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DISCIPLEPOINTS

Making Everyday Application of the Bible in Our Families

by **Cindy Williams**

Have you ever heard a great sermon or Bible lesson and thought, "Yeah, that sounds good, but how does that work in real life?" So often, we attend trainings or hear inspirational speeches about things that are great in theory, but not so great when we try to work them into our everyday responsibilities. My forty hour a week job is to provide training and mentoring for preschool teachers. I am thankful for the combination of "train and mentor" because it keeps me accountable to make my trainings practical and applicable for the classroom. None of us have time to attend a training (listen to a sermon, etc.) that cannot be reasonably applied in real life. To put it in YouTube terms,

"Ain't nobody got time for that!"

DISCIPLEPOINTS is a blog which is also posted on Facebook each week. The topic of the blog/post is the following Sunday's Sunday School lesson. The blog/post begins with the week designation (Fall Unit 2 Week 2), followed by the lesson title and scripture reference so that parents can read the scripture and know what their children will be taught on Sunday. Our foundational principle is, "Parents are the first and most



Cindy Williams

important teachers of their children." DISCIPLEPOINTS provides ideas for parents to introduce the Bible story and Biblical concept to their children to prepare them to listen to the following Sunday's lesson. Ideas for implementing the Biblical concept are shared by age group—Twos and Threes, Fours and Fives, 1st-3rd Grades and 4th-6th Grades. Often, the applications will be appropriate for more than one age group and the parents can choose the one that works best for their family. Every idea shared comes from real life—in other words, they are not just theory. They have been tested and proven effective.

Our prayer for DISCIPLEPOINTS is that parents, grandparents and

caregivers of any kind will use the ideas to plant God's Word deep in the hearts of the children in their care and, more than that, enjoy building lasting, loving relationships as they do so. We hope that each of you will share your experiences with us so that others can benefit. Tell us how you tweaked our ideas to better fit your family. Share with us your ideas of applying the Scripture to your family's real, everyday lives. This sharing and encouraging is the practical application of 1 Thessalonians 5:11, "Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing."

May God bless you as you travel the difficult, adventurous and rewarding path of parenthood.

He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

Luke 1:32-33

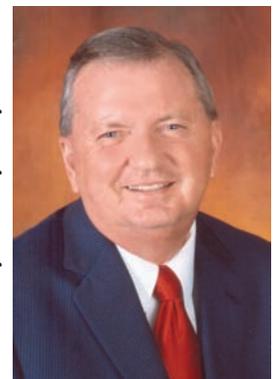


May God Grant You and Your Family a Blessed Christmas Celebration.

The Editor and Trustees
Mississippi Baptist

Adams Serves as Guest Chaplain for U.S. House of Representatives

On November 19, Dr. John Adams, pastor of First Baptist Church of Mantachie, Mississippi, and Director of Moral Action for the BMA of American and Mississippi had the honor of serving as the guest chaplain for the U.S. House of Representatives. Dr. Adams was afforded this opportunity as the guest of Congressman Ralph Nunnelee, who represents the First Congressional District of Mississippi.



Dr. John Adams

The Great Escape Cruise for Youth and Children's Leaders

DiscipleGuide Conference Ministry invites you to come aboard the Carnival Triumph and join us for a unique opportunity for Youth & Children's Leaders to fellowship & build supportive relationships with others in these leadership roles. Refresh, learn new ministry skills and enjoy free time with your spouse. The cruise is open to anyone in leadership roles with youth & children. Spouses are encouraged to attend. Due to the nature of the cruise, it is not recommended children attend. The Great Escape Cruise began as a getaway and growing experience for paid and volunteer youth leaders and their spouses. The popularity of "family-based" youth ministry prompted DiscipleGuide to include Children's ministers this year.

The Carnival's 5-day Western Caribbean Cruise departs from Galveston, Texas on the Carnival Ship Triumph with ports of call in Cozumel & Progreso Yucatan, Mexico. Cabins start at \$356 inclusive for Interior cabins with options for exterior cabins which include a window and/or balcony at a higher rate. These prices are not guaranteed and are subject to increase as sail date nears. However, you will receive the lower price if rates go down.

This is a holiday date and the ship is expected to sell out so secure your cabin promptly to guarantee your spot



The Great Escape
Youth & Children's
Leaders Cruise
January 18–23, 2014

Departing from Galveston, Texas
Ports of Call Progreso, Yucatan & Cozumel, Mexico
Cabin Prices – Starting at \$356 & Up Per Person
Registration - \$50 Per Person
See all the details at www.DiscipleGuide.org/thegreatescape
or contact DiscipleGuide at 501-513-3726 or triciak@conwaycorp.net.



Keynote Speaker
Donny Parrish

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and to receive the best rate by calling Gil Wilson at 800-819-3902 ext. 82690 or GWilsonjr@carnival.com and identify The Great Escape Cruise Group #60TVP4 with your \$100-\$200 per person deposit. Optional vacation protection is available for \$49 in the event

you have to cancel or leave the cruise.

Final payment is due November 19, 2013 and cancellations after that date will be assessed with appropriate penalties. These rates are based on double occupancy and will double if you book a single occupancy cabin. Cost includes all taxes, port charges, meals, entertainment, lodging and ports of call. Be sure to request the 6:00 p.m. early dining so all cruisers can sit, eat, and fellowship together.

Registration for the Great Escape with DiscipleGuide Conference Ministries is \$50 per person and will be expected by the December 18, 2013 cutoff date. Register and pay online or download a form and mail to DCM with your check. The Great Escape Cruise would make a great appreciation gift for a church to present to their youth and children's leaders and spouses. In support of youth leaders, children's workers, and spouses, Central Baptist College in Conway, Arkansas is proud to be a co-sponsor with DiscipleGuide Conference Ministry in offering Great Escape 2014.

Visit the Carnival Cruise site at www.carnival.com to view a layout of the ship, excursion options, cabins and amenities, ports of call information, pregnancy policy, etc. You will need a US Citizens passport OR original birth certificate (Not a COPY) and a photo ID. Watch your e-mail and our website at www.discipleguide.org/thegreatescape for updates and new information.

Donny Parrish is the featured speaker for Great Escape 2014. Donny serves as Chief Creative Officer for Lifeword Media Ministries. Donny has been in the ministry for over 30 years and has served in several churches including Arkansas, Louisiana and

Texas.

Donny also serves as Director of Student Missions for the Baptist Missionary Association of America Missions Department and as the Conference Ministry Director, DiscipleGuide Church Resources. He is author of instructional conference material on a wide range of ministry subjects and he works with churches to strengthen their individual local ministries. Part of his responsibilities includes sending high school and college students on mission trips around the world.

Donny is a nationally known conference speaker, concert artist and radio personality.

In addition, Donny produces videos and ad campaigns for various commercial companies and educational institutions. He lists as his credits the National Religious Broadcasters organization as well as many other ministry-related projects.

Donny and his wife, Datha, have been married for over 30 years. They have two daughters, Brittany, now with the Lord and Samantha, a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University. They reside in Conway, Arkansas.

The Great Escape Cruise promises to be just what you need to start the year off with some fresh ideas. Although there will be scheduled sessions, attendees will have plenty of free time for onboard activities and ports of call. More details will be available as the cruise date nears. E-mail triciak@conwaycorp.net or call the DCM office with any questions at 501-513-3726.

Get ready to set sail for the Great Escape Cruise 2013. You will cherish the time with your spouse and the many friendships you will develop at The Great Escape.

Promo Code "NOEL2013 "

How to Make Your Christmas Shopping Count for the Kingdom

As believers, I think we are all concerned with our tendency to become "consumer focused" during the holidays. We all struggle with spending extra money on ourselves when there are people around the world in need –not just financial need, but spiritual need. I don't know about you, but it makes me want to add "BMA Missions" to my Christmas shopping list!

