How to have a Merry Christmas

by Travis Plumlee

First of all, relax. I don’t think Jesus takes any delight in us being totally exhausted and stressed out because we are trying to celebrate His birthday. Usually, most of the things that exhaust us are society created pressures we put on ourselves which in fact have very little to do with celebrating a Savior being born.

Don’t stress out over buying gifts for loved ones. Your single motivation to give a gift this time of the year is an expression of love to someone. It is a token reminder of the greatest gift of love that we have all been given - A Savior, which is Christ the Lord. It is not a competition with other parents or other family members to see who spends the most. Don’t play that flesh-driven game.

If a person is unhappy with a Christmas present, you cannot control the responses of other people. Show me a person who is unhappy with a Christmas gift given to them out of love, and I will show you one selfish, self-centered person. Your response to a Christmas gift should be one of joy and appreciation that this person has thought of you and loves you, and has chosen to express that to you. I am afraid we have increasingly numbers of young Americans who are so over-indulged that they don’t appreciate the gesture. They actually want expensive, lavish gifts given to them or they are unthankful. I would pray for these ingrates, but I wouldn’t worry about their response. I also would keep getting them a gift if I felt led to do so out of love, but don’t do it out of a sense of obligation. If you buy gifts out of duty, with no dignity, then you remove the purpose of the gifts in the first place.

Finally, you give gifts because it is more blessed to give than to receive. If you are upset because you give a gift to someone and they don’t respond in kind, then again your motivation was wrong in the first place. Be sure and be spiritual at this time. After all, it is the meaning of Christmas. We are

continued on page 4

BMAA Coordinating Council continues to work

The BMAA Coordinating Council met November 2, 2006 at the BMAA Department of Missions in Little Rock, Arkansas. Members present were Richard Smith, David Watkins, Philip Attebery, Vernon Lee, Ronald Morgan and Larry Silvey. Department directors present were Ronnie Green, Grady Higgs, George Reddin and James Speer. To ensure the purpose and duties of the council are performed as outlined in the Principles of Cooperation Article VIII, the council worked to create clear processes for evaluation of departments and agencies for advising the development of budgets and fund-raising activities.

A proposed time-line for annual council meetings and primary agenda items was also determined. At the present, plans include the scheduling of an annual retreat for directors and the council each May to work on vision, cooperation and planning. A meeting scheduled for September will focus upon advising in the development of budgets and fund-raising activities. A January meeting will focus on the annual review of each ministry’s specific mission.

The directors presented verbal and written reports of their ministries. Each also provided the council with up-to-date financial reports. Lifeword’s Million Dollar Club campaign has raised financial commitments of more than $502,000.

continued on page 5

Special Missions Department
Open House

The BMA of Mississippi Missions Office will host an “open house” on Monday, December 11, from 10:00 a.m. until Noon. This will be a time of special prayer and thanksgiving. You are invited to join us for worship, praise and refreshments.
Statute Protecting Pro-Life Medical Professionals Survives Court Challenge

(AgapePress) - A U.S. federal appeals court has upheld the dismissal of a lawsuit brought by a pro-abortion group challenging an amendment that protects pro-life medical professionals from discrimination.

The Weldon Amendment, which was signed into law in December 2005, is a federal statute that bars federal entities receiving federal funding from forcing employees to participate in abortions or who refuse to perform abortions or who refuse to refer patients for abortions. The amendment faced a legal challenge just days after it was enacted - a court challenge brought by the pro-abortion National Family Planning and Reproductive Health Association (NFPRA).

When a federal district court upheld the law, the NFPRA appealed the ruling, arguing that the Weldon Amendment was too vague to be enforced. The group also asserted that its member organizations had a constitutional right to have medical professionals provide abortion referrals.

The Christian Medical Association and the American Association of Pro-Life Obstetricians and Gynecologists intervened in the case to defend the Weldon Amendment on behalf of members of the two pro-life and pro-life medical associations. The medical professionals groups were represented by the Alliance Defense Fund and the Christian Legal Society’s Center for Law & Religious Freedom.

The Christian Legal Society’s Casey Mattox, who serves as litigation counsel for the Center, is pleased with the federal appeals court’s ruling. "Doctors and nurses should not be forced to participate in abortions against their religious beliefs or conscience," he contends. Yet what is the NFPRA, "under the banner of ‘choice,’ assert a supposed right to do," he says. Fortunately, Mattox notes, "the court didn’t buy it." Instead, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit ruled that the NFPRA lacked standing to challenge the Weldon Amendment. According to Mattox, the appellate court’s decision to uphold the dismissal of the pro-abortion group’s legal action "turns back the effort to enshrine abortion as a right even above the First Amendment.”

