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Letters From Our Readers

Letters reflect the opinion of the writer and not necessarily this publication or the BMA of Mississippi

Editor's Note: The articles by Bro. Jason Howard and the subsequent response from Bro. Ed Steele and others has been an interesting conversation. This issue contains two rather lengthy letters to the editor on this subject. We are pleased that our readers are interacting with articles and each other. We encourage responses, but this subject will be closed to responses after this issue. Differing views have been presented and the discussion will certainly continue...

History & Archives Director addresses concerns regarding the historicity of Regular/Particular Missionary Baptist Doctrine.

I would like to personally thank Bro. Ed Steele for his previous letter to editor regarding the article I submitted which was an excerpt from J. R. Grave's book "The Work of Christ Consummated in Seven Dispensations." The subject of the article was concerning Graves's thoughts on the Covenant of Redemption. I also want to personally thank Bro. Steele for his kind words, and the spirit in which the letter was written. We are living in such a time when people who find they disagree cannot speak to each other, rather they speak about each other. Bro. Steele made no attempt to attack me and confined his remarks to that which was expressed by Graves in his writings. Bro. Steele is a very knowledgeable and humble servant of Christ. I look forward to a continued dialogue with Bro. Steele in anticipation of learning many things from him. However, there are a few points I would like to address since it was I who submitted J. R. Grave's thoughts regarding the Covenant of Redemption. I am not trying to persuade anyone of anything concerning Graves's or Bro. Steele's thoughts or views. It has been said, "A person's conclusions are often built into their presuppositions," and this is probably especially true in relation to this subject. Most people's minds are already made up concerning this subject; and should there be an unbiased mind, Bro. Grave's and Bro. Steele's comments are clear enough they can stand or fall on their own.

Bro. Grave's article was submitted from a historical point of view, not from the viewpoint of any theological system. J. R. Graves was one of three men included in what was referred to as the

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Baptist

Mississippi

JOURNAL OF THE BAPTIST MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION OF MISSISSIPPI

BMA of America Director's Take

by Dr. John David Smith

Over the next few months we will take a cursory look at some of the basic cultural issues that come into play in cross-cultural missions. We affirm that



John David Smith
National Missions
Director

the Bible is always authoritative over culture. However, in order to bear much fruit (John 15) and have more sheep (John 10) it is necessary to understand our own culture and the culture in which we will do ministry. Jesus walked into a very specific culture

of religiosity with the Pharisees and the other religious sects in first-century Israel. At times He used culture, at times He challenged culture, and at all times He understood culture. One of the first characteristics of American culture is individualism. Most all of our historical heroes - Daniel Boone, Superman, John Wayne, the Lone Ranger and others - are solitary heroes who did it all alone.

In American culture we have many customs and mechanisms that demonstrate our "self-reliance" as opposed to most other cultures in the world who are "collectivistic" where the extended family and the group goals are more important than the individual achievements. You can imagine how a missionary walking out of an individualistic culture and into a collectivistic culture can struggle mightily to adapt, build relationships,

Walker Family in the Philippines

by Holly Meriweather

Their Call

What began as a conversation at the Flying Burger in Magnolia, Arkansas, became a ministry call for Jimmy and Julie Walker. In August of 2016 Stan and Donna Scroggins asked Jimmy about moving to the Philippines to serve at the BMA Bible College (BMABC). He had been on five short-term trips there and agreed to pray about it. After six months of doing so, he still couldn't get the Philippines off his mind.

As it turned out, Julie, who had been on three trips to the Philippines, had prayed about the same possibility for two years. Clearly this was confirmation for the Walker family to move to the Philippines for missionary service. Their primary goal? To take the gospel to the 648,000,000 unreached people of Southeast Asia.

So in July of 2018, the Walkers and their children Judd, Adley, Nolan, Emory, and Silas arrived in Talisay on the Philippine island of Negros.

and do ministry.

We are thankful for the many who have crossed those cultural lines and still do it today in order to see the gospel, which is greater than culture, transform lives all over the world.

The vast army of ChangeMaker missionaries around the world is a testament to this life-changing power of the gospel and the Spirit-given power to cross cultures and fulfill the mission of Christ.

Their Plan

In the months before his departure, Jimmy developed a three-fold plan for what he would be doing at the Bible college and for what he would do to help in church planting:



Walker Family

#1 Evangelize - Take the gospel to the unreached.

#2 Equip - Train and equip pastors/church planters with God's Word and the skills needed to plant new churches.

#3 Engage - Partner with graduates (of BMABC) to plant churches and help them in evangelism, discipleship, and multiplication.

Because students at the BMABC are equipped and sent out as missionaries and church planters, many of them back to their own countries, the college is the epicenter of the BMA's Southeast Asia church planting efforts. With his school administration and teaching background, Jimmy was excited to be part of equipping the next group of God's laborers to reach the lost.

In addition to a vision for their ministry, the Walkers also had an exit strategy and were praying for when to hand off ministry responsibilities to ChangeMakers in the Philippines. There were four things they wanted to see implemented before leaving the mission field: setting up a discipleship model, establishing a first through twelfth grade school, helping BMA Bible College be financially self-supporting, and planting new churches.

By God's grace, they were able to

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SPECIAL EMPHASIS TIME

Southeastern Baptist College's Special Emphasis Months are July and August for focused donations from churches and individuals. If your church was not able to designate August, August 1, 2021, for a "Day of Giving" for SBC, there are still four more Sundays in August to do so before our special emphasis months are concluded. As a reminder, Southeastern Baptist College is a 501(c)(3) certified tax deductible charity.



Mississippi Baptist

Journal of the Baptist Missionary Association of Mississippi



Don Brown
Editor

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CHURCH HEALTH NOTES

by Larry Barker

Director of Church Planting & Church Health

Healthy Church Solutions is the church resource ministry of the BMA of America. Our mission is to help strengthen existing churches to become who God intended them to be. The status of the church in North America is pretty alarming and warrants our attention. We are told that 85% of American churches are plateaued or are in a state of decline. If these stats are true and we apply them to the number of churches we have in the BMA today, that means there are only 180-200 churches who are healthy and actively moving forward on the mission of God. It's so important for us to examine our spiritual health and our churches.



Larry Barker

One way we are striving to be an encouragement to pastors, leaders, members, and churches who have a desire to strengthen the ministry God has entrusted them with is through our Healthy Church Podcast (healthychurchpodcast.com). There are now 59 episodes that come out every Tuesday and you can find them at our website or on your favorite app such as Spotify and others. These weekly episodes talk honestly about what it means to be a part of a healthy church. There are no perfect churches, but by God's grace we can begin to dialogue about what changes can be made in our lives as leaders and in our churches.

Another way we are working hard to encourage pastors is through our Pastor Zoom calls. These are usually twice a month and we zero in on topics that are close to the hearts of pastors such as prayer, discipleship, navigating a pandemic, leadership, and more. These Zoom calls have included pastors from over 10 different states and we

are able to create a culture of sharing ideas, asking questions, and giving helpful content to pastors and leaders through right on time training. In our last two calls we discussed multiplying disciples and multiplying leaders. Our next Zoom call is Thursday, August 12 at 1:30PM CDT. Please join us.

