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LIFEWORD BROADCASTING TO NATIVE AMERICANS

Spiritword, is in its eleventh year



Lifeworld's Native American broadcast, Spiritword, is in its eleventh year and Brothers Merritt Youngdeer and Eddie Swimmer show no signs of slowing down in their ministry work to a people group where less than five percent claim to know Jesus. Last week, they traveled from their homes in Cherokee, North Carolina, to record additional programs at the Lifeworld Media

Ministries' studios. Chief Programming Officer Rick Russell and Engineer Mark Malone produced the new recordings that will be heard on reservations all across America, Canada and Alaska.

Bro. Youngdeer, who is of Cherokee descent, and Bro. Swimmer, a Chippewa-Cree, agree that Native Americans still feel the sting of the disenfranchisement of the 1800s, when the American gov-

ernment began to forcibly intervene in their lives. Rick Russell commented on that distrust as well. "The Native American community is difficult to break into; there is a tremendous distrust of the 'white man's religion', because early in our country's history the government began an attempt to strip them of their heritage. Spiritword is an opportunity to disarm or diffuse that animosity with humor, but it's been a slow march to get this program out on the rez (reservation)."

Bro. Swimmer says that Spiritword attempts "to introduce the gospel by bringing Christ into their own dances, stories and songs passed down for centuries and even into tragic experiences like Trail of Tears."

Lifeworld's affiliation with Bro. Youngdeer began in 1996 when he and his pastor in Oklahoma, who were producing a radio program at that time, contacted Russell for advice on how to "spruce up" their program to make it more interesting. Eventually Bro. Merritt became a member of Lifeworld's Board, and during that time, Russell says, "I continued to bother Merritt about how we could help spread the gospel to Native Americans and he finally agreed to use his own money and

raise more for the cost of getting those programs on the air."

Bro. Swimmer, a member of Cherokee Baptist Church where Bro. Youngdeer pastored at the time, soon



became his "sidekick" and the broadcasts began airing in 2004. God has blessed their efforts and many have requested the CDs, which are also passed out at the annual Gathering of Nations, a Pow Wow involving 500 Native American tribes. Bro. Youngdeer requested the following: "Please pray for a great and mighty revival among native people - instead of Satan doing his bid with them - and an increase in the number of program producers on tribal stations."

According to Rick Russell, those plans are in place. "To increase the number of affiliations. In October, Merritt and I will visit radio stations on reservations in several states to buy air time on their stations. We just hope that they will sit down with us, get to know us, and hopefully we can increase Spiritword's air time and broadcasts."

2015 Paschal Lectures Presented by Dr. Philip Attebery

BMA Seminary is pleased to announce the annual William N. Paschal Memorial Bible Lectures. The lectures will be held in the Dorman Memorial chapel on the Jacksonville campus and are scheduled for Tuesday, September 29 and Thursday, October 1, 2015. Sessions will be held at 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. each day.

This year's lectures are entitled "That Your Fruit Should Remain." They will be presented by BMA Seminary Dean

Dr. Philip Attebery based on his recent research describing the assimilation experiences of adult new converts in BMA churches.

In conjunction with the four lectures, the seminary will be offering a three semester hour motion course, Special Studies in Religious Education (RE 422/RE 631). This class is for students who are interested in learning about new convert assimilation and spiritual growth, and how to conduct doctoral-

level research. Students must enroll prior to August 21, 2015.

Students will need to attend all four lectures and a meeting on campus on Wednesday, September 30, 2015. In addition, they must also be prepared to conduct reading and research prior to their time on campus.

For more information, call the Dean's office at 800-259-5673, or email bmats@bmats.edu.



Dr. Philip Attebery

Southeastern Baptist College

Danny Pitts - Interim President

4229 Highway 15 North, Laurel, Mississippi 39440, (601) 426-6346



Danny Pitts

Serving Christ With a Biblical World View In A Christian Atmosphere

Registration underway

Registration week began August 10th for the Fall semester. The first classes begin on August 17th. Those who are interested in being a part of our school still have time to register. Remember that almost all courses offered on campus during this semester are also available online.

Youth help with mission work

The youth from Big Creek Baptist Church spent several days at Southeastern Baptist College at the end of July. They stayed in the dorms and each night special speakers came in to the chapel and spoke from the Bible

about principles of Christian Living. Everyone worked on campus each day. With their efforts, which included painting, cleaning, and cutting brush, they made many improvements to the appearance on our property. They usually scheduled the morning for outside work and the afternoon inside away from the greatest heat of the day. Some of the group also spent time with games in the gym.

