



LIVING IN THE PROMISED LAND?

By Kevin D. Newman, Bible Professor

Most of us would consider ourselves difficult to please. Not that this is a great epitaph, but it sure sounds better than being too easily pleased, or settling for something less than the best. But a closer look at ourselves would reveal that in fact, we are too easily pleased, we do settle for far too little. C.S. Lewis put it this way, “Indeed, if we consider the unblushing promises of reward and the staggering nature of the rewards promised in the Gospels, it would seem that our Lord finds our desires, not too strong, but too weak... We are far too easily pleased.” (Lewis, *The Weight of Glory*. San Francisco; Harper Collins, 1980, p26.)

In the Old Testament we find the children of Israel living as slaves in the land of Egypt. They had been crying out for deliverance, for freedom to return to the Promised Land, a place God described as “flowing with milk and honey” (Exodus 3:8). God had promised this land to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and Israel longed to live there once again as a nation. After over 400 years of living in a foreign land, God sent a deliverer in the person of Moses. He was to lead them out of Egypt and into the Promised Land.

But a funny thing happened to Israel on the way to the Promised Land; they got sidetracked in the wilderness. For 40 years they wandered in the wilderness because they were too afraid to actually enter the land that God had promised to give to them. Fear (and subsequent disobedience) had kept them from enjoying the abundance that God desired and planned for them.

But we know that eventually Israel did enter in and take possession of the Promised Land. Finally after 40 years of missing out, they could enjoy the abundance that God desired them to have. Possessing the Promised Land was not easy; there was a lot of work and many battles to fight. But it was all well worth it in the end.

Living in the wilderness was not the ideal, but it did have its perks. Each day God would provide more than enough manna for everyone to have their fill. When they tired of that, God sent quail to eat. There were not many enemies in the wilderness, so real battles were few. When it was time to move on, God made it easy for them by going ahead of them in a pillar of cloud and fire. Following God was almost child’s play.

But enjoying the abundance of the Promised Land would be a different story. As soon as they crossed the Jordan River, the manna would be gone. Now they would have to plant and plow and work for their daily bread. Where enemies had been few in the wilderness, now they were everywhere. Each day posed a new enemy and a new battle to fight. Even following God was made more difficult since the pillar of God’s presence was no longer there to guide them.

We often look down on Israel for not taking possession of the land even sooner. We would consider them even more foolish had they settled for staying in the wilderness and never possessed the abundance. But is that what many Christians are doing today?

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Many today seem more than content living in the wilderness of spiritual mediocrity. God desires us to live a life of abundance (John 10:10), to claim our inheritance in Him. But we know that to do that means work. It means the discipline of nurturing and developing a relationship with Christ. It means time spent alone with Him daily in the Word of God and prayer. It means surrendering our will to His, and serving Christ and people in love. It means gaining more enemies as we take a stand for the Truth, and hold firmly to the absolutes of the Word. It means more attacks and battles from the Enemy as we fight the "good fight" (2 Timothy 4:7).

Is it easier to be mediocre? Absolutely! Is it better? By no means! Will we continue to settle for religion when we can have a relationship with the Most High God; for information about Christ instead of intimacy with Christ; for concern over our spiritual growth instead of Christ-likeness; for sliding when we are meant to soar? Each day we must decide whether our desires for God will remain as they have been, and be found too weak by Him. Will we continue to be "far too easily pleased"?

"Will we continue to settle for religion when we can have a relationship with the Most High God; for information about Christ instead of intimacy with Christ...?"

Alaska Bible College admits qualified students of any race, sex, color, and ethnic origin.

