

Freedom FOCUS

*"...to turn them
from darkness
to light..."*

November—December 2007

NEWSLETTER

www.indianabcc.com

Dear Friends,

We just completed our 2007 Fall Praise Banquet and it was a fantastic evening together. Even though we are a small ministry, God is doing big things in peoples' lives. Many friends of the ministry gathered for the banquet and were encouraged as they listened to powerful testimonies, heard a ministry update of the Indiana Biblical Counseling Center, and were offered opportunities on how they could be involved.

IBCC is on the cutting edge of helping Christians who are struggling with extremely difficult problems in their lives. When people come to IBCC for help, they are looking for help from a biblical perspective and an understanding heart. We count it an honor to serve many of those who call us for help and provide them the biblical counsel they desire. We cannot help everyone who calls us, but we are doing our best to expand the scope of this ministry. In the coming year we are committed to three new ministry initiatives to help us better serve the needs of God's people:

- Quarterly small group discipleship-counseling training sessions in 2008.
- A new seminar to better equip the family, "Biblical Principles for Building a Strong Family." This seminar material will be in audio format on our web site, as a CD set to be purchased through our office, and will also be available for a live presentation to present at churches. In addition, we will be adding other valuable resources through our website.
- Weekly email devotionals that will help encourage people in their spiritual growth.

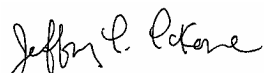
The strength of this ministry is the counseling that takes place on a daily basis in our office. It is a tremendous blessing to counsel at no charge. However, it does cost us \$85 per hour to counsel someone. Many people who have referred others have helped with this expense over the years. In addition, many clients have given what they could afford. As we finish another year of ministry, we are still facing a \$25,000 deficit for 2007. This shortfall is a concern; nevertheless, it gives us the opportunity to look to the Lord to meet our needs and share with you an opportunity to be involved.

I would ask that you prayerfully consider IBCC in your end of the year giving.

Thank you for your consideration. Your financial gifts and prayers bring freedom to others!

I join with my family, staff, and Board of Directors in thanking God for giving us the opportunity to serve Christ and to faithfully assist in God's appointed ministry. Thank you for caring about hurting people. May God bless you and your family this Christmas season!

God bless you and your family,



Rev. Jeffrey P. Pokone

Powerful Testimonies Highlight the 2007 Fall Praise Banquet

Reflecting on this year's Fall Praise Banquet, one attendee commented what an encouragement it was to see that God is still able to put back the pieces of broken lives, even in desperate situations. On Friday, November 2nd, approximately sixty guests joined us at the Indianapolis Training Center for a celebration of God's blessing on the ministry of the Indiana Biblical Counseling Center over the past year.

The program began with special music as Ron (IBCC Intern), Cindy (IBCC Secretary), and Mark Visser sang "Come Unto Me," taken from Jesus' invitation to every burdened soul, with the divine promise, "*I will give you rest*" (Matthew 11:28-30). This is truly the mission of IBCC—to point hurting men and women to the Great Comforter, Jesus Christ, because His burden is light.

IBCC Board Member Steve Becker recognized Dr. Mike Jacobson for ten years of faithful service as a Board Member for the ministry with a beautifully engraved plaque. Though Dr. Mike Jacobson could not be present due to military obligations, he did send his greetings via DVD.

The highlight of the evening was the powerful testimonies from three individuals who had been significantly helped through the ministry of Rev. Jeff Pokone and IBCC. One testimony was from a local pastor who found help with depression and anxiety which was beginning to impact his marriage and ministry. He shared how understanding and resolving past childhood wounds from his relationship with his mother was integral in getting "unstuck" emotionally. God continues to fulfill His redemptive work in this pastor's life as God has taken past struggles to give this pastor a vision for discipleship ministry in a new church plant.

Another moving testimony was given by a current IBCC counselee who continues to find freedom and healing from a painful past as he has begun to see woundedness as a gift from God. This gentleman shares in his own words: "Psalm 109 gives a good definition of woundedness, '*For I am afflicted and needy, and my heart is wounded within me.*' The psalmist goes on to say that the afflicted and needy man is despondent in heart. In my late 30's that was very evident in my life. I was in great despair, especially regarding my own sin. However, I did not know or acknowledge my *affliction, needs, or wounds*. Several Christian men helped me see how I had covered up my wounds from other people. God has now given me great freedom in my body, soul, and spirit, and the means to that freedom was and continues to be through His living and active Word. This deliverance came not from my futile attempts to keep His Law, but through seeing 'Christ crucified' for me. It was also only at the Cross that I found the freedom to forgive the people who hurt me."

The final testimony was given by a couple who received counseling from Rev. Jeff Pokone a few years ago. An abusive childhood in every way, two 30-day stints in a psychiatric ward, countless ECT treatments, and an attempt at suicide were the factors that forced the husband to seek spiritual help for his struggling wife. Pastor Larry Cornett from a Baptist church in Cincinnati, Ohio, was God's channel to first introduce them to the Lord Jesus Christ; this launched them on a new road of hope and healing. Later, Pastor Cornett introduced the couple to Rev. Jeff Pokone. In the counseling sessions to follow, God used the Scriptures to speak truth and worth into this struggling wife's soul. God also enabled her to forgive those who had so greatly offended her. Now, five years since their conversion, this couple is actively involved in ministry to other hurting people.

IBCC Board Member Rev. Rich Johnston concluded the evening by encouraging the partnership of others in the common goal of helping hurting people. Whether it be a financial donation to the ministry of IBCC, or prayer support for and during the counseling sessions, or participation in the upcoming training classes designed to equip lay leaders for effective discipleship ministry, there is an opportunity for everyone to be a part of what God is doing in redeeming broken lives. We believe that this year's Banquet was indeed a tribute to the goodness and mercy of our great God!
