



billy graham center  
**centerline**

winter 2004

News from the **Billy Graham Center** at Wheaton College, Wheaton, Ill.

**Due to security issues, the cover story of this issue is available only in print, not online. For the full issue, please e-mail [bgcadm@wheaton.edu](mailto:bgcadm@wheaton.edu) with your mailing address.**



# director's devotional

## Just Show Up

**A** recent television drama portrayed the impossible challenges faced by a pro-football middle linebacker and his coach. The linebacker needed to stop the league's most elusive quarterback in Sunday's upcoming game. Practice proved he couldn't. Unbeknownst to the player, the coach had just discovered he had prostate cancer.

"Coach," the linebacker says, "What does a person do when they face a challenge too big to handle?"

The camera zooms in and the beleaguered coach replies, "You just show up.

That's what you do, you show up."

I was reading Ephesians 6:10 this week. The passage describes our battle with unseen forces and the armor for our fight. I had pictured the Church as a fully armored and empowered, victorious warrior, boldly assaulting evil strongholds. But this time I noticed that four times the passage asks us to "hold on" and "stand your ground"—keep a stiff upper lip. Sometimes attacking is not possible. At such times, the best we can do is to stand or just show up.

I know this sounds despairing, but I often live somewhere between Charlie Brown (realist) and Snoopy (clueless opti-

mist). Still, this just-show-up attitude may be the stuff required over the long haul to impact the world for Christ.

What about the career missionary who devotes years to learning another language and culture, or the pastor who shepherds a church of 100 and 10 years later still has 100 members? Or the young scholar who slowly acquires multiple degrees before the seminary allows her to teach? I'm thinking of parents with prodigals, seniors with chronic back pain and the great evangelist with Parkinson's. And yes, I'm thinking of Jesus, who for the joy set before him showed up for a cross, despising its shame (Heb. 12).

Do you know a single soul who has not been called sometime in their journey, just to show up? Oh Lord, give us the energy and aptitude to stand firm.

*Lon J. Allison*

director's update...

► **BGC Evangelism Roundtable**, a theology/evangelism consultation hosted by the Billy Graham Center and co-sponsored by InterVarsity Press, will be held **April 22-24**. The topic is "Issues of Truth and Power: The Gospel in a Post Christian Culture." Speakers include: Duane Litfin, Brian McLaren, Lorna Dueck, Carl Ellis, Brad Kallenberg, Rick Richardson, George Hunter, Paul E. Larsen, Lon Allison and others. Registration is limited to 50 to ensure spirited dialog among participants. Contact <ISE@wheaton.edu>.

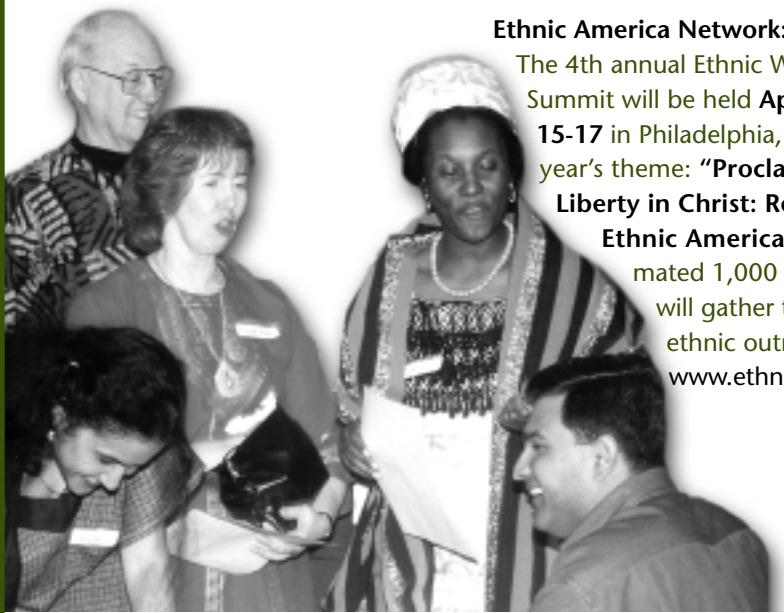
► **National Proclamation Evangelism Conference** will be held at the Billy Graham Center **June 12-17**. This third national conference focuses on training evangelists for publicly proclaiming Christ in local communities. Program includes three evangelistic outreach events and three days of training. Speakers include: Loren Cunningham, Joyce Meyer, J. John, Steve Douglass, Avery Willis, John Dawson, Tim Robnett, Angulus Wilson and others. Contact ISE@wheaton.edu for information and registration, or visit <www.PEN-net.org>.

