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Doctrine Can Be

By Jamie Buckingham

You can argue with a man's theology. You can debate his doctrine. But you cannot deny his experiences.

This was my conclusion in Washington, D. C., 1st week while attending the 16th annual convention of an inter-denominational group of laymen called by

the improbable name of the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship.

MORE THAN 8,000 persons had gathered from all over the hemisphere for a time of inspiration and fellowship.

Outside Washington was "alive" with activity — the roar of traffic — the music

of the cabaret — the noisy confusion of the cocktail party. But there in the basement ballroom of the plush Hilton Hotel was another kind of life — **REAL LIFE!!**

Each night the room was filled with noise, but it was a warm, orderly noise. A noise, I thought, that must be something akin to

Challenged, Experiences

what filled the streets of Jerusalem in that early morning meeting on the day of Pentecost.

TESTIMONIES were the order of the week. A federal judge from Atlanta who said, "It's a life to be lived, not a religion to be practiced." A wealthy citrusman from Arizona who

wept as he told of a wayward son but said it was worth his entire estate of millions to see his granddaughter on her knees.

One of America's most distinguished pastors said, "I preached for 52 years before I met the Lord Jesus." And the deputy mayor of Washington put

aside his ghost-written speech of reception and audibly wept at the microphone saying, "Our city is in trouble and you people have the answer. Tell us what to do."

Yet only part of the testimonies came from the platform. Behind me stands a Negro woman from Indiana with her arm

around a white woman from Georgia — singing Gospel songs. To one side stands a beautiful Hollywood recording star, her arms raised with palms up, her eyes closed, her face shining with a heavenly light.

"A **BUSINESSMAN** carrying a Bible under his

Never

arm (his name tag says he's from North Carolina) gets on the elevator and says cheerily, "Praise the Lord, everybody." And the evening's speaker, a cultured Episcopal priest from Washington state who practices speaking in tongues and has a miracle ministry in his church, says, "We're not building walls, we're tearing down fences."

As I left the ballroom late Friday night I saw a

Perspective

small cluster of people to one side. I started toward them but felt like Moses must have felt as he approached the burning bush. There in a small semicircle stood a Baptist layman, a Moravian pastor and a Catholic priest with their hands laid on the heads of two kneeling Catholic nuns — praying they might receive the filling of the Holy Spirit.

That, Mr. Mayor, is the answer to your question.