FRC Spokesman Applauds Defenders of Pro-Life Docs’ and Nurses’ Rights

Pro-family leader Tony Perkins, president of the Family Research Council (FRC), is commending the legal defense that helped secure a pro-life victory in National Family Planning and Reproductive Health v. Gonzales. "While the number of doctors who oppose abortion has increased," he observes, it is thanks to attorneys like those at the Alliance Defense Fund and the Christian Legal Society that these pro-life medical professionals’ vulnerability to lawsuits has not increased as well.

"The targets of the abortion movement have grown well beyond the unborn and now include pro-life doctors and nurses," the FRC spokesmen points out. "These days, they too need protection from members of their own profession."

The Weldon Amendment “protects those who, based on personal convictions, refuse to perform or refer for abortions,” Perkins notes. He agrees with the legal representatives who defended the statute, he says, “that doctors should not be held hostage to perform procedures that violate their religious beliefs.”

The Christian Medical Association and the American Association of Pro-Life Obstetricians and Gynecologists, along with the Fellowship of Christian Physicians Assistants, are also engaged in defending the Weldon Amendment in another court proceeding. California ex. rel. Bill Lockyer v. United States. That case is now pending in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California.

Leakesville Baptist Church announces new pastor

The members and congregation at Leakesville Missionary Baptist Church in Leakesville, is happy to announce that we have a new pastor. Bro. David Clark answered our call Sunday November 19, 2006. He and his wife Libbie are members at Parkview Baptist in Laurel.

Please keep us in your prayers as we labor together to do God’s will. If you are new to the area or are just visiting you are invited to come worship with us. Sunday services are 10:00 am & 11:00 am and 6:00 pm with midweek services at 7:00 pm.

New Year’s Eve Watch Night Service

Red Creek Baptist Church, Wiggins will have a New Year’s Eve service on Sunday, December 31st starting at 6:00 p.m. There will be good singing, preaching and food. We are hoping that some of the area churches will dismiss their own services that night and join us as we start the New Year praising our Lord. For more information call Pastor Scotty Rayburn at 601-926-9886.

Silver Haired Friends annual Christmas Program set

The Silver Haired Friends Senior Adult annual Christmas program will be Tuesday December 5, at 7:00 p.m. The program is entitled "Memories” and written by Mrs. Evelyn Reynolds. It will be at First Baptist Church of Calhoun, located 4 miles west of Laurel off Highway 84, behind the Calhoun School.

We welcome everyone to our Christmas program and please note that refreshments will be served. We will honor your presence - come early to get a seat.

MRS. Evelyn Reynolds, Director
Harold A. Holifield, Pastor

Tombigbee Association Meetings

The Tombigbee Association met at Pleasant Hill Church, Tupelo on November 9. They provided a delicious Thanksgiving meal to the 84 who were in attendance. A devotional was brought by Bro. Royce Hawkins and Jonathan Yant, a member at Pleasant Hill, led our singing.

Lavelle Lee gave a report on state missions and Rob Hager, BMA missionary to West Chicago, gave a report on his work. Wexford Parmer encouraged us to support the Christian Action Commission and it new director, Dr. John Adams. Roger Akers reported on Southeastern College.

We took a love offering for Bro. Hager and his mission work. After a special in song by Cheryl Lindsey, State Missionary Kevin Marr brought our evening message. Roger Akers, president Wanda Parmer, reprinter

BMA of Mississippi 2007 Pastor’s Retreat
February 26 & 27, 2007
Skyway Hills Baptist Church
Pearl, Mississippi

Theme
Standing Strong . . .
...Pleasing Him
II Timothy 2:1-4
Cost $25.00
Make Plans Now To Attend!

Christmas Drive-Through Nativity
Broadmoor Baptist Church
5426 Highway 39 North
Meridian, MS 39305
(Just north of Harders’)

Saturday, December 9, 2006
6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
All churches are invited
Free hot chocolate will be available
Dedicated to Discipline - Part Three

Children ages 1 - 12

In the first two articles we discussed scriptural principles and wise principles to follow through in the arena of disciplining your children. This article will focus on options parents can consider to discipline young children. Remember, for the Christian parent, disciplining is not an option, but a command. It is a major requirement for parents. If we can't get our children to honor and obey us, how will they ever honor and obey God?

We are to implement God's government here on earth. We have to train these little ones up in the ways of the Lord. If you do proper discipline while they are young, it will save you a great deal of trouble when they get older.