What if I told you there is a way to take care of all your Christmas shopping while supporting world missions at the very same time?

From now through December 31, DiscipleGuide will give 5% of your purchase to the BMA Missions office when you enter promo code NOEL2013 at check out online.

To get started shopping, go to discipleguide.org. Our all-new web store is full of great Christmas gifts for everyone on your shopping list. We have books for men, women, boys and girls in categories such as Christian Living, Biography, Fiction, Theology, and Missions. Plus, we have a wide variety of Bibles from which to choose.

Make your Christmas shopping count for the Kingdom with DiscipleGuide and BMA Missions.

Mississippi Baptist

January 2014 Special Emphasis

The Christmas Shotgun

There was a time in the life of a young boy in the South that marked the beginning of manhood for him. It was not reaching a certain age. It was not the stubble of whiskers protruding from his chin. It was not even the start of a full-time job when you began grade school. No, it was the moment he was entrusted with the responsibility of owning his own shotgun.

This was a sacred time in the life of a youngster as his dad proudly handed over a new, or somewhat new, single shot, crack-barreled 12 gauge shotgun into the trembling hands of his forever grateful son. The gauge of the gun depended upon the era in which you were born: 16 gauge in the '50's, 12 gauge in the '60's, and

20 gauge in the '70's. After the seventies, young boys became men by receiving video games, then computers, then cell-phones... This is when civilization had to change the name of men from macho men to metro men to account for the sensibilities of the gender. If you ask me, being called a metro man just doesn't have the same rugged and tough masculinity as macho man does. But then again, I was born in the sixties and thus, received a single barrel 12 gauge at an early age.

I can still recall the morning I awoke to manhood. Daylight was just a faint notion that was still over the Atlantic Ocean and had yet to reach our humble abode in Franklin, Tennessee. As I threw the Puff the

From The Mind of



Chuck Lee

Magic Dragon covers off the bed, I ran excitedly in my Superman jammies down the hallway where I burst into my parent's bedroom screaming, "It's Christmas Day, it's Christmas Day"! They apparently shared in my enthusiasm because they too leaped from their bed screaming, the exact words escaping my memory as several decades have elapsed. Nevertheless, two cups of dark roast later and mom was able to convince Pops that five children is what God had given them, and five children were what they were going to keep, although Dad put up a convincing argument about having a nice even number, such as four.

Now that I have children, a nice even four, I see the wisdom in sleeping in until the crack of ten or eleven on Christmas morning. I also delight in torturing my children by putting long-

john underwear in a shotgun box while hiding the real treasure underneath the mattress of my bed, just so I can see the look of disappointment on their faces. Hey, I get it honest!

The mists of time part for just a moment as I recall the joy in my oldest son's face as he was presented with his very own shotgun. "Son, this moment marks the beginning of a new life for you. You see, when you receive your first shotgun, that means that you have become a man. With that comes responsibility. You must treat the gun with respect and also clean your room and do your chores or else mom will never let you touch your gun until you are thirty. Now go get out of those Transformer jammies, put your long-johns on, and let's go try out your new gun".



Report From Ghana, West Africa

by Dale and Celia Broom

Greetings from Ghana! We have now been back in Ghana after being on furlough in the U.S. for about a month. We hit the ground running to get preparations made for the Water for Christ team that came the following week. Bro. John Lindsey also came the same week.



While the team was here, there were four wells drilled in different villages. A mini VBS was held in the village of Amaning at the school there. Bro. Rodney Castleberry was the evangelistic speaker that shared the Gospel in the villages, schools, and at the crusades each night. There were around 127 souls that accepted Christ as their Savior!

We are currently preparing for the upcoming school year and interviewing students. The first classes will begin on January 7, 2014. Bro. Jason Daughtery from The Dove Church will be teaching the degree students. We look forward to his visit.



We will also begin traveling to the North in an area that we have not been to teach evangelism/discipleship in the region and also to encourage the churches in the area. Please pray for our travels.

We would like to take this time to thank all of the churches in the Mississippi, Arkansas, and Texas area for

the wonderful hospitality that was shown to us during our furlough to the States. We would like to thank everyone for their prayers, support, and words of encouragement as well. It was good to visit with all of you! We enjoyed our time back, but we

are also excited to be back in Ghana doing the work God called us to do. It was hard leaving family, so please pray for us and our family as we readjust to being apart again.

We appreciate all that you do for us and please continue to pray for us!

Help Needed For Philippine Relief Effort

You have heard recently of the severe devastation in the Philippines caused by Typhoon Haiyan. The areas that EIM has been serving have suffered like most of the Philippines. The island of Layte was hit the hardest, but the islands of Negros and Panay have suffered as well. Though the islands of Negros and Panay did not obtain the structural damage that Layte has suffered, these areas still experienced devastation of their crops. Since most rural Filipino's are subsistent farmers, the destruction has caused a major economic impact. Typhoon Haiyan hit during the harvesting season of sugar cane, the area's most important cash crop. With families then unable to work the fields, there is no source of income to buy the needed food to sustain their families.

Breedlove Foods of Lubbock, Texas, has once again generously donated food to EIM for the purpose of immediate relief. This 40 foot container of Dehydrated Vegetable Blend soup will more than meet the immediate needs of those suffering from shortage of food. We need financial help to be able to offer immediate response to those impacted by this devastating tragedy. In the next two weeks, we need to raise \$8,000-\$10,000 to help in shipping and distributing the food and other supplies as needed.

Many have faith-

fully given over the years as EIM has responded to natural disasters in countries like Ghana, Pakistan, Honduras, and the Philippines. Once again, we call on our friends and partners to help us. EIM is a 501 (C)3 non-profit organization, and all donations are tax-deductible. If you would like to make a donation, please make checks payable to:

EIM Philippine Relief
P.O. Box 297
Magnolia, AR 71754

You may contact us at our Magnolia office at 870-234-5319. All funds will be directly applied to the shipping and distribution of food in the Philippines. We will be coordinating the distribution with the BMA of the Philippines and the BMA Missions office.

CHURCH OF THE COVERED DISH by Thom Tapp



**Baptist Missionary Association
of Mississippi**

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DEPARTMENTS & COMMISSIONS

Mississippi Baptist Paper

P.O. Box 8181, Laurel, MS 39441
601-426-3293

Southeastern Baptist College

4229 Highway 15 North Laurel, MS
39440 - 601-426-6346

State Youth Department

P.O. Box 4247, Laurel, MS 39441
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Mississippi Baptist | **Opinion Page**

Journal of the Baptist Missionary Association of Mississippi

He Was On A Mission

Well, December has rolled around again and the thoughts of many are turned to the Christmas season.

Gifts will be given, hearts will be thrilled and God's people will celebrate the birth of the Savior! The world uses the term "Christmas", but to the large majority it holds no religious or spiritual significance.

Our loving heavenly Father came to this earth in the form of His only Son on a mission. Jesus himself told us in Luke 19:10 that *"...the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."*

That was His mission. He paid the price for salvation so those who come to Him by faith alone might have eternal life.

We give because He gave! May this Christmas be special to those who believe and may those who do not know Him as their personal Savior see the true meaning and purpose of this time of year and turn their hearts toward Him. May we who are His continue to be on that same mission - telling others about Jesus and His love for them.

As we look around at the condition and standards of the world, we know the need is great. Pray for those who do not know Him. Share Him with those in need!



Don Brown
Editor

December Issue

At the 2013 annual meeting the messengers approved our recommendation to publish only one issue in the month of December. Much of the content of our paper deals with reporting the work and needs of the various departments and commissions of the BMA of Mississippi. With holiday celebrations, family time, vacations, and the rush of the season, it is more difficult to collect articles and information.

