Paul J. Levin Memorial Edition

When the Lord took Paul Levin Home, we bid farewell to a man called "Friend" by people over the world. Many who never saw him never less came to know Christ through him his tracts and radio broadcasts projected warmth and honesty of a true gentleman, the attributes seen by those who each in person. If was truly the beauty of Christ in him.

As Bible Tracts, his legacy of hard work and continues to spread the Gospel, his heavenly treasures and those of every other part—in the ministry will steadily increase. We ask God for the growing support of partners of faith and dedication. May the beauty of be seen in us, too. For the first time since the Bible Tract Bulletin circulation, this column doesn’t carry Paul Levin's by-line, his humor, his exhortations to keep on giving out the Gospel or his zest for life Christ, but it does carry a tribute to its

The Editor

GOD’S SERVANT IS GONE
by Ralph Blake

In the book of Joshua, chapter one, the Lord said to the young man Joshua, "Moses My servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people,... as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. Be strong and of a good courage ...”

In this chapter we see that God gave Joshua the promise of victory as well as the promise of His presence. God reminded him that His work was not done and that it must continue for His glory. Several times He admonished Joshua to "be strong and of a good courage." The leadership had changed but God's plans, purposes and promises had not.

Dr. Paul Levin was in many ways like Moses. Both men served God faithfully for many years. Both were characterized by humility. And, as Moses was perhaps the greatest individual of the Old Testament, so was Evangelist Paul Levin one of the giants of this century.

It was my privilege to travel thousands of miles with Dr. Paul during the last year of his life. We spent many hours talking together. What a rich blessing and great opportunity it was for me to get to know this servant of God, his love for the Lord, his philosophy of ministry and his ever-present wit and humor. But now the Lord has called him Home. His days of labor and toil are past, and it could be said of him, "Paul, God's servant, is asleep in the Lord."

And, even though I could never compare myself to Joshua, I find myself in a similar situation. The man whom God used to begin and firmly establish this worldwide ministry is gone—but the work is the Lord's, and it must continue for His glory.

I still remember clearly the day Dr. Paul asked me to "pray about coming to work for Bible Tracts and taking over

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when I am gone." The weight of those words is only now beginning to settle upon me, but God has encouraged me through His Word as He did Joshua centuries ago.

Dr. Paul desired to see this ministry continue moving forward. God allowed him to see us move into our beautiful new facilities, which are now fully paid for. He allowed him to see his tracts translated into almost 100 languages and shipped to over 100 countries with a total circulation of more than 474,000,000. Only the Bema Seat (which he so often mentioned) will reveal the far-reaching results of one humble servant's being completely sold out for God.

Friends, please pray that God would grant me the wisdom and strength to carry on the leadership of this work. I would also ask that you work with me to ensure that this needed work not only continue but also grow. The world's population is over five billion souls. If we could print 10 million tracts every year, what would that be among such a multitude. Let us all work, pray and give to the glory of God through the saving of lost souls around the world.

I would also ask for your patience with me as I learn and grow into this ministry. If we do something in a way different from the way Dr. Paul would have done it, please bear with us. There is only one Paul Levin and God has called him Home.

As God gives opportunity, I hope to get to know each of you better as we work together. So many have already written encouraging words, assuring me of their continued prayers! As I travel around this great land of ours, if you have the opportunity, I hope you'll just walk up and say, "Hello, Brother Blake, my name is 'So and So' (probably not your name!) and I am praying for Bible Tracts."

May God bless you as you serve Him.
When Paul Levin’s first tract was published in 1938, shortly before his twenty-fourth birthday, neither he nor Dorothy could realize that 58 years later its offspring, Bible Tracts, Inc., would be known worldwide through nearly a half-billion soul winning and a 15-minute daily broadcast. Only a few months before his death, the ministry as was featured in an Associated Press article in newspapers, the country, an encouragement to him, his staff, and the ministry who were delighted to see their ministry

before was completely unexpected. Dr. Paul was too ill to be interviewed so our newly-saved director Ralph Blake, supported with prayer and as many facts as he thought might thought might be useful, met with Christopher Kells, AP reporter. The ensuing article represented the ministry favorably and we felt it was God’s hand reaffirming the vital Bible Tracts ministry in leadership transition.

