the truth, how they support it may be fallacious.

One day you'll be a leader yourself! What kind of leader are you going to be?

(Excerpts from *Life to the Full*, Douglas Jacoby, DPI, 1995.)

CHALLENGES FOR DISCIPLES:

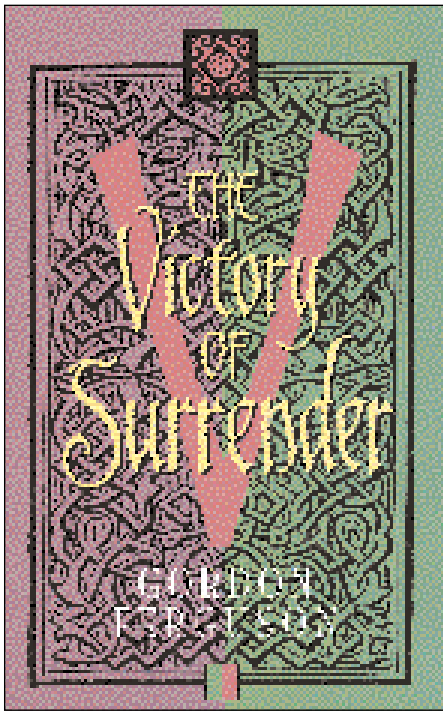
- Read your Bible every day.
- Read through the entire Bible in 1996.
- Memorize one Scripture every day.
- Let that verse change one specific thing in your life.
- Share that verse with three people.
- Pray for wisdom and insight.



▲ Michelangelo, *God the Father*, detail of Creation of Adam, Sistine Ceiling, 1511.

NEW RELEASES

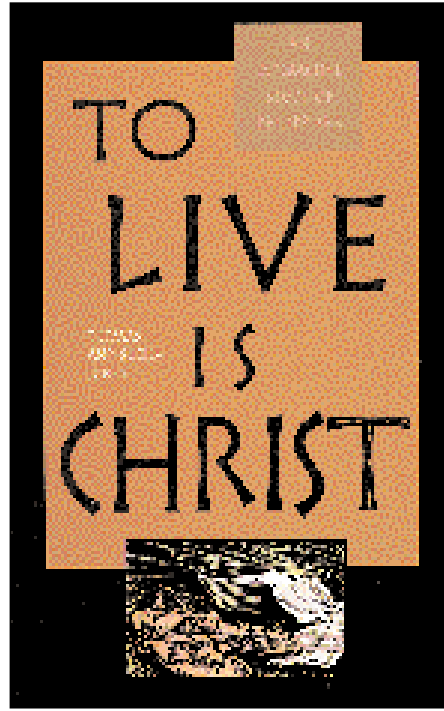
Discipleship Publications International is a ministry of the Boston Church. Tom and Sheila Jones serve as Managing Editor and Women's Editor. To order the books on this page, other books written by disciples or a catalog, call (800) 727-8273.



In *The Victory of Surrender* Gordon Ferguson takes the reader through his own spiritual journey, showing how he and all of us tend to be “god players,” how we try to run our own lives and resist the idea of surrendering to God’s plan. Surrender, as Gordon writes, does go against the grain. But then he shows how, in one situation after another, surrender is the only thing consistent with faith and is the only path to real security and peace. What at one point may appear to be terribly frightening is in reality the only sane spiritual course to pursue.

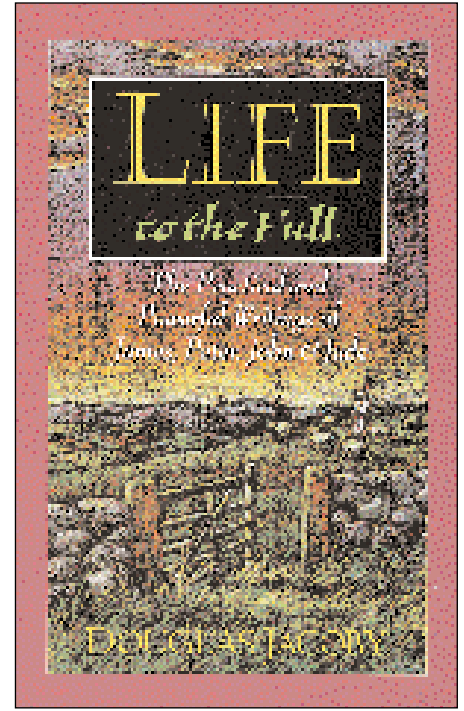
Eager to see the powerful principle of surrender put into practice, Gordon includes helpful chapters that will enable readers to test and evaluate their level of surrender and then understand how to deal with unsundered areas of their lives. Convinced that we will not surrender to a God whom we do not trust, Gordon concludes the book with important chapters on the nature of God. An appendix titled “Surrender and Finding the Will of God” will be read often by those wanting to be confident they are making right decisions.