We are publishing a larger issue for December and pray that you will search each and every page and pray for the work of the BMA of Mississippi and each of its ministries.

Missions Emphasized

There are a number of articles in this issue concerning 'missions'. Our state missions department has a comprehensive report that you will enjoy beginning on page 7.

We have reports on other mission minded ministries as well as reports from individual missionaries on the foreign field. Remember that Christ was on a mission to redeem mankind and that work continues in the churches, departments, and individual ministries that you will read about in this paper.

Pray for our missionaries and the work on their individual fields. Help them with their physical and financial needs. That puts you on the field with them and makes you a vital part of missions!

**Letters From
Our Readers**

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

**Report on Philippine Needs
Following Massive Storm**

This editor asked Missionary Linda Moore to report on the needs of the Filipino people and what we can do to help. She replied with the email listed below. The needs are great and I share this email with you. Pray for Bro. Doyle and Linda Moore and our other missionaries in the Philippines as they minister to those in need.

Dear Bro. Don,

Bro. Fred Minada came in this past Friday, and is leaving tomorrow going back to Leyte. The first trip back will be to help church families and their neighbors to buy basic needs, such as food and water. We are sending funds with him and another pastor to help as many as they can to buy food. Food, when available, has tripled in cost. The same with fuel, rice, and building supplies! Everything has tripled! Price gouging is apparently not against the law - though morally reprehensible! Money cannot be gotten - the banks are still offline. No power. The companies like Western Union are closed as well. They have no way of knowing whether money has been sent to their accounts, and also can't get cash to pay out anyway - because the banks are closed. If God provides the funds, we hope to go back in a couple of weeks to help start rebuilding destroyed houses.

Something Bro. Fred told us that was interesting was that during the storm, he had invited 6 nearby families into the house he had rented in Isabel, Leyte. They sang praises,

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Church of the Covered Dish BY THOMAS TAPP



Southeastern Baptist College

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

Words From Interim President

When asked by some on the Board of Trustees to consider serving as Interim President of Southeastern Baptist College, my first thoughts were about my position as pastor of First Baptist Church of Shady Grove. After the deacons and church at Shady Grove heard about the commitment involved, they agreed to allow me to accept the position if the board decided. I am awed by the heart for our work which the members of the church have demonstrated for many years.



Danny Pitts
Interim President

Obviously I have a large learning curve in the attempt to serve as Interim President. The faculty and staff have patiently answered

many questions already and will have to answer more in the future. All of them have been very kind to me. Everyone on staff has a strong commitment to see Southeastern grow to be all that it can be for the Lord's glory.

Our Needs

Our greatest needs as a college are for prayer, students, and money. We need prayer because the school is the Lord's work. The Psalm of Solomon says: "Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain. 2 It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: for so he giveth his beloved sleep" (Psalm 127:1-2). The Lord has blessed Southeastern for many years, but your prayers for His blessing are coveted afresh. Without His presence, nothing lasting will be accomplished.

We need students because they are the central part of the ministry. In fact, no college ministry exists without students. Buildings, administration, staff, and teachers would not be needed without them. Our enrollment in this semester is down to thirty eight. We do have some excellent students but need more. In my short time at school, I have met some men and ladies who desire greatly to be used for the Lord and are preparing to be more effective in His service in the future.

We need the financial support of our churches. The good news is that offerings from our congregations are up. The total income and the number of churches giving to Southeastern are greater than they were a year ago. In this time of a down economy and of some churches with reduced offerings, we must praise the Lord and our churches. We recognize the sacrificial commitments required to increase giving as you have. Everyone at Southeastern thanks you heartily.

Spring Semester Outlook

As this semester rolls to an end, we are excited about the prospects for a great Spring semester. An advantage of Online Classes is that qualified teachers from a distance can share their expertise. In the Spring, Dr. Gary O'Neal will be teaching three Online Classes. They are from the New Testament (Personal Books and Doctrinal Books) and from the Old Testament (Historical Books I). He will be the first teacher at our school in recent memory with a PhD in the Biblical fields. This degree normally requires a four year Bachelor's degree, a three year Master of Divinity, plus four years of study on the Doctoral level prior to a year writing a dissertation. In addi-

continued on page 8

Philippine Storm Relief

from page 4

prayed, and enjoyed the fellowship, even though there was a terrible storm raging outside. They were frightened, but trusting God, so they joined hands, and continued to sing and pray all during the storm. When it was over, they went outside to see the aftermath. He said that all around the house was devastation. There was not a SINGLE house left standing anywhere around their area - except the house they were in! Houses made from the same materials, made in the same way, built at the same time as this house was built were all destroyed. Only theirs remained. The Hand of God was evident, and He protected them from the storm. He said they were



Relief supplies being shared with the needy

all so thankful - even though all their homes were destroyed, they were safe, because they were inside with Bro. Fred, praying, singing and praising God!

God is so good! We praise Him, and thank Him for saving so many, when there was so much destruction! Many people did not seek higher ground, because they (just like some on the Mississippi Gulf Coast) had weathered so many storms safely, and could not imagine this kind of destruction coming. They said that the weather service kept talking

about finding shelter on higher ground because of a "storm surge", and they didn't know what a storm surge was. They thought it meant that the storm would be worse for awhile. They truly did not know it meant the waves carried before the storm!

If the weather service had said it was like a tidal wave, or like a tsunami, they would have understood, but they did not understand the American term "storm surge!" That is the way they are blaming someone else for their own bad choices! I think next time they say storm surge, though, they will remember Yolanda and find higher ground!!

Bro. Fred said that all the hills and mountains are bald! No trees at all left on them. All the trees that remain are stripped bare, like skeletons. And some people are taking some of the relief goods, or food, and selling them for very high prices! The organizations that are helping are working mostly in areas where there are large cities - not the small villages or remote areas!

Some helicopters are going to more distant areas, but most of them are going to the eastern side of Leyte. The western side is just as cut off. The damage is perhaps not as acute, but there is no food there, either.

Even here in Negros, there are some areas where food and help has been sent, and it is repacked in packages with the local politician's name on them! "Given by Juan de la Cruz" rather than the U.S. Government or whatever other country sent it! This really irks me, but there is nothing I can do about it - just pray it finally gets to the people that need it most!! At least it isn't being sold here! Please pray for all the people in need. They need food, potable water, building supplies, and someone to help them organize! Like most folks in shock, some sit and look at one another - wondering where to start! Overwhelmed by the impossibility of doing it all alone! We want them to know they are not alone! God is with them every step of the way, whether anyone else is or not!

God bless you all, and thank you for your help and encouragement during this time of great distress and need.

In Him,
Linda & Doyle Moore

Sofilthy's Attic

by Barbara White



Praise The Lord Anyhow!

Poor Uncle Ned went to sit down,
He grunted and grunted and, my, what a frown!
"What's the matter?" asked auntie. "Are you aillin'?"
"Oh," groaned Uncle Ned, "this old body's failin'."

"Hurts my hands to open a door;
Got no teeth, and my gums are sore.
My legs cramp, and my eyes are red;
Can't half hear, and no hair on my head.

"Can's see very well without my specs;
When I turn my head, it hurts my neck.
On my arm is a great big bruise;
Can hardly bend over to put on my shoes!

"Arthritis in my back, sinus in my nose,
Knots on my fingers and corns on my toes.
I'm skin and bones, with my cheeks sunk in;
When I close my mouth, my nose hits my chin.

"My legs ache, and my feet go to sleep.
When I move around, my joints creak.
I take cold in the slightest breeze;
Those lumps are not doorknobs; they're my knees.

"Had about all the diseases you can name,
Everything connected with an ache or pain.
I drag my feet across the floor;
Besides all else, people say I snore.