The role of the local church is to be the mobilizing home base.

The third way we are trying to encourage you is through our Pastor Encouragement videos that come out every two weeks on our Facebook Pages. We have heard from our Executive Directors of Missions, Dr. John David Smith; LifeWord, Donny Parrish; Ministers Resource, Dr. Steve Crawley, and many of our pastors. These videos are to remind us that we are in this journey together and we are not alone. Healthy Church Solutions is focused on the individual leader's soul-care knowing that we cannot expect a healthy church if the leaders are not spiritually healthy. You cannot give what you do not possess and leading on empty will eventually lead to burnout or worse.

Healthy Church Solutions has also been working diligently to once again offer you a venue to get away from the hustle and bustle to be refreshed and recharged. You are invited to join us September 27-29 in Dallas, Texas, for our very first ReCharge conference. The BMA of America is committed to resourcing you and also providing spiritual oasis. The entire time we are together we will be pouring into you through speakers, singers, and testimonies (a BMA pastor who almost died from COVID) that we believe will inspire and revitalize you. Make sure you check out the add in this paper and go to the link where you can get more details to register.

Healthy Church Solutions has also been working very hard to build a resource library through a partnership with Right Now



Media. Through our Church Dynamics Training alone we have resources to help your church learn how to develop and improve your systems. Systems are reproducible and interconnected processes by which a church actualizes its values and achieves its mission through quality control and growth engines. There are free trainings on the following systems: Reproductive, Outreach, Assimilation, Worship Service Planning, Spiritual Growth/Discipleship, Pastoral Care, Ministry Placement, and the Financial System.

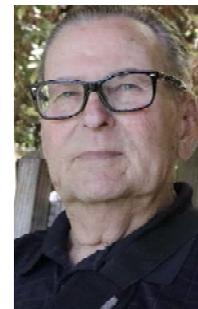
There are also trainings to help you in the areas of pastoral transition, dealing with discouragement, evaluating your church's ministry, dealing with difficult people, and dealing with time demands. If you are looking for training on one-on-one discipleship we have that through Steve McCoy and Small Circle. We also still have Activate which has become the revitalization arm of Healthy Church Solutions. There is a free church health survey that will be available for free hopefully by the time you read this article. Activate is a Bible-based discovery process, led by the Holy Spirit, driven by the pastor, supported by a team within the church, disciplined by the pastor's Huddle, and coached by the Activate staff. We agree with Mark Clifton's mission statement, "We are committed to decreasing the death rate of existing churches while simultaneously increasing the birth rate of new churches!" It is not an either/or choice but rather a both/and solution. In Made for More they state, "The role of the local church is to be the mobilizing home base. This empowers all disciples to discover their personal calling and then deploy them to express the fullness of Jesus into every corner of culture and into every sphere of society." This is the heart of your BMA of America leadership and we desire to serve you and your church through Healthy Church Solutions.

Obituaries

Long-time Missionary Passes Away

BMA Missions mourns the passing of Missionary Don Newsom, who served for 43 years in the Philippines, currently on the island of Iloilo. An extended article about his life and legacy is forthcoming. Dr. John David Smith says, "Bro. Newsom's legacy is one of surrender and service. Forty-three years of missionary ministry requires no narrative; it speaks for itself. He will be missed by our BMA Missions family."

Please join us in prayer for his family, friends, and co-laborers.



Don Newsom

Former pastor's wife passes away

Graveside Memorial Services for Mary Virginia Burks Rhoden, age 93, of Henleyfield Community, who passed away Sunday, July 4, 2021, were held Thursday 15, 2021, at 10:00 am at Henleyfield Cemetery.



Mary Rhoden

Burial was in Henleyfield Cemetery under the direction of McDonald Funeral Home.

Bro. Stanley Adams officiated the service. He was assisted by Bro. Vernon Watts.

A native of Henleyfield Community in Mississippi, she was a retired Missionary Pastor's wife and Postal Clerk for the U.S. Postal Service. Mary was a member of First Baptist Church of Henleyfield.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Rev. Howard Rhoden; her sister Verna Burks Wilson and her brother Kenneth Hugh Burks.

Left to cherish her memory are her sons, Howard Ervin (Beverly) Rhoden, Daryl (Vivian) Rhoden, and Barry (Carol) Rhoden, her grandchildren, Ben Rhoden, Amanda Socie, Michelle Summerton, Danny Summerton, Caitlyn Sherwood and Bronte Rhoden; her great grandchildren, Lucas, Grayson, Parker, Sam, Evan, Owen, Lily, and Luca; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Mary asked that, in lieu of flowers, contributions be made to Water Wells for Christ, 240 Skyline Drive, Conway, AR 72032.

Seminary President's Father Passes Away

Charles Nicholson Holmes, of Mexia, Texas, entered his heavenly home on July 6, 2021, at the age of 92. He was the father of BMA Seminary President Dr. Charley Holmes. Private funeral services were held at Sardis Baptist Church on Friday, July 9, 2021 with Bro. Jerry Fulton officiating.

Memorials may be made to the Baptist Missionary Association Theological Seminary, P.O. Box 670, Jacksonville, TX 75766

- CHURCH NEWS ITEMS -

Gospel Sing in Meridian

Broadmoor Baptist Church, 5426 Highway 39 North, Meridian, MS (just north of Hardee's) will host Gold City on Thursday, August 5, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. Gold City is an American southern gospel quartet based in Gadsden, Alabama.

Admission is free and everyone is invited to attend. A love offering will be taken. For more information call 601-323-4400 or 601-482-2229.

Big Creek Meetings Postponed

The Big Creek District Brotherhood and WMA will meet August 9th, 2021 at Calhoun Baptist Church in Laurel at 7:00 P.M. We invite all the Big Creek Association WMA and Brotherhood to attend.

Sean Piper



Mississippi Baptist Children's Home

118 Lowe Road, Laurel, Mississippi 39443 - (601) 426-3928
Dwight Lindsey - Director



DWIGHT LINDSEY

I want to apologize for the absence of reporting lately. We could easily say the busyness of things has kept us away, but in reality we have been in a little bit of a holding pattern. We never doubted what God was doing. We were merely waiting on the completion of His timing.

Now we are praising God for his provision. Since May we have been waiting on paperwork and court dates to finalize the adoption of Blake Matthew Kroese (now Lindsey). We are thankful for all of God's Word, and especially its encouragement in Ephesians 1:3-6, 2:19-22, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the



glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved... Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God: And are

built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." God is in the adoption business and we are thankful to come along side Him and exemplify His work in this world. I told someone just yesterday, "we do temporarily and physically what only Jesus can do spiritually and eternally."

We have said from the beginning of stepping into this ministry we desire the redemption of the family whenever possible. Unfortunately we have not yet run into many cases of that being possible. We are thankful that we can now give kids that fall under this specific scenario a permanent home and family. This young man will no longer have to wonder if someone will take him to another home after a few months.

