

A Broken World
World Missions
Day 2022
February 27

We live in a broken world full of broken people.

We know that.

We see that.

We say that.

Jesus did, too.



Matthew 9:36 says, "But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd."

Jesus was moved with compassion for the broken. Missions happens when we are burdened for broken people. It was in our brokenness that Jesus found us, loved us, and saved us.

The story of missions is the story of people – missionaries – who are burdened for people, Burdened enough to go. Burdened enough to sacrifice their lives for the lives of others.

The harvest is plentiful, and we need laborers. But laborers are birthed out of a burdened and broken heart for the lost and weary and scattered.

Our vision and impact in reaching the world will never be bigger than our burden for broken people.

That's the catalyst to missions.

That's the heart of missionaries.

We indeed live in a broken world full of broken people, but does that "move us with compassion"?

May we be burdened for broken people during this World Missions Day season and every day.

BMA President Resigns

from Jeff Swart

Chairman of the Coordinating Council

The Coordinating Council has received a letter from Justin Rhodes resigning as president of the BMA of America. First vice-president Clif Johnson has agreed to fill the position of president, and second vice-president Charles Johnson has agreed to fill the office of first vice-president, for the 2021-2022 associational year.

Baptist

Mississippi

JOURNAL OF THE BAPTIST MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION OF MISSISSIPPI

Thank God for His perfect gift, Christ Jesus.

Be A Blessing When Opportunity Knocks

Editor's Note - The following story is from an anonymous source on Facebook. In this Christmas season I thought the ideals and lessons found here would encourage each of us to be kind, be compassionate, and look at every opportunity that is given us by God. There are people who need encouragement and there are folks that will bless us beyond measure if we allow them into our lives. May God bless you all and may you all enjoy a blessed Christmas Season.

I have no idea who wrote this but it surely is powerful!

"In 1979, I was managing a Wendy's in Port Richey, Florida. Unlike today, staffing was never a real problem, but I was searching for someone to work three hours a day only at lunch. I went through all my applications and most were all looking for full-time or at least 20 hours per week. I found one however, buried at the bottom of a four-inch stack that was

only looking for lunch part-time. His name was Nicky. Hadn't met him, but thought I would give him a call and see if he could stop by for an interview. When I called he wasn't in, but his mom said she would make sure he would be there.

At the accorded time, Nicky walked in. One of those moments when my heart went in my throat. Nicky had Downs Syndrome. His physical appearance was a giveaway and his speech only reinforced the obvious. I was young and sheltered. Had never interacted on a professional level with a developmentally disabled person. I had no clue what to do, so I went ahead and interviewed him.

He was a wonderful young man. Great outlook.

Task focused. Excited to be alive. For only reasons God knew at that time, I hired him. 3 hours a day, 3 days a week to run a grill. I let the staff know what to

We are all like Nicky. We each have our shortcomings. We each



have our strong points. But we are all of value. God made us that way and God doesn't make mistakes.

expect. Predictably, the crew made sure I got the message, "no one wants to work with a retard."

To this day I find that word offensive. We had a crew meeting, cleared the air, and prepared for his arrival. Nicky showed up for work right on time.

He was so excited to be working. He stood at the time clock literally shaking with anticipation. He clocked in and started his training. Couldn't multi-task, but was a machine on the grill. Now for the fascinating part.....

Back in that day, there were no computer screens to work from. Every order was called by the cashier. It required a great deal of concentration on the part of all production staff to get the order right.

While Nicky was training during his first shift, the sandwich maker next to him asked the grillman/trainer what was on the next sandwich. Nicky replied, "single, no pickle no onion." A few minutes later it happened again. It was then that we discovered Nicky had a hidden and valuable skill.

He memorized everything he heard! Photographic hearing! WHAT A SKILL SET. It took 3 days and every sandwich maker requested to work with Nicky. He immediately was accepted by the entire crew. After his shift he would join the rest of his crew family, drinking Coke like it was water! It was then that they discovered another Rainman-esque trait.



continued on page 2

Mississippi Baptist

Journal of the Baptist Missionary Association of Mississippi



Don Brown
Editor

Trustees

Adam Sloan - Rayburn Freeman
Danny Bartlett - Clell Allen
Corbey Jones - Anders Lee

E-Mail - editor@msbaptist.org
Web site www.msbaptist.org

Content may be copied or reprinted without prior permission

USPS 353-960
P.O. Box 8181
Laurel, Mississippi 39441-8000
Phone 601-426-3293

PRICE

\$20.00 Per Year by Mail
\$15.00 Per Year by Email
CHURCH PLAN
\$ 1.50 Per Month per Family

Published on the 1st and 15th of each month by the Baptist Missionary Association of Mississippi. Periodical postage paid at Hattiesburg, MS 39402.

Postmaster

Send address changes to Mississippi Baptist Paper P.O. Box 8181, Laurel, MS 39441

January 2022 - Publications Department Special Emphasis

Just a quick reminder that January of each year is designated by the State Association as "special emphasis" month for Publications. Monthly gifts and our Annual Emphasis Drive make up a large part of our annual budget. Your prayers and gifts are greatly appreciated.

A Mississippi Missionary's Journey

from BMAA Missions

"From the time I was saved at the age of nine, God began a desire in me for missions and to experience what missionaries were talking about . . . like walking across a river holding their belongings above their head and the other stories they shared."

Alicia (Ramshur) Samson was born and raised in Columbia, Mississippi, and was part of her church's (Good Hope) GMA program. Girls Missionary Auxiliary is a discipleship program that she says helped her fall in love with missionaries and missions and where she heard their fascinating stories. She wondered what that life would be like . . . and how she would get there.

During high school, she went on two VSM mission trips that she says changed her life forever. After graduation God gave her the desire to go to nursing school and use that vocation on the mission field. In 2008, a year after graduating from nursing school, she began the process of getting to the mission field for full time ministry and was commissioned by the BMA in 2010.

After serving briefly in Laos, she went to the Philippines in 2011 and began teaching classes at the BMA Bible College of the Philippines (BMABC). Col-

From the beginning, ministry has led Alicia down a completely unexpected path. Plans failed, others succeeded, and some were completely changed.

lege President Bro. Doyle Moore talked to her about running a medical clinic on campus using one of the original buildings from the 1970s. It became an outreach for students to participate in weekend medical missions work, and many came to know Lord.