If there's anything more I'm supposed to take,
It had better hit me quick - or 'twill be too late!
But I'm not givin' up - No-o-o-o, Ma'am!
I just thank the good Lord I'm as well as I am!"

CHILDREN'S HOME

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

Coming Ready or Not

Well, Christmas is "right around the corner" as the old saying goes. Another old saying when I was a child playing hide and seek was, "here I come ready or not." If you are not ready, better get ready because it's coming whether you are ready or not.

That thought causes me to think on the fact that most people are not ready for the second coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to this earth again. The question is are you ready for His return? If not why not get ready? A number of years ago I ran across this article entitled "The Night Before Jesus Came."



SIDNEY DAVIS
DIRECTOR

The Night Before Jesus Came

'Twas the night before Jesus came and all through the house

Not a creature was praying, not one in the house.
Their Bibles were lain on the shelf without care
In hopes that Jesus would not come there.

The children were dressing to crawl into bed,
Not once ever kneeling or bowing a head.
And Mom in her rocker with the baby on her lay,
Was watching the Late Show while I took a nap.

When out of the East there arose such a clatter,
I sprang to my feet to see what was the matter.
Away to the window I flew like a flash
Tore open the shutters and threw up the sash!

When what to my wondering eyes should appear
But angels proclaiming that Jesus was here.
What a light like the sun sending forth a bright ray
I knew in a moment this must be THE DAY!

The light of His face made me cover my head
It was Jesus! Returning just like He said.
And though I possessed worldly wisdom and wealth,
I cried when I saw Him in spite of myself.

In the Book of Life which He held in His hand
Was written the name of every saved man.
He spoke not a word as He searched for my name;
When He said "It's not here" my head hung in shame.

The people whose names had been written with love
He gathered to take to His Father above.
With those who were ready He rose without a sound
While all the rest were left standing around.

I fell to my knees, but it was too late;
I had waited too long and thus sealed my fate.
I stood and I cried as they rose out of sight;
Oh, if only we had been ready tonight.

In the words of this poem the meaning is clear;
The coming of Jesus is drawing near.
There's only one life and when comes the last call
We'll find that the Bible was true after all!
Author Unknown

Just as Jesus came the first time He will surely come the second time. Don't allow the Lord to come without making proper preparations for His coming!

Christmas Sharing

Yes, the Christmas season is upon us. If you would like to help this year at Christmas time in sharing with the girls and boys you can contact us about your

Mississippi W.M.A.

President - Jessica Hayden

3208 Hwy 29 North
Soso, MS 39480
662-251-0455
Email: blhaden@gmail.com

Corresponding Secretary

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

First Bay Springs WMA "Brunch Report"

The WMA of the First Baptist Church, Bay Springs recently hosted a Ladies Brunch for all the ladies of the church.

This was a "Getting to Know You" themed affair. As the ladies were eating, they were asked to tell everything they knew about the person on their left. This was very interesting and informative. Then the main speaker, Becky Ulmer, had been asked to tell us all about herself. Becky is the Directory of Nurses at the Jasper County Nursing Home and she shared with the ladies how God had directed her life that allows her to serve in that position. She shared that she feels that her position is a ministry.

The ladies seemed to enjoy the affair because "Let's do this again" was heard several times as they departed the building.

Ten Mile Distric WMA Report

2013-2014 Theme: "It is Well"

"Run now, I pray thee, to meet her, and say unto her, Is it well with thee? Is it well with thy husband? Is it well with the child? And she answered, It is well." 2 Kings 4:26

The Ten Mile District WMA held their meeting, on October 14, 2013, at Pleasant Hill Baptist Church, in Saucier.

Our Devotional was brought by Sister Kelly Ulmer. Theme: "Let God Take Control of Your Life." Proverbs 31-17.

Our new project for this quarter is Missionary Bobby and Lisa Elliott, Freedom Baptist Mission, Burnsville, Mississippi.

Third Vice President Sister Dena Ellzey presented us with a book for our reading. 2 Kings 4:26. Remember it is well; we are a child of the Lord.

We enjoyed refreshments and great fellowship with Pleasant Hill Baptist Church. Our next meeting will be on January 13, 2014, 7:00 PM at Vardaman Baptist Church.

Reporter Maria Ochoa

Northeast District WMA Report

The Northeast District WMA meet on Tuesday, November 12th at Providence Baptist Church in Amory. We enjoyed a wonderful Thanksgiving themed meal complete with turkey, ham, dressing, and cranberry sauce. After the meal everyone gathered in the sanctuary and songleader Beverly Bean led us in "I am Thine O Lord". After Sister Anita Akers led in prayer, President Teresa Taylor declared the business meeting open. Sister Patti Harlow gave the welcome from Providence and Sister Stacy Smith gave the response. Secretary Martha Duncan gave her report, which was approved. Treasurer Sheila McDowell then gave her report, which was approved. There was no old or new business. A motion was then made to continue with Southeastern as the project for the next quarter.

President Teresa Taylor then turned the program over

continued on page 9

desire to help. We want to express our thanks to those who have shared with the children in past Christmas holiday seasons. Your generosity and thoughtfulness indeed brightens their lives at this special time of the year.

Merry Christmas

The staff and children of the Home would like to convey our thoughts, prayers, and best wishes to you during this Christmas season. Thank you for your friendship, prayers, and love. May the joy of Christ fill your hearts. Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Mississippi State WMA Corresponding Secretary's Report October 31, 2013 Shirlene Smith

Balance September 30, 2012 \$17,576.58

Total Received

October 1, 2012-September 30, 2013 6,904.72

Total to Account for 24,481.30

Expenditures 9,843.18

Balance on Hand 14,638.12

General Fund Balance \$8,192.09

Project (75%) 1,656.15

Mission Trip (paid to G.F.) 2,000.00

Ladies' Retreat Fund 4,789.88

Balance on Hand 14,638.12

Final Amounts Received for the

Mississippi State WMA Project for 2012-2013

25% General Fund (already added to G.F.) \$ 1,667.65
(PLUS DESIGNATED OFFERINGS)

Mission Trip (already added to G.F.) 2,000.00

Missionary Ed DuVall, Cleveland 2,321.21

Total Received \$ 5,988.86

BMA of Mississippi Churches contributing
\$100.00 or more to the Project

1. Berean Baptist Church, Soso
2. Big Creek Baptist Church, Soso
3. East Amory Baptist Church, Amory
4. First Baptist Church, Bay Springs
5. First Baptist Church, Calhoun
6. First Baptist Church, Louin
7. First Baptist Church, Mantachie
8. First Baptist Church, Shady Grove
9. Hopewell Baptist Church, Laurel
10. Lebanon Baptist Church, Laurel
11. Lee's Chapel Baptist Church, Picayune
12. Parkview Baptist Church, Laurel
13. Sharon Baptist Church, Laurel
14. Skyway Hills Baptist Church, Pearl
15. Temple Baptist Church, Lucedale
16. Vardaman St. Baptist Church, Wiggins

ASSOCIATIONS:

Washington Association District WMA

TOP FIVE CHURCHES IN CONTRIBUTIONS:

1. Vardaman St. Baptist Church, Wiggins
2. Parkview Baptist Church, Laurel
3. Temple Baptist Church, Lucedale
4. Skyway Hills Baptist Church, Pearl
5. Lebanon Baptist Church, Laurel

HONORABLE MENTION:

1. First Baptist Church, Calhoun
2. Hopewell Baptist Church, Laurel

Mississippi State Project for 2013-2014

25% General Fund

75% Women's Fellowship in Ghana, Africa; Dale and Celia Broom, Missionaries

Send offerings for this project to: Shirlene Smith, 730 Hwy 533, Laurel, MS 39443

May God add His blessings to our efforts to promote His work and glorify His name through WMA this year.