In the past, many of our churches have planned trips to distant mission locations. Pastor Justin Rhodes and the youth counselors from Big Creek saw the opportunity to minister locally. Other churches may want to follow this ex-



Big Creek Baptist Church Youth Group

ample and create an experience which helps Southeastern and lives in the memory of young Christians.

President Available

Since leaving First Baptist of Shady Grove as pastor at the end of May, I have

preached at eight churches. The Lord has also blessed with opportunities to report on the college at several other churches and associations. At the present I am available for appointments to represent the college or share the Word as He leads.

Court: Christian baker must provide wedding cakes for same-sex couples

by Todd Starnes

A family bakery owned by a Christian cannot refuse to make wedding cakes for homosexual couples, the Colorado Court of Appeals ruled Thursday.

The court affirmed the Colorado Civil Rights Commission's order that Jack Phillips, the owner of the Masterpiece Cakeshop, violated the Colorado Anti-Discrimination Act when he refused to make a wedding cake for Charlie Craig and David Mullins.

"CADA prohibits places of public accommodations from basing their refusal to serve customers on their sexual orientation, and Masterpiece violated

Colorado's public accommodations law by refusing to create a wedding cake for Craig's and Mullins' same-sex wedding celebration," the court wrote.

When all is said and done – Jack Phillips does not answer to the Colorado Court of Appeals. He answers to a Higher Power.

Jack, a devout Christian who honors God through his baking, had argued that he could not participate in same-sex ceremonies because it would violate his religious beliefs. The appeals court ruled otherwise.

"By selling a wedding cake to a same-sex couple, Masterpiece does not neces-

sarily lead an observer to conclude that the bakery supports its customer's conduct," the court wrote in its ruling.

Alliance Defending Freedom, a law firm that specializes in religious liberty cases, represented Phillips. They argue that the court is denying their client his fundamental freedoms.

"Jack simply exercised the long-cherished American freedom to decline to use his artistic talents to promote a message with which he disagrees," ADF attorney Jeremy Tedesco said. "Government has a duty to protect people's freedom to follow their beliefs personally and professionally rather than force



them to adopt the government's views." I spoke to Jack on Thursday just moments after the court ruling was handed down. He remains steadfast in his Christian faith.

"The court's ruling is not fair," he said. "It shows that some people have more equal rights than others. When you're not in line with the same-sex agenda, you don't have as much equal rights."

As it stands—Jack will be required by the government to make wedding cakes for same-sex couples. If he denies any one service, he will be required to explain why. He is also expected to retrain his staff in the state's anti-discrimination policies—including his 88-year-old mother.

It sounds like the government wants to round up Phillips and his staff and haul them to a reeducation camp—where they can be purged of the religious beliefs that offend the LGBT community.

"My mom is on my staff and she said

2015-16 BMAA Directory and Handbook Information

Each church that sent an offering to Information Services should have received a reserved copy of the 2015-2016 BMAA Directory and Handbook.

The Directory and Handbook is the reference book for all facets of the BMAA including:

BMAA Doctrine and Principles of Cooperation

Associational annual meetings, officers and their contact information – national, state, and local

Boards of trustees with contact information

Listings of missionaries – North American, international, state, Hispanic and chaplains

A detailed overview of each BMAA department, agency, committee and school

Annual Church Letter and other forms included in the back

Directory of churches

Directory of church staff

Directory of preachers, including contact information.

As the 2015 annual association meetings are beginning, it's time to start gathering data for next year's Directory and handbook. Information Services will be mailing the 2015-2016 Annual Church Letter form to church clerks to complete and return to this office to update church listings in next year's BMAA directory. These forms will be sent in time to submit a copy to your association clerk for the associations that choose to use it. Between August 15 and February 15, 2015, the online Annual Church Letter form is also available at www.BMALife.com/churchletter, to complete and submit to Information Services.

Local, district, and state association clerks will receive a Newly Elected Officers form before their association's

2015 annual meeting. This form should be completed and returned to Information Services as soon as possible after their annual meeting. The officers and next annual meeting information are an essential part of the BMAA directory.

A limited number of the 2015-16 BMAA Directory and Handbook are available for a minimum donation of \$25 each. If your church has not reserved a copy or needs extras, call DiscipleGuide with your request at (800) 333-1442. Donations help support this ministry of BMA America.

Offerings to Information Services for the Directory and Handbook ONLY should be sent to PO Box 6146, Texarkana, TX 75505-6146. All payments for invoices and other offerings to DiscipleGuide Church Resources should be mailed to PO Box 1749, Conway, AR 72033-1749.

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Kentucky prison volunteers can't call homosexuality sin

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. (BP) -- A Kentucky policy barring volunteers and employees in the juvenile justice system from calling homosexuality a sin has drawn criticism from the region's Baptists and provoked the threat of a lawsuit.