My mind hastens to the security believers have in Christ. Today we thank God for putting Blake in our earthly family. We pray for the day God receives the "praise of the glory of His grace," is Christ's redemptive work in Blake's life. We pray that you all would praise God with us in this joyous time.

We hope to have more to report soon. Part of the joys of patiently waiting for these things to be accomplished is just that waiting only to be told to wait some more. We had hoped to report two court

rulings in this report but gladly settled for one. Hopefully number two will get squared away soon and we can share in



those victories as well.

Continue to pray with us for God to call another family along side us so that we can help more children and pray for continued and growing support so that we can afford that family to help more children. As always I would love to talk to any church or business about this ministry to answer questions and educate our supporters and potential supporters on what and how we do what we do. Don't hesitate to call or email (662-605-0996, info@msbch.org)

COMMISSION ON *Senior Adults*

4226 Highway 15 North, Laurel, Mississippi 39440

Phone 601-426-3293 - Email senioradultcommission@gmail.com

Going Forward

by Don Brown

What a legacy that Bro. Vern Holifield and Bro. Kenneth Flynt have left with their dedicated work with the Commission on Senior Adults. They both have given years and much prayer and effort to make this ministry a success. But with life comes change and with change comes the determination to continue going forward. Bro. Kenneth Flynt resigned as director of the Commission at our state mid-year meeting.

I consider it a great challenge and opportunity to begin leading the Senior Adult Commission. I met with the Trustees in June and shared my heart and vision and they graciously gave me this opportunity.

Our first concern is to ensure that we continue with the Conferences that have been so popular and successful. Missing the North Conference last year and both the North and South this year was unavoidable, but still disappointing. Our churches are meeting in person now. Our local, state, and national associations are meeting again, along with most organizations and groups around the country.

Hopefully the Covid virus problems are mostly behind us. Caution will certainly be taken when it comes to our Conferences.

Our plan and goal is to resume our conferences and continue the great fellowship and worship that we have enjoyed in years past. We have already begun planning the events for next Spring. Big Creek Baptist Church near Soso, Mississippi, always does a great job and is planning to again host the South Conference. Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church near Fulton and Pastor Tim Holsonback are looking forward to hosting the North Mississippi Conference next May. We will have exact dates for you later. Pray that arrangements will be made to have great and successful meetings.

We will soon be introducing our Theme for next year and other possible additions and helps. Please pray for your Senior Adult Commission, the Trustees, and for me as we move forward. And please remember that your continued financial support is as important as ever. God has blessed this ministry with good support in the past and it is greatly needed and appreciated.

May His blessings be on our churches and especially our Senior Adults.

Walker Family

from page 1

either achieve or make strides toward all four goals:

In a thirteenth-month process of weekly meetings, Jimmy and Julie discipled around 65 future pastors and church planters, teaching them how to walk with Jesus daily and disciple others. Many are already making disciples.

In August of 2019 the Darlene Carey Academy's first grade began on the campus of the Bible College, then in the following year, second grade was added. The plan is to continue adding one grade per year until grade twelve, and the Bible College's staff are now in full control of the academy's daily operations.

BMABC is not completely self-supported, but plans have been made for the academy to underwrite 40% of the college's operating budget, then 40% to come from the US, and 20% taken on by Filipino churches. (Philippine churches recently gave over \$1,000, the largest gift they've ever given.)

Although the Walkers helped and partnered with other new church plants, they worked directly with two pastors: Pastor Genesis and Pastor JR are effective church planters who love their community and accomplished a lot, even during the pandemic

In addition to working in those four main areas, Jimmy also visited and conducted outreach and evangelism among mountain tribes; taught evangelism, church growth, and dis-

cipleship classes at the Bible college; and encouraged Filipinos to implement the Mission 2:10 initiative, which is to plant 200 churches in 10 southeast Asian countries in ten years.

Their Return Home

In March of 2020 Covid and resulting government restrictions in the Philippines forced the Walkers to return to the States on the assumption that they would return to the Philippines in August, just in time for classes to begin. However, the pandemic worsened, causing additional lockdowns. So Jimmy continued teaching his classes virtually for the next two semesters, all the while communicating with pastors, church planters, students, and Bible college staff members.

As it turned out, the Filipinos they served at BMABC and in other their other ministry areas were handling things just fine without them.

Jimmy said, "Along with meeting goals, we had been praying and seeking the Lord's direction for the right time to leave but assumed we would be on the field one or two more years. Since we planned to hand off ministry to the Filipinos, we know God closed the door on a return to the Philippines. We did not anticipate that when we returned home in March (of 2020), but we are confident that this was the Lord's plan and we trust that He is working all things out."

In June of 2020, Jimmy finished teach-

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Southeastern Baptist College

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

Serving Christ With A Biblical World View In A Christian Atmosphere

President's Perspective

"Forthou art my rock and my fortress; therefore for thy name's sake lead me, and guide me."
Psalm 31:3

I have said this many times, because I've personally witnessed it: "God's hand is on Southeastern Baptist College!" Under God's guidance, I believe that SBC is destined to become a grand college of prominence. The Lord is constantly showing us, in many ways, that growth and expansion are in the near future of Southeastern Baptist College. One of the projects I have been working on is the school's public relations within our local communities. We have been searching and implementing ways to promote the college while supporting the community.

Not long ago, Dean Walker and her husband attended a

southern gospel fest in another state. The fest was held over several consecutive nights with top billing groups. She returned to Laurel on fire for doing a similar event here. Her idea came right after the city's highly successful Crawfish Festival that thousands of visitors attended. One of the more common remarks from those attending the festival, was that it was wonderful, however, there was little for out of town visitors to do in the evening. As Dean Walker began to share her idea with friends, it was concluded that having our very own southern gospel festival along with the Crawfish Festival



Dr. Scott Carson
President

in the month of April, would bring many more to Laurel and provide a much needed awareness and funding for SBC. The idea was quickly endorsed by the Laurel Chamber of Commerce, selected downtown Laurel merchants, banks, and others stating that they were in full support of this ideal opportunity!

It wasn't long thereafter that Jack Anderson, a member of the Bibletones and a person well connected in the southern gospel music world, jumped on board and helped us develop a theme. The name of the event is The Southeastern Gospel Fest with Southeastern Baptist College being both sponsor and beneficiary of the event. We are so grateful to First Baptist Church of Laurel, Mississippi, for providing their sanctuary for this awesome festival of praise and

worship. The dates of this event are April 21, 22, and 23.

The southern gospel groups that have agreed to come are:

- Josh and Ashley Franks
- The Perrys
- Old Paths Quartet
- The Bibletones
- The Guardians
- Brian Free and Assurance
- Hopes Journey
- Dixie Echoes
- LeFevre Quartet
- Jeff and Sheri Easter
- Tim Lovelace
- Michael Combs

The speed at which this all came together and the large support from the various businesses and organizations of this city wide event, follows a recurring pattern of opportunity that shows God's great, provisional care of SBC. He has consistently brought just the right people, at just the right time, to support and promote Southeastern Baptist College. His guiding hand upon this institution, is undeniable!