ATTENTION LADIES
2014 Ladies Retreat Set

Mark your calendars! The date of the 2014 Christian Ladies Retreat is September 12 & 13, 2014. We will once again meet at Camp Garaywa Conference Center in Clinton, Mississippi. More information will be available in January. Watch the Mississippi Baptist for further details.




Baptist Missionary Association of Mississippi

Department of Missions and Revolving Loan Fund




State Missionaries and Wives













601.428.8616

www.bmams.org

“Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy, For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now; Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:” Phil 1:2-6

As the Christmas season approaches, I want to express my thankfulness for you and your Church for, “...your fellowship in the gospel...” So much has happened, in BMA of Mississippi Missions, over the past year. When I bow my head to express my appreciation to the Heavenly Father for the multitude of blessings He has poured out on us, I will be very mindful that our churches are the means by which God has supplied these blessings. I am thankful for you! “But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that...your care of me hath flourished again;...” Phil 4:10

For me, Christmas is a time of reflection, as I reminisce about the past Christmas and ponder on the depth of God’s love. “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son,...” John 3:16a It is also a time of expectation, anticipation, wonder and awe, as I think that, “...this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.” Acts 1:11 For me, Christmas is, and should be, and always will be, about Christ, “Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.” 1 Tim 1:17

My deep sense of gratitude for God’s grace to us is what drives me. “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” Eph 2:10 Walking, “... worthy of the vocation where-with ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” Eph 4:1-3. We are looking forward to an active and fruitful New Year. I am confident it will be filled with many challenges but I am reminded that He, “...is able to keep you from falling,...” Jude 24



Bro. Lavelle Lee
Manager of RLF



Brandy Riley
Office
Manager

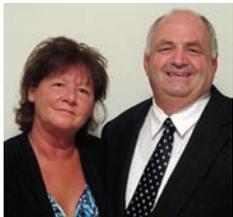


Kim Parker
Bookkeeper

Please remember your State Missionaries and your State Missions and Revolving Loan Fund staff and all of our associated work in your prayers.

Caledonia Baptist Mission

“This past year has been a very productive year as we completed our building project and began holding regular services. We set an attendance goal of 50 in attendance by the end of the year and it looks like we will reach it. We have had three saved this year



Edie & Bob Burch

and recently added 4 new members. We are holding Sunday School, Worship and Mid-Week services. We have



established a good rapport with the community and its officials, and I have assimilated myself into the community and they know that we are here to do the Lord’s work. I am thankful for your support and appreciate the opportunity to serve.”



--Bro Bob Burch, 1 Thess. 5:24

Freedom Baptist Missions

“Our primary goal has been to reach as many homes as we possibly could in this area. We are still working on this. We have witnessed to countless people. We are running in the high 30s to middle 40s. We were able to purchase land this past year and on July 18, 2013 we got the slab poured. We have set a goal to try to be in the building by Christmas. I believe that when we get in our new church that we



Bobby & Lesa Elliott

will see more people come. At this time our space is limited as we meet in our closed in two car garage. I want to give special thank you to all who came out and helped. We could never have gotten this far without you!!



We did our own youth camp at Chicasaw State Park. We took 25 and had 6 saved. Pray for us as we continue the labor her in Burnsville. The Lord is blessing us so great. We are looking to do great things for the Lord in this coming year!” --Bobby Elliott

Grace in New Albany

“We have had a successful year at Grace in New Albany. Our primary goal for our first year was to establish a core group of people. We have established

an assembly of 12 committed members in addition to other regular attendees. We have had 4 people make professions of faith and be baptized.



Kelby & Jessie Johnson

We meet in a coffee shop located in Downtown New Albany. The owner has graciously allowed us to meet at this location on Sundays and Wednesdays. As we move into our second year, our plan is to move from establishing our core group to expanding our core group. Our long term

goals are to become self-sustaining and reproducing. We realize that neither of these will become a reality until our core group expands. We ask that you pray for us during this upcoming year as we seek to grow God’s church for His glory.” --Kelby R. Johnson



Crossway, Clinton

“The Lord continues to bless at Crossway Baptist Mission in Clinton. The core group of members continues to attend and is excited about what God is doing through them at the mission. I am very thankful to the Lord for the young family that leads the music for us on Sunday mornings! My main fo-



Danny & Brenda Bartlett

cus o f mistry is the preaching of God’s Word. I trust that through this effort our core group will be edified in the Lord and challenged to become faithful disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. My desire is that Crossway Baptist Mission will continue to grow and develop into a strong Christ-centered church. Brethren, pray for us. Thanks so much for your patience with me!”--Danny Bartlett



Sidney & Becky Farmer

South Forrest

South Forrest Baptist Mission was begun in April 2012. “South Forrest has been blessed with new members this past year, and new visitors almost every service. Our membership is now at twenty eight and attendance is

continued on page 8

State Missions Report

from page 7

often in the fifties.

My vision is to build a doctrinally sound and spiritually stable church through the scriptural process of discipleship. We equip the people for the work of the ministry by preaching and teaching; making disciples (evangelism, baptism, teaching); making disciple makers. This will



-Sidney Farmer

develop South Forrest to become the cornerstone of stability and godliness in the community. Please keep us in your prayers.” --

New Heart Baptist Mission

“God has richly blessed us this past year at New Heart. I want to thank individual churches, and associations, for your financial help and your prayers.



Ray & JoAnn Boone

Since May of this year to October 1st of this year, they have worked hard to reduce our debt. In May we owed \$80,000.00. Now, we have reduced the debt to \$70,000.00. We began an in-home Bible study, and we continue holding services at the nursing home in Purvis. We are spending a lot of time in discipleship with a few

of our most faithful men. We have been blessed with God saving several souls this year. Three were baptized into our

membership. Several joined by letter this year. We have two families that just recently started attending services in which the husband, wife and children have never accepted Jesus Christ. Please pray that these will soon come to Christ.



Since we have begun the Mission, New Heart has given \$7,500 toward mission support. It is my prayer that we are able to give even more in the future. This year God called two of our faithful men home one which has been with us from the beginning of the work. Thanks to everyone for your support. Please remember Jo Ann and me in your prayers.”-- Ray Boone

Since we have begun the Mission, New Heart has given \$7,500 toward mission support. It is my prayer that we are able to give even more in the future. This year God called two of our faithful men home one which has been with us from the beginning of the work. Thanks to everyone for your support. Please remember Jo Ann and me in your prayers.”-- Ray Boone

Day Star Baptist Mission

Bro Burns has served on staff at First Baptist Bay Springs with Bro. James Sprayberry for the past 11 years. Bro. Burns has a BA in Christian Education from New Orleans Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Dawn and Phillip & Dawn Burns their two girls, Makayla and Hope have relocated to Sumrall, Mississippi to begun the process of developing core group.

“My vision is to build relationships with individuals and families in the community with the sole purpose of having the opportunity of sharing the GOOD NEWS of JESUS CHRIST’S Sinless Life, Death, Burial, and Resurrection. To disciple individuals with the doctrines, commands, promises of

God’s Word and to encourage men to be godly fathers and to be the spiritual leaders of their family.” – Phillip Burns

Support Missionary

Dr. Pollock has over 21 years of pastoral experience and holds a Doctorate in Christian Counseling from Andersonville Theological Seminary, a Doctorate in Ministry from Andersonville Theological Seminary, a Masters in Christian Education from Andersonville Theological Seminary, and a BA in Biblical Studies from Luther Rice Seminary. Dr. Pollock is present assisting Bro. Bobby Elliott who is heavily involved in his building project. Dr. Pollock is preaching and teaching with specific emphasis on teaching through the BMA doctrinal statement.