The months of joyful and excitement preparation between our February move and the June open house were saddened by Dr. Paul’s failing health. Every day that he wasn’t traveling and was well enough to come to the office, he’d walk the length of the ground floor (and occasionally, against our “orders” for his safety, sneaky upstairs!) to view the progress in unpacking and redecoration. Oh, how he wanted to help paint! And, oh, how he hated that we ladies had to carry boxes! And, oh, how he appreciated everything we did! Has there ever been any staff, friend or family member who felt more appreciated than Dr. Paul’s? There was nothing too small for him to be grateful for, and even if you knew him only through his preaching, radio voice, or pen, you know this to be true, too.

Back in his corner office, it was a race against time to shelve his many books, file his drawers and drawers of materials (We never completed either project!), and make things handy for his ever diminishing strength and ability to reach. He and Rhonda worked at padding his chair with pillows to support his painful back and sides. His niece Donette brought him a wheeled cart to hold his reel-to-reel player at a height he could reach without bending. Wanda cut and placed chair mats so that he could easily roll between his desk and files, although none of this insulated him from the pain he felt from every exertion.

We privately grieved at the changes the cancer produced. It was after Dorothy’s death (the day before his 80th birthday in 1994) and the several weeks it took him to adjust to the acute loneliness that he had told us he felt 30 again—and proceeded to act like it! We’ll never forget seeing him run across the parking lot and up and down the hall between our old offices. Then he began to experience leg and back pain that slowed him down, but despite the heartache and cancer’s onslaught, we didn’t see much change in his ability to work night and day until a short time before open house. He wanted to live long enough to enjoy his new broadcast booth and hoped for another 20 years. On one particularly painful day, he conceded that he’d be satisfied with “maybe just 19 more years!”

More than in years, time in moments was always a valuable commodity to him, so he never did only one thing at a time! He read while eating, he read while resting, and he listened while reading! While answering correspondence or preparing sermons or articles, he’d audit tapes and time every selection or sermon with the stopwatch that was part of his wardrobe. (He had plans to make more tapes available.) The only thing he seemed to forget in those months blured with nausea and overwhelming work was the time to take his medicine! He’d write notes to himself and arrange the next dosage on them, but Pam or Conni or I would have to say, “Have you taken your medicine?” He often teased that women were running his life—staff at the office, nieces at home, hostresses on the road—but he grinned and “took his medicine” gratefully.

He took his final road trip in May to Colorado, despite our protests. His calls home to the office revealed labored breathing and physical weakness (and confession of one trip to the emergency room to alleviate his breathing problem in the higher altitude). His broadcasts “on location” were ever the sweet and kind gestures of love he genuinely felt for the thousands in Echoes’ audience and he pled for the unsaved to call upon his Savior. While listeners were blessed with the “homey” sound (once real birds chirped and warbled throughout the entire broadcast!), those close to him were assailed with the pain of realization that his life was ebbing away.

When Ralph Blake brought him home from Colorado and a “whistle-stop” service in Kansas, he was exhausted and had to rest if he was to come for open house. Things looked bleak the final week of preparations but early Saturday morning he prayed fervently for strength, and God granted him both Saturday and Sunday. (See pictures from the open house weekend throughout this issue.)

Dr. Paul loved seeing many friends and family members who came from nine states, and he loved having them see the new facilities’ spaciousness and brightness. We had the opportunity to meet the former office manager at Waterloo, ladies who had done volunteer typing in their homes, and many of our ministry partners whom we’ve known only by name.

Our greatest joy was to show Dr. Paul the Dorothy G. Levin Memorial Room. We’re all pictured with him here, surrounded by framed memorabilia of the ministry.

Time was valuable to him, so he never did only one thing at a time!
Dr. Paul had a burst of energy one morning after our open house that allowed him and us his last day in the office. Following that, he was at home (except for getting out of bed to preach one last time July 7) until July 22, when he had to be admitted to a nursing home, where he departed for Heaven on September 7.

His funeral September 10, at Calvary Baptist Church in Normal, was a service to honor our Savior. Dr. Arno Q. Weniger, Dr. Paul's former pastor and current board member, said that, “like the Apostle Paul, for Paul Levin to live was Christ and to die was gain.” He called his life of evangelism, radio broadcasts and the tract ministry “the work and labor of love which God doesn't forget.”

Dr. Bill Rice III said that three things characterized Dr. Paul: his humility, his humor and his preaching.

He said that Dr. Paul lived with a smile on his face, enjoying life and causing us to enjoy it. Characteristic of his humor, his answer in the nursing home to Dr. Rice’s, “When do you think the Lord is coming?” was, “You got a stopwatch?”