David Wells, a 13-year volunteer prison minister from McQuady, Kentucky, was informed in July by the Kentucky Department of Juvenile Justice that he would no longer be permitted to serve at the Warren County Regional Juvenile Detention Center in Bowling Green because he refused to sign a document, per state policy, promising not to "imply or tell LGBTQI juveniles that they are abnormal, deviant, sinful, or that they can or should change their sexual orientation or gender identity."

Wells told Fox News he and every other volunteer from Pleasant View Baptist Church received a similar notice, as did volunteers at a nearby Baptist church. Pleasant View is not listed as a Southern Baptist congregation in the Southern Baptist Directory Services database or by the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

KBC Executive Director Paul Chitwood told Baptist Press that while nondiscrimination policies "have become commonplace in government and corporate settings," to "begin to require people of faith to sign off on statements that compromise our religious convictions is sad for those desiring to volunteer their time in programs designed to help fellow citizens who, for whatever reason, have found themselves caught in the justice system.

"Sadder still," Chitwood said in written comments, "is the reality that those who are in this terribly broken system will no longer have a chaplain to listen to them, counsel them and pray with them."

The "great irony," he noted, is that "the very belief system that has motivated us to volunteer our time for the betterment of our state and society is the belief system our state and society most fears."

In a July 23 letter to the Department of Juvenile Justice, the Christian legal organization Liberty Counsel threatened legal action if the state did not reinstate Wells and other affected volunteers, repeal its policy regarding homosexuality and promise not to impose a "religious litmus test" related to homosexuality on ministers providing counseling to juveniles. The state's actions against Wells violated both the U.S. and Kentucky constitutions, Liberty Counsel attorney Richard Mast wrote.

The Lexington Herald-Leader reported a week later that the Department of Juvenile Justice was "standing by" its policy, which was adopted in April 2014. Chitwood observed that signing a statement of compliance is an

"apparently new requirement."

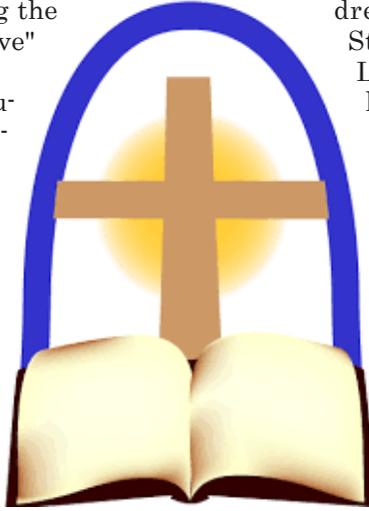
Juvenile Justice Department Commissioner Bob Hayter wrote a letter to Mast defending the state's "open and inclusive" stance.

"The department's regulation is neutral as to religion and requires respectful language toward youth by all staff, contractors and volunteers," Hayter wrote, according to the Herald-Leader. "The regulation advances a compelling government interest in developing a trusting, therapeutic relationship with the children in DJJ custody, which requires an environment of unconditional acceptance."

Liberty Counsel founder and chairman Mat Staver called Hayter's response inadequate.

"The policy has such broad language that it literally prevents [Wells] from answering questions from children seeking guidance," Staver told the Herald-Leader. Suppose "one of the kids tells David he sexually molested his sister and wants to change. Another kid tells David that he was sexually molested by a man when he was younger and he wants to change. What is he supposed to do, not offer them a message of hope?"

Richard Nelson, executive director of the Commonwealth Policy Center in western Kentucky, wrote in a commentary for the KBC's Kentucky Today website that the Juvenile Justice Department's policy is an "irony of ironies."



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601-426-3293

Southeastern Baptist College
4229 Highway 15 North
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601-426-6346

State Youth Department
4226 Highway 15 North
Laurel, MS 39440
662-397-6832

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118 Lowe Rd., Laurel, MS 39443
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4226 Highway 15 North
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4226 Highway 15 North
Laurel, MS 39440

History & Archives Commission
4229 Highway 15 North
Laurel, MS 39440
601-729-8098

Moral Action
P.O. Box 88, Mantachie, MS 38855



Don Brown

Mississippi Baptist

Opinion Page

www.ms baptist.org

Journal of the Baptist Missionary Association of Mississippi

Don Brown - Editor

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS OF A HIGH SCHOOL CLASSMATE

What A Legacy!