An Unexpected Road

In 2012 Alicia began to question where the ministry was headed. Patients at the clinic needed much more advanced care than she was trained for, and she was uncertain where to find the needed personnel. These questions led her to enrolling in medical school in the Philippines.

Alicia says, "I knew the Lord wanted me to continue my education, but I questioned his plan because I had already gone to nursing school and worked in the U.S. to prepare for the mission field. So why did I need to go back to school at 28 in a foreign country?"

"I thought those days of being a student were far behind me, but ministry was suffering due my limitations as a nurse, so I cautiously applied to medical

school and was accepted in June of 2013. Four years later, by the grace of God, I completed medical school."

During those four years, God continued to reveal unexpected plans to Alicia. Many of her medical school peers shared



Alicia, Cris and their two sons

her passion for improving community health and helping the helpless; however, their reasons for serving the marginalized was about good works, so it

became an unexpected evangelism opportunity.

Another of those surprises involved a young church planter and BMABC graduate, Cris Samson.

A Help Meet

Alicia knew Cris from her time teaching at the Bible college, but after five years of ministry, she had accepted the fact that God wanted her to remain single in service to him, so she was not interested in dating and uncertain how two different callings could work.

continued on page 5

Ministry Position Openings

Seeking Pastor

First Baptist Church of Calhoun near Laurel, Mississippi, is seeking a pastor. For those wishing to inquire concerning the church and this position please contact Chairman Paul Welborn at 601-319-6353 or 601-729-8397.

Music Minister Needed

Sharon Missionary Baptist Church of Laurel is searching for a song director for Sunday morning, Sunday Night, and Wednesday night services. We are a small older conservative congregation and we use the old hymnals. If you are interested, please call pastor, Joe Watson at 601-319-5488.

Texas Church Seeking Pastor

Friendship Baptist Church of Mesquite, Texas, is prayerfully seeking our next full-time pastor. Interested parties should send a resume to office@friendshipmesquite.org. Please enter Search Committee in the subject line. Also include a recent video of a sermon, on a DVD or by a website link. You may also mail the requested information to Friendship Baptist Church, 820 Pioneer Road, Mesquite, TX 75149. Information about our church can be found on our website at www.friendshipmesquite.org.

Be A Blessing

from the front page

Nicky was a walking/talking perpetual calendar! With a perpetual calendar as a reference, they would sit for hours asking him what day of the week was December 22, 1847. He never missed.

This uncanny trait mesmerized the crew.

His mom would come in at 2:00 to pick him up.

More times than not, the crew would be back there with him hamming it up. As I went to get him from the back, his mom said something I will never forget. "Let him stay there as long as he wants. He has never been accepted anywhere

like he has been here." I excused myself and dried my eyes, humbled and broken-hearted at the lesson I just learned.

Nicky had a profound impact on that store. His presence changed a lot of people. Today I believe with every fiber of my body that Nicky's hiring was no accident. God's Timing and Will is Perfect.

This Christmas, I hope we all understand what we are celebrating. Nicky certainly wasn't a mistake. He was a valuable gift that I am forever grateful for. We are celebrating the birth of the ONE that leveled the playing field for all of us. God doesn't care if you are rich or

poor, republican or democrat or black or white. He doesn't care if your chromosome structure is perfect. He doesn't care what level of education you have attained.

He cares about your heart. He wants us all to love and appreciate the gift HE gave us on Christmas. His son, the Savior, our salvation. His Son that was born to die for our sins. To pay our debt. To provide us a path for eternity. So this Christmas, let's check our hearts. There is a little bit of Nicky in all of us and I suspect there is a Nicky somewhere in your life that is looking for the chance to be embraced.

Thank God for that. Thank God for His perfect gift, Christ Jesus."

Southeastern Baptist College

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

Serving Christ With A Biblical World View In A Christian Atmosphere

President's Perspective

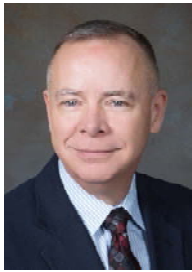
We are living in a world that seems to be falling apart all around us. However, as we approach this wonderful time of the year, we rejoice in the goodness of our God and celebrate once again, Emmanuel, God with us. The reality of God loving us to the point of entering our world incarnate never grows old or insignificant.

2021 marks a milestone for Southeastern Baptist College as we continue to see record enrollment in student population. We are grateful for our Board of Trustees and dedicated faculty & staff as they help us to accommodate and evangelize an ever-growing student body, while meeting the educational needs of these students.

Southeastern is still facing occupancy challenges, as our infrastructure is still stretched to capacity. We are still developing plans and talking with key partners about our next steps. Please pray for God's clear direction.

2021 also provides donors with a unique giving opportunity. This

year, the federal government, through the Taxpayer Certainty and Disaster Tax Relief Act enacted last December, is incentivizing giving to non-profit organizations by allowing single taxpayers to deduct donations up to \$300 on their 2021 federal tax returns, even if they do not itemize. The maximum increases to \$600 for mar-



Dr. Scott Carson
President

December 31, 2021, will qualify you for this deduction. To learn more, consult your tax professional to see how it might apply to your individual tax situation.

As you consider the gifts you will make during this special season, I invite you to be a partner in the ministry of Southeastern Baptist College. You can be certain that your monetary gift will have an eternal impact in the life of each student. Please mail your donation to SBC at 4229 Hwy. 15 N., Laurel, MS, 39440, postmarked by December 31, 2021.

Because of your prayers and generosity, together, we have the privilege of educating the next generation for the glory of God

ried couples filing joint returns.

In 2017, the deduction for cash contributions made to public charities was increased to 60% of a donor's Adjusted Gross Income. The CARES Act, which was passed as part of the 2020 economic stimulus package, increased this limit to 100% for cash gifts, but only for 2020 and 2021. Any cash gift made by

Because of your prayers and generosity, together, we have the privilege of educating the next generation for the glory of God. Thank you for supporting Southeastern Baptist College.

May you experience a very merry Christmas and a blessed New Year!

Equipping the saints,
Dr. Carson

Year End Giving

Are you looking for a worthy cause to donate toward? At the end of the calendar year, many look for organizations where they can contribute in order to impact the world for Jesus Christ and at the same time help in their personal or business annual tax deductions. Southeastern Baptist College is a 501(c)3 charitable organization. Your donations to SBC are fully tax deductible. Donate today! Southeastern Baptist College, 4229 Hwy 15 N, Laurel MS 39440.