NORTHWORD

is a publication of



Alaska Bible College

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SEARCH FOR PRESIDENT

Proverbs 19:21 affirms: "Many are the plans in the mind of a man, but it is the purpose of the Lord that will stand". Our God, with infinite, and kind wisdom, has the last word in every matter. The Alaska Bible College Board of Directors was recently reminded of that precious truth. Friends of ABC will recall that the Board invited Mr. Michael Fiorello to replace Dr. Steve Hostetter as president of the College in May 2006. It became clear to the Board in spring of 2007 that God was closing the door for Mr. Fiorello to serve at ABC. The Board acted decisively in two ways. First, the search for a president was

renewed. Second, Mr. Gary Willford was appointed to serve as interim president. Mr. Willford has served ABC as a faculty member, and at times as an administrator, for seventeen years. He is a graduate of Wheaton College, Western Seminary and Dallas Theological Seminary and very qualified to lead the College. We are grateful that Gary has agreed to serve in a time of transition and believe the College is in good hands. Please pray for Gary and the Board of Directors in the months ahead. *To the only wise God be glory.*

Marlin Beachy

Chairman, Board of Directors

NEW ABC WEBSITE

We invite you to visit our new website:

www.akbible.edu

Notable features of our new site include new doorways (prospective students, current students, alumni, parents, prospective faculty or staff, friends and churches), better access to links, and an updated look. Visitors to the site will see information pages highlighting our faculty and staff, student quotes, quick links, drop down menus, and icons that indicate which classes are required for specific degrees or certificates. We hope you will enjoy the new website. If you have suggestions or corrections, send them to webmaster@akbible.edu

WISH LIST

Small newer model pickup truck for maintenance staff use

PERSONNEL NEEDS

All faculty and staff at ABC serve as missionaries or self-supporting volunteers.

Director of Admissions/Recruiting

Food Service Manager

Registrar

Vice President for Institutional

Advancement

For further information view position descriptions on our website: www.akbible.edu or contact Bill Lambert, Human Resources Director at 800-478-7884.



Copper River beginning to freeze

ALUMNI RECEPTIONS

Alaska Bible College hosted an Alumni Dessert Reception in Eagle, Alaska on Saturday, September 8 at the Eagle Bible Chapel. It was a great time of meeting alumni and hearing what God is doing in their lives and what God is doing at ABC. Food, information, and pictures of buildings and staff, along with “remember whens” made the afternoon fun.

Another alumni dessert reception was held in Anchorage at Chapel By the Sea on Monday, October 22.



ALUMNI UPDATES



DARRIS & DEBBIE ARNOLD

Children:

Denée & Steve Longan, Dayn,
Daylan, Drew

Year(s) you attended ABC, degree or certificate earned there:

Darris–Fall '70; Spring '73 – '75, BA
Debbie–'72 – '76, BA

Other schools attended/degree or certificate earned:

Darris–Multnomah Biblical Seminary,
MDiv

What you do now:

Darris: Pastor, Fellowship Bible Church, Church Health Overseer, Pacific Northwest District–EFCA
Debbie: Secretary, High Desert Educational Service District, Bible Study and worship leader
With the kids gone, we hang out together!

How your time at ABC prepared you for a life of ministry:

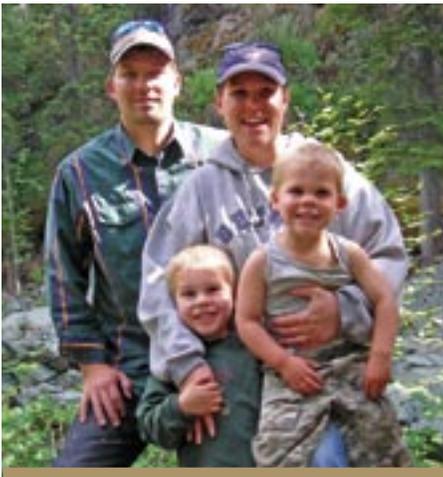
Without a doubt–Bob Lee’s Bible Study Methods class. It was there that I first encountered the opportunity to have God “speak for himself.” In addition to that class, Dr. Lee became a personal encourager. It is a special privilege to have him as one of my lifetime mentors. And, it was at ABC that Debbie and I met and began our lives together. With 33 years of marriage behind us, we are even more grateful that God has allowed us to partner together in life and Kingdom work.

CINDY (SWEHLA) HEMEN

lives in Eagle, Alaska with her daughter Sunny. She graduated from ABC with a B.A. in Christian Education in 1990. She is a full time homemaker, homeschools her daughter, is involved in the music ministry of her church, and worked on the construction of her log home after her husband David passed away. She says the project took three years!