In the early years you are teaching the Biblical principles and how to live their life to your children. These guiding foundational principles will guide your children all their life. The majority of all views on moral objectives are set by around age 10. You have the greatest impact on your child's life and future life. For good or bad, you will impact them more than society or anyone else. Yes, parenting is serious. Be sure you take the job seriously. Few parents today recognize the enormity of the job they've been called by God to do. You must raise soldiers in God's army that will rise up and glorify Him.

Remember that each child is different. Other people may suggest things that worked with their child. It may or may not work with yours. Even siblings will differ in response to what works. Find the discipline that works best for your child. I will give you some options. These are not the only forms of discipline, but the most common. You must use spanking as an integral part of your parenting according to scriptures. (See Part One of this Series). However, we don't want to just be spanking all the time. Here are some other options.

Removal of privileges
Find what the kid likes to play with. That is what you remove from them when they misbehave. It can be a toy. It can be a special privilege such as spending the night with a friend. It can be toy or TV or video games. Every child has something they like and they lose the privilege of using it because they have disobeyed or dishonored you. The time period for removal depends upon the severity of the infraction.

Isolation
This describes it better than time-outs. Isolation can be used sometimes. It is not used as the main means of discipline or the only means. You take the child and put them in a room or part of the house where they are cut off from contact with others. They cannot play or watch TV. You can send your kid to their room to think and pray about what they have done. You can send them to their room for a cooling down period until they regain composure. You cannot send them to their room for punishment. They have many toys in their room and they just sit there and play. That is not discipline. Take them to the restroom first and tell them they cannot go to the bathroom once they are in time out. They cannot cry. You will not start the time until they have stopped whining. Both restroom requests and whining are forms of manipulation on their part. Throw away the rule that says one minute in time out for every year they are old. A four year old is quite capable of staying in isolation for more than 4 minutes. You might try 10 to 15 minutes. Longer than this may require you to choose another form of discipline.

Grounding
If you give in on grounding, you may not use this as a form of discipline. You can't ground them for a week and then give in mid-point because they beg you and there is something important to attend. They need to learn that bad behavior will cost them to miss out on fun things in life. It has to cost them. Don't underground. Grounding them for 30 minutes from TV is ineffective. Don't over-ground them. Grounding them for the summer is too harsh. Grounding should have a set time period and should be explained how long to the child. Grounding can take on forms from grounding them to their room. Grounding them to stay in the house. Grounding them to their yard and not being able to play with friends. You must fit the crime and punishment. Don't be manipulated. Stick to your guns.

Spankings and whippings
This is a key to discipline at the young age. If it doesn't hurt, it doesn't teach. Spankings should hurt. It may even leave a momentary redness to the behind. Spankings should always be on the backside. It shouldn't leave marks, cuts, or welts. That is going too far. You should never jerk a kid by the arm, pinch, bite, shake or slap your child. This can be abusive. God made a spot for spankings. It is the behind.

You can use your hand or an instrument. It doesn't matter. My wife used a wooden kitchen spoon. I used a belt and a switch. Both work wonders. Failure to whip your kid will cause you pain and heartache later on. You will reap what you sow. Spankings should start at about one year - the first time they disobey you. It continues through childhood. It's not only the form, but it is perhaps the best form to alter behavior.

Christian Commentator: Use Bible as Baseline for Media Consumption

WASHINGTON, (AgapePress) - A popular Christian talk-show host says Christians need to be more discerning of what is being reported in the mainstream media by using God's Word as 'the plumb line of truth.'

Radio talk-show host Janet Parshall says one of the myths permeating Washington, DC, and the nation at large is that faith and intellect are mutually exclusive. According to the conservative commentator, some in "the church" mistakenly believe that being a "thinking" Christian is antithetical to being a believing Christian.

Parshall hosts Janet Parshall's America, which airs daily on XM Satellite Radio (FamilyTalk Channel 170) and radio stations nationwide. She maintains that evangelicals need to be using what is reported in the electronic media as a launching pad for the greater dialogue in the culture. She fears, however, that "story-telling often segues into a fairytale."

While taking part in a recent panel discussion ("Evangelicals and the Media") at the annual meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society, the radio personality offered examples of what she says are mainstream media's inaccurate portrayals of evangelicals -- which has led, she believes, to the popularity of Internet and talk radio.

"When the LA Times refers to the evangelical church in America as the new Taliban, we’ve got some issues," Parshall said. "When Harper’s Magazine refers to us as the new Taliban, we’ve got some issues. When fundamentalist Islam is compared to fundamentalist Christianity, we’ve got some issues."

