

# Bearing Fruit, Sharing Joy

Our ministry theme for 2001 was "Sharing Joy," which focused us on the source of our joy, the "author and perfecter" of our faith, Jesus Christ. One of the most fulfilling aspects of partnering with you in this ministry is the sharing of joy over the fruit God has brought forth in our midst. After our plentiful harvest in 2000, we thought it impossible that we

would ever exceed our greatest year in ministry.

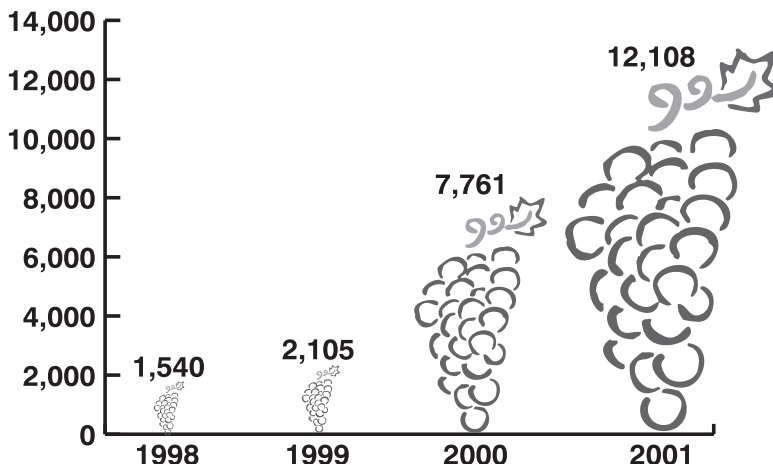
Yet God, the Lord of the harvest, thought better.

It is with greater joy than ever that we again report the most fruitful harvest in the history of our ministry. Last year, Faith Studies International was

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## Commitments to Christ by Year



*"...[T]here is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents" (Luke 15:10).*

## 2001: When Less Became More!

The nation of Israel was distressed as it gathered before Nehemiah the governor and Ezra the priest. As they heard the Word of the Lord read to them, they were assured with the words: "Do not be grieved, for the joy of the Lord is your strength" (Nehemiah 8:10). "Sharing Joy" was our ministry theme for 2001, and it served well to comfort us, to remind us of the source of our joy, and to give us strength in a trying year.

Faith Studies International had to live with less in 2001. There was a lot less income from individual contributions; there were fewer outreach events scheduled; and sales of ministry materials were reduced. By strictly human predictions, these should have translated into a reduced ministry as well.

But not so with God!

Our strength is in the Lord who called us to do His ministry and to rely on His provision. God multiplied the resources that did come in, and the results were phenomenal. We saw more commitments to Christ than in *any previous year* in our history; more ministry tools were published *than ever before*; and the total income was our *greatest in history!* Yes, God brought in other financial resources (that we knew nothing about) to make up for and exceed the reduced level of individual contributions.

### 2001 Special Highlights

- All new 5-hour video of *FaithSearch*
- Greatest number of recorded confessions of faith
- Largest number of financial contributors
- Evangelism tour of South Asia

The other articles and charts in this short 2001 Ministry Highlights report are a testimony to the power and goodness that God has shown toward Faith Studies International. We look forward to your continuing partnership with us, that we may together see what more God will do in 2002.



**Dr. Don Bierle**  
President



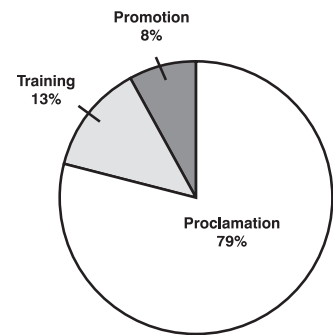
# Bearing Fruit, Sharing Joy (cont'd from previous page)

privileged to help over 12,100 individuals make a faith commitment to Jesus Christ. These numbers include only what is reported at our events. There are tens of thousands more who are impacted for eternity by reading our books, by attending small group video studies and by being trained as witnesses through our *Friend To Friend* materials.

The emphasis in the ministry of Faith Studies is evangelistic, reflecting our mission

statement. This is represented by nearly 80% of our events being Proclamational. We believe that God is honoring this commitment to evangelism, as we see the impact of changed lives growing rapidly, even over the last three years. It is our prayer that Faith Studies' continued efforts will result in further rejoicing in the presence of God over the many who come to faith in Christ through our partnership with you in the ministry of Faith Studies International.