Amazon Smile

Christmas will be upon us before we know it! As you begin to make lists and purchase gifts from Amazon, remember, anyone shopping on Amazon Smile can select Southeastern Baptist

College as your charity. When you do this, a portion of your purchase price will go directly to SBC as a donation from Amazon! Thank you for those who are already using this unique method to benefit SBC.

Need a Preacher?

Dr. Carson is available to fill the pulpit or to make a presentation about the work and vision of Southeastern Baptist College. Thank you Broadmoor Baptist Church of Meridian, Mississippi, for recently having Dr. Carson preach services. Chaplain (Colonel) Carson can also provide an update on the BMAA Chaplaincy and deliver a related message. You can reach him at 601-433-4736 or at scarson@southeasternbaptist.edu

Coffee with the President

We invite folks, and especially alumni, to meet with Dr. Carson to discuss any topic that might be on their mind. If you are interested in meeting with Dr. Carson, contact him at 601-426-6346 to make an appointment.



Dr. Carson was the Master of Ceremonies at the Jones County Veterans Day Ceremony

Around the Campus

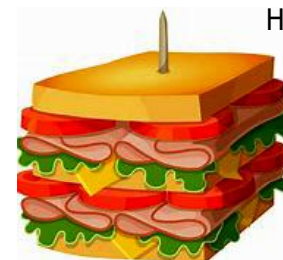


A surprise visit to SBC from leaders in the BMA Hispanic ministries. Pictured L-R Alfredo Luis Didier of Puerto Rico, Dr. Carson, Josue Osorio of Mexico, and Estuardo Marroquin with the BMA of MS Hispanic Ministries.



James McGhee, alumnus and pastor of Pine Grove Baptist Church, Bailey MS, recently spoke in chapel

Holloway's Dairy Bar



Holloway's Dairy Bar is open and the public is welcome! The Dairy Bar is located on the campus of SBC. There is an expanded menu and it is open Monday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Come support SBC and Holloway's!

Of note, Holloway's is not open on Sundays.

MINISTERING TO YOUNG PEOPLE

by Anders Lee

It's a Wonderful Life!

We all know and love (well most of us) the classic Christmas movie "It's a Wonderful Life!" I started watching that movie on Christmas Eve in 1988 and have not failed to watch it on Dec. 24th since. What could we learn and apply to Youth Ministry from that movie? I'm not the first to use the movie to learn certain truths for Christianity. Other's have written about it... I might be the first to apply it to youth ministry LOL... I'm kidding, I'm sure others have also. Now please know before reading this that I'm not asserting that we should turn to movies for spiritual guidance, but it is Christmas so I thought it would be fun to think about it! Well here we go... what could we learn... here are a few things I thought of.



Anders Lee

Save Harry Bailey

Early on in the movie we are introduced to why George can't hear in his left ear. He and all his friends, and his "kid brother" Harry were using large shovels to slide down the hill. At the base of that hill was a frozen river. When it was Harry's turn he slid too far and went into a broken area and fell through. What did George do? Did he panic over the problem and freak out? No... you know the story, he organized a solution and led the boys to rescue Harry, himself leading the way by jumping into the freezing water and getting the guys to line up, form a chain gang, and pull them out. Wow! A brilliant in the moment move. It reminds me of the principle in John 15:13.

Youth Pastors are faced many times with the unthinkable. You are having a great time one minute with your youth and the next minute a catastrophe happens! It stinks when everything is going great in ministry and then suddenly the Devil has attacked. How you respond to that attack is critical. Be like George! Don't blame Harry for creating

the problem, save him and be a leader and come up with a quick solution to solve problems. Kids are going to make mistakes. When someone fails, I mean really blows it, that's when someone should step up and despite what anyone else thinks, do something to change the problem. It takes leadership, care, love and sacrifice like ole George demonstrated.

"Ask Dad, he knows"

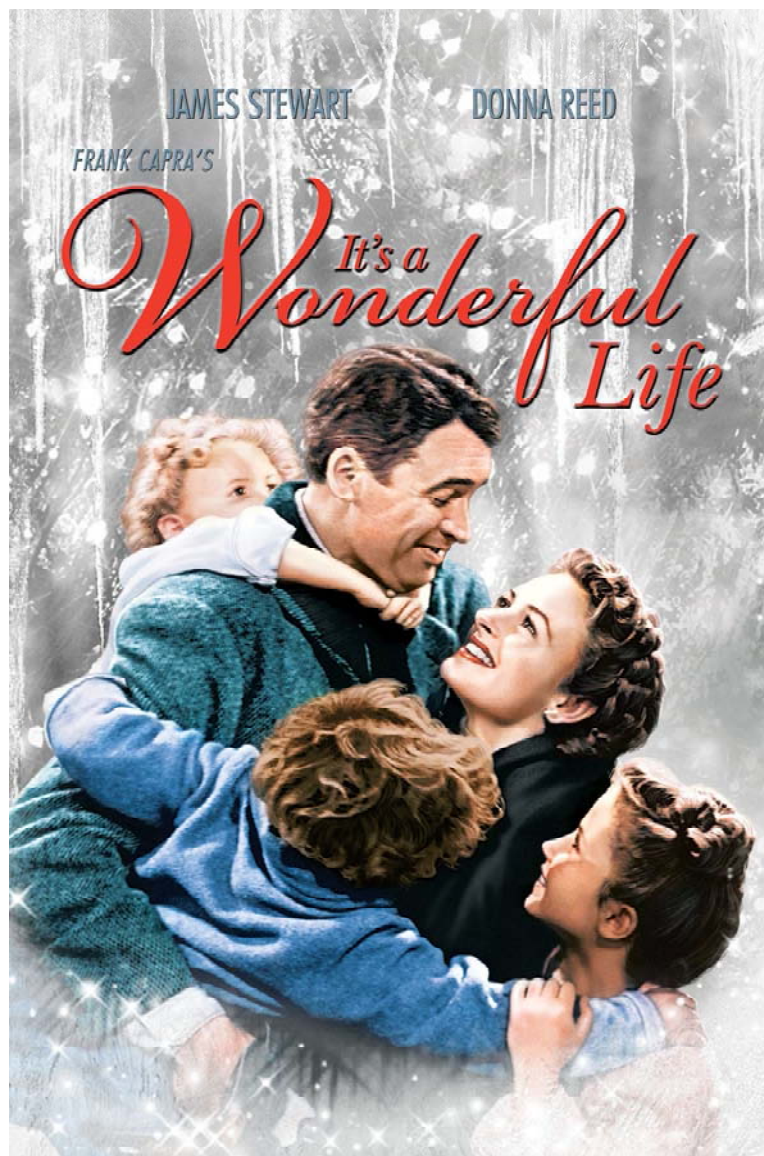
In the movie young George Bailey is in a major jam. He was asked to deliver some pills, that mistakenly had poison put into them, to a sick family in the city. Of course he couldn't do that yet his boss insisted it be done and he rushed him off to the chore. Not knowing what to do, he sees the sign in the store that says "Ask Dad, he knows." So, off to his Dad's he goes to get advice on how to handle that touchy situation. That moment in the movie reminds me of Ephesians 6:1-4 and James 1:5.

