

D Mississippi **Baptist**

JOURNAL OF THE BAPTIST MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION OF MISSISSIPPI

JANUARY 1, 2009

Vol. 63 No. 1

BMAA National Missions Effort - January & February 2009 50 Days of Prayer and Giving

Involve Yourself and Your Church

Missions should be a lifestyle for every believer. In order to accomplish this, modern believers must involve themselves personally in missions everyday. Whether that involvement includes telling your co-workers, your neighbors, or your family and friends about Jesus Christ or simply putting some change in the offering plate at church, missions begin with you. Missions must become your lifestyle.

Opportunities to go beyond your local boundaries are abundant through the BMAA Department of Missions. Through prayer, giving, or going, you can influence your own culture, as well as cultures across the globe with the life-changing message of Jesus Christ.



Nine Things To Do In 2009

by Travis Plumlee
Family Ark Ministries
Conway, Arkansas

It is a practical and helpful thing to make New Year's resolutions. We always want to try and improve ourselves. We need to periodically step back and assess how we are doing, and where we are going. The start of a new year is a good time to do this. I would encourage you however, to assess and re-evaluate your priorities and lifestyle choices every 3 months or so. That way you are always marching towards growth as a Christian. You can have 50 goals for 2009 if you are that ambitious. I have come up with nine you could do in 2009. These are things that God desires for all of us to do.

1. Appreciate others. Stop whining and saying, "but no one appreciates me". If you want encouragement and appreciation to come your way, then give it away. What you give out frequently comes back to you. However, I don't want you to do this just for your own benefit. We are to encourage one another and edify one another according to I Thessalonians 5:11. Make it a habit in '09 to say one thing every single day next year to someone whose path you cross. One day it may be a family member. The next day it may be a coworker. It may be that you spend half the year speaking something of appreciation to each member of your church. It doesn't have to be specific. You can simply say, "You know, I just wanted to tell you that I appreciate you". If they say for what, you can answer by saying, "for just being you".

2. Walk - We must take care of our temple. We must reduce stress in a healthy way. If you do intense exercise, then good for you. But all of us should get into the habit of taking a walk. If the weather outside is bad, any town nearby would have an indoor community

gym and track. A large store or mall can be walked through also. Just take care of yourself and improve your health. You are a valuable person to this world.

3. Read something out of the ordinary - I pray this is not the Bible for you. I hope you daily study the Word. Try to expand your world view by reading something you knew nothing about. Reading on a subject you aren't familiar with will stimulate your brain. The sky is the limit here. It will help improve your mind and memory. Reading has gone out of style, but we need to bring it back into our life. Remember, something you don't normally read is our goal here.

4. Volunteer - Somewhere. Anywhere. The Lord wants us to serve the less fortunate. He wants us to think of others. No matter how busy you are, if you don't volunteer for something, then you are missing a great blessing in your life. It could be one day a month. You could volunteer at a church food pantry. A community shelter. A hospital. Reading to children at school, or reading to adults in a nursing home. There are countless opportunities for you to volunteer somewhere. If you say that you are too busy even for one day a month, then you are entirely too busy and your goal should be to reorganize your priorities in 2009 and slow down.

5. Get involved in a Bible study - Most churches have them throughout the year. If yours does not, talk it up and see if you can get one started. There

are also many community study groups. Bible Study Fellowship for men or women are scattered nationwide. My friends are taking a 3,000 year old study out of the Old Testament, taught by a Jewish Rabbi here locally in Conway where I live. How awesome! Grow

choose power
over pity,
better
over bitter
and
victory
over victim

January 2009 Publications
Department
Special
Emphasis

continued on page 4

In Connection With 50 Days of Prayer and Giving

Mission Opportunities Through The Baptist Missionary Association of America

Ministry Funds

A ministry fund is an approved account for an American missionary of the BMAA of America, above salary and benefits, to be used for field ministries. These ministry funds are intended to cover the cost of on-going ministries such as evangelism, church planting, literature needs, schools for missionaries, schools for children, medical ministries, Bible and tract ministries, etc.

Since ministry funds are to be raised through designated offerings, they provide a perfect opportunity for individuals to get personally involved in the ministry of a particular missionary.