► **Arrow Leadership Ministries' US Seminar** will be hosted by the Billy Graham Center **May 16-20**. Active in seven nations, Arrow Ministries discovers, develops and helps deploy evangelism leaders. The 2004 class of 23 select leaders will study and grow at this seminar in spiritual formation, evangelism theory and praxis, leadership and missiology.

► **Pray for Billy Graham Center evangelists-at-large this spring:**

- **March**—**Angulus Wilson** preaches at a rally in South Africa preceding the Franklin Graham Mission.
- **April**—**Dallas Anderson** speaks to prisoners in Texas and Florida in partnership with the Operation Starting Line network.
- **April**—**Lon Allison** proclaims Christ and trains 40 evangelists from Southeast Asia in Manila, Philippines.
- **May**—**Angulus Wilson** leads a preaching and teaching team to Uganda.

► **The Museum**—Ninety-seven people made spiritual decisions at the Museum from August to December last year. ■



**Ethnic America Network:**

The 4th annual Ethnic Workers' Summit will be held **April 15-17** in Philadelphia, Penn. This year's theme: "**Proclaiming Liberty in Christ: Reaching Ethnic America.**" An estimated 1,000 participants will gather to learn about ethnic outreach. Visit: [www.ethnicamerica.com](http://www.ethnicamerica.com)

## on BGC Evangelism Partners

BGC auxiliary board member **Rebecca Manley Pippert** wrote the 1979 classic evangelism book *Out of the Salt Shaker*, which has sold more than a half-million copies in 25 languages. She also wrote *Hope Has Its Reasons*, *A Heart for God*, and *Salt Shaker Resources: An Evangelism Toolkit [all with IVP]*. She and her family live in Louisville, Kentucky, where she heads *Saltshaker Ministries* <[www.saltshaker.org](http://www.saltshaker.org)>, equipping Christians to share their faith. Recently she spoke with guest writer Deann Alford.



### Q: Share your thoughts on the BGC ministry.

I'm thrilled by BGC's commitment to evangelism in diverse, innovative ways. Lon Allison brings creativity and intellectual firepower to evangelism. I admire his combination of head and heart. We share a similar passion about reaching this generation for Christ's kingdom.

### Q: What's different about the revised, expanded *Out of the Salt Shaker*?

I wrote it in my twenties and revised and expanded it in my forties so now it has middle-aged examples! I've learned a lot in the 20 years I have trained people from nearly every denomination and continent in evangelism. Plus our culture has changed significantly. Among new issues addressed: How to communicate sin in a therapeutic age primarily concerned with building self-esteem? How to talk about Christ's uniqueness in a culture influenced by New Age? How to deal with people influenced by moral relativism where the common assumption is that everybody's path is equally valid?

### Q: You founded *Saltshaker Ministries* to train people in evangelism. What's your approach?

Our deepest motivation for sharing Christ comes not from learning new techniques but from knowing God, being transformed by his love, and having confidence that God's Word and his Spirit are powerful, life-changing resources. At a Saltshaker conference I emphasize that methodology must flow from our message. First we must understand what we believe. Then we explore how beliefs shape the way we communicate and live our faith.

### Q: How does understanding doctrine affect relating to non-Christians?

A great example is the Incarnation. Exploring how God related to us through Christ provides models. Jesus was radically identified with sinners. He walked alongside people and was involved, yet he was radically different in his deity. We too must learn how to walk alongside seekers without compromising our holiness. The Incarnation teaches us to celebrate our human inadequacy while depending on the Holy Spirit's power. I've been amazed how understanding the Incarnation frees people from their fears about witnessing.