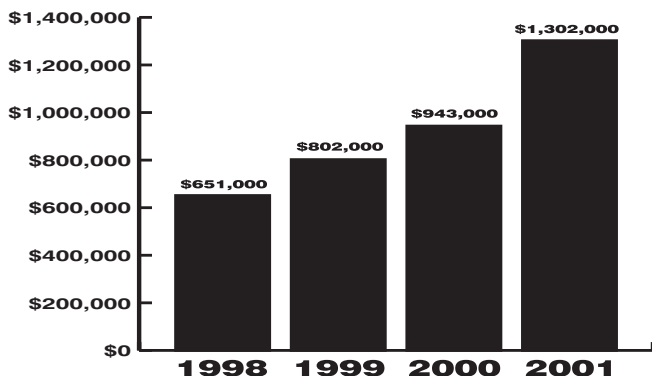
**Percentage of 2001 Event Types**



## The Bottom Line: God Remains Faithful

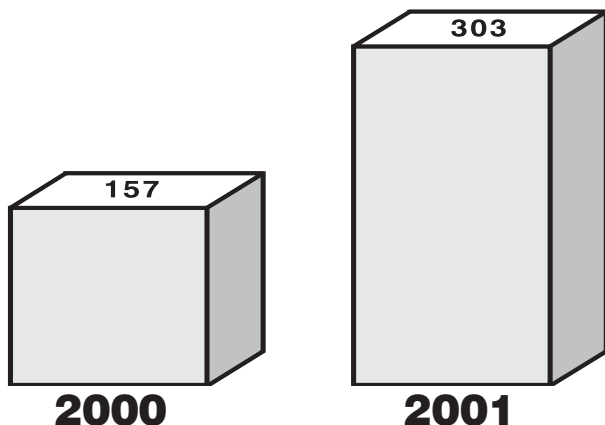
We never cease to marvel at both the faithfulness of God and the unpredictable ways in which He meets our financial needs. After experiencing a budget shortfall through most of the year, God used special servants of His to bring us resources in December that increased our total income to \$359,000 over the year 2000. The accompanying bar chart reflects the wonderful way that God has financially blessed Faith Studies over the past four years.

**Total Income by Year**



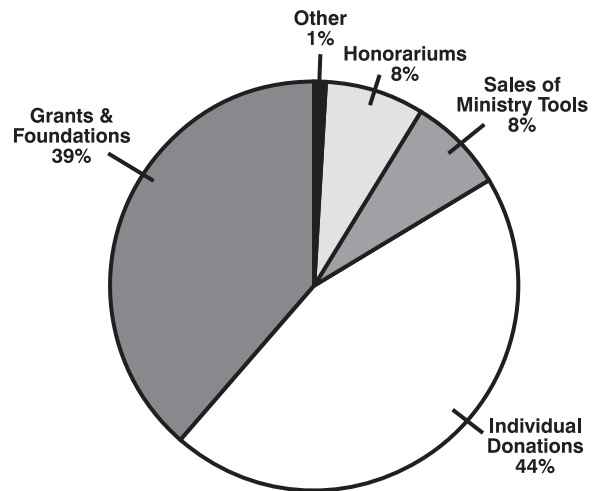
While total dollar contributions from individuals were down, a bright spot was the 93% growth of new donors in 2001 (see the two-year bar chart). Because of this, the total contributors was the most in our ministry history—757 compared to 692 in year 2000.

**Number of New Individual Donors 2000 vs 2001**



Faith Studies' total annual income is the sum of several sources as indicated in the accompanying pie chart. Grants and foundations were the big surprise this year, but honorariums were also up 12.4%. The near completion of our entire curriculum of publications makes it quite likely we will see an increase in sale of these ministry tools in the future.

**Total 2001 Income by Source**



*“My God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:19).*

Meanwhile, we were thrifty on the expense side of the ledger, reducing costs \$155,000 below budget—a low level of spending not achieved since 1998.

We continue to keep our financial needs before the Lord, and to keep you informed in an educational way, rather than using crisis appeals. The monthly newsletter and personal receipting of donations are two of the ways we do that. We have repeatedly affirmed that this is God's ministry, and it is in Him that we trust. His faithfulness to put us in the “black” for 20 years has been a source of both praise and boldness to move forward. We believe that God has an increasing role for us in this country and around the world to help fulfill His desire, “...not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance” (2 Peter 3:9).

## Historic Celebration Coming April 13

### “Piling Up Stones” to Honor God’s Faithfulness

In Joshua chapter four, and in many other places in the Bible, God’s people Israel set up a pile of stones to mark the occasion of His working in their lives. Future generations could point to the stones and remember that God was faithful to deliver or provide for His people.

