



Native



Sons

Equipping Native Leaders to Reach Native Americans

COURSE CORRECTION

THE NEED TO EQUIP AMERICAN INDIAN LEADERS

- In spite of over 5 centuries of "evangelization" only 5% of Native Americans know Jesus as Lord & Savior.
- The main obstacle to reaching Native people today is "vaccination" - exposure to the Gospel which ranged from the ineffective to genuinely evil.
- The answer to this "vaccination" is the development of a healthy Indian church.
- Good leadership is needed to cultivate healthy churches.
- Leadership must be cultivated with thought and care.

Based on Jim Dempsey former President AIC

PRAYER POINTS

- Sale of our home
- New financial partners
- The safety of Levi & Caleb.

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We are changing direction in order to not change direction—this is a contradiction that needs explanation.

At the end of this school year I resigned from teaching at NABC and accepted another missionary teaching position at the American Indian College in Phoenix, AZ.

Last August I received a copy of a letter which NABC sent out to the churches in NC seeking to garner financial support and students. Included in this letter was the following statement: "NABC was founded in 1968 as a missions school... The school was known as Eastern Indian Bible Institute. Much has happened over the years... We are now a multi-ethnic ministry training college..." (emph. mine) This is a public declaration of a change in direction from the founding purpose of the school. This change has been long discussed both within the school and the Lumbee Christian community. The heart of this change is to attract more students by broadening the focus of the college.

While Theresa and I appreciate what is involved in this reasoning two items compelled my resignation: 1.) Almost every college in America is now "multi-ethnic" so it is difficult for us to justify remaining here as missionaries. 2.) We are missionar-

ies to the Native Americans and as such we see that there is still a strong need to equip Native leaders for ministry so they can build strong, biblically-grounded churches which will effectively reach Native people without destroying Native culture (see sidebar). As former president of the American Indian College (AIC) Jim



John & Theresa

Dempsey stated, "The efforts of missionaries will never reach the First Nations. ...No nation has ever been successfully reached with the Gospel until it has taken true ownership of its churches... Paul's... approach was to develop a local leadership who could contextualize the gospel most effectively by responding socially, cultural-

ly, and linguistically."

I carefully interviewed the leadership of AIC (and was carefully interview by them!). Both President Dr. DeGarmo and Academic Vice-President Dr. Saggio expressed the concern & commitment to remaining focused on equipping Native leaders for ministry in order to reach Native peoples and their communities for Christ. With this shared commitment and focus AIC extended the invitation to come and join the community at AIC. An invitation which Theresa and I have accepted. I will continue teaching Bible, theology, and ministerial courses. Theresa will be working with Rev. John Maracle as his administrative assistant (office manager) in the Native American Fellowship offices.

Arizona is home to 21 federally recognized tribes and AIC attracts Native students from a great many more states and Canada. I need to arrive in AZ in August. I am currently working on the courses I will be teaching and on various transitional issues. I also continue to teach the Wednesday night Bible study at our Lumbee church, Open Arms Assembly. Now, we need a miracle sale of our home!

ON A PERSONAL NOTE

Theresa's neck surgery went well. She returned to work teaching just a week later and has remained very active. She experienced sharp pain in her shoulders shortly after the surgery, but the doctor determined that this was muscular and caused by her rapid return to work and other activities. Now that her school year is over this pain has subsided.

Caleb is just finishing the Marines desert training in the Mojave desert in CA—6 weeks of further physical punishment in extreme heat! He should be back at Camp Lejeune by the time this newsletter arrives. He will be deployed for 6 months soon.

Levi has been thoroughly enjoying being

with his family after being away for 8 months on the USS John C. Stennis. He has a 1-month away to San Diego which also will have begun before this newsletter arrives.

Our home has been on the market for just under a month now. We purchased a "fixer-upper" and I needed to finish the roof and several other projects before we could put it on the market. I need to be in AZ at the beginning of August and we need to sell this house for us to move together. Theresa and I do not want to be separated and there will be many difficulties which we and especially Theresa will face, so please pray for a rapid sale of our home



Caleb's baby