

“... pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest.” Luke 10:2

August 2022



FUNDAMENTAL BAPTIST MISSIONS INTERNATIONAL



## Let the Son Shine In!

George Zarris lived in the Fort Apache—at least that is what his mother called the one-room, third-floor apartment that he shared with his parents and a younger brother Gary. It definitely was spartan and almost empty except for a bed, a table, and some chairs. Four families shared the bathroom down the hall. For decoration, George’s mother wrote the alphabet on the wall—capital and small letters—so George and his brother could learn to read.

Religion was not a part of George’s life. God’s name was often used, but not in reverence. However, God did not forget the little Greek boy on Peoria Street in Chicago.

Christmas 1956, George’s father brought home a black box that was destined to change the trajectory of George’s life. It was a radio! It was alive! It talked! It sang! George was smitten! Then he heard it—a song that struck a chord in his heart! It made him feel warm and secure inside. The message spoke to him. “Open up your heart, and let the sun shine in!” Captivated, George spent hours turning the dial, trying to find that song again.

Three years passed. George’s Catholic Uncle Neil attended the 1959 Billy Graham Crusade at Soldier Field in Chicago. Convicted of his sin, he accepted Christ as his Saviour and began witnessing to his relatives. Eighteen months later, George (11) and Gary (9) accepted Christ at a Boy’s Brigade meeting. They were so excited! When they told their unsaved mother, even her caustic “SO WHAT!” couldn’t dampen their spirits.

Five years later, George’s life pivoted again. Uncle Neil began attending First Baptist Church in Hammond, Indiana, and urged George’s newly saved parents to visit.

LOCAL CHURCHES MULTIPLYING LOCAL CHURCHES

SERVING AT  
507 State Street  
Hammond, IN 46320  
219.228.2850 | fbmi.org

SERVING UNDER  
First Baptist Church  
219.932.0711  
fbchammond.com

SERVING WITH  
Hyles-Anderson College  
219.365.4031  
hylesanderson.edu

“He’s too loud, and he’s too long,” 16-year-old George declared. “I’m never going back!” But he did! Within weeks, George got baptized, quit his Catholic girlfriend, and surrendered his life to preach the Gospel. Two years of training under Dr. Jack Hyles and five more years under Dr. Lee Roberson at Tennessee Temple College, in Chattanooga, Tennessee, prepared George to plant a church in Aurora, Illinois, in 1972. Then radio reentered his life.

Utilizing the training from Mrs. Reesor’s college radio class, George broadcast a weekly program on a country station and a daily devotional, *Signs of the Times*, on eight outlets. When George responded to a WBBM editorial about teen contraceptives, he was invited to rebut the topic on air. Soon he was debating various moral issues with liberals, atheists, and unbelieving clergy on Chicago programs, including the *Oprah Winfrey Show*. When CBS television touted a clergyman who supported evolution, George provided so much opposing information that the Chicago station ran a five-day series on Creation vs. Evolution, using George as the main spokesman.

In the 1980s, George catapulted into a nationwide sphere of influence while directing the Moral Majority of Illinois. As the Fox River Valley Baptist Church, which he pastored, grew to a weekly attendance of 500-750 and a high day of 1,986 people, George recognized that public media was silencing the Christian voice and orchestrating an irreversible cultural shift. God directed George to resign his church and enter the second phase of his life—the realm of Christian radio.

After George purchased a distressed AM station in Louisville, Kentucky, both he and his partner/son Olympus poured their personal funds into the enterprise as they struggled to extend their influence and keep the business solvent. Sixteen years later, when *The Bridge* was a network of 5 stations with a combined listenership of 75,000 per week, God dropped a bomb! The station was sold, and the dazed Zarris duo questioned, “God, what are You doing?”

“Take it to the world!” was God’s reply. For the last 16 years, God has done just that. Christian Radio International was birthed. God, through His faithful servants, Iraqi Pastor Maher and Dr. Edgar Feghaly, provided a radio-station license for Baghdad, Iraq. Since then, CRI has partnered with Missionary Gene Sharp in the building of 41 radio stations for nationals and veteran missionaries, including such notables as Rick Martin (Philippines) and Jerry Wyatt (Tanzania). Eleven more stations are pending construction. Numerous other missionaries and national pastors have purchased radio and television time on public outlets and are proclaiming the Gospel on five continents. Everywhere radio and television are used, the Gospel is exploding, churches are growing, and Christians are strengthened in their faith; but it all started in a one-room flat in Chicago, when God opened up the heart of a little boy who “let the Son shine in.”

## **GHANA Kumasi**

### **A Prisoner Set Free – Testimonies from Missionary Ted Speer**



The television ministry has produced a steady stream of converts. Rudolph (pictured left with Ted Speer) saw our program while in prison. Upon release, he decided to visit our church. On the way, he saw me driving my car and followed me home, where I gave him a clear presentation of the Gospel. A pastor saw our program and sent me the name of Christian, a college student in the area. Christian got saved and brought a friend, who brought another friend, and then another.

Week after week, the story repeats, and the church keeps growing. A radio listener called Pastor Addai, one of 12 radio preachers we have trained. “I have been following your teachings since you came to Sunsum FM. Today, I am fully convinced what you are saying is the truth!”

## **UKRAINE Vyzhnytsia**

### **Fight the Good Fight!**

What should Christians do during wartime? Answer: “FIGHT!” That is exactly what CRI broadcaster Paul Dudka has continued to do. He has witnessed to sinners, baptized believers, fed the hungry, housed the refugees, married young couples, ordained

deacons, trained 50 young adults (ages 18 through 30) at a three-day retreat, and despite the threat of indiscriminate bombing, conducted a VBS for 200 children in a dark village where no believers exist! Please pray for Pastor Dudka, and give for Ukraine. Money is continually needed to buy daily food for 55 homeless refugees housed in the church.

George Zarris  
*Christian Radio International*