I met Ronnie in either the 6th or 7th grade. I was born in Clarksdale, Mississippi and returned to live there when I entered the 6th grade at Kirkpatrick Elementary School. Growing up on



Ronnie McElroy

Clarksdale was a great experience. The education system was one of the best in the state during the 60s. I graduated in 1966 and did not see Ronnie again until 1986 at our 20th High School reunion. The next time I saw Ronnie was at our 45th reunion in 2011. Ronnie was on the planning committee for that reunion and during one of our sessions he called on me to lead in prayer.

I was not "religious" growing up and was unaware of the spirituality of most of my classmates. It is funny how things change as we get older, experience life and make decisions. Facebook has allowed me and my classmates to make connections with those whose lives have taken them to far away places and out of our daily lives. Ronnie stayed in Clarksdale, was in business, married his high school sweetheart and lived a good life. Most of the rest of us moved away for various reasons.

Having only seen Ronnie two times in the last 49 years does not put us in a category of close friends, but we certainly were friendly toward each other.

My best friend during most of my high school years and I have seen each other only twice since 1966. Lives change and we go about our separate ways.

Life has a way of coming full circle many times. Ronnie was still on the planning committee for our 50th High School Reunion and had been communicating with the rest of us concerning the time and plans for this milestone event in our lives.

Since most of us are now grandparents, Ronnie was working and trying to make the reunion time convenient for as many of our classmates as possible. Ronnie

has been very active in his community, his church and as most parents and grandparents, very involved in the lives of his kids and grandkids. Ronnie cared about his family relationships and the same relationships of his classmates.

Ronnie turned 67 on July 24. He suffered a heart attack a few days later, had heart surgery, but passed away on August 8, 2015. Ronnie was a leader in his church and the community.

I am impressed with the response of the community and those who knew him best. Ronnie McElroy left a legacy of love, service and integrity. The comments of those who knew him best speak well of the type of man he was.

His love of God and for others has surfaced in every comment about him and his life. What a legacy!

As we grow older, more and more of those who we know and are close to are also leaving this life. I am made to wonder, "What will our legacy be?" I am told that around 600 people filled his home church to say their good-byes. A person who knew Ronnie well wrote a song about him and recorded a video encouraging people to "be like Ronnie". Classmates from around the nation who



Ronnie (far right on front) with a group from his church that he led.

could not attend the funeral wrote glowing memories and thoughts about their friend. It is easy to come to the conclusion that Ronnie McElroy was a 'good guy'. What a legacy!

As I stated earlier, in the past 49 years I have only seen Ronnie 2 times. I remember from school days that he was a good guy then and obviously he continued to be just that for the rest of his life.

Proverbs 18:24 says "A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother." By all accounts, Ronnie McElroy was a fine Christian man, a friend to all and a dedicated servant of the Lord.

Ronnie recently wrote a note to his 9 year old granddaughter for her birthday telling her how much he loved her, how proud of her he was and that his prayer was for her to come to the knowledge of Jesus Christ as her personal saviour. She read that note at his funeral. What a legacy she has of her grandfather.

Even as his family feels the pain of the loss of a loved one, they can certainly be proud and pleased with the legacy he left behind.

I know my readers do not know Ronnie or his family, but I use this experience to help each of us to think of the lives we are living and the legacy we leave behind.

Pastors, missionaries, church planters, staff members and their wives

are invited to:

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First Baptist Church

Bay Springs, Mississippi
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— James Sprayberry, pastor

We need a head count for the catered meal and names for nametags, so please let us know if you plan to attend:

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Don J. Brown, Editor

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Teaching Wild Animals Can Be Fun

The wild animals I am alluding to in the title are not real wild animals. I am speaking of teenagers. Ha! While many teens are respectful and decent and wonderful Christians in their daily walk, there are an increasing number that come to camp and act like a pack of wild dogs or broncos that need to be broken. I am still some times shocked by their rudeness, arrogance and overall lack of manners and respect for adults or even the facilities of the camp. So the main focus of this article will be addressing the need for manners in the younger generation.

As a whole, America is not a civilized society anymore where people cooperate with one another, concerned more with respect than their personal rights, and respect other people's property. Many Americans today are rude, crude and could care less about anyone other than themselves.

As Christians, it should still be very important for parents to teach their children manners and respect. Honoring others and holding others in esteem is in the Bible. I realize that many churches have teens that are coming from profoundly messed up homes where

survival is more the key than being civilized and polite. However, it is then necessary for the church to help teach young people how to let their light shine before others. If we allow kids from dysfunctional homes to come in to the church and still act dysfunctional, then we are not teaching them new ways of responding. While you may think it is not the church's role to help young people learn manners, if we don't teach this then teen classes and camps become out of control and no one hears or learns anything. Even your decent acting Christian kids lose out when they can't

hear the preacher for all the talking, laughing and horsing around that goes on in a sermon by some of these kids. It may be necessary for some of the adult sponsors to walk up and sit with a group of unruly kids. It is best to talk to one or two privately instead of embar-

rassing them in front of all the others. But at times this summer I have found it necessary just to have a heart to heart talk with the teens and talk to them about respect and honor. In every case they straighten up and I think it is because many of them have never been instructed. There are a few groups that, even after you talk to them, are still disrespectful. This requires a dif-



ferent and deeper approach that takes more time and tact. However, teaching is still the best method of conveying the ideas. Scriptures that might be helpful in

teaching on manners and respect can be:

I Peter 3:8, "Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be COURTEOUS."

