

Reflections of Pilgrimages Past

by **Dr. Gary Rickman**

Recently I had the privilege of speaking in a small Baptist church in Tennessee. In this church was a couple, John and Glenda Palmer. They invited Joyce, my wife, and me out for lunch after church. While sitting around the table getting to know one another, I asked John, "What is it that you do in your work?" He explained that he is the editor for a Knight Templar publication.

My interest grew immediately. I then asked him, "Does your organization still do the Holy Land tours for pastors," and he said yes. I shared with him how glad I was to hear this since I was the recipient of that wonderful privilege over twenty years ago. I still remember this trip with great gratitude for those Knights Templar in Chattanooga, Tennessee who made it possible for me to go. This experience added so much to my understanding of the Bible. I have often said that this trip was worth a semester of learning in a seminary. It opened my eyes to so many things that I had read in Scripture.

Up until this trip I had not traveled much throughout the world but as a result of this experience, I began to open my eyes to a much larger world and the issues being faced by other people. Since this time I have traveled many places and have gone on other tours, and I always compare them to the experience of the Holy Land trip. It has been the bench mark which was set very high.

Thank you, Knights Templar, for providing such a wonderful experience for a young pastor many years ago. Keep up the good work of being a blessing to young leaders in our churches across the United States.

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