Youth ministry should always build into kids and stand by the biblical principle that God has given them a family leader – their Dad! I know youth pastors at times can get the hero syndrome thrust upon them, but in my opinion they are a hero when they make kid's dads the hero. When kids come to you about problems, sure talk with them guide them, but lead them to do what young George did... go ask your Dad what he thinks! I know he has some solid advice for you too.

But there is something else here for the youth guy! When you are in a jam... ask others in ministry who have more experience than you what they would do in whatever situation you are dealing with. There are plenty of godly & great men in the BMA who are old & wise that you can turn to! Get them on speed dial and have a chat from time to time. You will be glad you did.

Resist Mr. Potter

In every good movie there is a villain. LOL. You know that in



this one it's Mr. Potter. He controls the whole town. He wants to monopolize it further and the only thing that keeps him from doing that are the Bailey's. He strategizes to take out George from the Building & Loan by offering him a job that paid \$20,000 a year. George was only making pennies compared to that offer, \$45 a week, that's \$2,340 annually. He could travel like he had always dreamed about also. WOW! In the moment George was captivated by the thought. He contemplated it but then suddenly realized when he shook the Devil's hand, I mean Mr. Potter's hand, that somehow he would be done wrong and ruined in the deal! Indeed he would have been.

I don't want to sound like a negative guy, but Dr. Gerald Kellar once taught me that many times when a preacher or youth pastor is interviewing with churches, the first guy that wants to meet & eat with you probably wants to influence and control you. WOW! You know what... he was right. There are many Mr. Potter's out there. They are em-

bedded in the fabric of churches, associations and schools etc... They want power and control. Be wise, be led of the Lord and don't fall into that trap and by all means don't make deals with "Mr. Potter." But of course this applies directly to the Devil himself. He wants to destroy you. He will make you all kinds of offers to take you out. RESIST! Remember what 1 Peter 5:8 and James 4:7 teaches & warns you about. Through time we have seen too many good men taken down by the enemy... don't be the next one.

You Can't Have Christmas Without Mary

George is no doubt the main character of the movie. But MARY! His Wife! Behind every great man there is always a great woman. The role of Mary in the movie can't be missed! She was a model wife. She worked hard and loved and raised her kids. She supported George. She stood beside him and work beside him. And... well you know how it ended... she was responsible for saving the day. She told every-

one George was in trouble and she organized an effort to raise funds immediately. George always got the job done and solved all the problems, but in this situation, MARY saved the day and the generosity and love of all the people. They all trusted and loved George and knew when Mary called they had to respond. WOW - She was a special lady!

Can I tell you something... you can't do youth ministry without YOUR Mary. God brought Carla Lee into my life at Southeastern Baptist College in 1993. WOW! All who know us... know she is a MARY. She is NEVER out front or on the stage, but has always stood by me in every season, through everything, serving and loving and making things happen out of love for the Lord, me, ministry and the church. Soooo... this Christmas and all year make sure that you always love, serve, and appreciate Mary the way she deserves it.

"Help Me, God!"

I love the moment in time in the movie when George in desperation turns to God and cries out to Him and pleads with Him... "Help Me, God!" He has always been successful, confident and self-reliant until this moment. God brought him to a place of utter dependence. He admits that he isn't a praying man but he knows that ultimately he needs to be so he cries out to Him.

Guys... Youth Leaders... you can't do it without Mary... and you sure can't do ministry without prayer. Never fail to be on your knees. Don't wait till the hour or moment of desperation. Make it your habit & lifestyle to pray and seek His face. At that moment in the movie I am reminded of Hebrews 4:16 and certainly as a principle 1 Thess. 4:16-18. We must be men of prayer. So if you have neglected that discipline in your life that needs to change for sure.

There are certainly other things I could note in this article but I've run out of room to continue. So, let me close with this personal note. It's a joy to write in the paper. I hope you benefit from the articles in some way from time to time.

I want to wish you all a Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year!

Lee is pastor of Central Church, Southaven, Mississippi and may be contacted at anders.lee571@gmail.com

Be wise, be led of the Lord and don't fall into that trap and by all means don't make deals with "Mr. Potter."



Mississippi Baptist Children's Home



Lindsey

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

Brownie Brittle

Favorite Activity

Hunting
Fishing
Basketball
Baseball
Going to the Beach/Swimming
Singing
Video Games
Riding Bikes

Favorite Stores

Walmart
Thrift Store
American Eagle
Bass Pro
Hibbett Sports

Items Need/Want/Wear/Read

Blue Jeans – 18 youth, 36x30, 30x29, 29x30 slim
Shirts – A-XS, A-M, A-L, A-XL
Joggers – Y-XL, A-S, A-L, A-XL
Shorts – A-S, A-L, A-XL
Shoes – 6, 8, 11, 13
Infant girl - 12 month clothes
Toddler girl - 5T
Boots (8, 11, 13)
Devotional Books
Christian Hero's Book series
Magic Tree House series
Spy School Books
Epic Zero Books
Survival Books
Wildlife Books
Who Is/Was Books
What Is/Was Books
Adventure Books
Classic Books
Gift Cards
PS4/5 Video Games



Thankful and Watchful,

It truly is, "the most wonderful time of the year." We can all have different reasons for our favorites. As for me I love how outside feels in late spring and early summer, but those times cannot compare to now for what it brings to mind. This brings me to verse three of Psalm 34, "O magnify the Lord with me, And let us exalt his name together."