Luke 6:31, "And as ye would that

men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise."

Leviticus 19:32, "Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man, and fear thy God: I am the Lord." If this scripture doesn't work for you and you are gray headed and old like me; then you can always throw out the story about the bears that ate the kids for making fun of the prophet. That is a really quick attitude adjustment. Ha.

Romans 12:10, "Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love, in honour preferring one another." Other scriptures that you could have youth look up some night as you teach on treating others with respect are: I Corinthians 15:33, Philippians 2:3, Proverbs 23:1, Ephesians 4:29, I Corinthians 13:4,5, Matthew 15:11, Titus 3:2 and many others.

You might also get a book on proper manners to teach some social skills. You could invite an older person who is sound in doctrine and a good example of manners, to teach some of the old ways to the kids from back in the day when people were polite to one another. For the most part the kids are glad to learn this stuff. It is brand new to them.

By the middle of August, the last of the teen camps should be winding down for me and another summer of great salvations and spiritual growth should be logged in for the Lord. I love doing teen camps because of the great evidence of the Holy Spirit working. So many salvations; So many lives changed; Deliverance and healing and hope restored through Jesus Christ. Sometimes when I am growing weary with all the travel, hot, humid days in the sun and some very challenging sleeping arrangements, all I have to do is hear one teen say—"this camp changed my life forever because of what Jesus did in my life this week" and I am good for another 1,000 miles!

Some pastors and adult sponsors say, "I am exhausted after one week of camp. I don't know how you do it all summer, week after week." It is God that strengthens me, and I find so much joy in seeing hope restored in some of these kids who come to camp crushed and hopeless. While it would be helpful to have teens learn manners, we must still press on toward the prize even with kids that challenge us. We must love and help those that don't even know enough to want it. I suspect that our Shepherd, the Lord, sometimes finds all of us, his sheep, a little unruly. Let's all pull together and love one another and live in peace, and respect – giving honor unto others.

Family Ark Ministries

Dr. Travis Plumlee is a full-time professional speaker and leads Family Ark Ministries. For more information or to contact him, visit www.travisplumlee.com.



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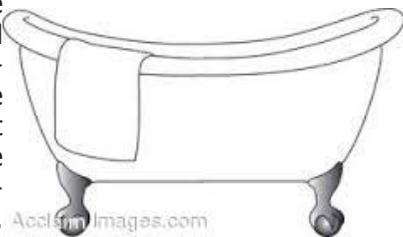
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Not For Sissies

It seems as a person reaches a certain age, they begin to have these inexplicable moments or events that keep popping up. Like losing things and then finding them in strange places - like the cell phone in the refrigerator, or the butter dish in the bathroom, etc., etc. My kids informed me sometime ago that they were keeping a list of those things I do and then when it got to a certain point, that's it - Nursing Home here I come!

I asked them a while ago if they had a full page yet and they said, "Mama, we're on chapter four!"

I've learned to "forget" to tell them some things. Like this time a good while ago, I decided I'd see if I could get in (and out) of the bath tub. I was full dressed so I lowered myself into the dry tub. Made that fine. Then came the next challenge - getting OUT of the tub.



I had some stiff joints that hindered that process considerably. I floundered and flopped and wallowed around in that tub until I finally decided that I was going to die in that tub! I did finally roll out, though.

But I didn't tell my kids for a year or two. When I did tell them they asked, "What would our friends have answered when we asked 'How did our Mama die in the bath tub with her clothes on and no water in the tub?'"

Getting old is not for Sissies!!

Women's Missionary Auxiliary

President

Linda Smith
2816 Old Bay Springs Rd.
Laurel, MS 39440
601-470-1398

Corresponding Secretary

Mrs. Shirlene Smith
730 Hwy 533, Laurel, MS 39443
601-729-5638



Hobolochitto WMA

by Debbie Lott, Reporter

The Hobolochitto District WMA ladies met on Saturday, July 25, 2015, at Mt. Calvary Baptist Church, Picayune. A devotion was given by Melissa Comeaux about focusing on things of God and things that are true. We had the election of officers with Beverly Lumkin remaining as president and Jean Dunn remaining as vice-president. Bro. Beau Comeaux brought the message with scripture taken from Matthew 1, the Genealogy of Jesus Christ, God's Plan. Our next meeting will be at Mt. Carmel Baptist Church on October 24. The attendance banner was awarded to Bienville Baptist Church. The closing prayer and blessing on the food was given by Jackie Lee.