So mark your calendars and be one of the first in line to buy tickets which will be available for sale in the Spring of 2022. We



Jack Anderson, member of the Bibletones, presents Dr. Carson with a copy of their most recent recording

are excited about this event coming to Laurel and hope you, your friends, and families will join us in worshiping our Savior and at the same time, support SBC at this grand Southeastern Gospel Fest!

"I will sing unto the LORD as long as I live: I will sing praise to my God while I have my being."
Psalm 104:33

Equipping the Saints
Dr. Carson

Holloway's Dairy Bar

Holloway's Dairy Bar is open and the public is welcome! The Dairy Bar is located in the same location where the Lighthouse Café was formerly. There is an expanded menu and it is open Monday thru Saturday, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. An official "grand opening" event will be announced soon.



Members of the Jones County Community Service painting Hilburn Hall

Available Scholarship

The Arnold Knight Memorial RLF Scholarship is available every semester to Baptist Missionary Association ministers who take classes at Southeastern Baptist College. These funds are administered by the BMA of Mississippi Revolving Loan Fund. Contact our Financial Aid Officer, Ginny Singleton for more information.

Registering for Fall Semester

We have opened early registration for the Fall Semester. Classes begin the August 16. There are many possibilities for financial help. Contact Admissions through our website, or calling 601-426-6346, or by visiting our campus in person 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., Monday through Thursday.

Coffee with the President

An SBC alumnus suggested we begin a "coffee with the president" program where we invite folks, and especially alumni, to meet with Dr. Carson to discuss any topic that might be on their mind. If you are interested in meeting with Dr. Carson, contact him at 601-426-6346 to make an appointment.

Need a Preacher?

Dr. Carson is available to fill the pulpit or to make a presentation about the work and vision of Southeastern Baptist College. Thank you Brother Brandon Clark for recently allowing Dr. Carson to fill your pulpit at Pine Ridge Missionary Baptist Church in Laurel! In addition, Chaplain (Colonel) Carson can provide an update on the BMAA Chaplaincy and deliver a related message. You can reach him at 601-433-4736 or at scarson@southeasternbaptist.edu.

Improvements Around Campus



Alumni and member of the Board of Trustees, Sam and wife Judy Oglesby, working on Grandbury Hall



SBC Basketball Coach, Geno White, removing the old tile surrounding the gym court



SBC Athletic Director, R.E. Lopez, working on the gym floor

Southeastern College Positions Available

Adjunct Accounting Professor: The applicant must possess a Master's Degree in a related field or be studying toward a Master's Degree in a related field.

Part Time Librarian: The applicant must possess a Master's Degree in a related field or be studying toward a Master's Degree in a related field.

Résumés may be sent to Southeastern Baptist College, 4229 Highway 15 North, Laurel, MS 39440 or emailed to jwalker@southeasternbaptist.edu. Feel free to call us at 601-426-6346.

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In His Grip

by Carolyn Hagler

Carolyn Hagler is a retired educator and a member of Westover Baptist Church in Hattiesburg. You may contact her via email at cmhagler@bellsouth.net



In the Garden

"I come to the garden alone while the dew is still on the roses." That old hymn just starts your day off right, doesn't it? As I'm walking through my garden this morning as I do most mornings and evenings, I just smile as I think of His walking with me and talking with me.

I have a yard that Sharon Lucy once described as "eclectic." I think she meant "junky" because even Middle Sister used to say, "You have too much stuff" even though she gave me a lot of the stuff. But, the flowers, yard art, the turtles, the king snake, the swimming pool that used to be and is now a garden, and the trees all remind me of people in my life, trips, experiences, and mostly the Lord.



Eclectic Garden

Sister No. 1 and I don't travel as much as we used to without our traveling buddies, but walking in my backyard is a trip in itself because of the memories of places and people that spring forth.

What triggers your memories? My memories can be triggered by any of my senses through a fragrance, a flower, a bird, or even a piece of yard art.

Years ago when the McKey Sisters were together a lot, whether traveling, working at Kristy's Trail Ride, or just visiting, I made pot people to represent us sisters. Sister No. 1 is turquoise, her favorite color; Middle Sister is purple, her color; and Baby Sister is red. What makes me smile is that Sister No. 1 is still watching over us, Baby Sister is being kind of a klutz, and Middle Sister is just out of our sight in her heavenly home. Pure love!

The fragrance of a cape jasmine flower (some of you may call it a gardenia) makes me remember my mother. She was a fun-loving person and enjoyed being with her family. One special memory involved a trip to Longwood mansion in Natchez,



Longwood Plantation

the one that is still unfinished today.

On that day, we visited the mansion with two of her grandchildren. When questioned about the fragrance in the air, she told the tale of a ghost being near because the smell of the cape jasmine was a warning. You'd just have to have known her! I wonder if that triggers their memories, too?

Other flowers also trigger memories. When a certain plant blooms, I think of Sharon, who was our garden expert. She was the only person I knew who studied gardening catalogs each winter to decide what to plant the following spring. I'm more of a haphazard gardener: I see a plant, especially an unusual one, and I buy it. Then I try to find a place to plant it. Sometimes that works, and sometimes it doesn't.



Carolyn Hagler

Those God-given memories that come to me in my garden encourage me and help me remember His faithfulness and His works

But each summer, I would ask Sharon, "Now, what is this plant?" I could never remember the proper name; today, I call it Stokes' aster. But that's a guess because Sharon isn't here to remind me.

Roses trigger my memories of JB. He loved his roses, and he carefully clipped the first rose of the season, removed all the thorns, and took it to his cousin's wife. JB and Millie are both gone now, but the fragrance of a rose brings back that special memory.

The stone Schnauzer that sits by my weeping Japanese maple reminds me of my long-lasting friendship with Carole, who now has Alzheimer's. We were high school classmates and college roommates and have remained friends all these years. We've had lots of years to share a love of Schnauzers, plants, garden shows, exercise, and books. Our biggest enjoyment came every year when a group of us went to the garden show in Crystal Springs. We looked at all the plants and yard art, we listened to garden tips, we ate delicious steak sandwiches, and we bought stuff. She doesn't remember that, but I do.

You already know that I like goats. Well, the metal goats in my yard remind me of another old friend whom I met in dance class when I was in elementary school. Daddy bought us a goat, and Sandra and I made Billy Goat the meanest goat around and taught him to get out of his fence.

One day he got out of his fence and started chasing me. Screaming at the top



Goats

of my lungs, "Mother, open the door," I was going too fast to get in the house. I raced to the fence and jumped it. When he came over the fence, I ran to the house. Everybody was so busy laughing that they had no sympathy for me. Daddy got rid of the goat shortly afterwards.

The flower you see with my barnyard flock is the vitex. On our first cruise to Alaska, Sister No. 1 and I visited Victoria, British Columbia. As we arrived at Victoria, I saw the largest butterfly bush I had ever seen. Well, that butterfly bush turned out to be a vitex. Now when I look at mine, I am transported back to a wonderful time and a cooler place.