### Q: What's your take on post-modernism?

Moral relativism, the erosion of absolute truth, and the fact that "tolerance" has become our culture's supreme virtue, all challenge us in evangelism. However, we still must ask ourselves: Has the fundamental problem changed? No. The problem is still sin. Has the solution to the human crisis changed? No, the solution is still the cross of Christ. Have the resources God uses to bring people to Christ changed? No. God still uses the power of his Truth though the Word and the gospel, the power of the Holy Spirit and the power of Christ's love to bring seekers to himself.

An effective strategy is connecting post-modern needs with God's resources. Post-moderns respond to a dialogical, process-oriented, authentic, relational approach in which truth is communicated in narrative form. A seeker Bible study, then, meets their need for dialogue, process, relationship and narrative truth while powerfully utilizing God's resources. I've seen so many come to Christ through this tool.

### Q: What's a seeker Bible study?

It usually focuses on a gospel passage that confronts us with the person of Jesus. Anyone is welcome. It takes place with your neighbors, colleagues, etc. People who wouldn't darken the door of a church would come to a home or office to study the Bible because they're curious. The key is a non-churchy atmosphere where seekers aren't pressured or embarrassed for their lack of biblical knowledge. They don't have to believe in Jesus or that the Bible is divinely inspired. It's Jesus' "come and see" approach. The Holy Spirit opens eyes as seekers read about Jesus. They are drawn to him, amazed by how real and relevant the Bible is to their lives. Seekers nearly always invite more seekers to come, and some are saved!

### Q: To switch topics, how are you viewed as a female evangelist, author and speaker?

I've rarely had negative responses, but they wouldn't have invited me if they had an issue with women teaching! When I speak it's under the inviting pastor's authority. I've heard repeatedly, "This is the first time we've ever had a woman speak to this group."

### Q: What words do you have for women wanting to do what you're doing?

Never use ministry as a means of gaining identity or worth. It isn't your ministry or gifts that ultimately defines or names you. Only God has the power to name you and give you a sense of being.

Take your gifts seriously. They are God-given and intended for use, not in a demanding way or with a chip on your shoulder, but in order to serve the body of Christ. Find a place that allows you to use your gifts. Practice patience, humility and love towards those who may still be in process. Be zealously committed to the development of another's gifts. ■

**The Billy Graham Center (BGC) strives to stimulate global evangelism through key partnerships.** Forty leaders on the Center's advisory committee work alongside the BGC to develop strategies and skills for communicating the gospel.

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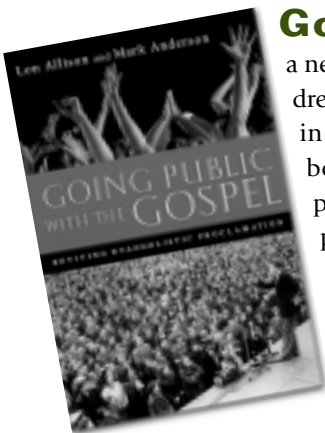
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**Going Public With the Gospel,**

a newly released book by **Lon Allison and Mark Anderson**, addresses the critical need to revive public evangelical proclamation in today's answer-starved world. This 180-page, easy-to-read book offers compelling arguments for returning to publicly proclaiming the gospel, citing God's historic use of evangelistic preaching to bring people to himself. Allison directs the Billy Graham Center and has experience in church planting and reaching nonchurched people. Anderson is the founder and international director of Youth With A Mission Campaigns, a worldwide evangelistic ministry, and has a background in pastoral ministry and church planting.

Published by InterVarsity Press and available through the **EMIS office at the BGC for only \$13. Order online at [www.emisdirect.com](http://www.emisdirect.com) or call 630-752-7158.**



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The Billy Graham Center stimulates global evangelism, partnering with Christian leaders to develop strategies and skills for communicating the gospel. The Center serves the church in evangelism and missions through leadership training, research, networking and strategic planning.

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