

A PREZ RELEASE from AGTS

(Monthly commentary from the President of the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary)

January 2002

.... And Miles to Go Before I Sleep!

I'm presently experiencing the ultimate in helplessness. I'm stuck in a plane on the tarmac at Atlanta Hartsfield Airport. We've been sitting on the runway waiting in line for 7 hours to have our plane de-iced. Picture it with me....! Recycling stale air, no more pretzels, 250 people about to go crazy, smokers going rough cold turkey, babies screaming, bathrooms overflowing and if I hear one more kid say "I'm bored", I will....! I just heard one 10-year old budding theologian ask his dad, **"where is God when you really need Him?"**

I'm amazed at what this kind of event does to people. Locked into a metal tube with the only connection to the world being cell phones, options in life become "slim and none." Stimulation is reduced to reading and re-reading a six-month-old copy of Field and Stream left in the magazine rack. My tendency to trouble-shoot all the options open solving a problem quickly comes up empty and I'm struck by the fact that I'm at the mercy of the elements and (in my judgment) very poor planning for inclement weather by the airline I'm flying. The bursar said early in this ordeal - **"the door has been closed... we're now in line to be de-iced and there's absolutely nothing we can do to remedy this situation."**

Stuck in this plane with no options is not much different than what countless people in the world face everyday. By decisions they have made and have had made for them, people find themselves with no options---stuck in ruts, mired in unjust circumstances, controlled by evil systems and generally reduced to last gaps like "where is God when you need Him" or "there is absolutely nothing that can be done."

The frustration I'm feeling right now is only a fraction of the deeply felt pain of running out of options that debilitates people daily. I will make it to my destination tonight, exhausted but finally "there." The really great news is that unlike my plane trip, the lifeline to the human condition is more than a cell phone. The solution to our human dilemma was conceived even before we got frustrated, desperate or fatalistic. God has been reaching toward us since the moment of Creation. The old Gospel song captures that reality in poignant words:

*When we have exhausted our store of endurance,
When our strength is gone 'ere the day is half done,
When we've reached the end of our hoarded resources,
Our Father's full giving is only begun:
His love has no limits; His grace has no measure,
His love has no boundary known unto men,
For out of His infinite riches in Jesus
He giveth and giveth and giveth again*

Check it out!!!!

AGTS will be sponsoring two leadership roundtables in 2002. March 4-5 in Sacramento, California and November 18-19 in Philadelphia. Our special guest for these roundtables on Emerging Church Models will be Brian McLaren, well known author of Finding Faith (Zondervan, 1999) The Church on the Other Side (Zondervan, 2000) A New Kind of Christian: A Tale of Two Friends on a Spiritual Journey (Jossey-Bass, 2001) and coming in January, 2002 from Zondervan, More Ready Than You Realize: Evangelism as Dance in the Postmodern Matrix. For more information on these two events contact Randy Walls at rwalls@agseminary.edu To register call: 1-800-467-AGTS, ext. 1044 or register online at: www.agts.edu

Do you know someone interested in attending seminary? The 2002 **SEMINARY DAY** is March 22. A one-day event that includes attendance in classes, conversation with faculty and all the information needed to make a decision. There's also a Job Fair with potential employers and real estate options. To register call: 1-800-467-AGTS and ask for John Skinner or Raquel Perez or check on-line at: www.agts.edu

I highly recommend a fellow seminary president's latest book. Dr. Richard Mouw has written, The Smell of the Sawdust, Zondervan Publishers. A very powerful reflection on the continual tension between our heart and our head in our walk with God