Kenneth & Carole Pollock

Hispanic Missions (North)

“God is using us and wants us to do more in the matters of; coaching, training others, fulfilling the Great Commission, mentoring, taking care of those who serve the Lord, multiplication, and extending the kingdom of God in other nearby cities.



Wendy & Elvis Garcia

This past year we had the first graduation in of our Bible Institute. We started another small group in Oxford. We will start holding worship services in December in Oxford. We are opening of two more small groups out of the church in Ripley. We continue to see good development of the worship ministry in Tupelo. GOD has blessed us incredibly.” --Elvis Garcia



(Bro. Garcia serves as Sr. Pastor of Way, Truth and Life (formally known as First Hispanic Baptist Church in Ripley, MS), and the Hispanic Missions Coordinator for the BMA of Mississippi (North) working with missions in Tupelo and Oxford.)

Hispanic Missions (South)

“God continues to open doors for the sharing of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ in South Mississippi.

Years ago, El Camino Church developed a Bible Institute, with the vision to enroll Hispanic Christian people from our membership who are interested in doing missions work. As of today we have 20 students. We teach them BMA doctrine, evangelistic tools for winning souls, planting church principles, discipleship guides, etc. I believe that El Camino Church can be a strong base to train several laborers and send them to plant new BMA Hispanic churches in the south of the state or where the Lord opens doors.

Every Saturday we go out for soul winning and visitation. Currently we have 10 small groups with the vision to reach more people for our Lord. Thanks for your prayers for me and my family



Yasmine & Estuardo Marroquin



and your continued support. May God Bless you!”-- Estuardo Marroquin

(Bro. Marroquin serves as Sr. Pastor of El Camino in Laurel and the Hispanic Missions Coordinator for the BMA of Mississippi (South) working with missions in Biloxi and Hattiesburg.)

African American Missions

“My passion to serve in the Delta area of Mississippi is very strong because this area is one of the most neglected missionary fields in the world. My overall goal is to start new African American church plants, send out missionaries, and be financially independent. My vision is to primarily reach the African American community in the Delta with a gospel that is clearly understood and that is practical and relevant. My objective is to establish a sound Bible believing, Bible teaching conservative New Testament church. I also am committed to starting new churches in the African American community and reaching out to some



Ed & Patricia DuVall



Ed DuVall

traditional churches and try to bring about change. My goal is to support new missionaries financially and with whatever resources I have available, train traditional pastors by teaching them, and establish an association to help accommodate my goals. Please keep us in your prayers.” --Ed DuVall

(Bro. DuVall serves as Pastor of Homestretch in Cleveland, MS and the African American Missions Coordinator for the BMA of Mississippi working with missions in Indianola and Olive Branch.)

College Report

from page 5

tion to the academic background, Dr. O’Neal comes with many years of practical experience as a pastor. Bible students and pastors should profit from sitting at his feet, even if it is online.

In addition, Dr. Medrick Savell will be teaching Bible Geography. He has taught the course many times and can share first hand information from a trip to Israel in the past.

Dr. Aaron Parker will be teaching at least four classes in the Spring. For preachers, his class in Homiletics will cover all the basics in preaching. Young and old ministers could improve their presentation of Biblical Truths by being challenged in this class. Also he plans to offer the first course in Beginning Greek. Because this study is required before you can take the other grammar and translation classes and is only offered periodically, rush to sign up today. The ability to read the Greek letters in commentaries will allow you to confirm the validity of their comments.

Consider A Unique Gift

As we approach the Christmas holidays, some of you may want to present a class at Southeastern Baptist College as a gift to your pastor or to a young minister in your church. Sunday School teachers will improve in their presentations by the stimulating environment of the structured study available face to face or online. Call 601-426-6346 to sign up today. Southeastern will be closed for the holidays from December 11th through the end of the year. Regular registration will be from January 6-8th. Classes begin January 13, 2014.

Missionary Jessie Hales Appreciates God's Faithfulness

J. Hudson Taylor once said "God's work, done in God's way will never lack God's supplies." That's right, these words were said by a man who knew what it meant to literally live off of bread and water alone and sometimes not even able to afford that. You might say, "How can a man who lived like that say something like this? I believe he simply had a godly perspective. I believe he was good at remembering that God, who did not spare His own Son to fulfill our greatest need, will in no wise turn away from our cry now! God is faithful! Let me say that again, God is faithful! We must simply keep our focus on doing God's work, God's way. You can certainly trust Him with the rest.



Pastor Miguel praying over Colton (the Hales' new son) at his dedication

I want to thank God for His supplies in our lives and our ministry, and I'm not just talking finances either. Although He has definitely used you to supply in that way, He has supplied far more than that: our health, our family, even this opportunity to learn Spanish. Maybe it would be easier to say there has never been anything we truly needed that He hasn't supplied. We want to take this opportunity to thank you for being obedient to Him and being part of that supply. Thank you!

WMA Reports

from page 6

to several girls from Bethel, who gave a very moving report of their summer trip to India. They spoke of a couple who has given up everything to help women who have been victims of human trafficking. The girls talked about how much of a problem human trafficking is and not just in other parts of the world. It is a huge problem in the United States as well. This couple risks their lives every day to help these victims and to tell them about Christ. The girls from Bethel talked about how life-changing this trip to India was for them. Their passion for the work being done in India was very clear on the girls' faces.

After the program, President Teresa Taylor asked Sister Patti Harlow to close in prayer. There were thirty-five ladies present and four visitors. It was a good meeting with great food, wonderful fellowship, and a very moving and eye-opening program. Thank you to the ladies of Providence for hosting this wonderful event.

by Reporter Kala Hudson

Church helps with Shoebox Project



Canaan Baptist Church of Purvis packed 100 shoe boxes for Operation Christmas Child Shoebox Mission Project this year. Some of the members will be traveling to Atlanta to work at the OCC warehouse distribution center. Pictured are left to right: Gloria Steele, Kristen Steele, Lynn Steele, Diane Cooper, Betty Cooper, Doyce Cooper, and Su Anna Cooper.

Mississippi Baptist

January 2014
Special Emphasis

Former Pastor Passes Away

Rev. Tommie Joiner, 63 of Benton, Mississippi, passed away Friday November 22, 2013 at St. Dominic-Jackson Memorial Hospital in Jackson. A minister he was a member of Shiloh Baptist Church, Kosciusko, Mississippi.

Survivors are his wife Gloria Joiner of Benton; Son Corey (Kim) Joiner of Brandon, Mississippi; daughter Christy (Richard) Johnston of Yazoo City; grandchildren Ashton Johnston, Katlin Childress, & Hunter Johnston; sisters Nancy Bowles, Susan Hanks, Jill Carwyle all of Oxford, Mississippi, and Lynn Odom of Batesville; father Tommie L. Joiner & step-mother Faye Joiner.

Funeral services were held at Scotland Baptist Church on November 25 in Yazoo County, where he served as pastor for 9 years. Members of Shiloh Baptist Church served as pallbearers. Rev. Glenn Allen, Rev. Jimmy Goodwill, & Rev. Bill Watson officiated.

Church honors pastor and wife

With October being designated as Pastor Appreciation month, First Baptist Church of Bay Springs honored



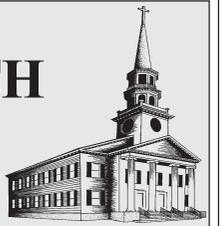
our pastor & his wife, Bro. James & Mary Sprayberry, on Sunday, October 27, with a luncheon after the morning service. Also, they were presented with a love offering to show our appreciation for what they mean to us as a church and our community. In addition, that morning we were blessed to have Bro. Jason Walters & his family, BMA missionaries to the Navajo Indians, visiting with us to share about their work on the field.



Jason Walters

Jason Walters & his family, BMA missionaries to the Navajo Indians, visiting with us to share about their work on the field.

