

FOLLOWING THE HARVEST

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A SPECIAL MESSAGE FROM  
 BARRY & LINDA~



Does One Size Fit All?

It seems to me that we as Christians are always looking for the latest technique or formula to share Jesus with the lost. It gives us confidence to have some method or system that we can use on people to bring them to Christ. I suppose the same thing can be said for almost any part of the Christian life. "If I can just find the right prayer formula to get God to move, or if I can just get the right system to understand what God's will is for me it would be great."

The reality is however there is no one set way to do things in the kingdom of God. I can tell you how I witness to people, but that way may not be the way God wants you to share your faith. That is why I believe it is of the utmost importance that we rely on the Spirit of God, rather than by the latest successful formula.

I was witnessing to a young man the other day about Jesus death, burial and resurrection. He was brought to tears as I told him what Jesus had done for him. I didn't have to whip out the *10 Big Guns* (The Ten Commandments) to convince him of his need for salvation. The Spirit of God had already been dealing with him prior to our

The Endless Summer

SUMMER TIME HAS ALWAYS BEEN MY FAVORITE TIME OF THE YEAR. AS A KID, I WISHED THAT IT COULD STAY SUMMER ALL YEAR LONG AND I STILL DO. IN 1968 A MOTION PICTURE CALLED THE ENDLESS SUMMER ABOUT SURFING CAME OUT THAT WAS FILMED IN AFRICA, AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND, TAHITI, HAWAII AND CALIFORNIA.

“ The problem is when we define ourselves by what we *do* rather than by what Christ has *done* on our behalf. ”

It is the crown jewel and tribute to ten years of Bruce Brown surfing documentaries. Brown follows two young surfers, Michael Hynson and Robert August around the world in search of the perfect wave. They end up finding the perfect wave at a place called Cape St. Francis, South Africa, in addition to some colorful local characters. Lately I've been thinking about this idea, not of the perfect wave but about the perfect Christian life, my seemingly endless search to be all that I should be for the Lord.

I so often fall short of my spiritual goals. My best efforts often end up becoming my worst defeats. But I've found that I am not alone on my search to be the perfect Christian. It's kind of like when I go on a diet. I say to myself, "Barry, you are going to lose 20 pounds if it kills you." I do really well for about 2 1/2 days; I'm on a roll, not a jellyroll, but a weight loss roll. I get pretty motivated, but soon I become hungry. So hungry I that I end up eating like a man possessed. I know you have never had that happen to you, but it's my reality.

What does the perfect Christian look like anyway? How would I identify him if I saw him? When would I know that I've arrived at that place myself? I think about what we have come to believe is the perfect Christian. His head is filled with scripture memorization and sermons. He prays seven hours a day. He is able to raise hands in praise for hours. His alarm is set for 4:00 a.m. for devotions. His heart is filled with love for his Proverbs 31 wife and perfect kids. He is able to pray for long extended periods of time but is ready to go to church whenever the doors open. He carries tracts to pass out to everyone he talks to or does not talk to, and carries a list of all those that he has led to Christ. He wears comfortable shoes for going door-to-door. He is always prepared to give his 10% and more. He has pictures of children he supports in Africa. He teaches ten Bible Studies. He is able to sing hymns on key. He has scars on each side of his face when he turned the other cheek. He listens to people's problems before speaking, and he is always alert to hurting people in need.

I could go on and on about what the perfect Christian might look like. Please don't get me wrong. These things I have listed are all good and right things to do. The problem is when we define ourselves by what we *do* rather than by what Christ has *done* on our behalf.

## A SPECIAL MESSAGE...

*Continued from page 1*

conversation. So all I had to do was be there to explain the good news. There was no pressure at all. Just a simple explanation did it. He repented and turned his life over to Christ as his Savior and Lord.

In another encounter, I was speaking to a man who was extremely proud of his own good life. He told me that because he was such a good person that he would without a doubt be going to heaven. I then turned to the big 10 and proceeded to ask him if in fact he had ever broken any of God's commandments. He admitted that he had, and I explained to him that he was indeed headed for hell without Christ as substitute for his sin problem. Unfortunately he didn't believe what the scriptures had to say and told me he was good enough. In another conversation I answered valid questions the best I could about why God allows pain, heartache and death in the world. That individual really wanted to know why bad things happen to good people.

My point is that just like *one shoe size does not fit all*, there is no one right way to share our faith. We need to be sensitive to each person individually, finding out where they stand before we unload on them. I usually do more listening to people than I do talking to them. If I talk at all I take them directly to the scriptures. That is where the truth is, and that is what the Holy Spirit uses to convict them of their need for Christ. The Holy Spirit knows exactly what each and every person needs in order to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth.

— Barry & Linda

## June Outreach Schedule

Please call (310) 327-3134 for locations and directions. Meetings start at 7:30 pm.

### ABOUT US

Barry Felis Ministries is a tax-deductible, nonprofit organization.

Be sure to visit our new web page at:  
[www.BarryFelis.org](http://www.BarryFelis.org)

## THE ENDLESS SUMMER... *Continued from page 1*

A few years ago my life took a turn that would mark a new beginning for me. I'd been a born again Christian for many years, but I had struggled for most of that time with a keen sense of not measuring up to what I felt God required of me. I wanted to please God. I also wanted to please His people, most especially His leaders. That is where I got into trouble. They being God's representatives, I bought into everything they taught without question. Over time, this proved to be detrimental to my emotional well-being. For much of their teaching was old covenant law mixed with new covenant grace. That kept me off balance and not really knowing where I stood with God. Dependence upon my leaders and my inability to hear God for myself led to a deep sense of emptiness. I was committed but confused, saved but sorry. I was on an endless search to get right and stay right with God.

The endless search for the perfect wave was easy, compared to searching for where I stood with God. The change came from a truth that I had been taught when I first became a Christian, but hadn't gotten a hold of in my personal experience. Simply put I was reminded that the finished work of Christ was all that God required of me to believe for His *complete* forgiveness and acceptance. The pressure was off. My responsibility was simply to allow His life to be lived out through me. The great mystery that Paul the Apostle spoke of was that of, 'Christ in you, the hope of glory' became a reality to me.

Many strong leaders have natural gifts and charisma that enamor their followers and their followers have such great respect for them that no one would dare question their teachings. That seems to be a big mistake for many good Christian people. Unfortunately it will continue to go on as long as the masses have a need for someone else to do their thinking for them. The difference for me is that I am no longer one of them.

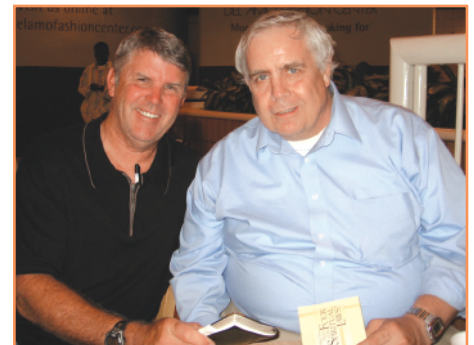
Let's be like the believers in ACTS 17. 'Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true', in my case true in light of the new covenant that God has brought to pass by the *finished* work of Jesus Christ. If we do our endless search for right standing with God will come to an end, the pressure to be perfect will leave us, and we will be free indeed. Knowing that Christ's righteousness has been given to us, and God is pleased.

“ I was on an endless search to get right and stay right with God. ”

## WEEKLY OUTREACH



LINDA LED KIMBERLY AND TWO OF HER FRIENDS TO JESUS AT GALLERIA MALL



ERNIE, A BRAND NEW BROTHER IN CHRIST