A walk through my yard even reminds me of Hurricane Katrina. Several years before that memorable time, I saw a weeping mulberry tree. Because I like anything "weeping," I wanted one but didn't want to spend that much money. I talked about it for years, maybe a little too much, because friends started saying in a suffering tone, "Just buy it." I finally did.



Cape Jasmine

When I heard about the trees that had fallen in my yard, I was afraid to ask about my mulberry. Arriving home a week later, I saw that one of the trees had landed on top of the mulberry. It was scarred, but it still lives today. That scar reminds me of the strength that often comes from trauma!

Another Katrina victim brings a smile to my face. The Harrises and I were neighbors for many years. Mary's parrots survived the storm, a little battered but precious! Those parrots are a prized possession representing friendship.



Mary's Parrots

I've got to admit the one thing in my yard I hate are the weeds. My thoughts are not kind ones when I spot the devil vine, the rattlesnake weed, and the mimosa tree weed. I don't think you'll find those listed anywhere, but that's what I call them. Even the weeds, though, remind me of the Lord because you do remember why we have weeds and thistles (Genesis 3:17-18)? As I pull weeds in my garden, I'm reminded, too, that God weeds and prunes in my life. (John 15:1-4)

Those God-given memories that come to me in my garden encourage me and help me to remember His faithfulness and His works. In the quietness of my garden, I feel His presence and have my own worship service, just me and the Lord. It's the perfect way for me to start my day and recall that I'm always in His grip.

THE TEACHER'S CORNER

HELP FOR THE CHURCH'S CLASSROOM

Can you teach an old dog new tricks?

by Ronnie Johnson, Ph.D.

Older adults often embrace the idea that they are too old to learn. We have all heard the saying, "You can't teach an old dog new tricks." In his book, *Teaching to Change Lives*, Howard Hendricks responded to that idea sharply, "That is true, if you're teaching dogs and you're teaching tricks." He continues to explain that Christian teachers are not doing either one, "we're teaching people and we're teaching truth."

The Bible assumes the fact that older adults can learn. Paul instructed Titus to teach both older men and older women (Titus 2:1-5). If older people are incapable of learning, then Titus would be wasting his time. An example of how older adults can be motivated to learn new things is found in recent research from AARP. The study found that older adults view communication technology more positively than they did before COVID-19. In addition, 4 out of 5 adults age 50+ rely on technology to stay connected and in touch with family and friends.

Neuroscience concludes that learners of any age have brain "plasticity." Unless there is illness or injury, the human brain has the ability to learn and change throughout life. It may slow down, but it does not stop.

A teacher should believe all people can learn and grow! Older learners should believe they can learn and grow! Try a new trick like downloading a free Bible study app such as BibleHub.com or learn to use an online Bible website such as BlueLetterBible.com.

Ronnie Johnson, Professor of Religious Education at BMA Seminary. PhD in Adult Education. He teaches Sunday School at First Baptist Church of Maydelle, Texas.

Letter to Editor

from front page

Great Triumvirate. These three were James Robinson Graves, Amos Cooper Dayton (A Presbyterian who converted to Baptist), James Madison Pendleton. These men were largely responsible for the Landmark movement in the 19th century. It is a point of historical fact that the labors of these men helped revive waning biblical Ecclesiology during this century. It is also a point of historical fact that the churches now known as ABA, BMA and Faithway were, for the most part, once one and the same and were by and large Landmark in their Ecclesiology, and according to their doctrinal statements, Particular Baptist in their Soteriology. Many, if not most, Missionary Baptists today have never heard or picked up a book written by any of these men. Graves, according to history, was a renowned biblical scholar and a captivating preacher under whose ministry many were converted. Anyone who would read the writings of Graves without regard as to whether they agree with His conclusions, would have to admit he was very thoughtful, thorough, and scholarly in his work. It is sad that the work of these men, for the most part, has been forgotten.

Now specifically in regard to Graves's thoughts concerning the Covenant of Redemption, Graves expressed what was historically and commonly accepted (in varying degrees) by Regular Missionary Baptists. It is another point of historical fact that Regular Missionary Baptists in the 19th Century and early 20th century were Particular Baptists and, according to the Doctrinal Statements of Regular Missionary Baptist churches as well as associations, would have taken little or no

Walker Family

from page 3

ing his classes remotely at the Bible college and officially came off the field.

Their Future Plans

With twenty years of experience in school administration, in May 2021 Jimmy was hired as assistant superintendent at Columbia Christian School in Magnolia, Arkansas. He will work alongside the current superintendent until Jimmy assumes the superintendent role in the 2022 fall semester.

He and his family plan on returning to the Philippines, taking family and students there on short-term trips, and continuing to raise funds for the Darlene Carey Academy, which now has first graders and second graders and will add a grade each year.

John David Smith says, "Jimmy and Julie Walker went to the Philippines with a clear objective and a working exit strategy in relation to the schools there. In conjunction with other missionaries, they have accomplished their goals and have seen fit to not return to the Philippines.

"We are thankful for the ministry the Walkers enjoyed there, and we pray that God will use them mightily in their next ministry opportunity. Jimmy, Julie, and family, thank you for your service to the Lord and to our association."

issue with the sentiments expressed by Graves concerning the doctrine of Election. It would seem, and this is a matter of personal perspective, that many, or too many Baptists are so unfamiliar with their history, not only regarding Ecclesiology, but also Soteriology, that the statements made by Graves wash over them as something new or un-Baptist, and should a preacher even broach the subject of Election, he is quickly looked upon with suspicion. In the July 15th, 2020, paper I submitted an article which I am resubmitting along with this letter showing the historicity of Grave's understanding of Particular Redemption among the churches of Mississippi. The re-submitted article can be found in this issue in the History and Archives section.

Now regarding the views taken by Graves, (the same view held in the main historically by Regular Missionary Baptist Churches) being a dangerous view, Bro. Ed Steele, in the conclusion of his article pointed out some practical issues that indeed would logically seem to flow from the position taken by Graves. I fully agree with Bro. Steele on this general point; any doctrine that is unbiblical is dangerous.