In the same way, on April 13, Faith Studies International will be celebrating God’s faithfulness in our ministry as we “pile up stones” to honor God. Past, present and future will be brought into focus as we celebrate what God has done, what He is doing and what we’re believing Him for in the future of our ministry.

You are invited to come and share in this historic time, to enjoy great food and fellowship, entertainment and speakers. Plan now to attend the 2002 Celebration Dinner, by marking your calendar for April 13. The event will be held at the Radisson Hotel

South, in Edina, MN. It will begin with a social time at 5:30 p.m., followed by a complimentary dinner at 6:00 p.m., and our “Extending the Vision” program from 7:00-9:15 p.m. Call our office now to reserve your spot for this special evening (952-401-4501 in the Twin Cities, or toll free, 1-800-964-1447).

As part of the celebration, we will recognize the 20 years of Dr. Don Bierle’s leadership of Faith Studies, and rejoice at the impact of this ministry in our lives and in the lives of literally hundreds of thousands around the globe. From its beginning as a Bible study written by Dr. Bierle to encourage Christians that they can indeed rely on the Scriptures; to a truly international evangelistic outreach proclaiming evidences for the Christian faith, God has begun a work through Dr. Bierle that is continuing to multiply its fruit in the lives of many around the world.

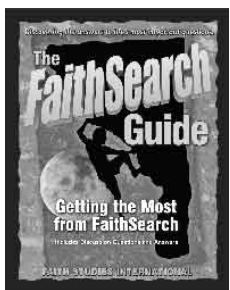
We will also take a moment to reflect on the bounteous harvest from the last 10 years of Faith Studies’ full-time evangelism ministry. We have been blessed to be used of God in playing a part in the eternal destiny of individuals from virtually all walks of life.

Our special keynote speaker for this evening of celebration will be Dr. Lon Allison, director of the Billy Graham Center at Wheaton College. Musical entertainment will feature Mary Beth Carlson, and Twin Cities radio personality Chuck Knapp will be our master of ceremonies. There will also be a special and exciting announcement—you truly won’t want to miss it.

All friends of Faith Studies, past and present, are welcome to attend. We especially encourage you to invite others as well, to share what God has been doing in and through us. We look forward to seeing you there.

## The FaithSearch Guide

### Getting the Most from *FaithSearch*



The much-anticipated, all-new companion to the *FaithSearch* seminar is currently being printed and will be available for purchase beginning in February. Titled *The FaithSearch Guide*, this 96-page book is designed for use with the entire *FaithSearch* family, whether the live presentation, the new video and audio series, the book *Surprised By Faith* or the “FaithQuest” interactive CD. Each participant is guided through the logical steps of *FaithSearch*, examining the evidence for the Christian faith,

and is encouraged to make a faith commitment to follow Jesus Christ.

This complete work identifies the key points of each session, and includes thought-provoking questions, supporting material and suggestions for further study. More than a workbook, the *Guide* also offers brief, insightful articles addressing some of the most frequently asked questions arising out of any *FaithSearch* presentation.

We’ve also included a section “For Leaders” as part of the book. Discussion leaders and organizers are provided with tips and suggestions for conducting a small group using these materials, as well as answers to each session’s questions. And because these materials are all in one convenient book, anyone who participates in a *FaithSearch* has all the resources they need to become a leader for their own event—and in fact they are encouraged to do so.

Faith Studies International is excited to make this book available at our seminars or directly from our office. (Call 1-800-964-1447, or 952-401-4501 in the Twin Cities.) It is our prayer that each participant in

an event will be able to use the *Guide* to enhance their experience and get the most out of their *FaithSearch*.

### Additional material provided in *The FaithSearch Guide* through Related Questions and Answers includes:

- If Evolution Is True, Who Needs God?
- Disputing the Existence of Demons
- Top-Five List of the World’s Religions
- The Question of Evil
- Aren’t There Other Explanations for the Resurrection?
- Is Christianity Narrow Minded?
- Aren’t Good People Good Enough?
- Is It Your Fault You’ve Never Heard of Jesus?
- Archaeology Can’t Tell Us Everything
- Don’t I Know What’s Best for Me?

Faith Studies International is an interdenominational, not-for-profit organization dedicated to presenting evidences for the Christian faith through the *FaithSearch* seminar and its derivatives—including outreach and training seminars, media resources, and discipleship programs. Faith Studies International is not publicly or denominationally supported.

**For information call:**  
(952) 401-4501/toll-free  
1-800-964-1447

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Visit our Web site at [www.faithstudies.org](http://www.faithstudies.org)  
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### CLASSIFIEDS

#### Full-Time Position Available

We are currently seeking a mature Christian to fill a full-time position for Director of Church Partner Services. Request an application, job descriptions, and other details at 952-401-4501 (local Twin Cities) or 1-800-964-1447.