Parshall suggests that some media...
Letters From Our Readers

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Don Brown
Editor

Church of the Covered Dish by Thomas Tapp

"Let's see now ... are we liberal or conservative?"

 implied Cursing in TV Ads Concerns Christian Activist

(AgapePress) - Recent television advertising that used "bleeped" profanity as to grab attention and shock viewers is being compared to the Bible's warning concerning seduction and deception getting worse and worse.

Dodge, Comcast, and Volkswagen have all run recent ads utilizing the "bleep" technique to indicate profane words banned by FCC regulations from television and radio between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. In a Dodge commercial for its Caliber model, for example, a Muppet-like character shares that the car "scares the [bleep] out of me." An official with Dodge tells USA Today the marketing ploy for its "Anything But Cute" campaign is an attempt to "stir up a perfect storm of taste and getting attention." He then adds: "We think we've straddled it quite well."

A Comcast ad promoting high-speed Internet service portrays a man who, after getting a "power boost" from the cable line, blusters through a kitchen clean-up chore at lightning-fast speed -- to which his wife exclaims: "Holy ...." A spokes-woman for Comcast says the end of the ad is not for shock value but merely to support the idea of making fast Internet performance "even faster."

How about a Volkswagen ad promoting the built-in safety features in one of its models? Passengers in a new Passat blurt out "Holy ...." after surviving a crash. Instead of hearing a profanity, viewers hear a voice-over saying "safe happens." VW's general manager for creative content tells USA Today that it was critical in the commercial that both the dialogue and scene be "extremely natural." He contends that "... anyone who's been in an accident, one of the first things you do is curse."

It is unlikely that Bill Johnson, president of the American Decency Association (ADA), would agree with these companies' rationale behind the commercials. Besides pushing the legal and ethical limits, Johnson believes the advertising approach is designed to desensitize the general population.

"This degradation, this desensitization leads to an accommodation and causes an erosion of our ability to recognize the difference between what is pleasing to God and what is not pleasing," says Johnson. That is why, warns the ADA leader, it is important that Christians strengthen themselves daily through spiritual disciplines such as prayer, Bible study, and time with God. "Our nature is being changed and so, therefore, when we are exposed to innuendo and subtleties and deception and seduction, we want to have nothing to do with it," he explains.

With such discipline, he says, continued on page 5...
Key Moral Issues
I have personally visited with or spoken with several key state representatives recently. My purpose was to inform them of the agenda of the Christian Action Commission. Hopefully, in 2007, as our State Senators and Representatives convene, they will hear the Biblical concerns of our Association. We as the church laity and pastors of the state have a tremendous potential to impact our elected legislators and area judges. I urge all Christians to share convincingly our Biblical area judges. I urge all Christians to share convincingly our Biblical:

- Senators and Representatives concerning the Christian Action Commission.
- Hopefully, in 2007, as our State seniors and Representatives concerning the Christian Action Commission.
- I wish to pass along to you some excellent websites and journals. As we get ready to battle Satan’s evil forces, these will be good study guides along with our prayers.

Passing Along
As your new Christian Action Commission Director, I wish to pass along to you some excellent websites and journals. As we get ready to battle Satan’s evil forces, these will be good study guides along with our prayers.

Journals
American Family Asso. Journal
P.O. Box 2440
Tupelo, MS 38803
www.afajournal.org
1-662-844-5036

National Liberty Journal
1971 University Boulevard
Lynchburg, Virginia 24502
www.nljonline.com
1-434-582-2432

Other Websites:
Mississippi State Legislature Bill Status
http://billstatus.ls.state.ms.us/20062E/pdf/mainmenu.htm

Christa Adkins
Coordinating Council
from page 1

The council was also made aware that the Baptist News Service division of the Department of Church Resources is in need of increased financial support. Church offerings for this division have decreased by $20,000 a year since it was transferred to the department.

It was announced that the Internet Services Committee of the BMA of Texas has recommended the transfer of the BMAWeb to the BMA of America with anticipation of doing so by January 31, 2007. It is recommended that the Department of Church Resources be given the responsibility of maintaining the BMAWeb should the transfer be made.

Implied Cursing'
from page 4

Group urges ultrasound of baby
A women’s advocacy group says all abortion clinics should be forced to show women seeking abortions an ultrasound image of their baby. The State of Oklahoma is the latest to require that abortion providers offer women an opportunity to view an ultrasound picture of their child before an abortion is performed.

