

# TAMPA BAY BIBLE CONFERENCE REPORT

February 7<sup>th</sup> - 9<sup>th</sup>, 2003

Report by: Ernestine Priebe (2/18/2003)

God has instilled in Tampa Bay Fellowship an intense desire to study His Word, which became the driving factor in holding our first Bible Conference. When teacher Zin Yi of Good Message Foundation confirmed the weekend that he would be available, our small group (nine, including children) began to plan for this very special weekend. With no prior experience, we relied on God for every detail. All of us were brought closer to each other and felt more like co-laborers in the Gospel before, during and after the Conference. As we let other believers and fellowships know about the conference via emails and phone calls, we were excited that many expressed a desire to join us. In all, eleven visitors from out of the Tampa Bay area were allowed of God to be with us that eventful weekend. All stayed in Tampa Bay Fellowship homes which provided further opportunities of fellowship and talking about the things of God. From the beginning, we left our conference schedule flexible, all being willing to change as God led.

During the conference, we were blessed by seven recorded sessions of Bible study, as well as a time of Bible Q & A, interspersed with times of sharing meals together and talking with one another. Even the commute time to and from the two homes where we met became a wonderful time of conversation about the Bible and personal testimony.

The first three sessions explored the very important question of "**Why do we study the Bible?**" We learned the relationship between the Bible and Sanctification, the importance of correct doctrine, the basic principles of Bible study, and the Biblical basis for spiritual interpretation. These lessons gave our fellowship even more motivation to study the Bible carefully, and by Bible rules, as well as to be thorough as we work on word study charts. This was an extremely helpful supplement to our Sunday afternoon Basic Steps in Bible Studies over Paltalk (3:30 - 5pm, EST).

The remaining four sessions were spent looking at the little book of **Esther**, which has some pretty big spiritual applications as we learned during the Conference. We focused on Esther's petition (comparing it to the widow's request in Luke 18:1-8), Haman, the enemy of the Jews, and the two queens of Ahasuerus - Vashti and Esther. Brother Dave from our fellowship said that studying the spiritual meaning of these two wives has shed new light in his own personal Bible study. Brother Graham also was edified in studying the parallels of these two wives, who are figures of the corporate and the Eternal Church. Brother Lingo was quick to add that he now understands this parable of Esther so much better after these sessions. He thought it tied well with our Sunday Afternoon Basic Steps in Bible Study. Lingo also said he was thankful that someone asked a question that had been troubling him during the time of Bible Q & A. All agreed that the Bible Q & A was, indeed, a profitable time.

All attending the Bible Conference have expressed their delight in being with like-minded believers and intense Bible study for nearly 3 days. Brother Tony from Tampa Bay Fellowship said he enjoyed being "immersed in the Word." Brother Dave heartily agreed. Everyone, including the Carter family who came from Jacksonville, FL, was eager to comment about how much they enjoyed the entire Conference. Sister Robin (wife and mother) said she especially "liked the time to discuss the different Scriptures with other brethren." She said it helped her in her personal Bible study and "answered

many of our questions.” She went on to say that she “was truly blessed and enjoyed getting to know others we had met but didn’t have the chance to really fellowship with.” Brother Gary (husband and father) added that “it was a real blessing to be able to enjoy the study of the Scriptures with the whole family. Some studies separate the children from the parents, and we find that a family that learns together, grows together.”

In closing, we cannot neglect to also mention the wonderful times of singing hymns and spiritual songs together. We were so delighted and grateful that sister Ernestine Priebe (SSG of WNY) accompanied us on the keyboard. We also thank God for Brother John Priebe who helped to lead the singing. The Priebees were kind enough to bring numerous hymnals with them, one of which they left for the Tampa Bay Fellowship. We are also thankful for sister Patty Swanson (Beaumont, Texas) who also brought hymnals and asked some very excellent questions during the Bible Q & A. Lingo also added that this Bible Conference was a cost effective way to obey God’s exhortation of Hebrews 10:25. Last, but not least, we thank our sovereign God in allowing Zin Yi, from Good Message Foundation, to be with us in person, and enabling him to be a faithful student and teacher of His Word.

### *Tampa Bay Fellowship*

P.S. An audio mp3 CD is available that includes the complete conference for the asking. If you are interested please contact Tom and Kathy Sollis at [tsollis@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:tsollis@tampabay.rr.com).