

# Threads of a Tapestry...

by Joe McCormick

**Bertist Rouse**, founder of International Gospel Outreach, or IGO, in Semmes, Alabama, died on November 18, 2003. There is no way to sum up in a few words what this humble servant meant to the kingdom of God or to those who loved him. If all the threads could be connected, all the obscure testimonies could be traced, we would no doubt be surprised at the impact of the life and ministry of this one man on the world.



To speak of one man impacting the world is not inappropriate, because of two particular instances where Bertist was instrumental in improving the conditions of nations. One of these nations was Chile, the other was Kenya. There are certainly other cases not as well documented.

In the 1970's Bertist began taking evangelistic teams to Chile, and saw first hand the poverty of a society recently broken free of a communist administration that had bankrupted the country. The gospel of Christ swept through the nation and transformed it. Twelve years later those who had been with Bertist on some of the earlier teams were amazed at the changes they saw. Everyone was prospering! A dozen years earlier, most of the cars they saw were ancient, like model T Fords and Packards, still in use. But all that had changed in a little over a decade. By 1992 the only really old car on the streets was more likely to be one some kid had fixed up to make a low rider out of. Now, another decade and more has passed, and Chile continues to prosper. Not coincidentally, the Christian renewal also continues there unabated.

A *Reader's Digest* article several years ago actually gave a great deal of credit for Chile's recovery to the revival of Christianity that swept the nation in the 70's and 80's (and, in fact, is still going on). In case you haven't noticed, Christians make good citizens, honest, hardworking and responsible, assets to any nation.

Bertist Rouse led many of those evangelical campaigns that emptied the communist-run seminaries and gave birth to a widespread return to true biblical principles. The revitalizing effect on the whole society was so obvious that the government of Chile offered to build Bertist a seminary if he would provide the staff. At the time Bertist couldn't afford to take on so ambitious a project.

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# Overwhelming Love...

During the past few months all of us in the IGO home office have been flooded with expressions of love and honor since the passing of Bertist Rouse. Our missionaries, friends and supporters have shared things about Bertist with us that none of us really knew.

All of the notes and cards have encouraged and touched our hearts, and so it was a really difficult task to choose what to share with you in this newsletter. So, we have picked three letters that we hope will encourage you as they have encouraged us. I know you will be blessed and amazed as we were upon reading all of the letters we received.

The first letter comes from **Joe and Beverly McCormick**, in Pinson, TN. Joe and Beverly have been a part of the IGO family for many years, serving in the home office, and leading dozens of short term trips into Honduras, as well as several other countries.

The second letter comes from **Kay Stewart**, a Bible Teacher and minister, who has been a friend of the ministry for as long as I can remember. Rather than a letter, the Holy Spirit gave her a poem that expresses the life and work of Bro. Bertist.

The last letter we wanted to share comes from **Pablo Bañados**, from Antofagasta, Chile. Pablo is the founding pastor of the Jesus te Llama Churches (*now 16 of them*) spread throughout Chile. He is Bertist's first personal disciple.

Many people have called and written asking about the welfare of Anna Merle, and the ministry. I want to assure you that Anna Merle is doing well, and is adjusting to life without her best friend. She is surrounded by family and friends that will continue to stay by her side and walk through the difficult days. She continues to work in the office on a daily basis.



The ministry continues to grow beyond anything we could have imagined. We are seeing new doors open into new countries that we have only imagined and prayed over. We will place missionaries **Bill and Amy Witters** into **Romania** and **Brian Wolf** into the **Republic of Georgia** this spring, with missionar-

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Historians may never make the connection, but down in Chile there are pastors all over the country who will never forget the man they called "Roose", who showed them the difference between religion and a relationship with Almighty God.

Then, in the late 80's and early 90's, Bertist broke new ground in Kenya. He spoke at a Christian convention. In the audience was a man who presided as bishop over a group of churches with a strange history. Back in the 50's a band of terrorists calling themselves "Mau-Mau's" started the church as a front to raise money for their murderous activities. The church struggled on long after the Mau-Mau's were forgotten. Most of the pastors, however, had no idea of what it meant to be truly saved. The bishop knew they needed to hear the message Bertist was preaching, and begged him to come and preach it, first of all, to his pastors.

When Bertist answered the call to the ministry as a young man he was stricken about the same time with diabetes. His entire life and ministry since then have been spent proving true the scripture that says, "My strength is made perfect in weakness." Bertist couldn't have done the things he did in his own strength, and he knew that. He circled the world, risking his life in foreign places where there were no medical facilities to help him through his frequent diabetic attacks. But the Devil never stopped him. He went places a man in his condition wasn't supposed to be able to go. The power of his preaching never diminished. His strength and zeal came from God. The holy fire that burned within him for the nations was the heart of God.