CHURCH NEWS



News articles should contain information of interest to the general public who are not members of the church reporting.

Fulton Church Seeks Pastor

Big Oak Baptist Church of Fulton, Mississippi, is searching for a pastor. Those interested in more information should call Aaron Loden at 662-213-6918 or Robert Loden at 662-397-5395.

Hobolochitto Report

The Hobolochitto Baptist Association met on Monday, November 11, 2013, at Benville Baptist Church. Bro. Willie Tebo brought a message about "How Precious is The Word of God" from I Samuel 3:1. After the message, the business portion of the meeting began. There were six churches represented.

Bro. Paul Lee gave a report about the Prisoner's Bible Crusade and Bro. Lavell Lee reported on the Revolving Loan Fund and BMA of Mississippi Missions. He also gave us more information about the missionaries in the Philippines in the wake of the typhoon. Then Bro. Tebo recognized all veterans in attendance.

The minutes and treasurer's report was adopted. The Missionary Committee recommended the reappropriation of some of our funds. It was announced that our association is considering hosting a Senior Adult Conference for this area. The December meeting was postponed and the association will next meet at Canaan Baptist Church in Franklinton, Louisiana, on Monday, January 13th. Bro. Cedric Lumpkin reported from Southeastern Baptist College. He requested prayer for the college.

After the closing prayer, refreshments were served to all who wanted to stay.

Wayne Rice, Clerk

Washington Report

The Washington Baptist Association met November 15th at Pilgrim Rest Baptist Church. Ten churches were represented with thirty three members and four visitors. Bro. Larry Geraldson, Bro. Ray Freeman and new Interim President of Southeastern Baptist College Bro. Danny Pitts each gave reports of their work.

Bro. Wade Ivey, pastor of Inspire Baptist Church, Hurley, brought an inspiring message of encouragement for all. Bro. Darnell Minyard gave Bro. Ivy the right hand of appreciation for the message.

The members of Pilgrim Rest served a wonderful meal afterwards that was enjoyed by all. Thank you Pilgrim Rest for your hospitality.

Moderator, B.J. Hudson

DiscipleGuide

Scott Attebery, Executive Director
 Email: scott@discipleguide.org
 Facebook: [Facebook.com/scott.attebery](https://www.facebook.com/scott.attebery)
 Twitter: @scottattebery



Scott Attebery

The 16oz Church (Small Can Be Big!)

Remember the Pepsi Challenge? It was a marketing campaign in the 80's where people would be offered two unmarked cups. One contained Coke and the other contained Pepsi. After taking a sip of both, the participants would be asked to reveal which one they liked the best.

Apparently more people picked Pepsi. At least, that's what their ads led us to believe.

Comparing two different brands of soft drinks makes sense to us. However, what if someone ran the same test, except this time using the same brand? Let's say the only difference would be the size of the cup. Wouldn't

you think that was a strange comparison? Does anybody really think that a 24oz cup of Pepsi tastes better than an 16oz cup? No matter the size, the contents would be the same –and that's what matters!

I think we would all agree that testing by size would be ridiculous and illogical.

So why, then, do we often measure the effectiveness of a church by its size? A church of 50 and a church of 5,000 are both full of the same thing: Followers of Christ!

Don't get me wrong, not every small church is healthy, but neither is every big church. The fact of the matter is that the majority of churches around

the world are what most would consider "small."

I'm afraid that some may have the mistaken impression that "small" means a lack of mission or purpose. Nothing, however, could be further from the truth. Some of the most passionate missional churches are relatively small congregations. Make no mistake about it, "small" does not mean inferior.

There are a number of reasons why a church may be small:

- 1) The community may be small to begin with
- 2) The congregation may be transitory
- 3) The congregation may be sending out people to plant churches

Stop and think. Is there a big difference between having a few large churches as opposed to a lot of small churches? Of course not. If anything, a larger number of small churches may allow more people to exercise their gifts of leadership. When you think about it, a large army of small churches could be the sleeping giant that strategically infiltrates the world.

Small churches have some great

advantages.

- 1) Many people feel more comfortable and are more prone to open up in a smaller setting.
- 2) Small churches have less logistical distractions.
- 3) Pastors can spend more time investing in each member

Maybe that's why it should be no surprise when we hear a pastor or missionary reminisce about growing up in a small church. For that matter, we would do well to remember that every large church started out as a small church!

Please don't misunderstand: I am not against big churches! Many mega-church pastors do a great job making sure that their congregation enjoys the same level of fellowship and mission as a small church.

All I'm saying is that it would be a mistake to write off churches because they are small. So, I want to go on the record proclaiming my love for small churches.

So don't worry if your church isn't a "three liter" congregation. After all, God does BIG things in SMALL churches!

As I See It

by Rayburn Freeman - rsfree39@gmail.com

In What or Who Is Your Trust, Religion or Christ? In Honor of Christ, the Christian Reason for the Christmas Season

Psalms 20:7, "Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; but we will remember the name of the LORD our God". Isaiah 31:1, "Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help; and stay on horses, and trust in chariots, because they are many; and in horsemen, because they are very strong; but they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the LORD!"

In Psalms 20 David reminds us of two divisions of people who are very different. The first division is those who trust in things. In conclusion things rebound to personal accomplishment and praise. These accomplishments may come through the exercise of mental, physical, relational, associational, or financial efforts. Romans 10:2-3, "For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. 3 For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." Therefore this division is prone to trust in things. James 1:22, "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves." James encourages works, not for salvation, but because of salvation. When put into personal perspective things illuminate and bring out praise and ac-

complishments of self effort. The text verse of Isaiah 31:1 vividly points out those who trust in themselves seek personal praise. They never acknowledge that God is the giver of eternal life, and even earthly life and liberty.

The second division is those who solely trust in God, even to the exclusion of things or self. In Deuteronomy 8:11 Moses warned Israel by telling them, "Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God." In the following verses 17 and 18 he tells them what to beware of. "And thou say in thine heart, my power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth. 18 But thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth." It is in this division David classified himself. David did not believe it was horsemen, horses, chariots, or even himself that brought Israel's battle victories. He believed all victories in Israel and his life were brought to pass only and solely by the Sovereign God of the universe, and ultimately for God's praise.

Christ alone provided our salvation, no exception - it is complete. Nowhere

in the Bible did Jesus say I came to help man to be saved. In Luke 19:10 Jesus said, "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Thousands of years before Christ the law was given instructing Israel of what was needful for them to be saved and live a righteous life. No one except Christ was able to fulfill those requirements. In Romans 10:4 Paul says, "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth."

In a morning service of the late 80's at Tangub Missions Baptist Church in Negros, Occidental, Philippines, our visitor was a young man from Australia. He was there to see a young lady of our congregation. After introducing ourselves to one another we engaged in a brief conversation. In our conversation I asked, are you saved? He answered very emphatically, no sir! I don't have anything for religion. He was shocked when I answered, neither do I. He said, from a child I have been hammered over the head with religion to the point, I've had enough. I said, I understand and admit that religion is frustrating and sad to say that throughout history many have been by deceived it.

At that point I said to him, I would like to talk with you further about this. Can you have lunch with my wife and me? To my surprise he agreed. During this visit we enjoyed a wonderful lunch and time of fellowship. Later he and I retired to the patio for our conversation on religion and salvation. After making reference to our previous conversation I explain that belonging to a religion and belonging to Christ were not the same.

Religion is a way of life, a tradition, a set of beliefs and practices which in

most cases is the formulation of man. It is completely apart from Christ who is man's way to heaven. Religion advocates works which puts the responsibility of man's salvation on himself, works will not secure salvation for man's soul. Salvation is a gift of Grace only in Christ and none other. Acts 4:12, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Also in Titus 3:5 Paul tells us, "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost."