DAVID HELMER

graduated from ABC in 1981 with an A.A. degree. He returned to Eagle and worked for his family’s power and telephone company. He married Meg in 1987. David became the manager of the power company after his family sold it to AP&T, is a deacon in the Eagle Bible Chapel and an alternate song leader. He enjoys hunting, trapping and dog mushing in the winter with Meg and his 5 children Daniel, Dana, Joel, Nathan, and Naomi. During the summer he runs a fish wheel for chum salmon to feed his 23 sled dogs. It is a fun and busy life.



TROY AND SARAH DOLGE met at

Alaska Bible College and were married on June 3, 2000 at Glennallen Chapel. "We both graduated from Alaska Bible College in 2000 and 2001 with our Associate of Arts Degrees. We moved to WA for a few months and were too homesick for Alaska to stay there. We returned to Kenny Lake only six months after leaving!"

Troy worked as the Administrator of Copper River Emergency Medical Services for 5 years and recently transferred to a security position for Alyeska Pipeline. Sarah worked a seasonal job for the Park Service and then moved on into motherhood. Taylor Loren was born in December, 2002 and Trevor Lewis was born in May, 2005.

Troy and Sarah also led the youth group at Kenny Lake Community Chapel for over 3 years. Sarah is just beginning a women's bible study in Kenny Lake and is excited to see God work as the women go through a book by Lisa Bevere titled "Fight Like a Girl".

"This life really is an adventure and we are waiting on the Lord to see what He may have for us in the future. Life has been busy and full for us and God has been more than faithful to us. We love our lives in Kenny Lake and we love growing our family here, but we are also waiting to see what the Lord may have for us around the bend. Whatever our future holds, we know He will always be for us...Father...Good...Faithful...Provider...Sovereign...Rock...Steadfast...All Things!"

TIM AND BARBIE

Family members:

Barbie (formerly Schwartz, Bob's sister), Dane (18), Ryan (15), and Soren (13)

Year(s) you attended ABC: 1982-83

Other schools attended/degree earned:

Taylor University - B.A. Biology/Environmental Science; Colorado State University - M.S. Range and Watershed Science

What you do now:

Agricultural Development Specialist in Central Asia with a community development NGO. I help meet physical and economic needs of poor Muslim farmers while sharing the Good News of Jesus. Our goal is to help facilitate a movement toward the peace and blessings of Jesus in this country both in the villages and in the apartment buildings where we live in the city. Also, spent six years in Uganda doing the same work and 14 years in the western states being a follower of Jesus working in university and government environments.

How your time at ABC prepared you for a life of ministry:

I had foreign work in mind when I came to ABC. Studying under Eileen Starr and Gary Ridley had the most impact. Cross cultural communications and a microbiology class at the hospital got me ready for malaria and living a life of obedience in Uganda. Gary taught me how to get excited about studying scripture

JON & MARYANNA CASEY

Children:

Andrew 2, Renee 2, Nathan 6 months

Year(s) you attended ABC: 2002-2005

What you do now:

Raising support for Church planting in Alaskan villages with Send International. (Also driving school bus in Greeley Colorado)

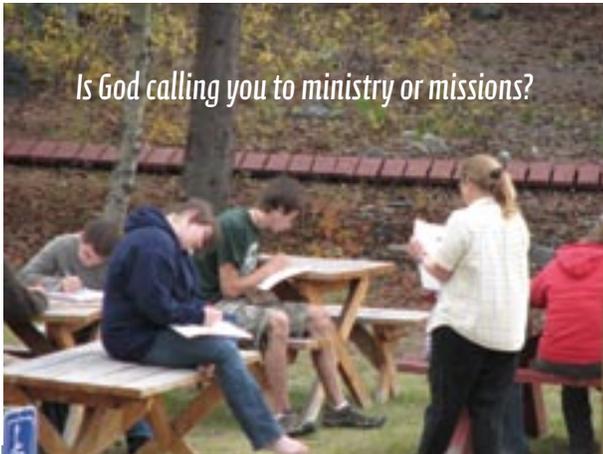
How your time at ABC prepared you for a life of ministry:

ABC shaped our hearts for the villages in Alaska, both in praying for villages and the missionaries and through the testimonies of others. We gained a love for the truth and a strengthened desire to share the gospel in places that have not heard it. Jon teaches a kids club regularly and MaryAnna is active in a Bible study and mentorship.

and seeing God's heart on a matter. I thoroughly enjoyed my time at ABC. Not the least of my enjoyment came from meeting and marrying my bride while a student there.