*This is the quality Bertist had. He could see things nobody else but God could see. He could find people who fell through the cracks and were ignored by others.*

The pastors began getting saved. They took the Good News back to their churches. Revival broke out. They wanted more. Bertist was the first white man ever to preach in those churches.

By this time Bertist and Anna Merle had started IGO, and were able to send missionaries John and Norma Dodd to Kenya, where they spent a fruitful decade or more teaching and preaching. They established a Bible College where pastors could be trained to continue the work.

Significant is the fact that, in the world of missions, no organization would have targeted this group Bertist reached. They called themselves a church and considered themselves Christians. They would not have appeared in any demographic study as an "unreached" people.

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Bertist had a way of passing that fire on to others. The IGO ministry stands as a testimony to his labors. Through mostly hard times, a lifetime of near poverty, and in the weakness of a diabetic condition, Bertist Rouse accomplished enduring works for the Lord's kingdom.

God's instrument in sustaining Bertist through it all was his wife, Anna Merle. Every word said of him must be said of her. She stood beside him, not behind him. Bertist would be the first to say how much he depended on her.

So the work continues. Bertist labored through the "heat of the day," as he was fond of saying about other missionaries he admired, and has now entered into rest. Others he trained will carry on the work. But we will miss him.

*The world is better because he came.*

*- Joe*

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ies **Ed and Pat Coleman** to follow later this year into **Brazil**. Plans are now being implemented to establish a strong church planting movement into **Myanmar** in the next twelve months as well. *It appears that God has our work cut out for us!*

**The Institute of World Ministry**, IGO's missionary school, under the watchful eye of **Randy Seals**, currently is training 20 missionary students who are seeking to find their place in the world harvest.

**The Global Fellowship** (IGO's Network of Ministries) continues to grow and help its membership to become stronger and connected into missions under the leadership of **Bishop Eddy Brown** (Senior Pastor of the Family Worship Center in Granite City, IL)

Strategic partnerships with our sister ministries such as **American Mission Teams (Dr. Verda Thompson)** and **World Indigenous Missions (Dale Pugh)** continue to strengthen and produce good fruit. More of these strategic partnerships are under development to enable more work to be accomplished on the field in the days ahead.

In the next newsletter, I will be sharing more about these partnerships and about how God is increasing the reach of IGO around the world. It was once said, "That the sun never sets on the British Empire..." it is our desire to be able to say, "That the sun never sets on the work of the Kingdom through International Gospel Outreach." Not so that we can boast about our accomplishments, but so that we can be about the Father's Business.

The last partnership I want to mention in this article is our partnership with you, our friends and supporters. Without you, none of these things would be possible. It is because you pray with us, give into the work with us, and stand in faith with us that we are able to say without any reservation that "The Kingdom is Advancing."

James Graham was appointed as President of IGO on November 19th, 2003. He and Sharlene along with their kids, Jonathan, Matthew and Jamie, live near Semmes, AL

# The Tapestry

(A Tribute to Rev. Bertist Rouse)

The canvas began...as blank as the sea.  
Who is Bertist Rouse? What will this life be?  
Just what is his purpose? What is the design?  
What threads will he choose? What will God assign?

His mind hungered for knowledge;  
It was quick, sharp and keen.  
He reigned with a quiet, but sure, confidence;  
Humble, yet regal as a king.

If there were questions, answers or solutions unknown,  
He read and researched, like a hound dog after a bone.  
He then sought the Lord, he fasted and prayed.  
Until the answer came, on his knees he stayed!

People sought him out, it seemed one and all.  
With problems to solve; some large, some small.  
He always made time, was never too busy,

He listened to them all, and never seemed to get into a tizzy.  
It did not matter, whether rich or poor,  
With keen discernment, he saw to the core.  
Anyone who came with a true cause,  
He listened and assisted...not for fame, not for applause!

A mighty warrior was he!  
Quiet, yet strong...it was easy to see.  
His life spoke loudly, "This ain't no game!"  
It was evident to all, souls was his aim!

His assignment in life, to teach, train and send out;  
His blessings he gave, with a prayer and a shout!  
To the Harvest fields, trained soldiers he sent,  
If he ever had a doubt, there was never a hint!

Each life he touched, has a story to tell,  
Resounding through time, strong and true as a bell  
Though from life on earth, he had to depart,  
Our memories of him, we'll hold close to our heart!

The Tapestry of Bertist Rouse's life is now complete.  
Threading through lives, the poor and the elite.  
All races, color and creed, the young and the old.  
There woven through lives...are Threads of pure Gold!

There is a question, I now must ask,  
It's not about a small chore, nor a small task.  
Bertist Rouse's life on this earth has gone out like a candle...  
How many are now willing, to take up his mantle?