Six Reasons Why It Is More Difficult to Lead Your Church to Growth Today

by Thom Rainer

The conversation was both predictable and profound. It was predictable because I have been asked a similar question many times. It was profound because it represents the very nature of the challenges our congregations face today. "Thom," he began. "I have been serving as pastor of my church for over 20 years. I have never had more difficulty leading growth in a church. What is going on?"

My pastor friend emphasized two points clearly. First, he was not looking for an excuse for the lack of growth. Second, he wanted information so he could address the issue.

The pastor was right. Growth is indeed more difficult today in American congregations. And there are some clear reasons why this reality is true.

Cultural Christians are much less likely to attend.

It's Time to Order Fall Literature from DiscipleGuide

The summer is coming to an end and the new school year is around the corner. Fall is coming!

DiscipleGuide's fall lineup of curriculum features



the beginning of a new five-quarter series from Compass called "The Big Picture." This adult study focuses on seeing the Bible as one unified story of Christ's redemption. Each lesson focuses on a book of the Bible and demonstrates how it fits into the bigger picture.

SOAR:lit will encourage students to worship God through a study of his attributes. Each lesson will call on students to respond by increasing their adoration and worship of God.

DiscipleKids curriculum will explore the life of Christ and why he came to earth. In addition, children will learn about being a friend to others.

Ordering for the fall quarter begins August 3. Go to discipleguide.org or call 800-333-1442.

"Cultural Christianity" is really an oxymoron. I am referring to those people who once attended church because they saw it as culturally, politically, and economically beneficial. That reality no longer exists for the most part. Congregations could be losing anywhere from 10 percent to 50 percent of their attendance with this change.

More committed Christians are attending less frequently. When the most committed believers in a church decrease their attendance patterns by 25 percent (they go from attending four Sundays a month to three), you can expect a precipitous decline in attendance. And the greater majority of congregations are indeed experiencing this unfortunate phenomenon.

An over correction to practical ministry. Many church leaders rightly became disturbed and frustrated by the fierce pragmatism prevalent in many churches. But, to use an overused phrase, many threw the baby out with the bath water. It's hard to reach people in the community if the church does not have practical ways to do so.

Activities replacing ministry. Many churches have their members so busy they don't have time to develop relationships with unchurched people and non-Christians. Meetings and activities have become substitutes for real ministry.

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GMA Girls

State Youth Auxiliary Director

Beth Caldwell
166 Twin Creek Rd,
Lucedale, MS 39452
601-947-6011

State GMA Promoter

Becky Farmer
464 Churchwell Road
Hattiesburg, MS 39401
601-596-1005
becky@southforrest.org



State GMA Outreach Planned

Mississippi State GMAs are planning a Mission Outreach in July of 2016. We are currently taking applications for GMAs who are interested in participating with the outreach. We will provide one of our local church plants with a VBS next summer. Please contact Lane Flynt at 601-641-1475 or email at lane.flynt@gmail.com for more information. The deadline for applications is August 31st 2015.

State GMA Retreat Information

Retreat planning for the March 2016 Mississippi GMAs is in full swing. We are taking applications for any girl or church group who may be interested in being part of the talent show. Please contact Lakelan Flynt at 601-517-1476 or email at lakelanflynt@yahoo.com for application and more information. Limited time slots are available. Applications will be due December 15th 2015.

Sign of the Times

We live in a day of cute quotes and one-liners. "What's missing in CH--CH? UR!!" Upon seeing this sign posted prominently in front of the local Baptist church, I was at once filled with guilt and remorse that I was headed to the woods to check on my deer plots instead of sitting on a pew with a hymn book in my hands. Then I realized it was Saturday. Alas, such was the power of the church sign, that I was up bright and early the next morning ready for service to start. The church where I pastor was thankful I was there as well. At least I think they were.

I saw where even ole Abe Lincoln was getting in on the rage of the age that is called social media. He said not to believe everything you read on the internet. If Honest Abe said it, you can rest easy that it is true. Between the church posting quips of inspiration and the world wide interweb filling our thoughts with nuggets of wisdom, it's a wonder that we have so much ignorance in the world.