Wendy Wright of Concerned Women for America says women need to be reminded that there is another person involved in the situation -- the child. “And that is equally important,” says Wright, “that the woman see what she is paying for and see the human being that would be affected by her decision.” The pro-family leader says it was a “smart move” on the part of the Sooner State to require that an ultrasound be done whenever a woman is seeking an abortion so a woman is given all the facts before an abortion is performed.

With such information, the woman can then make up her own mind, says Wright. “And ... she knows there is another human being who’s involved in this decision.”

Military Service Prayer List
- Please remember the following as they are serving in our military. You may add names to the list by mailing them to: Mississippi Baptist, P.O. Box 8181, Laurel, MS 39441 or by email at editor@msbaptist.org.

CPT Lawson “Sonny” Brannan, Stringer, MS
George Rogers, Wiggins, MS
Scott Clanton, Pineview, Lucedale
Miles Farragut, FBC of Shady Grove, Laurel
Kenneth Smith, Hattiesburg, MS
Wayne Mack, Seminary, MS
Anthony Hodge, Purvis, MS
Thomas Temple, Laurel, MS
David Cunningham, Forked Oak, Booneville
Jacob Blakney, Mineral Springs, Taylorsville
Lance Hollfield, Mineral Springs, Taylorsville
Phillip Holfield, Mineral Springs, Taylorsville
Robert Shavers, Pleasant Hill Baptist Church
Jeff Necaese, Pleasant Hill Baptist Church
Michael Wright, Pleasant Hill Baptist Church
Harold (Scooter) Bond, Jr., Laurel
Harold (Tank) Compton, Faithview Church
Jeff Schonewitz, Saucier
Michael Casey, Gulfport
Larry “Dean” Welborn Jr., Carneys
James Reeves, Westlawn, Picayune
Ronnie Spiers, Westlawn, Picayune
Patrick Garrett, Poplarville, MS
Darryl Gianpolo, Poplarville, MS
Ken Bullock, Skyway Hills, Pearl, MS
Lemuel Kendrick, Lee’s Chapel #2, Picayune
Albert C. White, McLean, MS
Craig Landry, Berryville Church, Picayune
Janet Hilburn, Sand Hill, Lucedale, MS
Baron Ho, First Baptist, Bay Springs, MS
Jessie David Loague, Bethel, Fulton, MS
Dustin Wills, First Windsor Park, Ocean Springs,
William “Lee” Henry, Richlton, MS
Justin Johnston, Summerland Baptist
Dusty Gray
James Riley
Randol Harlow, Nettleton, MS
Joshua S. Pierce, Corinth Church, Lucedale
Alan Fiscarkly, South Green Church, Tupelo
Russell S. Taylor, Paramount Church, Perkins
Craig Filligane, Cypress Creek Baptist Church
Michael Patrick Boyd, First Baptist, Bay Springs
Johnny R. Hunt
Jason Rivers, Ellisville
Tammy Mitchell, Purvis
Jake Driskell, Lebanon, Laurel
Will Norris, First, Henleyfield
Russell Robertson, Temple, Lacedale
Tim Cooper, Orzel, Mantee
Wesley Grissom, Hopewell, Fulton
Derek Mallett, Ramsey Creek, Saucier
Mary Muffler, Ramsey Creek, Saucier
Jonathan Morgan, Ramsey Creek, Saucier
Neal Garrett, First Baptist, Tremont, MS
David Palmer, First Baptist, Tremont, MS
Bradly Sharp, Bethel, Lucedale’s 150th
Johnny Ray Hunt, Unity, Unity, MS
Chuck Williams, Sharon Baptist, Laurel
Cory Williams, Sharon Baptist, Laurel
Jason Cotton Hillman, Washington, Neely
Richard Rylee, Richton, MS
Jennifer Norris, Pleasant Hill Church, Mooreville
Thomas James Reich, Bethel, Fulton, MS
Adam Martin, Clearview, Mendenhall
Finding the "Funny"

Having some very good friends who serve in some very hard jobs, I always like to find out how they train and prepare to face stressful situations daily by asking them personally or reading about their particular field. That's especially true with the friends I have who have gone into law enforcement as a career. It seems absolutely harsh the physical, mental, and emotional training they have to undergo, but then they have one of the most demanding jobs I can imagine. But some of the training that some in law enforcement take is amazingly simple - and interesting.

Did you know how those who serve in the U.S. Treasury Department are trained to spot immediately counterfeit money? To my mind you would become very familiar with the fakes - looking at funny money all day long till you could pick it out of a stack of twenties. But that's not how it's done. No, these agents look at real money, the kind in your pocket, wallet, or purse right now (or at least hope was in your pocket, wallet, or purse). They look at it and over and over and over and over and...well, you get the idea...until they have the pattern of the money memorized.