This time of year brings thankfulness into focus, and a reminder for what we are thankful. We enjoy family, fellowship, and food. Through Bible study, sermons, corporate worship, songs of the season we are constantly confronted with the fact that we should be thankful for what God did, what He is doing, and what He has promised to do in the future. He cares for us, He provides for us, He protects us, and all the while He listens as He abides with His people. He deserves to have much made of Him and have His praise be ever on our lips. We truly serve an amazing God. He continues to

amaze us in our daily service to Him, He has seen fit to send us two more of His children to care for during this holiday season. This has been a great time of sharing Christ and discipleship with two young ladies. Please pray for our newest and the rest of the Home through this holiday season. We praise God for His care and are reminded in our thankfulness that it is by a child who came to dwell and give Himself for us that we have reason to celebrate.

I want to thank everyone who dug a little deeper and gave extra during our time of special emphasis. We do appreciate all that is given to serve this ministry. If you haven't, please consider us this Christmas and if you would like to help out the kids this is a compiled list that might be helpful:

Favorite Candy:

Twix
Snickers
Kit Kat
Caramel Apple Tiger Pop

PS4/5 Accessories
Nintendo Switch Games
Nintendo Switch Accessories
USB C cables
Charger Blocks
Lightening cables
Baseball gloves
Baseballs
Baseball Tee
Baseball Net
Airsoft BBs
Flashlights
Multi tool
Guys silicone bracelets
Earbuds
(Cheap wired or bluetooth)
Fishing Rods/Reels
Fishing Tackle
Camo/Hunting Gear
Corn hole set

Continue to pray that God will provide the provision and the people for another set of house parents that we may continue to grow and serve more and more children in need. If you would like for us to come and talk to you about this ministry please email or call info@msbch.org or 662-605-0996.

Our family here at the Children's Home wishes a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all of you, and may we conclude by returning to Psalm 34:7, "[may] The angel of the Lord encampeth Round about them that fear him, and delivereth them."

Missionary Journey

from page 2

Part of Cris's church planting ministry was working with families of sugarcane workers. He and Alicia, along with her medical school classmates, conducted service projects addressing both physical and spiritual community health. As they served together, the Lord showed her that church planting and medical missions could merge and complement each other in evangelizing the lost.

Alicia says, "Although it was hard to open my heart to the possibility of marriage and serving together, God helped me realize that we had the same ministry vision and I'm so glad because Cris is the spiritual leader of our home and has helped me with the growth and maturity I needed."

They were married in the States in October of 2015 during an eight-day break from medical school then returned to the Phil-

ippines for Alicia to finish school and continue to serve there. In 2017 their first child, Benjamin, was born, then Asher joined the family in September 2019, and they have been in the States ever since.

A Different Plan

With a target date of August 2020 to return to the Philippines, the pandemic and ever-changing travel restrictions have kept them stateside much longer than anticipated with no clear pathway home. Still, they have continued traveling to BMA churches, sharing their ministry vision, and building partnerships to become 100% fully funded.

Alicia spent much of their furlough studying for then taking the USMLE, the U.S. medical licensure exam for doctors. Although she didn't pass it, Alicia says, "God is sovereign, and He



has helped us understand His will and direction. I will continue to pursue my U.S. license even though it may take longer than we thought, but it won't keep us from continuing ministry with the vision God has given.

"After our return to the Philippines, we will continue church planting with a support ministry of medical missions under my nursing license just as we've been doing in the past. Our hearts long to serve God and it's what we will do."

Getting to the Philippines without any kind of family disruption is almost impossible with

the current restrictions, but the Samsons are monitoring the ever-changing rules closely and are ready to return home. In the meantime, Cris is helping Alicia with her Illongo skills so she can have deeper communication with Filipinos. Also, they're raising and teaching two boys, which has helped them learn more about evangelism.

Their ministry vision is to minister to spiritual needs through addressing physical ones and to show compassion that leads to relationships and opportunities to share the gospel. They will utilize other God-

given resources like former Filipino classmates who are now doctors, and Alicia will continue studying for the USMLE.

"When God called me to be a missionary," Alicia said, "I had no idea where I would go or how I would serve, but I was willing to go, first through nursing. That ministry plan has adapted as the Lord has revealed His will, and I'm grateful for the journey. I have been challenged, broken, encouraged, discouraged, uplifted, and blessed, and have grown in more ways than I could have imagined. I look forward to the future as God molds me, His servant, into what I should be."

From the beginning, ministry has led Alicia down a completely unexpected path. Plans failed, others succeeded, and some were completely changed. But the Samsons are thankful that God's plans are always perfect and right on time.

Their prayer is to soon return to the Philippines.

MORAL ACTION

Baptist Missionary Association of America

Dr. John M. Adams, Director

P.O. Box 305, Mantachie, MS 38855 - 662-231-3863

On The Web at www.macbma.net/

Email - fbcdjmaj@yahoo.com

Christian Founders of America

Proverbs 1:7... "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of Knowledge; but fools despise wisdom and instruction."

The blessing of wisdom is the blessing of God. The invitation of wisdom is the invitation of God. Many believe that God invited the early American founders overwhelmingly to raise Christ as the leader of America.

That mind-set was held widely among the founders....George Washington, John Adams, Daniel Webster, Benjamin Rush, Samuel Adams and on and on.

The Bible

THE AMERICAN FRONTIER opened up between 1776 and 1850, American colonists

first expanded out as far west as Appalachia, then pushed the frontier to the Mississippi River. By 1850, American pioneers pushed the edge of settlement to Texas, the Southwest, and the Pacific Northwest, seeking cheap land and inspired by the belief that they had a "manifest destiny" to stretch across the continent....The Patriot Bible

In 1835, Alexis de Tocqueville, a French historian, traveled



Dr. Adams

America as it was coming into its own as a nation. He wrote down his observations in Democracy in America. This classic book provides unique insights into what made America such a rapid success, which clearly he believed to be Christianity and the Bible.

The voice of the Bible is "who-soever will may come"...Revelation 22:17. That Bible invitation of wisdom is open not just to a chosen few, but to all. God loved this new nation and it was settled in the love of God.

Education

In a great culmination of writings and historical opinions, American schools, colleges, and universities loved the Word of God.

Harvard University, founded in 1636 by the Puritans, adopted the "Rules and Precepts" of the university that stated: "Let every student be plainly instructed, and earnestly pressed to consider well, the main end of his life and studies is, to know God and Jesus Christ which is eter-

nal life." John 17:3..."And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."

Most of America's oldest universities were started by preachers and churches. Harvard, William and Mary, Yale, Princeton, King's College, Brown, Rutgers, and Dartmouth were founded by Christian preachers and church affiliations.

