

FOLLOWING THE HARVEST

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A SPECIAL MESSAGE FROM BARRY & LINDA~



Sign of the Times?

On the evening of Friday, September 21, 2007, we were at the Del Amo Fashion Square Mall in Torrance. I was witnessing to a group of four men. After talking with the men, Steve and I were stopped by a security guard who had apparently been watching our interaction. We were told that we were not permitted to hand out any religious literature. Because our desire was to be courteous, we willingly followed the security guard's instruction, and told him that we would stop passing out literature and leave the mall, which we attempted to do. However, as we walked to our car to go home, we were subsequently detained for a second time. This time by three other security guards who ordered us to "GET UP AGAINST THE WALL and get your hands out of your pockets!" The guards were very aggressive with us, barking orders in raised voices and demanding that we provide them with identification. One of the security guards also tape recorded the exchange. One officer asked me what group I was with, and demanded to know who told me to come to the mall and do what I was doing. I pointed my finger upward and said, "The Lord Jesus Christ told me come and share His good news."

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Pressing on Toward the Goal

"NOT THAT I HAVE ALREADY OBTAINED ALL THIS, OR HAVE ALREADY BEEN MADE PERFECT, BUT I PRESS ON TO TAKE HOLD OF THAT FOR WHICH CHRIST JESUS TOOK HOLD OF ME. BROTHERS, I DO NOT CONSIDER MYSELF YET TO HAVE TAKEN HOLD OF IT, BUT ONE THING I DO: FORGETTING WHAT IS BEHIND AND STRAINING TOWARD WHAT IS AHEAD. I PRESS ON TOWARD THE GOAL TO WIN THE PRIZE, FOR WHICH GOD HAS CALLED ME HEAVENWARD IN CHRIST JESUS."

It's that time of year that many of us reflect on the previous year and set our goals for the New Year. One of the Apostle Paul's secrets was to "forget what is behind and strain toward what lie's ahead." That is especially important for those of us who find ourselves pining over past mistakes and failures. When that happens, we become self-focused and our lives become neutralized and ineffective, in allowing the Spirit of God to flow through us.



ORANGE COUNTY OUTREACH TEAM AT WESTMINSTER MALL — SINGING CHRISTMAS CAROLS AND SHARING JESUS

The Apostle compares the Christian life to an Olympic runner. "Know you not that they which run in a race run all, but one receives the prize? So run, that you may obtain the prize."

During my elementary school years I realized that I had the God-given ability to run faster than most of the other kids in school. A football coach took notice one day, and asked my parents if it would be all right for me to play football on his Pop Warner Football team. With their permission I played. My speed paid off and our team was successful. We ended the season by playing in the Los Angeles Coliseum before a professional football game was played. That was a wonderful experience for a young guy like me. After football season I was encouraged to join the track team. I became a sprinter and high hurdler (I've slowed down with age and run slower, longer distances now). One of the most important things a sprinter should do is to keep his or her eyes on the finish line. Looking back only slows down the speed that is necessary to win. So the eyes have to be set on the finish line.

So what does this have to do with the New Year? Just this. As believers we must not look back at our past, good or bad. All the mistakes, misjudgments, miscalculations and misunderstandings we've made are to be let go. Just as a runner

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## PRESSING ON TOWARD...

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needs to let go of anything that would slow him down. Again, we are not only to let go of the regrets of our past but our successes as well. That's because everything eternally worthwhile that we have accomplished, is a result of God bringing it to pass by His Spirit, so He gets the glory.

This Christian life is about Christ living out His life in us, as us. He is the one who is worthy, not us. Having said that, we have the satisfaction of being used by Him to carry out His desires in this fallen world. What a wonderful privilege it is to be used of God to advance His Kingdom here on earth. It just doesn't get any better than that.

Letting go is a choice we make. Sometimes that is easier said than done. It boils down to trust in our Heavenly Father, to take the good and the bad circumstances of our lives and work His will in and through them all. He is to be worshipped in all that we say and do.

I would like to share one additional word of encouragement: Time spent just being with God will be the most productive time you will make all year long. Delighting in Him, loving on Him and telling Him, will so gladden His heart. It will give you the peace and joy that the world does not have. May He lead you in His pathways this New Year and may His goodness and mercy follow you all the days of 2008.

## January 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)

## A SPECIAL MESSAGE... *Continued from page 1*

The security guard responded, "Well, I'm a Catholic!" During the exchange the security guards surrounded us. They were in a very agitated state, taking an aggressive posture and acting with unnecessary and unprovoked hostility and tension. After taking our

identification information, the security guards told us that we were banned from the mall for three months, and if we did not cooperate, that we would be "banned for life!" I asked whether that meant that I could not come shopping with my wife, Linda at the Mall. The guard replied in the affirmative.



**“ We were shocked at the severe penalty levied by the guards...”**

We were shocked at the severe penalty levied by the guards, for engaging in an activity we believed to be within our Constitutional Rights. During our time at the Mall, we did not bother, annoy, or harass any shopping patrons, and complied with all of the directives of Mall employees. In addition, we were willing to leave when asked, despite the fact that we had done nothing wrong. In spite of being accommodating and having respectful attitudes, the security guards acted with hostility, aggression, and outright malice towards us, culminating with the issuance of the three-month ban and threat of a lifetime ban. At that point, I was concerned that the officers' conduct was disproportionate to our conduct, and asked the officers to provide their names and badge numbers so that I would be able to follow up regarding any speech, public access, and first-amendment issues.

When I asked for their names and badge numbers, the security guards became even more agitated, and reluctantly gave me the information I requested. Without going into further detail we have secured legal assistance from "The Western Center For Law & Policy."

A lawsuit has been filed with the Superior Court of the State of California charging the violation of our right to public access, free speech and free assembly under the United States Constitution. Jesus said, "This I command you, that you love one another. If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this, the world hates you."

**John 15:17-19** It will be of no surprise if one day I will be thrown in jail for preaching the gospel. However, like Paul the Apostle, "I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me, the task of testifying to the gospel of God's grace." **Acts 20:24** Pray for us that we would continue to preach the gospel boldly as we should.

— Love, Barry & Linda

## WEEKLY OUTREACH



**DAVID DRENNON SHARES THE MESSAGE OF RECONCILIATION**



**LEADING FATHER & DAUGHTER TO JESUS CHRIST**