So what do you suppose happens when these now eagle-eyed agents see a fake twenty in with real twenties (which they've studied repeatedly)? What would be like looking for a needle in a haystack to us (or at least to me) is child's play to them. They have learned to measure the fake, the fake, the fake, the fake, the fake against the standard of the real. If it doesn't fit the pattern, then the agents have their counterfeit.

Now, not all of us serve in law enforcement. Not all of us have undergone such intense training. Not all of us would compare that job to the difficult and requires effort, but it is so much easier and wiser to do this than settle for the counterfeit.

None of us would want counterfeit money because it holds no use for us. None of us should settle for anything less than a relationship with the Savior - a counterfeit holds no use for us.

Mississippi State W.M.A.

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Laurel, MS 39443

Big Creek District WMA
The Big Creek WMA met at Lebanon Baptist on October 2nd. Mrs. Shirlene Smith, President, called meeting to order. Barbara White led in two songs and Jannelle Hammond from Hospewell led in prayer. The WMA motto was led by Kay Chisholm of First Baptist, Louin. Betty Lofton of Lebanon welcomed us to their church.

Bro. James Brown was a special guest at the meeting. Kay Chisholm gave a delightful devotion entitled "Going Back to School for a Christian" that instructed us to rest in the Lord, have daily prayer and Bible study, follow the rules, develop good work habits, do your best, get along with fellow Christians, and to get to know your teacher-Christ. A great big thanks to Regina Chisholm for making the very nice WMA booklets for 2006-2007.

Jenelle Burks read minutes and treasurer report. Nita Jefcoat encouraged everyone to keep studying the WMA study book "A Work In Progress." Linda Dertinger gave the Sunbeam/GMA report. Barbara White promoted the National WMA project "Fund Creative Access to Nations Work," stressing the need for anything less than a relationship with the Savior - a counterfeit holds no use for us.

December 1, 2006 • Mississippi Baptist
Children's Home

118 Lowe Road, Laurel, Mississippi 39443 • (601) 426-3928

The Good News of Christmas

In Luke 2:8-20 we read about the story of the shepherds out in the field. They had no idea about what was about to take place. They were given the announcement that the Savior had been born. What good news! God’s grace in sending His Son. God’s grace in sending the angels to announce the birth of His Son. God’s grace in opening up the way that we might be saved. The greatest message of the cross is the message of Christmas!

Recent Church Visits

On Sunday, November 12, we visited the New Bethany Baptist Church near Ellisville and Pastor Glenn Shoemaker for their morning service. Then on Sunday evening we were with the Shiloh Baptist Church near Mt. Olive and Pastor David Rice. We enjoyed a fine Thanksgiving meal with both of these good churches. We are thankful to have had the opportunity to be a part of their worship services and the hospitality shown to us.

Special Emphasis

We would like to convey our gratitude and thanks to the good response to the Special Emphasis for the Mississippi Baptist Children’s Home during the months of October and November. To every church, Sunday School class, auxiliary, and individual we want to say from the bottom of our heart “thank you” for your participation in meeting the needs of the Home through your generous giving.

Special Offerings

Special offerings received are as follow: F. B. Bay Springs, $553.88; Sharon, Laurel, $50; Movella, Lucedale, $65; Temple, Biloxi, $77; Buffalo Missicians, McClain, $68.23; Forked Oak, Booneville, $329; F. B. Shady Grove, Laurel, $120; Lee’s Chapel #2, Picayune, $30; Derby Place, Poplarville, $100; Hopewell, Fulton, $75; Spring Hill, Laurel, $125; George W. Harper, Laurel, the Untouchables, $100; Bro. Glenn Shoemaker, Collins, $50; Boguefela, Mooreville, $500; New Bethany, Ellisville, $62; New Bethany Brotherhood, Ellisville, $30; Bethel, Petal, $200; Riverside, Ellisville, $150; Sycamore, Carriere, $18.35; Cynol Creek, Brooklyn, $350; Ballardsville, Tupelo, $255; East Amory, Amory, $200; Mt. Carmel, Carriere, $1,000; O’Neal Road, Gulfport, $132; Mrs. & Mrs. Claiborne Bouds, Picayune, $200; Community, Poplarville, $707.09; Dykes Chapel, Richton, $200. We deeply appreciate each of these special gifts.

Children's Home

Bush HHS Nomination Irks Abortion Advocates

WASHINGTON (AgapePress) - Traditional values groups are applauding President Bush’s decision to nominate an abstinence-until-marriage advocate to run the Department of Health and Human Services’ Office of Population Affairs.