The Victory of Surrender is a warm, personal and solidly biblical examination of one of the most important issues in the spiritual life – surrender to God.



When Paul wrote to the church in Philippi, he was in prison. Religious people were undermining his influence. Even some Christians criticized his ministry. Despite these problems (and many others) this man of God was grateful. What did he know that we need to know?

This study of Philippians is designed to help the reader find Paul’s secret and then put it into practice. Written by DPI Editors Thomas and Sheila Jones, this book includes a special “Into Your Life” section at the end of every study that calls on the reader to get personally involved. Questions are raised to help the reader carefully consider his or her own response to God’s Word. This fifth volume in the Daily Power Series challenges the reader to wrestle with key issues and decide how he or she will show the world that “to live is Christ.”



Life to the Full by Douglas Jacoby brings to life seven of the most exciting documents of the ancient world, the letters of James, Peter, John and Jude.

Avoiding the dry and heavy style of most theology, Douglas Jacoby has created a volume light enough for the beginner, yet deep enough for the seasoned disciple. There is something here for everyone.

Life to the Full is not only an overview of seven New Testament documents, but also a window on responsible biblical interpretation, furnishing a living color example of how to study the Bible. Douglas Jacoby serves as an evangelist and teacher with the London Church of Christ. He has advanced degrees from Duke University and the Harvard School of Divinity.



The Unveiling by Curt Simmons

We all grow up with various conceptions of God or, as author Curt Simmons would put it, with various veils over our eyes that keep us from seeing God clearly. In this book, characterized by a unique and refreshing style, Simmons invites the reader to “grab a lawn chair, get a friend and watch the real God go by.” Blending references to pop culture, insights from everyday life and solid biblical teaching, he shows us the real God of the Bible and how he gives us an impactful life.

Says fellow evangelist Ron Drabot, “Curt Simmons is a dear friend; a loyal pure-hearted disciple who loves our great God. His writing is creative, humorous, spirit-filled and life-changing.”

KNN FRONTLINE NEWS

FALL 1995

Amazing Fruit

An administrator in the White House was baptized. An assistant producer for a major network became a disciple in New York. At a high school in San Diego, three members of the football team were baptized. Their team not only won the state championship, all three disciples were named to the All San Diego High School Team and one was named to the All Academic Team as well.

Johannesburg, South Africa

The Johannesburg Church of Christ, host of the 1995 World Missions Leadership Conference in August, increased by 300 disciples from August through November. Led by Mike and Anne-Brigitte Taliaferro, the Johannesburg Church is South Africa's largest interracial church of any kind with a Sunday attendance of 2,600. Sunday attendance in all African churches in the movement now totals over 11,000.

HOPE for Kids Award

The Johnson & Johnson Company presented HOPE For Kids with its Crystal Award, a recognized symbol of excellence in the Community Health Care Field, and a \$50,000 grant.

On January 10, 1996, *USA Today* featured HOPE for Kids in nearly a half page article about solving the immunization problems for inner-city children throughout the U.S. "In 2 1/2 years, the group has used 30,000 volunteers to screen and immunize more than 32,000 children."

HOPE for Kids ► received the Crystal Award and a \$50,000 grant from Johnson & Johnson for their excellent service immunizing children.



NOVEMBER 1995

Tokyo, Japan

The Tokyo Church is now the largest Japanese church of any kind in history in this country where less than 1% of the population professes Christian faith. With a record attendance the Church, led by World Sector Leader Erica Kim, recently celebrated the opening of their new building designed by world famous architect, Fumihiko Maki.



OVER
HALFWAY
THERE!

89 Nations Planted
77 Nations Waiting

The Kingdom passed the halfway mark in our goal to plant a church in every nation with a city of 100,000 by the year 2000. There are now 89 nations planted and 77 nations waiting.

Triangle, North Carolina

The Triangle Church in North Carolina, led by Sam & Geri Laing, also celebrated the opening of their new building with a record attendance over 1,400.

DECEMBER 1995

ABC World News Tonight

On December 1, International Aids Day, ABC World News Tonight with Peter Jennings featured Dr. Ottenweller as "Person of the Week" for his work in Soweto, South Africa. Dr. Ottenweller is director of the Center for the Poor in Africa. His family are members of the Johannesburg Church of Christ. He handed out 100,000 brochures at an AIDS rally in Johannesburg on December 2.