## 2001: The Best of Times, The Worst of Times But God is Good — All the Time!

Perhaps titling this article after the famous beginning line from *The Tale of Two Cities* by Charles Dickens is a bit of an exaggeration as applied to Faith Studies in 2001. But we did have our trials this year, and the answering line affirms our conviction that God is *always* good, regardless of the times.

It is obvious that the economic downturn and terrorist fears have taken a serious toll on Christians' ability and/or commitment to financially support ministries like Faith Studies. Individual contributions for the year were down nearly \$150,000. We had to release one full-time staff person during the year and another for 2002. Because giving to churches is also down, they are in turn reducing expenditures available for outreach with our events and evangelists. Scheduling events has become more difficult.

On the other hand, God is always at work to redeem the situation. The 12,108 commitments to Christ at our events were the largest one-year total in our ministry history. We had over 9% more financial donors (757) in 2001 than in the previous year. We cut our expenses \$155,000 under budgeted amounts in order to avoid deficit spending—so we ended

the year in the **black!** Ministry publications were professionally updated in content and appearance. Our flagship event, *FaithSearch*, was released in a new and best-ever video recording.

We adopted "Sharing Joy" as our theme for 2001 based on Philippians 2:17-18. It is significant that the Apostle Paul's greatest joy was in the Lord Himself (Phil. 3:1 and 4:4). Ours is too—and we love sharing Him! Faith Studies is God's ministry and we are privileged to be called to lead it on His behalf. Regardless of the conditions or the times, we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love Him (Romans 8:28). It's in God we trust, and in that we are content. Will you trust Him too and help us make 2002 another "best year" in our ministry history?



Dr. Don Bierle  
*President*

## New Director of Communications and Publications

Rick Wattman joined the staff of Faith Studies International in September 2001, and has been busy right from the start writing, editing, updating and printing the many communication pieces used by the ministry. Bringing a breadth and depth of experience from his background in ministry and the communications field, Rick says, "I'm excited to be here at Faith Studies. I'm blessed to see how God is bringing virtually every aspect of my career history to bear on our work here, even in the few short months I've been here."

Immediately from the University of Minnesota School of Journalism, Rick joined the staff of Campus Crusade for Christ. He worked and ministered at the International Headquarters, then in San Bernardino, CA, where he served in the photography, multimedia and television ministries. Rick next helped form a small, independent television production company, producing evangelistic sports programs and publications, after which he moved back to Minnesota. Prior to joining Faith Studies, he worked as a project manager, print buyer and webmaster for an advertising agency in Minneapolis, and finally enjoyed a brief stint as webmaster at a local software firm.

"Already I've been able to use my television background in working on the completion of our new *FaithSearch* video series," he said. "And working closely with Sandi, our graphic designer, we're striving to make all our printed and electronic ministry tools the best they can be. I'm simply thrilled that the things we produce here are being used to change people's lives for eternity."

Born and raised in Oregon (but with family roots in Wisconsin and Minnesota), Rick now makes his home in Bloomington, MN, with his wife and two children. Outside of work, he and his family enjoy the outdoors, especially camping and canoeing, as well as reading, both individually and together, and are active in their church.



## Faith Studies to Train Stonecroft Leaders

In an unprecedented partnership, Hasnah Burdge, Faith Studies Vice President, has been invited by Joyce Courtney, CEO of Stonecroft Ministries, to train *all* their national and regional leaders in the principles of effective outreach to today's world.

Stonecroft is an interdenominational, evangelistic outreach for men and women that offers a variety of programs and resources designed to meet the spiritual needs of people today. There are over 1,700 clubs in the U.S. and Canada, with attendance last year of 900,000.



Joyce Courtney  
CEO, Stonecroft Ministries

This historic partnership with another evangelistic organization for the purpose of equipping men and women for effective outreach is the largest ever for Faith Studies. Hasnah recently trained all their national leadership in the principles of *Friend to Friend*, and the responses have been very encouraging as leader after leader affirmed the importance of intentionally equipping their people for outreach.

**"Your presentation is the key to our ministry — reaching out! Thanks for re-affirming us in our mission." —Melissa H., Stonecroft Ministries, MO.**

The Spring regional conferences will be held in Sacramento, Calgary and Denver. Fall regional conferences will be held in Atlanta, New Orleans, Syracuse, NY, and Columbus, OH. Please pray for us and Stonecroft as we venture out in this very exciting opportunity.