College Days

APRIL 9-11, 2008



Is God calling you to ministry or missions?



Do you wonder what it would be like to attend college classes?



What is it like in the "Last Frontier"?



Do you want to get a better understanding of Scripture?

If you want answers to these questions and more - you are invited to College Days: Wednesday -Friday, April 9-11, 2008

We will pick you up at the Anchorage airport (or you can provide your own transportation), you will be our guests (food and lodging provided) and we will return you to the airport. Visitors will attend classes and chapel, see the campus and the dorms, get a tour of the area, chat with current students, staff, and instructors, and hang out in the student lounges. Parents are welcome too.

Students who attend ABC full time for at least 1 semester are entitled to a refund of the airfare for their visit (up to \$500).

Call 800-478-7884

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(regularly \$35)

Submit all required documents with
an application fee of only \$20 with this coupon.

Application deadline July 1 for Semester 1, November 1 for Semester 2

Documents required

- Completed Application
 - Completed essays
 - High School transcript
 - College transcript (if applicable)
 - SAT or ACT scores
 - Personal Reference
 - Pastoral Reference
 - Teacher/Employer Reference
- Forms available at www.akbible.edu



IN THE ZONE

A lesson in evangelism from the geography of Israel
by Kevin D. Newman, Bible Professor

What can an understanding of Palestinian geography possibly teach us about evangelism in today's world? Maybe not much in the area of how to evangelize or possible methods, but it can reveal an interesting insight into the need for evangelism.

As one scans the topography of the land of Israel, one finds that it is divided into four distinct areas. Beginning in the West on the shore of the Mediterranean Sea is the Coastal Plain. This territory is anywhere from three to twenty-four miles wide. It reaches an elevation of approximately 500' above sea level. Due to its location near the sea, it is a fairly fertile land. In the past it was the homeland of the Philistines. Today it is better known as the Gaza Strip and the land of the Palestinians.

Continuing west, one would come to the Shephelah. This territory is also known as the foothills. As can be noticed from its name, it is a very hilly region. It stretches about eight miles and rises to an elevation of about 1,000'. Many of the Canaanite tribes made this their home prior to the Conquest, some even after Israel took possession of the land.

The next region one would encounter as they traveled west would be the Mountains. This area has often been termed the Hill Country because the mountains are not as high as many throughout the world. The tallest regions reach approximately 4,000' above sea level. It is in this region that the majority of the Israelites settled, and where the capital city of Jerusalem lies (at about 2,500' above sea level). This territory was difficult to farm and navigate, but easy to defend and provided quite the sense of security for those who dwelt there.

Finally, one would travel down the mountains into the Jordan Valley. Here the beautiful Jordan River flows from the Sea of Galilee in the north, to the Dead Sea in the south. It is a fertile land in many places. At its lowest point on the banks of the Dead Sea it dips to 1,300'



Map of Israel from
<http://www.mideastweb.org/misrael.htm>
(This map adapted from originals at *Atlas of the Orient* made by Tore Kjeilen)

below sea level. Travel from the mountains to the valley could be treacherous due to both natural and manmade dangers (robbers and thieves).

Now that we have had our geography lesson, let us notice what it might teach us concerning evangelism. As was mentioned earlier, the Coastal Plain was the domain of the Philistines. For many years

they were the enemies of the Israelites, and a general thorn in Israel's side. It would begin in the time of Abraham and Isaac and their dealings with Abimelech (Genesis 20 & 26). It continued after the exodus (As the Israelites left Egypt, the quickest route to the Promised Land was through Philistine territory where there was already an established road. But God knew that Israel would face battle with the Philistines on this route and this would scare them back into Egypt (Exodus 13:17).). In the time of the Judges Samson would battle the Philistines (Judges 13). Israel would even lose her first king in battle to the Philistines (both Saul and Jonathan would die in battle, and the Ark of the Covenant would be taken by them as a trophy of war).