Dr. Rice paralleled Dr. Paul's life with that of John the Baptist, whose ministry was to point to Christ so that to think of John the Baptist is to think of Christ; “to be around Paul Levin was to talk and think about Christ. To praise Paul Levin is to praise Christ...If you remember Paul Levin, you remember the Lord Jesus Christ...May God multiply his kind.”

Dr. Ralph Wingate III, Dr. Paul’s pastor and current Board member, gave the funeral sermon, first reminiscing from Dr. Paul's personal interviews about Billy Sunday, Dr. Bill Rice, Jr., and Dr. M. R. DeHaan. Soloist was Reverend Ken Barth who sang “Saved by Grace” and “I Want to See My Savior First of All.”

Even now, over two months later, we still expect him to come through the door and often think of sharing an anecdote or letter with him. But he prepared us for this with his humor, his philosophy, his “conversation” and his plans for the future. He personally chose Ralph Blake with good counsel, and he set in motion many changes you’ll be seeing which he felt were necessary for the continuation of our ministries into the next century, if the Lord tarries.

Dr. Paul’s fervent desire that Bible Tracts continue, with or without him, has brought repeatedly to mind Moses’ prayer in Psalm 90:16-17: “Let Thy work appear unto Thy servants, and Thy glory unto their children. And let the beauty of the LORD our God be upon us: and establish Thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish Thou it.”

Sherri Rodman

Note: Dr. Paul’s last sermon, “Paul's Trip to Heaven or Are You Afraid to Die,” is now available on audio cassette and will be available on video cassette after Christmas. See the enclosed order blank. This photo was taken the evening he preached this sermon at Park Meadows Baptist Church, Lincoln, IL.
From Norwegian to Arabic, group prints Bible messages for the world

By CHRISTOPHER WILLS
The Associated Press

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.—Messages are handed mil in American prisons, African markets and Ilipino villages. The words are English or Arabic or Tagalog, but the subject is always the same: Jesus.

For 58 years, a not-for-profit company in Bloomington has preached the Gospel with a flood of pamphlets. Bible Tracts Inc. gives the pamphlets to missionaries across the world and believers here in the United States.

The company — just four full-time workers and a handful of part-timers — says it has printed 472 million tracts in "y' lai[i].iaj.î's since il', 1 < S liumdiu;"
converting people to Christianity. The philosophy is built around the Bible's command to "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature."

"We take that very literally, and we're trying to do that," said Ralph Blake, who runs the organization now that its founder is in poor health.

"It's a way of sharing the good news," Blake said. "Maybe you don't have time to stop and give a sermon, so you give people a little something they can take home and read at their convenience."

A brochure for people ordering tracts suggests mailing them to newlyweds or people in jail. Or they can be left with tips at restaurants or on buses and airplanes. Many are simply handed out on the street to passers-by.

But Blake says the tracts may be most useful to missionaries working overseas.

"Overseas, people are more eager for literature. They're not inundated with junk mail like we are," he said.

Jerrold Myers agrees. He is leaving soon for missionary work in Uganda and Rwanda, and Bible Tracts is giving him 625,000 tracts to take along.

He said people snap them up when they are given out in markets or along the road. People even approach him to ask for tracts when he is not handing them out, Myers said.

"It's the only way to carry out your ministry. You have to have something in print," he said.

"They have an insatiable desire to read and learn."

Bible Tracts prints 43 tracts with such titles as "What God Wants You to Know" and "A Would-Be Suicide."

Some are written for special occasions. "You Don't Stand a (host of a Chance" can be handed out on Halloween. New parents could be given "What the Bible Has to Say About Infant Baptism."

Each one urges people to write in if the tract convinces them to accept Jesus. Blake says 83 people have written so far this year. Bible Tracts then sends them more religious literature and the name of a nearby church that shares the company's Independent Baptist beliefs.

"I believe that follow-up to be unique among tract organizations," he said. All the tracts are distributed for donations; the company gets by solely on donations.

It also produces a daily 15-minute radio program for 45 stations across the country. "Bible Tract Echoes"...
Levin founded Bible Tracts after writing two articles for a Christian newspaper. He got requests for the articles in pamphlet form and printed a few.

Then he got requests for more and kept printing, adding new pamphlets over the years.

Levin, 82, still writes all the tracts.

The latest, “Peace in Terminal Illness,” was inspired by his own battle with cancer.

Blake acknowledges that many of the tracts are thrown away unread, but he says that doesn’t faze him.

“I can never feel that I’m wasting my time presenting the Gospel of Jesus Christ,” he said. “There will be results. I’m guaranteed of it.”