Yale College was established in 1701 with a stated goal that "every student shall consider the main end of his study to wit to know God in Jesus Christ and answerably to lead a godly, sober life." William and Mary was founded in 1693 to supply the church of Virginia "with a seminary of ministers" that the "Christian faith may be propagated." Princeton had as one of its founding statements: "Cursed is all learning that is contrary to the Cross of Christ." - Copied

Christianity

To be open and correct, all the Founding fathers of America were not Christians (true believers in Christ); they were not.

But the Christian teachings from the Bible were great influences on the culture. Christ's words had a profound effect on the homes, families, and political leaders of that day.

The Baptists sent out their "farmer-preachers." As was true of the Methodists, the Baptists developed systems that made it easy for committed lay people to enter the ministry and to be deployed quickly where the greatest opportunities were. Most of their preachers had little education and were poorly paid, but they were in touch with the pioneers' lives. With an emphasis on the need for a personal conversion and salvation from sin through faith in Jesus Christ, these ministers spread the Gospel far and wide. - Copied

This conviction that is attributed to Patrick Henry, Governor of Virginia is so needed today:

"It cannot be emphasized too clearly and too often that this nation was founded, not by religionists, but by Christians; not on religion, but on the gospel of Jesus Christ."

Why Should We Go Back to Church?

by Rick Clark, Pastor
Mt. Gilead Missionary Baptist Church
Columbia, Mississippi

There are three institutions in the world that have been instituted by God: the family, government, and the local church. All three of these institutions are under attack. The one that I would like to address is the local church. We are blessed to be living in such a great era as far as technology goes. We are also cursed to be living in such a technologically advanced society as well. We are able to access more sermons, Bible based books, and Bibles in a variety of ways and on many different devices. Yet, this is also damaging to the church. People are putting the church second and seeking Biblical nourishment elsewhere. I believe this is a grave misuse of the blessings of God and would like to encourage others to get back to supporting the local church.

1. It's the only kind of church there is.

The church is mentioned in the New Testament over 100 times. The vast majority of those times it is referring to local congregations. Paul wrote to local congregations. The letters to the seven churches were to local churches. The few other times when the church is mentioned when it's not to a local congregation is in the institutional sense of the word. In other words, no church in specific but all churches in general. So, to use the term "local church" is redundant because the church is local. In the modern age that we live in we hear a lot about church on television, online church, and

other such modern terms that are not found in scripture nor is the idea alluded to.

In this COVID-19 era, no doubt we had to make certain provisions by holding parking lot services or online services, but they were to never take the place of the church. To have a church one must have organization and structure. The church is compared to a body (Col. 1:18; 1 Cor. 12:27) so just like a body must be assembled in a certain way so must the church be assembled in a certain way. For one to declare that they will stay home and have church is foreign to scripture. You may be able to stay home and worship but to have church, you must gather with the assembly where ever that local gathering may be.

2. Jesus loves the church.

Eph. 5:25 tells us that "... Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it." As believers that have put on Christ, we are to hate the things that Jesus hates and love the things that Jesus loves. Many are quick to acknowledge and amen that sentiment when it comes to certain things. Christians hate abortion because it is the killing of an innocent baby. Christians love giving to certain charities because we are to help the less fortunate. But when it comes to loving the church,



Rick Clark

some will only pay lip service to it. They might say, "I love the church but I don't like the people in it." When one says that, they are ignorant of the fact that the people make up the church. These are people that are made in the image of God and are imperfect because of the sin that has marred that image.

I heard of one preacher telling someone, "If you find the perfect church don't join it because you'll ruin it." No body is perfect and the church isn't for perfect people. It is a place for sinners that have been saved by God's grace to come and

Just as a body needs all of its parts to function properly, so does the church.

worship and serve the Creator and Savior of the world. Jesus said people would recognize us by the way we love one another (John 13:35). How we treat people shows how we truly feel about them. If we say we love the church and yet stay away from the church, how do we really feel about the church?

3. We are commanded to attend.

We are told to not forsake the assembling of ourselves together (Heb. 10:25). That is exactly what a church is, an assembly. In this post COVID-19 era, many people are beginning to opt for "online church", or some other way to "get preached to." For many this was to be a temporary option while we navigated the waters of a pandemic that we had not experienced in our lifetime. Now that

COVID numbers are down and many have received vaccinations, many are returning to the church house and gathering with the saints for worship. But many are still using the online services and other means as an excuse to stay home.

The fact of the matter is that there is an element fellowship that is lost when one fails to attend church. We are created

continued on next page

Sofilthy's Attic

by Barbara White

Cleaning

Have you noticed the beautiful huge spider webs this season? One of those ladies built one in my car port. I live in a pine thicket and a pine needle got blown into that web. It was then that I learned that Mrs. Spider is a fastidious housekeeper. I watched as she patiently worked until she had removed that pine needle from her beautifully crafted home. It was quite interesting to watch.

A verse that came to mind that talks about cleaning house is the woman who was looking for her piece of silver. But there are many verses that tell us to cleanse our hearts and our minds because Jesus said in John 13:11 ".....therefore said he, ye are not all clean."



In His Grip by Carolyn Hagler

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



Home for Christmas

With all the smells, sights, and sounds of Christmas, I'm surrounded with memories of Christmases past when life was so simple in the country.

One of my favorite toys of childhood was a kaleidoscope; and those Christmas pictures in my mind are like that kaleidoscope, mixing and combining my bits and pieces of memories from childhood all the way to the present.

One of the fragrances of Christmas, the smell of a cedar tree, takes me right back to our country home. Daddy always got us a cedar for our Christmas tree, except when Mother wanted one of the silver tinsel trees. Remember them? One of my joys as a child and as an adult was to go with him into the woods near home to find the perfect tree.

The first year JB and I were together I insisted on a cedar, not an easy task in pine country. He spotted some on the side of the road, stopped, and cut two

skinny cedars and put them together for our tree. It was a sad-looking tree compared to my childhood memories, but it made me happy. Then we had to put a screen around it to keep Gabi 2 from attacking it.

For us children, though, Christmas came on Christmas Eve. We would load up in whatever Chevrolet Daddy was driving at the time and head toward Natchez.

The International Paper Plant had the most beautiful display of Christmas scenes and wooden characters on the horseshoe driveway around the plant. It was so magical for us children because it was truly a winter wonderland.

Mr. Lanus Hammack (Mr. Santa Claus) created the displays back in the 1950s for the annual Natchez Christmas display. Over the decades they fell into disrepair, but Burnley Cook, a local Renaissance man as Walt Grayson calls him, has brought them back to life and created some new ones. Now people can enjoy them at the Natchez Visitor Reception Center.