Sydney, Australia

The Sydney Church appointed the first elders in Australia, Peter Boardman and Jeff Hansen.

Three Songs Hit Number One

Three songs hit Number One on the charts from the band Second Wind in Manila. The band includes two evangelists, leader Rodell Gonzalez and Jerick dePerio.

National Public Radio

National Public Radio in the USA aired a story on December 22 featuring Rick and Diana Stafford, disciples in the Cincinnati Church. The Staffords adopted a seven-year-old crippled boy, Vladimir, from Russia after hearing about him on NPR. The radio segment included Rick's leading "Sing Hallelujah to the Lord" in a Sunday service.



WBC World Featherweight

Luisito Espinosa of the Metro Manila Christian Church won the WBC Featherweight Boxing Championship in Tokyo. Luis is the only Filipino ever to win a world boxing title in two weight divisions.

The Best News You Will Ever Hear from Around the World



10,000 Gathered at LA Convention Center
10,000 gathered at the Los Angeles Convention Center to hear Douglas Jacoby, teacher and evangelist from the London Church, teach the Book of James. The L.A. Church was joined by the San Diego Church. Also that day, over 4,600 toys were gathered to be given to children throughout the southland area.

Plantings

During 1995, the International Churches of Christ averaged over one new church planting per week for a total of 242 Churches. Countries recently planted include: Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Laos, Turkey, Iraq, Morocco, Paraguay, Cur Honduras, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Turkmen Zaire and Burkina Faso.

ALSO IN 1995

Eye 2 Eye

Eye 2 Eye was named the best local Rhythm & Blues band at the Boston Music Awards. All the members of the band are disciples in the Boston Church. Formerly an atheist, band leader Larry Jackson wrote the Kingdom song "Lord Of All" shortly after being converted. David Graham, now Geographic Sector Leader, leads AMS ministries around the world.

Delhi, India

The Delhi Church is now the largest Hindi-speaking congregation of any kind in all of North India. God blessed the Church with a growth over 40% in 1995 to a weekly attendance of nearly 700. Two men are now training to be the first elders in India.



◀ Eye 2 Eye members (clockwise from bottom center): Cire Jones, Regi Brunton, Mark Dolan, Dan Foote, Jim Peterson, Damon Carter, Larry Jackson, and Jamie Galarza.

JANUARY 1996

Geographic HOPE Leaders

The new Geographic HOPE Leaders held their first meeting in Philadelphia.

Performing with Pavarotti

Tim Blevins of the New York Church was recently named to perform with world famous tenor Pavarotti. Tim is currently appearing in the Broadway musical "Showboat."

FEBRUARY 1996

Coming Up on KNN

The next edition of KNN will feature the Middle East World Sector and the first ever Middle East Jubilee. This marks the first time KNN has added an Arabic anchor team.

Coming Up in LA Story

The next issue of *LA Story* will feature an update on the Kingdom, reviewing the incredible things God has done and looking to the future.

JUNE 1996

1 Tour

1 Tour this year will be the first ever KNN National Seminar and the long leaders Conference. It will be held in Hollywood June 28-30.

L.A. CHURCH OF CHRIST

Elders & Teachers

Dr. Albert W. Baird
David Graham
Dr. Gregory Metten
Bruce Williams
Dr. Martin Wooten

Lead Evangelist

Kip McKean

Super Region Leaders

Cory Blackwell
Marty Fuqua
Bruce Williams

Leader of Women's Ministry

Elena Garcia-McKean

Women's Ministry Leaders

Gloria Baird
Megan Blackwell
Chris Fuqua
Coleen Graham
Robyn Williams

Congregational Deacons & Deaconesses

John & Emily Bringardner
Marvin & Lillian Jones
Tom & Etta McCurry
Keith & Maryann Rose
John & Frances Thorne
Cecil & Helen Wooten

Missions

Copenhagen, Denmark
Moscow, Russia
Odessa, Ukraine
Helsinki, Finland
Novosibirsk, Russia
Vladivostok, Russia
Stockholm, Sweden
St. Petersburg, Russia
Tbilisi, Georgia
Kiev, Ukraine
Oslo, Norway
Minsk, Belarus
Tallinn, Estonia
Kharkov, Ukraine
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Nizhny-Novgorod, Russia
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Alma-Ata, Kazakhstan
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Michaelangelo, detail of *Creation of Adam*, Sistine Ceiling, 1511.

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Church of Christ

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