However, history again gives us some insight into these concerns. For instance, William Carey, known as the "Father of Modern Missions" was a Particular Baptist minister. Consider Adoniram Judson, who was one of the first missionaries from America to travel overseas (Burma). Judson translated the Bible into Burmese, as well as established a number of Baptist churches in Burma. Judson, although beginning as a Congregationalist, converted and became a Particular Baptist. Charles Haddon Spurgeon, known as the Prince of Preachers, although no Missionary Baptist, was a Particular Baptist and labored for souls for years in England. In 1651 Obadiah Holmes, John Crandall and John Clarke (founder of first Baptist Church in America, Newport) were arrested for holding an unlawful Baptist meeting. Crandall and Clarke's fines were paid, and they were released. Holmes refused to have his fine paid and who was beaten in Boston Market for holding services in a colony when and where it was forbidden for Baptists to meet. These men were Particular Baptists. After Holmes was publicly whipped, he said, you have beaten me "as with roses." Jesse Mercer, the great Missionary Baptist in Georgia in the 1800's was a Particular Baptist, and it is interesting that Mercer, although a Particular Baptist, became embroiled with the Primitive Baptists due to his promotion of revivals and mission support. Another great American Particular Baptist preacher was John Gano. It is believed that John Gano baptized George Washington. It has been written concerning Gano, there were "few Baptist ministers at the time who had journeyed to the extent Gano did in preaching the gospel of God's grace, for he is known to have preached in each of the thirteen original colonies as well as what was considered the 'far west' of his day, Ohio and Kentucky. He also assisted in constituting at least eleven churches and participated in the ordination services of pastors and deacons throughout the country." John Leland, another Particular Baptist preacher, possibly did more for the cause of religious liberty than any pastor in the United States. It has been written concerning Leland that "in the first 15 years of his ministry, over 3,000 sermons were preached, 700 persons were baptized, and two large churches were formed under his ministry." Consider the great Baptist missionary zeal and explosion of Baptist work in Mississippi in the 19th and early 20th century. This work (according to Doctrinal Statements) was directed by Regular/Particular Missionary Baptist. There are

many other examples that could be given. (Study the Welch Tract Baptist Church, Welch Neck Baptist Church, the Philadelphia Association.)

Understanding Bro. Steele's concerns regarding the Soteriological views of Graves and other historical as well as modern Particular Baptists, I offer the few above examples, of which there are many, to show that the views held by these, and other men, did not seem to hinder them in any of the ways expressed. They preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ with much success. Some of the greatest contributions in Baptist work were made by men holding views very similar to those of Graves. And yet, they preached to thousands, saw many souls saved and baptized, planted many churches, are a forgotten part of the foundation of our great nation, and laid the foundation for the Baptist work we cherish and are blessed to be a part of even to this day. It is an understandable and common assumption that the Soteriological views taken by Graves and others would be a detriment to missionary zeal, and yet the opposite is true. Their beliefs became the great impetus of their missionary zeal.

I would humbly submit, all things considered, that the greater damage done to Baptist churches has not been the result of the Soteriological views of Graves or other Regular/Particular Missionary Baptists, but rather, in the first place, a man-centered Soteriology that sacrifices the Sovereignty of God at the altar of man's will which has led to "repeat after me and be saved," "say the sinners prayer and be saved," "raise your hand if you don't want to go to hell," "easy believe-ism," etc. This methodology has filled the Lord's churches with the unregenerate and made them twofold more the children of hell. And we wonder why we have the trouble we have in churches today. And in the second place, a great amount of damage has taken place simply because Baptist people have become disconnected with their own history and their heritage. "Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations; ask thy father, and he will tell thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee" (Deuteronomy 32:7).

Jason Howard
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Reader Responds to Article

Why such opposition to Biblical theology that Bro. Steele and others call Calvinism? Theology that has been held to historically for over 500 years by Baptists. Do they have new revelation? It is dangerous to dismiss the beliefs of our church fathers without diligently studying what they believed and why they passed that on to us. Was John Bunyan in error? Was Charles Spurgeon? William Carey? Adoniram Judson? All believed in the doctrines that Bro. Steele and others call dangerous. The subjects that the doctrine of the Covenant of Redemption describes were addressed as early as Augustine, an early church father. The formal name 'Covenant of Redemption' did not come about until 1638. Mainstream Baptists held to this doctrine until the mid 20th century when Arminianism began corrupting the sound doctrine of Baptist Theology.

Mr. Steele errs regarding the Covenant of Grace. He stated, "I believe the Covenant of Grace was revealed in Genesis 15 when God, as a Smoking Furnace, and the Son, as a Burning Lamp, met between the sacrifices Abram had severed to confirm the covenant." The text Mr. Steele quotes contextually fits within the Abrahamic Covenant. And while the Abrahamic Covenant is a steppingstone in the ultimate fulfillment of the Covenant of

Grace it is not the covenant of grace. Why isn't it? Grace is defined as unmerited favor. Meaning blessings and benefits bestowed are not the result works or in the case of the Abrahamic Covenant which Mr. Steele has referred to keeping the covenant. The covenant with Abraham was ratified in Genesis 17. The token of which was circumcision. If any male child was not circumcised the were cut off Gen 17:9-14. Biblically the Covenant of Grace was instituted in Gen 3:15 And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel." The difference is clear. In the Covenant of Grace there is no requirement on the part of the seed of the woman just the promise made by God.

He contradicts himself in the article, agreeing to the very thing that he disagrees with. "Thus, each Person of the Godhead is involved in the Covenant of Grace which they planned, initiated, and are still carrying out." Though he gets the name of the covenant wrong this is a basic definition of the Covenant of Redemption with the exception that God does more than just receive the blood of Christ for our atonement. 1 Peter 1:1,2 clears up his error 1Peter 1:1,2 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To the pilgrims of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, (2) elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace be multiplied. The pilgrims were elect (chosen) according to the foreknowledge of God. God's foreknowledge is not His looking into the future to see who would exercise faith in Christ. No! God foreknows because He foreordains. He foreordains because He foreknows. Act 2:23 Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death; Paul echoes this in Eph 1:4,5 ...chose us in Him before the foundation of the world...having predestined us to adoption... The doctrine of election is found throughout the Scripture in the Old and the New Testament but due to the limits of this article all the references cannot be listed. Each Person of the Godhead is indeed involved in the Covenant of Redemption: the Father elects, the Son secures the salvation of the elect, and the Spirit applies and keeps the elect in salvation.

Mr. Steele does speak the truth when he says the best interpreter of Scripture is Scripture but, unfortunately cherry picks verses that fit his presuppositions rather than seeking the truth. He conveniently leaves out the Eph. 1:4,5. I am curious. If the Scriptures teach that man in his natural condition is dead in sin, enemy, and hater of God, (and it does) how is it he suddenly finds in Himself the need for repentance and faith? The Scriptures teach man's responsibility to believe, just as man was responsible for keeping the whole Law, but there is a huge difference between the responsibility to do a thing and the ability to do the thing. Did Lazarus bring himself to life or was he brought to life by the command of God?

Bro. Steele's warning about the horrors of God's election are nothing but a play on emotions rather than based on Scripture. Deu 29:29 "The secret things belong to the LORD our God...". No man knows who God has elected to save or not save which is why we cast a wide net with the free offer of the gospel. And when we have the terrible task of preaching the funeral service of a child then we appeal to the goodness, the grace, mercy, love, and compassion of God. And Mr. Steele

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History & Archives Commission

4229 Highway 15 North, Laurel, Mississippi 39440

Regular Missionary Baptist Churches

Baptist history and work in Mississippi began around 1791 with Salem Baptist Church near Natchez. In studying Baptist History in our state, one thing soon became quite obvious to me, and that is this - there was a time when Baptist churches held much more in common, in both faith and practice, than "Baptist" churches throughout our state do today.