No one should let the rituals and rigors of religion turn him from Jesus Christ. It was Christ who died that man could be saved from his inherent sin nature. John 3:16 clarifies it is God/Christ and not religion who loves us. Religion binds by putting the responsibility of salvation on man. Christ sets free by taking the responsibility of man's salvation upon himself. After discussing Ecclesiastes 7:20, Romans 5:12, 3:10, 23; 5:8; 6:23, that declare man's depravity and God's grace, the young man began to show interest. I asked him to read Romans 10:9, "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." He also read Romans 10:10, 13, 10 "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. 13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

He saw how that verse 10 tells us

continued on page 11



Bro. Ray Freeman

Are You Tired of Leftovers Yet?

Thanksgiving has come and gone. In most homes, there is a cornucopia of leftovers after holiday meals. Many people feast on a Thanksgiving meal, and then put it in the refrigerator for later that night. Supper is already prepared. You just have to warm it up. Now people are different. Not everyone is a leftover fan. My own children do not like leftovers. When they were small they were always begging us to order a pizza on the Friday night after Thanksgiving because they were tired of turkey. There are others, like my wife and I, who love leftovers. I can eat turkey and dressing and casserole dishes until they are all gone. I love leftovers.

Of course, there are many older people who remember food shortages, the depression days and things like that who store and eat leftovers because they were raised that way. You dare not waste good food. Still others keep leftovers because they are on a tight budget and limited income. I once stayed for one whole week with a pastor and his wife in their home. Everything had to be eaten at that meal or it would be served at the next meal. We had a full breakfast including biscuits. There were a few biscuits leftover. We had them for lunch. We had them again along with our supper. We finally finished off the last of the leftover biscuits the next morning for breakfast. It didn't bother me at all. I don't mind leftovers. I was more

disturbed by a church that would pay their pastor so poorly that he and his wife had to live like that. You should have seen the other things they had to



do so they could have enough money to pay their bills.

Either way, whether you love leftovers or hate them, whether you do it because it is an easy second meal and good use of the excess, or do it out of necessity for financial reasons, all leftovers eventually become stale, old and boring. Even I eventually get tired of leftovers. Leftovers finally go bad. And even the heartiest of leftover eaters will eventually succumb to wanting something new. We get tired of leftovers.

So what about spiritually speaking? Does God get tired of our leftovers? Do we give God our leftover time? Do we give Him our leftover money? Do we give Him what's left of our energy level to do something for Him like a ministry? Do we live all day for ourselves and give God our leftover time at the end of the day in a short demand list to Him that masks itself as a

prayer? I think that sometimes God may get sick of eating our leftovers. He can certainly grow weary with us if all we ever offer up to Him is our leftover time. We need to all reflect on this during the week. You may be doing really well. You may give God the first of everything in your life. Praise God. But there is always room for improvement. Many of us may reflect upon the fact that we were very thankful to God during Thanksgiving, but during the routine of our daily life we may some days live for ourselves first and give God our last.

Psalm 63:1, "O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee; my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is." Note it says "early" will I seek thee.

Do we ever get up and get in such a hurry to go to school or work or to do chores that we

forget to seek Him early? Do we not spend time with God until we lay down at night to say prayers? Matthew 6:33, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Now do we do this? Do you seek God "first" in all matters during the day and night? Would we be a better people if we

called upon God first when a loved one was sick instead of the doctor? Maybe place a call first to Jesus, then to the doctor. Would we be better off if we sought God first instead of a lawyer first? How about family disagreements? Should we stop and take a time out when things get heated in the home and pray and seek an answer from Jesus? Do you think we would have fewer arguments if families sought Jesus first in prayer and then came to reconcile and restore peace in their home over their problems?

Jesus has all the answers to every thing in our life. If we seek Him first he will add all things unto us. I think this is how we get into trouble so often. We

don't seek Him first. We make up our own mind. We listen to friends' advice. We seek human experts for guidance. The internet is our source of help. Should not all of this be secondary? I exhort you to consciously, every day, seek

Him first. Give the Lord your first time in the morning with prayer. Give God your first fruits of your labor. Give God your emotional and mental strength poured out in praise to Him. Don't go to Him always tired and exhausted.

Some people show up every Sunday morning to praise God tired from not getting enough sleep. God grows tired of our leftovers. He desires a fresh spiritual meal from us. Revelation 2:4, "Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast LEFT thy FIRST love." Make Jesus first this holiday season.



DiscipleGuide encourages missions with XPLORE

DiscipleGuide Church Resources is getting behind the mission movement by providing XPLORE, a six-lesson curriculum to prepare short-term missionaries to take the gospel to the ends of the earth.

Executive Director Scott Attebery said, "DiscipleGuide is interested in serving our churches and our other departments. XPLORE is a way to do both. Our missions department is mobilizing churches through short-term mission trips, and churches are becoming more and more mission-minded. There is a new grass roots effort for churches to not just send money to the field, but to go to the field.

"XPLORE helps encourage this mission revival by making sure that mission teams understand the biblical basis for missions. It will inspire Sunday school classes and small groups to get involved as well."

The book is now available for purchase at discipleguide.org. Pastors, Sunday school teachers and lay people are encouraged to go to discipleguide.org and search for XPLORE to see the new product.

Attebery said mission teams should



definitely consider using XPLORE as a resource when planning a mission trip. The lessons help believers to prepare their hearts for service in the mission field and to live in a more missions-minded way after their mission trip, he said. Learning about God's

heart for the nations in missions and then applying that learning in everyday life is what XPLORE is all about. "The message of missions is on God's heart. XPLORE is a great tool to make sure it is on our hearts, too," he said.

Freeman

from page 10

how to be saved, and verse 13 tells us who can be saved. The word "whosoever" in verse 13 means all. Would you like to confess your sins and ask Christ to save you? At that point the young man bowed his head in tears confessing his sins asking Jesus to forgive and save him. He then understood the way to heaven is not religion, but Christ who makes the difference. The invitation to be saved is open to all, to whosoever will. In the text verses of Psalms 20:7 and Isaiah 31:1 the Psalmist David and prophet Isaiah reminds us there are many who trust in themselves or their works, but to get it right one must exclude himself and his works and trust only in Christ. "The Lord is .., not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).

Where is your trust? In horses and chariots or Christ?

"Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!"

2014 BMA of Mississippi Pastor's Retreat

January 27-28, 2014

Lake Tiak O'Khata - Louisville, Mississippi

Theme: "Pleasing Unto God" - I Thessalonians 2:4

Monday, January 27

1:00pm Registration Begins
2:00pm Worship
2:05pm Welcome/Introduction of Theme
2:20pm "Pleasing Him in Prayer"-Bro Gary Smith
3:00pm Break
3:30pm Worship
3:45pm "Pleasing Him in Power"-Bro Ken Riley
4:25pm Worship
4:40pm "Pleasing Him in Pastoring"-Bro Denny Patterson
5:20pm Dismiss for Dinner
7:00pm Worship
7:15pm "Pleasing Him in Purity"-Bro Dewitt Bain
7:55pm Worship
8:15pm "Pleasing Him in Preaching"-Bro Larry Geraldson

Tuesday, January 28

7:00am Breakfast
8:00am Business
8:30am Worship
8:45am "Pleasing Him in Personal Study"-Bro Matt Hudson
9:25am Break
9:45am Worship
10:00am "Pleasing Him in Patience"-Bro Dennis Knight
10:40am Worship
10:55am "Pleasing Him in Praise"-Bro Justin Rhodes
11:35am Lunch

Cost: \$50.00 (staying in Bunkhouse) \$35.00(staying in hotel)
For more info contact Justin Cameron at 601-325-3047 or
justincameron@bellsouth.net

January 2014 - Special Emphasis

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