There are other signs that have given me concern. Driving to a nursing home service in Alabama a few years ago, I passed a cemetery that was named...I kid you not...Furnace Hill Cemetery! I know where my hope lies, but don't bury me in Furnace Hill Cemetery. It's the principle of the thing. Ironically, it

was close to Little Hope Primitive Baptist Church. You may think I'm making this up, but I can take you to these places. My favorite head scratcher of a name came from south Louisiana. I'm not sure exactly where it is at, but I believe if you head down toward Grand Isle, and look closely on your left, you will see John the Baptist Catholic Church! Somebody didn't think that one all the way through.

I thought that perhaps we could put a scripture on the church sign, but that doesn't really catch the eye. Besides, if we wanted to read scripture, we could do that at home. I thought of a catchy saying to put on the sign for next week, but I'm not sure the irony would be appreciated. Tell me what you think. "Have we reduced God to a catch phrase on the church sign?" It sounded better in my head. But hey, these are just the signs of the times.



From The Mind of Chuck Lee

Lee pastor's Pine Grove Baptist Church, Purvis. He may be reached by email at leecharles47@yahoo.com



Six Reasons

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Growing conflict and disunity in congregations. I have addressed this issue in a number of blogposts. When we are divided and at odds with fellow believers in the church, we are distracted from focusing on the Great Commission and the Great Commandment.

Entitlement mentality among some church members. This issue was the thesis of my book, *I Am a Church Member*. When church members see the church as a place to meet the needs and preferences of "me, myself, and I," you have a congregation who is inwardly focused.

Any one of these six issues will hinder the Great Commission outreach of a church and, thus, frustrate attempts to lead a church to growth. But many congregations have more than one of these factors present. That reality really presents challenges.

Lebanon Church 110th Homecoming

Come join us at Lebanon Baptist Church on Sunday, August 30th, 2015 for our 110th Homecoming. The special speaker will be Bro. Harold Floyd. The morning service will begin at 10:00 a.m. and the afternoon service will start around 12:30 p.m. Lunch will be served following the morning service.

Bro. Harold Floyd is a member of Lebanon Baptist Church and serves as interim Music Director. We are pleased to have him and Mrs. Shirley as our guests of honor and for them to be part of this special upcoming day.

Bro. Floyd has been a preacher for over 41 years. He has pastored several churches and also served as State Missionary-at-Large. In November 1989,



Bro. Harold Floyd

MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CHILDREN'S HOME

118 LOWE ROAD, LAUREL, MISSISSIPPI 39443 - (601) 426-3928
SIDNEY DAVIS - DIRECTOR



SIDNEY DAVIS

Back To School Bash

We were with the Pleasant Hill Baptist Church in Saucier on Saturday, August 1st for a day of recreation with the youth and youth leaders of church. The children, Pat, and I enjoyed this time of activity the church had planned and we appreciate the time of fellowship that we were able to have with each other. Then on Sunday, August 2nd, following the morning services, the children were presented with back to school supplies for the upcoming school year. Our thanks is extended to Pleasant Hill Church and Pastor Jerry Anderson for the hospitality shown to us during our stay with them.

Back To School

Well, the boys and girls are back in school. Everyone is getting back in the routine of getting around in the morning before having to get off to school. Keep each of the children at the Home in your prayers each day as they go to

school that the Lord will guard, protect, and surround them with His love, mercy, and grace.

Expression of Sympathy

We would like to express our sympathy to the family of Bro. James Wilson. Bro. Wilson had served on the Board of Trustees of the Children's Home in past years. Our prayers and thoughts continue to be with the Wilson family during this time of sorrow and loss.

Remember in Prayer and Focus Verse

Continue to remember the Home in your prayers and its ministry. We are thankful for your prayers and support. It is good to have the assurance and confidence that the Lord hears and answers prayers. "And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." Luke 11:9.

First Baptist Church of Shady Grove Galileans



Shady Grove Galileans - Left to right -Isaac Hinton, Alden Brunty, Noah Hinton and Galilean Director Roger Jefcoat

First Baptist Church of Shady Grove, Laurel, recently recognized the work of its Galileans. Director Roger Jefcoat

Bro. Floyd came to Lebanon where he served as pastor for 16 years. He was not only a great preacher, but a great pastor. He loved everyone and everyone loved him (and still do). We hope that you will come and join us on for our Homecoming as we honor Bro. Harold Floyd.

presented the boys with their sashes and stars showing their progress. He gave a history of the Galilean program and the work that is required of the young men. Jefcoat stressed the amount of scripture that is required to be learned and each young man quoted a passage learned during their work.

A steak supper and fellowship was given by the Galileans for their families and supporters.

Those attending lauded Jefcoat for his dedication in leading by example and his overall work with these men.