The president has tapped Dr. Eric Keroack to oversee the Title X Program, the government’s “family planning” funding. Pro-abortion groups have criticized the move because of the doctor’s past work with “A Woman’s Concern,” a Christian crisis pregnancy center in Massachusetts that discourages contraception.

Bush has not wanted to be party to supporting a news policy that he feels amounts to “supporting terrorism.”

Thompson says pro-choice feelings are part of what drives his conscience, and he was not nor political nor publicity concerns that led him to make what he views as a private decision based on “doing the right thing.” But even though his decision was personal, Thompson notes the president of Stony Creek Hospital Corporation says in making it he feels he is also doing the right thing for his business’s patrons.

But Janice Crouse of Concerned Women for America says Keroack is well qualified. “Unfortunately it’s a day late and a dollar short, but we’ll take it anyway,” she says. “We’re very happy to have someone who is from a Christian pregnancy counseling center to be nominated for a position such as this.”

“I think it’s about time we had someone in that position who will be more fair in distributing the money for programs in high schools and other agencies that work with women who have reproductive health problems,” Crouse continues. “It’s long past due that Planned Parenthood not get the kind of funding that they have.

The CWA spokeswoman says Planned Parenthood has been able to provide abortion facilities and abortions without any restrictions because it has had an “unobstructed path to the federal trough.” She also points out what she sees as an irony: the liberal left speaks constantly over a nominee’s personal beliefs only when he or she is a Christian, pro-life, or supports abortion until marriage.

Joseph Harris

Joseph Harris

The Paradox of Freedom

Freedom is not free. Liberty is one of the most misunderstood and least appreciated privileges enjoyed today. The desire for liberty is built into every man by God, the Creator of all men. Men desire to be free from oppression and exercise voluntary self-determination, and pursuit of this desire has led to the death of many men, women, and children who chose to take risks and seek liberty rather than remain in bondage.

Freedom is what America represents and is the main reason she is hated and despised by those who seek to enslave others religiously and politically. Freedom may appear to be “free” to its recipients, but rest assured, when freedom is obtained, someone, somewhere paid a price.

Freedom is often the result of the freedom to purchase services and products, one must first be in bondage to employment, to have money to be able to purchase. The bondage of a 9-5 job (or any other hours) secures money which gives the ability to purchase. Even if someone purchases merchandise with money received as a gift or a grant, somewhere provided that money through their bondage or commitment to produce through their labor.

Even the freedom of a violinist to perform comes only after the bondage of lessons and practice, which requires work. It is only after the price of study and practice has been paid that the freedom to perform becomes a reality. Try playing the violin with no lessons or practice and you will get the point. Men and women are free to have sexual intimacy with one another, but only after the commitment (some would say bondage) of marriage has been made. Marriage is a type of bondage, however, because husband and wife promise to be bound exclusively to one another. “Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge,” Hebrews 13:4.

Not only must a price be paid to secure freedom, but there is also a maintenance fee. Freedom costs.

The recipients of freedom must ever be aware of those who would steal liberty under the guise of promising “more freedom for all” by playing on emotions and using “discrimination and inequality” as a battle cry.

The erroneously named American Civil Liberties Union and other groups, promote an unlimited, one-sided freedom for abortionists, pornographers, pedophiles, homosexuals and other trans-sexual deviants, while trampling on the freedom of normal Americans, especially conservative Christians. Believers in God must walk the tightrope of being active yet never becoming activists to the point of promoting morality above the Gospel of Jesus Christ. However, if ungodliness is free to reign, eventually all freedom will have been destroyed, and bondage to sin, Satan, and ungodly government will result.

The greatest freedom in the world is liberty from sin and freedom from eternal punishment in the lake of fire, through eternal salvation, but notice the paradox of peace. This FREEDOM required. It was secured by the payment of the Son of God on Calvary with the highest price ever paid for any purchase. We only have freedom through Christ by first surrendering totally to Christ. And we do not have freedom “come boldly unto the throne” as God’s children until we first submit at the throne. Absolute freedom in the sense of no price being required does not exist. Where freedom is a reality, some one, somewhere has paid and is paying the price and carrying the burden of liberty so freedom can exist. Let freedom ring.

Joseph Harris is the Vice-president of Southeastern College.
Two hundred years of associational operation is history. His story of working through Baptist churches to carry the Good News is our history. We are grateful for those who attended and others that made the BMA bicentennial celebration a success, an event we will always remember. Mrs. Chris Smith, Barbara White, Sherline Smith, Roger Jefcoat, and David and Sam Freeman did an excellent job in planning, putting together, and setting up for the mission banquet. We also appreciate the missionaries who were present to help with the different job throughout the annual session.