Carolyn Hagler

After oohing and aahing at those beautiful scenes, my family would drive home. And I never lost my excitement over discovering Santa had visited while we were gone.

Only as an adult did my sis-

a rifle when I was about ten.

Daddy was a great Santa. He loved Christmas; Mother did, too, but maybe not quite as much as Daddy. His greatest joy seemed to come from the excitement of his children and then his grand-

won was when I partnered with him.

But everyone remembers, too, visiting neighbors. Remember in past years you had the same neighbors until they died. And everyone visited all the time.

..my wonderful Christmas memories remind me, too, of Isaiah 7:14, "Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel," which means "God with us"

ters tell me that Mother or Daddy always went back into the house before the drive to Natchez. What a disappointment to hear how they did it! But I never caught on.



Bride Donn

Before he died, I learned that Daddy always bought our toys while Mother bought the practical gifts. And in those days, we got only one or two special gifts—quite different from children today. Among the gifts I remember, Daddy bought me a bride doll when I was about eight and

children over their gifts.

As our family grew with husbands joining the family and then children and then grandchildren, the many presents under the tree created a swirl of colorful paper and ribbons. Mother would always sneak a peek during the night and see what she had. She never admitted it, but we knew!

As they grew older, they loved to compare their gifts to see who got the most. And for years, Mother would try to outdo Daddy by saying in a pitiful voice, "This will be my last Christmas." Shopping for them one more time would be a thrill.

Momma's table of plenty was a part of Christmas, too; but I'm remembering her cocoa on those cold, often snow-filled days back then. And snow ice cream. Do you remember that? Even now if it snows, I call Sister No. 1 for Mother's recipe. But we never have enough snow. But I remember those days.

Everyone in the family remembers the fireworks that our Houston family usually provided. We had to wait until dark to open the presents and then we would have fireworks. It seemed that dark would never come. I've got to admit that the furry members of our family hated that time, but the humans enjoyed the sparklers, firecrackers, and skyrocket—anything available.

The most special fireworks show occurred after JB joined the family. My two nephews, Bill and Michael, were the main instigators. And I'm blaming Michael for the rocket (that he managed to land in the bed of JB's pickup) that exploded when we were about 9 miles away. Much to our surprise!

One other Christmas tradition was playing rook, an old card game from the early 1900s. Daddy never believed in gambling, but he was good enough to have been a gambler. He would take the bid many times without even looking at his cards and then would win because he could remember which cards had been played. Rook time was the only time he didn't like JB, who would change the rules (I'm pretty sure we played by McKey rules, and they didn't change). Daddy would still win. The only time I ever

Christmas was always the time to see Miss Lessie, who fed us tea cakes as children, and Mr. Percy, who took us swimming in the creek and pond.

One of the other memories of Christmas is watching movies, not the Hallmark movies but the special movies of earlier times. JB and I spent Christmas Day drinking hot mulled cider in front of a roaring fire and watching "Miracle on 34th Street." Sister No. 1 loves "White Christmas," and we watch it every year we're together. I like the old Christmas movies the best.

And I couldn't have Christmas without the music. I've been listening to the Christmas Tradition station on Enlighten since before Thanksgiving. The smooth sounds of Nat King Cole, Perry Como, and Bing Crosby remind me of how much Mother loved those crooners. I'm listening this morning to Gerald Wolfe's Gospel Christmas and singing along with "Christmas time's a'coming, and I know I'm going home."

A major part of our childhood was Daddy's storytelling about favorites such as Androcles and the lion. One special story at Christmas was about the cattle bowing down at midnight on Christmas Eve to worship Jesus. I so wanted to see that, but I never could stay awake.

And my wonderful Christmas memories remind me, too, of Isaiah 7:14, "Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel," which means "God with us" (Matthew 1:23). Although Christ has always been, we celebrate Him at Christmas as that baby born in a manger over 2,000 years ago. "The Word of the Father became Mary's little Son. And His love reached all the way to where I was" (Gloria and Bill Gaither).

Our family is missing many loved ones around the tree this year, and you may be, too. I'm reminded that the joy of Christmases past has shown me a glimpse of future Christmases when we'll truly be home. What a celebration that will be!

Merry Christmas to all who are In His Grip!

Back to Church from page 6

to be interpersonal beings that need to fellowship, not just with God, but with other believers. We need to be able to come together and bear one another's burdens as described in Gal. 6. We need the encouragement that comes from the relationships that we have with fellow members within our local church. When we skip the public gathering, we are missing out on a great blessing.

4. It is where God is glorified.

"Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." Eph. 3:21. The church is made up of people that are imperfect. We have sinned against God and are deserving of God's wrath. Yet, the members of the Lord's church are people that have realized this and have come to God in repentance through the name of Jesus Christ. We recognize just how sinful we are and yet, in God's glorious love

and kindness, He has shown us mercy and bestowed grace upon us. What a time it is to come into the church and rejoice over the fact that we are not getting what we deserve.

It's amazing to think of this when we are alone and worshiping in our quiet time, but to come together with other people that have experienced the same wonder working power of the blood of Jesus Christ makes it that much more wonderful. Not only for us but most importantly it is a sweet-smelling aroma in the nostrils of God.

As I sit here and write this, I'm reminded of how it is when one of my children runs up to me and gives me a big hug and as great as it is, that feeling is intensified when all three of my children run up at the same time and wrap their loving arms around me. I could only imagine how it is when God's children praise Him when they are in one accord in the household of God.

5. It is where we are to serve and practice our spiritual gifts.

In Romans chapter 12 and 1 Corinthians 12, we are taught about spiritual gifts. In these passages Paul discusses these gifts and gives the illustration that the church is a body and that as members of that body, we are gifted in a variety of ways to serve within that body. It is up to you to determine how God has gifted you and to use that gift in a variety of ways and places, but to not use those gifts in the church is to deprive others.

Just as a body needs all of its parts to function properly, so does the church. Just as a body needs a hand, eye, and even the pinky toe, the church needs you to serve and practice your spiritual gift. You are vital to the life of the church.

I know that as Bible believing Baptists, we want to be Biblically correct. In order to do that, we must get back to the Bible and get back to church. The church needs us and we need the church.