By Kay T. Stewart, November 27, 2003

## ***Bertist Rouse Memorial Fund***

***Many thanks to you who have given to the Memorial Fund set up in honor of Bro. Bertist. So far we have received \$7,937.00 that will be used to build and furnish the new Missionary Library and Research Center.***

# Thank You

November 18th, 2003, a day that changed my life and the lives of our family and all of us here at IGO Ministries. That was the day that God chose to call Bertist home. Since that day, we have walked in shock, disbelief and finally in the reality that it actually happened, and we must go on.

To all of you who have so faithfully continued to stand with us during these difficult months, we express again how much we love and appreciate you. Every call, e-mail, cards, food, flowers, gifts and visits have been such a source of strength to all of us.

The Ministry is growing and moving forward because of your love and prayers. Together, I believe that we will carry this precious vision forward in a way that would glorify God, honor Bertist and bring a great harvest in the months and years to come.

May the Lord bless you and keep you is our prayer for you today.

*Anna Merle Rouse*



## 2004 International Gospel Outreach Global Fellowship Conference

This is the annual gathering of the IGO family and network of ministries. If you would like to come and be a part, contact Randy & Charlotte Seals at IGO.

DATES: June 8-11, 2004

PLACE: Lake Tiak O'Khata, near Louisville, MS

REGISTRATION: \$75 By May 24th

### ROOMS & LODGING

1 room - 1 person	=	\$225.15
1 room - 2 people	=	\$153.00 each or 306.00
1 room - 3 people	=	\$127.65 each or 382.95
1 room - 4 people	=	\$115.05 each or 460.20

Includes all food, taxes and gratuities.

Children 0-4 are free, children 5-10 are only 37.50 for the whole conference. Ministry will be provided for children 3 and up.

For more information and registration forms, call IGO at:

**251-645-2117**

E-Mail Randy & Charlotte Seals at:

***rseals@igoministries.org***

or log onto our Web Site and download a registration form at:

***<http://www.igoministries.org/globalfellowshipconf.html>***

## A Tribute to a Visionary

In 1975 hearing the Macedonian call from that old Methodist, Bishop Pedro Zottele, Bertist and Anna Merle Rouse made their first cross cultural missionary trip to Chile. There are many countries in the world and thousand of cities in those countries, however by God's providence they were led to **Antofagasta, Chile**. There they met a young Christian who having received a call to the ministry and was eager to learn, and to win his nation for Jesus.

I was that man. Bertist C. Rouse was the answer of God to my need of a pastor and a mentor. From then on he became my example, my discipler, even more.....my father.

Thus a Paul and Timothy relationship developed. He brought me to the States and exposed me to his untiring and anointed ministry, he sent me to Seminary, paying all my bills and most of all he took me into his home and adopted me as a son. There I learned what a Godly home can be.

All I am and all I know up to this day I owe to Bertist Rouse. The national pastors that I lead and the 16 churches that have sprang from out ministry consider him their spiritual grandfather. His message of holiness, missions, stewardship, and accountability have been taken all across this country, our neighboring nations and even back to the United States.

Today, his Chilean church mourns with me, also my wife and three children who called him "*Abuelito Rouse*" (grand-daddy Rouse). Yes, we grieve but we also give thanks to The Lord for the example, for the message and for the torch he passed unto us. We have been so blessed and thousands of lives have been saved and restored because of this humble and holy Mobilian preacher who cared for people beyond his nation who needed the light.

On this solemn day his Chilean disciples commit ourselves to continue to spread his message, his style of living and his passion to preach to the nations. And we urge his disciples from across the world and other men in America to go and do the same.

Bertist Rouse's life was feeble but well lived and well spent. His life was worthy...!! It Sure was worthy!!!! In Heaven a word is resounding, "*Well done my faithful servant, enter ye in the joy of the Lord.*"

In Chile my heart is saying, "*Thank you, Dad.*"

His Son in the Lord,  
Bishop Pablo E. Banados  
Jesus Te Liama churches of Chile  
Antofagasta, Nov 21, 2003

## LOOKING INTO THE FUTURE

In the next edition of this newsletter, we want to share with you new doors of ministry, and opportunities for service. As we pray and plan for the days ahead, we stand amazed at what is unfolding before us.

All of us at IGO have dedicated ourselves to being sensitive to what the Holy Spirit is speaking concerning our part of World Missions.

Here are some of the countries that we are praying about investing missionaries into. **Myanmar** (formerly known as **Burma**), **Greece**, **Tunisia**, **Egypt**, **Algeria**, **Turkey**, and **Iraq**.

In order for us to accomplish this vital task of reaching the un-reached, we are forming **Strategic Partnerships** with other ministries whose heart and mindset fit together with IGO like pieces of a puzzle We will be sharing more about these partnerships in the months ahead.

Please continue to pray with us as we enlarge the scope of IGO. We need your prayers and continual support like never before.

It is because of friends like you that we are able to go...

**To All Nations  
To Make Disciples  
Till He Returns**



**International Gospel Outreach**

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