Why all the hostilities? Basically, the Philistines took offense at being on the agenda of the Israelites for conquest. God had promised the Coastal Plain to the Israelites for their eternal possession. But obviously the Philistines did not appreciate the intrusion, and held on strongly to their land and their way of life.

Meanwhile, many of the godly Israelites had made a home in the mountainous region. This was a safe place. All of their enemies had been dispersed from here, and it was fairly easy to defend. They had found their comfort zone.

The problem is that God never intended Israel to be comfortable. The choice of Israel to be the children of God was for the purpose of having a people that would reach out to others so they too might come to know God. God intended them to be different (as the book of Leviticus clearly portrays), but not isolated. At times we see Gentiles coming to God by means of the witness of Israel (Rahab, Ruth, Naaman, and the city of Nineveh are a few examples), but never to the extent that God had intended.

The chosen Israelites lived safely in the mountains. The hostile and pagan Philistines lived in the coastal plain. Between them sat the foothills. The Isra-

elites were secure and safe in the mountains, and fear of the Philistines kept them there. The Philistines lived comfortably on the plain, with no reason to ever go up the mountains to a people who were considered a threat. Israel knew the Philistines would never come to them, and they liked it that way. During the time of Saul, the Philistines even kept a monopoly on iron so the Israelites would have no weapons to use against them (1 Samuel 13:19).

Time would demonstrate that the Philistines never were successfully converted by Israel. Today the descendants of this land still fight with Israel over who truly owns Palestine. The Palestinians claim the right of first occupation, and Israel looks to the promise of God for their claim of the land. Had Israel won over the Philistines, much of the fighting that is present today in that part of the world would not exist.

So what does this have to teach us regarding evangelism? Today the Church has taken the place of Israel as God's chosen vessel to reach the world for Him. As with the Philistines of old, so much of the world today sees the Church as a threat, fundamentalists trying to push their agenda onto them. But like Israel, we are secure in the church. We know that most of the time the world has no desire to enter in to our domain. In order to reach the world we need to go out to them. But that requires us to leave the safety and security of our pews. The world sees no need to desire what we possess because they are more than comfortable where they are now. The church is in its own comfort zone behind its stained glass windows. Both are in the zone.

In order for the world to come to know Christ, we must leave our comfort zone. We must go out from the security of our mountain tops and travel the path into the lowlands, as dangerous as it

might be, in order for others to know that they truly are missing out by not having Christ in their lives. If we stay in our church buildings, all they see is a religion. We need to live the Christian life not only behind the doors of our churches, but in the marketplace as well. We need to demonstrate in the workplace and the political arena and the athletic stadium that Christ is real and can transform lives, and give them the hope that they so desperately need. But they will never see or know this truth unless we as Christians begin to live as Christ would have us to live someplace other than church once a week. Acting like a Christian behind the doors of the church and like a pagan in the streets will never win the world to Christ. The time has come for us to leave the security of our mountain-tops, and cross the foothills into the plain of unbelief, for it is only there that we shall meet and reach those who need Christ the most.



"In order to reach the world we need to go out to them. But that requires us to leave the safety and security of our pews."

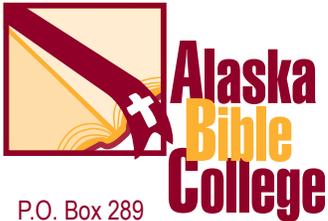


IMPORTANT DATES

JANUARY 10	DORMS OPEN FOR NEW STUDENTS
JANUARY 10-12	ORIENTATION FOR NEW STUDENTS
JANUARY 12	DORMS OPEN FOR RETURNING STUDENTS
JANUARY 14	CLASSES BEGIN
FEBRUARY 15-16	WINTER RETREAT
MARCH 9	DAYLIGHT SAVINGS BEGINS
MARCH 17-21	SPRING BREAK
MARCH 21	GOOD FRIDAY
MARCH 23	EASTER
APRIL 9-11	COLLEGE DAYS
MAY 2	LAST DAY OF CLASSES
MAY 5-9	FINAL EXAMS
MAY 10	COMMENCEMENT

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