These early Baptist churches were designated Regular (Particular) Missionary Baptist churches in contrast to General Baptist churches. The 5th article of Salem Baptist church in 1791 stated, "We believe in the doctrine of Particular Redemption, in Personal Election, Effectual Calling, Justification by the imputed Righteousness of Jesus Christ, Pardon of sins by his atoning blood, Believer's Baptism by immersion, and Final perseverance of the Saints, the Resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment."

What became known as the Primitive, Hard Shell or Old School Baptists are in fact the "New School" Baptists. They were Regular Missionary Baptists who went to seed on the doctrine of election. D. B. Ray states, "It may surprise some when they are informed, that no party among the Baptists were ever called 'Old School' until after the separation, about the year 1832, when the Anti-Mission brethren assumed the name - 'Old School Baptists.' The Missionary and the Anti-Missionary Baptists were once together as one people; and therefore, their history up to the separation was the same. The opposition of our Anti-Mis-

sion brethren to the mission work, and kindred objects, is a new feature among Baptists. There are some of the so-called 'Old Baptists,' who have lapsed into 'Two-seedism' and 'Non-resurrectionism;' and have thereby denied the faith . . . most of them have impaired their usefulness by speculating on the decrees and purposed of God to the neglect of faithful preaching to sinners." (Baptist Succession, pg. 91)

While the Primitive Baptists allowed their belief in election (to which there are many shades) to quench their missionary zeal; for the Regular Missionary Baptists, these doctrines became the great impetus for their Missionary work - believing salvation being solely the work of God, and that God having ordained the end, including His elect, He also ordained the means to the end. The means to the end of the salvation of the elect is the preaching of the gospel.

Many local BMA associations retained their original Articles of Faith until they accepted the BMA state Doctrinal Statement. The BMA of Mississippi, tracing its lineage back to the 1806 Mississippi Baptist Association, finds its roots and heritage in Regular (Particular) Missionary Baptists.

The following Statement of faith was that of the 1806 Mississippi Baptist, Pearl River, Mt. Pisgah and Landmark (now Big Creek) Associations.

Articles of Faith

1st We believe in one only true and living God; and that there are a trinity of persons in the God Head, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; the same in essence, equal in power and glory.

2nd We believe the scriptures, of the Old and New Testament, were given by inspiration of God; are of Divine authority, and the only rule of faith and practice.

3rd We believe in the fall of Adam, in the imputation of his sin to all his posterity. In the total depravity of human nature - And in man's inability to restore himself to the favor of God.

4th We believe in the everlasting love of God to his people. In the eternal unconditional election of a definite number of the human family to grace and glory.



Jason Howard
Director

Letter to Editor

from page 6

what do you tell the parent who has diligently brought up their child in the fear and nurture of the Lord who is unconverted? Do you tell them they didn't do a good enough job? That it is their fault their child is unconverted? The danger lies with the theology of Bro. Steele's and those who agree with him. They make God with the impotence of man and man with the power of God to save themselves. That is not the God of the Bible and is idolatrous.

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SPECIAL EMPHASIS TIME

Southeastern Baptist College's Special Emphasis Months are July and August for focused donations from churches and individuals. If your church was not able to designate August, August 1, 2021, for a "Day of Giving" for SBC, there are still four more Sundays in August to do so before our special emphasis months are concluded. As a reminder, Southeastern Baptist College is a 501(c)(3) certified tax deductible charity.



WOMEN'S MISSIONARY AUXILIARY

WMAofMS20@gmail.com

President Theresa Reus

264 Dean Nursery Rd., Lucedale, MS 39452 - 601-508-9697

Treasurer Mrs. Shirlene Smith

730 Hwy 533, Laurel, MS 39443 - 601-729-5638

Ladies Retreat September 17-18, 2021

Registration will be mailed to Beth Caldwell, 166 Twin Creek Rd, Lucedale, MS 39452. Her phone number is (601) 947-6011 or (601) 766-5702. The fee is \$50.00. This is due by September 12, 2021. This includes dinner and breakfast.

You will need to call the Holiday Inn, (601) 939-5238 to make your reservations. The rooms will accommodate four (4) people. The cost is \$109.00 per room. The Hospitality Room and our rooms will be on the second floor. We will all be together. The physical address of the hotel is 110 Bass Pro Drive, Pearl.

If you know ladies that are not in your church but would like to attend please invite them. We need 150 ladies to attend to help cover hotel expense. We would love to have more.

Registration will begin at 2:00. Looking forward to seeing you in September. If you have any questions please call me at (601) 508-1082.

Ladies Retreat Registration Form

Church: _____

Name	Phone No.
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____
5. _____	_____
6. _____	_____
7. _____	_____
8. _____	_____
9. _____	_____
10. _____	_____

Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

Registration Fee: \$50.00 per person.

Mail to: Beth Caldwell, 166 Twin Creek Rd, Lucedale, MS 39452

Master builders continue ministry

Jacksonville Baptist College, Jacksonville, Texas, called on The Master's Builders to come help out with some renovations needed as the college goes through many changes and begin a new era under President Dr. Joe Lightner. It had been five years since our group had last worked at JBC and we were happy to be back. This would be job #172 for The Master's Builders who began their ministry in 1991.

If you have any questions about The Master's Builders ministry please contact Eddie Sikes at 470-462-1675, Mike Green at 972-935-3877, or David Axe at 903-918-0720.

Like us on Facebook at "The Master's Builders".



Scripture Thoughts by Cleaver

Ezra 1.1 *“the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia”*

God works in the hearts of rulers. God works in the minds of prime ministers. God moves the actions of presidents. There was no cause for King Cyrus to issue the decree for the Jews to go back to Jerusalem to rebuild the Temple other than the Lord rousing his spirit! Cyrus also added to his decree the encouragement for all Jews to return for this great project.

He further added that all people, even non-Jews, were enlivened to contribute to this project. Now that is God at work in leaders to project them along with His intentions for the ages! Good Reader, current leaders from the highest office to the most menial official are all open to the Lord's moving in their spirit to perform His strategy. They may not be church going people or even nominal Christians, yet they are subject to His will and His creations to glorify His objectives.

Ezra 3.3 *“And they set the altar upon his bases; for fear was upon them because of the people of those countries.”*

A preponderance of people reading this have never had to worship in fear. Worship is a free right and it is not a fearful thing to attend the regularly scheduled divine services.

Dear Reader, I wonder what would happen if the majority of people around Christians were not inclined to appreciate their worship? Would Christians stop worship of the Risen Lord? Would Christians go underground to worship? Would Christians soon forget worship due to the extenuating circumstances surrounding it because of the fear of those around them? This verse informs us the God worshippers went on about their worship even though it was fearful, diffi-



Tony Cleaver

cult, even dangerous. My goodness, it is so easy to worship today in any given Christian church for they are on almost every corner in our towns.

It is not today's Christian is afraid to worship because of the surrounding people, rather it is because the Christian wants to be like one of the surrounding people.