Lifeworld Global Prayer Meeting

On September 4, 1965, Lifeworld launched its first gospel broadcast. On September 4, 2015, 50 years later, the BMA family will pause to give thanks.

Join the family of BMA churches around the world via the internet as we thank God for 50 years of taking the Good News to billions of people.

Friday, September 4th, 9:00 a.m.
www.bmalife.com/tv

Lifeworld
 MEDIA MINISTRIES



Church Seeks Youth Pastor

Bradford Baptist Church is seeking a full-time youth director. Those interested are asked to submit a resume by mail to Bradford Baptist Church, P.O. Box 216, Bradford, AR 72020. For more information, please contact Pastor Bro. Matt Grantham: church office 501-344-2414 or cell 870-995-2524. You may also email bbcbradfordar@gmail.com with any questions.

Harmony Encampment

by Mike Johnson, Camp Director
 The Harmony Association held their yearly youth encampment June 22 -24 at Tishomingo State Park with 76 campers. The theme this year was "God is Great, God is Good" from Jeremiah 32: 17-18. Bro. Josh Awtrey was our camp pastor and did an outstanding job of teaching God's word to us. Music worship was led in the mornings by Donica Phifer & Charles Sanderson and in the evenings by Bryan Letson, Leah Beth Letson & Deborah Letson.

On Tuesday evening Bryan Letson hosted special teen night activities while our younger youth were having "in cabin devotionals". The highlights of the camp were having 1 young man rededicate his life to the Lord and 5 precious souls accepting Jesus as their Savior. Praise God for the men and women who volunteered to plan and staff this camp so that God's word could be shared; and pray for our new brothers & sisters as they begin their walk with the Lord.

Harmon Meeting

by Tony Marolt, reporter
 The Harmony Association met at Shady Grove Baptist Church on August 8. After special music the message was brought by Bro. Bryan Wilson, entitled "Visions of a Local Church". Business was taken care of with the minutes and financial reports were read and approved. There were 55 present with 7 churches represented. Our September meeting will be a Unity Baptist in Guntown. Bro. Bobby Elliott gave a report on Freedom Hills mission and the success of their recent camp with 8 souls saved. Some of the youth were present to tell of their salvation experience. The church provided a delicious meal prior to the meeting.

Christian Baker

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she will not be retrained," he defiantly said. "And I'm not going to make same-sex wedding cakes."

Jack stopped making all wedding cakes last year – but one day he hopes to resume his passion.

"I would like that to be my choice and not the government telling me which ones I can do and which ones I can't," he said.

Jack said Christian business owners are under attack – especially those providing goods and services to the wedding industry.

"A lot of Christians are under attack – bakers and florists, wedding chapels," he said.

Jack came under attack in 2012 when he declined to make a cake for Craig and Mullins. There were plenty of bakeries that would have provided the cake – but for whatever reason – they targeted Masterpiece Cakeshop.

According to the court documents, Jack offered to make them any other baked goods – including cakes. But that wasn't good enough for the gay couple.

They demanded that he make a wedding cake.

And when Jack refused – they filed discrimination charges – leading to a long court battle.

If you Google Jack's name – you'll find that many of the LGBT bullies and their minions have smeared his good name. He's been called all sorts of things – from homophobic to a right-wing bigot.

But in reality he's none of those things. There was one item that I found particularly interesting in the appeals court ruling. Apparently an administrative law judge had been investigating Phillips' spiritual life. Here's the verbatim quote:

"The ALJ found that Phillips had been a Christian for approximately thirty-five years and believes in Jesus Christ as his Lord and savior. Phillips believes that decorating cakes is a form of art, that he can honor God through his artistic talents, and that he would displease God by creating cakes for same-sex marriages."

I suppose the LGBT bullies and their minions might call that paragraph the "smoking gun."

And in a way it is – it exposes the heart of this good-natured man.

"I'm a man who is devoted to follow-

ing Jesus Christ," he told me. "He's the one that's in charge of all this."

And when all is said and done – Jack Phillips does not answer to the Colorado Court of Appeals. He answers to a Higher Power.

"It's not up to the courts to decide what marriage is," he said. "It's up to God to decide that. If we are living in obedience to Jesus Christ and the teachings of the Bible we are on the right side of history – no matter what they say."

Pastors, missionaries, church planters, staff members and their wives

are invited to:

BMA Town Hall Luncheon and Meeting

Thursday, August 27, Noon-2:00

First Baptist Church

Bay Springs, Mississippi
 (371 Highway 18 West)

– James Sprayberry, pastor

We need a head count for the catered meal and names for nametags, so please let us know if you plan to attend:

email (holly@bmaamerica.org)

text (501-472-0825) - phone (501-205-1127)