2021 National Senior Adult Conference Re-cap

by Nick Jacobsen
BMA Conferences Manager

In November, BMA Conferences held its annual National Senior Adult Conference at Chateau on the Lake in Branson, Missouri. It was the first venue change in over 13 years, and it did NOT disappoint.

Last year's conference was canceled out of an abundance of caution due to the Covid 19 pandemic. It was so good to gather again, see familiar faces, hug old friends, and attend a great conference. Pastor Kirk Shelton preached, Travis Sellers led worship, and Lauren Talley and Brian Free and Assurance provided two fantastic concerts. To top it off, conference goers enjoyed an evening on the Showboat, Branson Belle.

Planning for 2022 National Senior Adult Con-

ference is already underway, and Pastor Richard Smith from Farley Street Baptist Church has agreed to be conference pastor for the week. Pastor Richard is a fantastic preacher that everyone will enjoy. Travis Sellers, who did such a great job this year that he left us wanting more, has agreed to return and lead worship.

We have lowered the registration price to \$125.00 per person, another drop in price since 2018. Our goal is to continue lowering the registration price as attendance grows. Doing so will make the conference more affordable, all while providing a fantastic conference for our attendees.

Mark your calendars for November 15-17, 2022, for the National Senior Adult Conference at Chateau on the Lake. More details coming soon, so check out our website, www.bmaamerica.org/senior to stay up to date.

Silence and Solitude

by Larry Barker

Years ago I turned to my wife and asked, "What is it like being married to a guy who does not wait for God to open doors but tends to kick them in?" She replied, "I have kind of gotten used to it!" The truth hurts but everyone needs someone who loves them enough to speak it.

And so it is with many of us .

In Exodus 14 the children of Israel had left Egypt, and the Red Sea was before them as the Egyptian army closed in from behind. Scripture says they were terrified and cried out to the Lord for His help.

Have you been there before?

Can you relate to not being sure what to do or how to handle a certain situation?

Ever felt like you were in completely over your head?

As their leader, Moses tells the Israelites not to be afraid but to watch and see God's deliverance. In Exodus 14:14 he says, "The Lord will fight for you; you must be quiet." Wow! There's another challenge... remaining quiet.

Another example of a difficult-to-follow verse is Psalm 46:10: "Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth."

And another is Psalm 27:14, "Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord."

Don't be scared. Be quiet. Be still.

God's life-altering command to us in Psalm 46:10 is to be still and know that He is God. I'm not really good at being still and

would much rather be busy and active. You know you need to make things happen, and you are either a part of the problem or the solution. Yet there are several biblical examples where God speaks loudest when we are our quietest. He spoke to Elijah in a still, small voice while He was in a quiet place. It has been well said that "quiet is the think

84:10 that, "Better is one day in your courts than a thousand anywhere else." Batterson also says, "If we want to do more by doing less, we need to get into God's presence. It's our most efficient use of time by a factor of a thousand. And quiet is the key."

Elijah, Isaiah, Paul, John, and many others heard the Lord's voice because they were in His

"The devil wants you to worry about what's next so you can't enjoy what's now." The devil is a liar.

tank of the soul." It is far too easy to become human doings rather than human beings.

How good are you at listening? Stillness gives you the opportunity to slow down, be still, then hear from God in the silence. Resist the temptation to speak, listen closely without distractions, and be ready for God's direction and instruction. Silence is not the practice of waiting in a passive posture, but listening in a proactive manner. If you're ready to listen and pray a very dangerous prayer then pray as Samuel did:

"Speak (Lord), for your servant is listening." Be still and get alone with God and His Word.

In *Whisper: How To Hear the Voice of God*, Mark Batterson says, "If you want to hear the heart of God, silence is the key. If you want the Spirit of God to fill you, be still." Stillness and silence are the biggest challenges to being able to retreat with God where we can be encouraged and refreshed by Him. We all need that quiet place where we can rest in Him. For prayer to truly be communication with God requires not only talking with Him, but also listening to Him.

The psalmist reminds us in

Why Not Sunday School?

by Jordan M. Tew, Assistant to the Director

For the last several decades, churches have changed their approach to Sunday School on a nearly constant basis. Some have even concluded that Sunday School is no longer relevant or needed in today's world. In many churches, Sunday School was the first ministry cut when COVID arrived, and many of those classes remain vacant. Despite all of this, I would like to ask you to consider this question: Why not Sunday School?

If you were to sit down to come up with a plan on how to get your church family together for Bible study, prayer, and ministry, then you would likely come up with something that looks a lot like a Sunday School class. I do not believe Sunday School has become outdated or ineffective. However, I do believe that many of us have given up Sunday School and have forgotten how much potential it has for impacting our local churches.

Here are some ways to reinvigorate your Sunday School ministry:

1. Stay focused on the Bible. People who attend Sunday School classes ought to be learning the Bible and growing in their relationship with the Lord. While enjoying coffee and donuts can be a great part of Sunday School, we need to make sure our people are feeding upon God's Word.

2. Start a new class. You may start a family class where whole families can attend together. Others may split a large class into two new classes. Another idea is to put younger women with older women and younger men with older men as seen in Titus 2. Each church has different needs, so plan accordingly for your church.

3. Fellowship! Plan a breakfast fellowship for the beginning of each new Sunday School quarter. Schedule an activity for your class such as bowling, mini golf, BBQ, or simply grabbing lunch together after church. These serve as great opportunities to build relationships with others and invite lost people to church.

4. Minister together. God's people have an inherent desire to serve God and other people. The Sunday School class is a great avenue to do both! Your class may adopt a shut-in or bring food to someone who has recently had a baby. Your class may volunteer for a specific need around the church or work together to support a missionary. The possibilities are really endless.

5. Make it about more than Sunday. Be friends with your Sunday School "classmates" outside of Sunday morning. Pray for each other. Text each other. Eat a meal together. Study God's Word together. Be a part of one another's lives.

Why not Sunday School?

Stop worrying. Focus on God and enjoy every single day He has given." In Psalm 27:4 David reminds us that even when the enemy is closing in, "I have asked one thing from the Lord: it is what I desire: to dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, gazing on the beauty of the Lord."

Hear God's voice through the

challenges given to us in His written Word. Be still. Be quiet. Be alone with Him in silence. He tells us to seek Him, abide in Him, rest in Him, trust Him, talk with Him. Praying and having communion with God is a two-way street: You pray, God listens, and God speaks when you're ready, which requires stillness and silence.

January 2022 Publications Department Special Emphasis

Your Gifts and Support Are
A Blessing and Appreciated