Ezra 5.2 *“and with them were the prophets of God helping them”*

The people of God were trying to carry out a great endeavor for God. They were trying to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem. It was a difficult, dangerous, demanding, daunting, and draining task they sought to accomplish. The prophets of God—those men who spoke forth the Word of God to the people—were right alongside them to help. Dear Pastor in your Church today, be alongside your people to help them.

Dear Minister as you go in and out of your congregation's lives, help them to be

encouraged in Christian living. There is no better help to God's people than to read the Word, speak the Word, and especially live the Word. It is so important that the preacher be the model the congregants can look up to see the help of God coming to them in their time of need. Certainly the Temple was rebuilt, but not without the prophets being with their people helping them. Is there any wonder when the pastor of today's congregation does not help the people that the work of God is not done?

Ezra 7.5 *“...The son of Abishua, the son of Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the chief priest...”*

Ezra was proud of his religious heritage. Listed here are many generations of those who had served the Lord: his father, grandfather, great grandfather, and all the way back to Aaron. This is possibly more than fifteen generations.

Some today whose father, mother, or grandparents were staunch in their Christian faith find themselves as basic civic, philosophical, even political pagans. There is no faith in Christ or commitment to His Church even though generations before them made sacrifice to serve the Lord. Little by little, generation by generation the religious faith has slipped away until the generation of today does not understand or think they need the God of their fathers.

Hear some of the words of a hymn rarely heard by this generation: “God of our fathers whose almighty hand...has lead us in the past...by Thee our lot is cast...Thy true religion in our hearts increase...glory, laud, and praise be ever Thine.” It is the Christian's prayer that God will instill even a greater faith in our lives than in the generation before us.

Dr. Tony Cleaver is a retired U.S. Army Chaplain and Director of Distance Learning for BMA Seminary.

You may contact him at jstmcleaver@embarqmail.com

History

from page 7

5th We believe that sinners are only justified in the sight of God, by the impute righteousness of Jesus Christ; which is unto all, and upon all them that believe.

6th We believe all those who were chosen in Christ, before the foundation of the world; are in time effectually called, regenerated, converted, and sanctified; and are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation.

7th We believe there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who by the satisfaction which He made to law and justice, “in becoming an offering for sin” hath, by his most precious blood, redeemed the elect, from under the curse of the law: that they might be holy and without blame, before him in love.

8th We believe good works are the fruits of faith, and follow after justification; are evidences of a gracious state – And that it is the duty of all believers, to perform them from a principle of love.

9th We believe in the resurrection of the dead; and a general judgment, and that the happiness of the righteous, and the punishment of the wicked will be eternal.

Gospel Order

1st We believe that the visible church of Jesus Christ, is a congregation of faithful persons, who have given themselves up to the Lord, and to one another, and have covenanted, to keep up a Godly discipline, agreeably to the rules of the gospel.

2nd We believe that Jesus Christ is the head of the church, the only Lawgiver – that the government is with the body “the Church,” and is equally the right and privilege, of each member thereof.

3rd We believe that baptism and the Lord's Supper are gospel ordinances, appointed by Jesus Christ, and are to be continued in the Church, until His second coming.

4th We believe baptism, by immersion, is the only scriptural mode, and that believers are the only proper subjects.

5th We believe that none but regular baptized church members, have a right to

partake of the Lord's Supper.

6th We believe it to be the duty, and privileges, of all believers, to make a public profession of their faith, to submit to baptism by immersion, and to give themselves members of the visible church.

7th We believe it to be the duty of every regular organized church, to expel from her communion, all disorderly members, who are immoral in their lives – or that hold doctrines contrary to the scriptures.

Some Associations that went Faithway or that organized as Faithway have retained the older Statement of Faith, which includes a Gospel Order. Some BMA Associations for years retained their original Articles of Faith and Gospel Order. While many Missionary Baptist churches would now reject Particular Baptist Doctrine, these older Statements of Faith almost always reflect to some degree the doctrine of election. In many cases, the Rules of Decorum of older Associations will state the following: “This association shall neither answer nor debate any query on gospel doctrine, except it be merely to explain the articles of faith of this Association.” This statement discourages any changes in the Articles of Faith, and, as a result, churches that have moved away from Regular (Particular) Missionary Baptist doctrine still belong to Associations whose Doctrinal Statements do not reflect their beliefs. Consider the Washington Association (BMA). Found in the minutes of the 4th Annual Session of the Washington Missionary Baptist Association of Regular Baptists held in 1916, there are ten Articles of Faith listed and seven items listed under Gospel Order. (Washington Missionary Baptist Church was originally part of Leaf Association which was organized in 1890 and held its first meeting at Washington church in Neely, MS.) Both Leaf and Washington Associations Articles of Faith reflected Regular (Particular) Baptist Doctrine. (Washington Association was organized from churches which split from the Leaf over the issue of feet-washing – Washington Association retained feet-washing at this time) Feet-washing was listed, and practiced among churches of the Washington Association at least until 1945. By 1981 the original Articles of Faith and Gospel

Order had been combined and feet-washing was dropped from the statement. However, the 1981 Articles of Faith still very clearly reflected Regular (Particular) Missionary Baptist Doctrine. Sometime after 1981 the Washington Association dropped its old Articles of Faith and adopted that of the BMA of Mississippi.

In every case in which I have been able to find (certainly all are not available to me) the original Articles of Faith adopted at the constitution of a church or an Association in the 19 century, it always presented Regular (Particular) Missionary Baptist Doctrine.

When the SBC formed in 1845 (without church authority) many of the churches that came into the convention were Regular Missionary Baptists. Take for example the Perry County (SBC) Association. On the cover of Perry County Association's first minute book reads, “Minutes of the First Session – Perry County Missionary Baptists.” The Leaf Association organized in 1890, out of which the Washington Association formed, later became the Greene County (SBC) Association which is now the George and Greene (SBC) Baptist Association.

The SBC 1925 Baptist Faith and Message is based upon the New Hampshire Confession of Faith. The BMA of America's Doctrinal Statement is based upon the New Hampshire Confession of Faith. The New Hampshire Confession of Faith emphasizes Unconditional election rather than Conditional election. The New Hampshire confession states concerning “Of Grace in Regeneration - We believe that, in order to be saved, sinners must be regenerated or born again; that regeneration consists in giving a holy disposition to the mind; that it is effected, in a manner above our comprehension, by the power of the Holy Spirit in connection with divine truth, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the gospel; and that its proper evidence appears in holy fruits of repentance and faith and newness of life.”

In the 1800's and in some cases even into the early 1900's, there was far more commonality among Baptist churches in Mississippi. They were Regular (Particular) Missionary Baptist Churches.

Southeastern College Positions Available

Adjunct Accounting Professor: The applicant must possess a Master's Degree in a related field or be studying toward a Master's Degree in a related field.

Part Time Librarian: The applicant must possess a Master's Degree in a related field or be studying toward a Master's Degree in a related field.

Résumés may be sent to Southeastern Baptist College, 4229 Highway 15 North, Laurel, MS 39440 or emailed to jwalker@southeasternbaptist.edu. Feel free to call us at 601-426-6346.