The work of our missionaries is rapidly moving toward self-support status, some are nearer than others, but all are making considerable progress. Bro. Marr and LifePoint in Hernando are near the completion of renovating the inside of their building. The attendance and financial progress at LifePoint is good. They are giving to missions, making their property and building payment, and already paying back into mission a percentage of Bro. Marr’s salary.

Bro. Estuardo and El Camino in Laurel have been seeing souls saved consistently for the past several months. El Camino is now making plans for the construction of a sanctuary and educational building. Property for El Camino was donated by a member of Parkview Baptist Church in Laurel. In addition to the property given, we are pursuing the purchase of an adjoining lot that is greatly needed. The El Camino Mission has saved around fifteen thousand dollars toward their new construction and the East Central Association has given them fifteen thousand plus toward the construction. It is true, that when people show they have a mind to work, others will help.

Divine Grace of Long Beach is excited to be near occupancy with their building program. They are presently hanging and finishing the wall board in the fellowship hall, rest rooms, and Sunday school department. By finishing the back portion of their building first it will allow them to move inside and out of the weather they have been enduring under the utility shed. After moving inside they will continue to work toward finishing the auditorium and other parts of the building. The Lord has been good to Divine Grace and the Williams from the very beginning, and we are sure He will be glorified through their ministry.

Bro. Ed and Homestretch are working hard to grow a strong congregation while at the same time looking for property upon which to construct a building. Any church or group desiring to help Homestretch mission financially, with a visitation/evangelistic program, or a seminar please contact Bro. Ed or the mission office.

Bro. Elvis and First Hispanic Mission of Ripley, and Bro. Joseph and Maple Street Mission at Columbus are also experiencing many blessing from the Lord.

Bicentennial Mementos

For those who would like a bicentennial jacket or watch please contact the mission office. We yet have a few of the jackets in stock and can re-order if needed. The jackets are $65.00 and the watches are $30.00. Our goal for the Special Emphasis Calendars is to provide at least one for each BMA household in Mississippi. If you have not received yours and would like one please let us know while the supply lasts. Any other bicentennial item such as place mats, lapel pins, bookmarks, pencils, or pens that you did not receive and would like one please contact us immediately, they are going fast.

Individual Missionary Letters

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I hope my letter finds all of you doing well. My family and I are doing great. The church family is doing well also.

We are delighted to have a family of four join our church this past month. This new family came to us basically homeless and with many needs. There is a temptation for us as humans to pick and choose who we will embrace. There is a tendency to embrace the lovingly, the rich, the popular, the independent, the clean and so on. God put in my heart to embrace this family in spite of their many needs. If the church can’t be a place for the hungry, the hurting, broken hearted and lost to go, then what is the purpose of the church?

God blessed our church with a van. Bro. Roger Akers and East Amory Baptist Church donated it to us. We are so grateful for this gift.

We are approaching our goal for purchasing the land for our church. We expect to reach our goal of $20,000.00 by June of 2007. We would not come close to reaching our goal if it was not for the loving Brothers and Sisters of the BMA (especially the WMA of Mississippi). It is because of the BMA of Mississippi, the BMA of Arkansas, and the BMA of Memphis that our ministry is going forward and is possible.

Continue to pray for us, as we continue to reach this area with the gospel of Christ.

Sincerely,

Edward Duvall

2007 Missions and Evangelistic Conferences

We are now in the planning stage of the Missions and Evangelistic Conferences for the North and the South. The date for these two conferences are, for the North it will be on Tuesday, March 20 from 9:00 AM until 8:00 P.M., and for the South it will be on Thursday, March 22 from 9:00 AM until 8:00 P.M.

Any church that would like to host a session or all of the North or South conference please let us know by calling 601-428-8616 or email us at director@bmamissions.org. Help make these conferences the greatest by marking your appointment calendar and attending at least one of them.

Christmas and New Year’s Holidays

We wish each one A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR. The Mission Office will be closed the week of Christmas and New Year’s Day.

Available For Service

Listing of names does not indicate endorsement. This column is for Information purposes only.

John Read

Bro. John Read is available for pulpit supply as the Lord leads. He has pastored BMA churches in Mississippi and Oklahoma and may be contacted 601-947-4370.

Kenneth Lofton

Bro. Kenneth Lofton is available for service wherever the Lord may lead. He is a member of Riverside Baptist Church. Bro. Lofton may be contacted at 601-319-7804.