Visionaries

This is one of the oldest personal involvement programs. It had its beginning in 1982. Since that date the Department of Missions has not denied a loan request from a missionary (home or abroad) due to a lack of funds.

All funds received from Visionaries go into the Revolving Loan Funds of the BMA of America.

Loans are given to mission congregations each year to help with the purchase of property and the construction of worship places. These loans are interest free for five years.

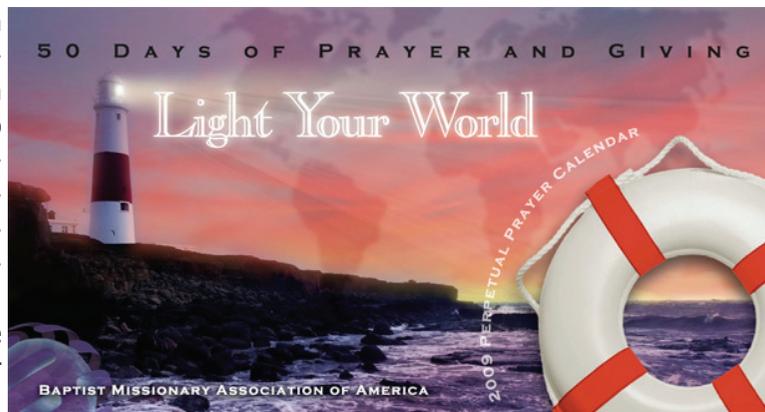
Visionaries are requested to give \$25.00 once each year. The call for funds goes out to each Visionary on May 1st. Of course, a member may give at any time.

Cheerful Givers

This program began in 1993 and provides a faithful inner circle of supporters who are willing to help when mission funds are low. Some of the most faithful BMAA mission supporters are a part of this group of contributors.

Cheerful Givers are those who agree to give \$10.00 or more whenever called upon to help in the support of missions.

Members of the Cheerful Giv-



people who have the financial means to help pay the travel expenses of a participant who would not otherwise be able to go. They may contribute the funds for another to "go in my place".

There are

ers will never be called upon to give more than three times in any calendar year.

Go in My Place

Baptist Medical Missions International is a support program of the International Missions division of the Department of Missions of the BMA of America. BMMI has a program called Go in My Place (GIMP).

This program is designed for

nurses and evangelistic personnel who are eager to serve but are without the necessary personal resources to do so. If you cannot go, perhaps you are able to be a GIMP contributor and send someone in your place.

Relief Fund

The BMA of America maintains a Relief Fund to address needs that might arise around the world. When the hurricane-induced floods

hit Central America in 1999, the BMA Department of Missions sent nine 40-foot ocean-going containers filled with relief items. Each year, relief items are rushed somewhere around the world to a place in need of help.

Any person wishing to make a contribution to this fund may do so at any time. The donor determines the size of the contribution.

A call for new 'statesmen' to lead America

OneNewsNow - A pro-family activist says it's time for voters across the country to examine more diligently those individuals who seek public office in this country.

Political scandals have racked America in 2008. Illinois Governor Rod Blagojevich faces possible impeachment for allegedly attempting to sell Barack Obama's former Senate seat the highest bidder. Congressman William Jefferson of New Orleans was defeated for reelection in November. The FBI discovered \$90,000 of alleged bribery money in his freezer in 2005.

Then a report emerged about former Ohio Attorney General Marc Dann, who is accused of misusing campaign funds to make lavish payments to friends and family as well as indulging himself.

David Miller, vice president for public policy at Cincinnati-based Citizens for Community Values, says the United States really needs statesmen. "There is a selfish pursuit that goes on," he notes. "It's a sad day that we have a very difficult time finding statesmen -- those that hold office who care about the greater good, about a strong community, and a country that's not susceptible to the kind of downfall we're seeing right now."

Grassroots citizens need to make a difference, according to Miller. "Somebody from the citizenship who wants to run for office, and I think we need more people out there in the grassroots to think about and pray about opportunities that God would give them to make a difference where they live in this country," he contends.

Fraternity stands on 'Christian values' at secular college

OneNewsNow - An Alabama fraternity is offering its members something different than typical frat life.

Lambda Sigma Phi is a Christian fraternity, founded at the University of Alabama in 2000. OneNewsNow had the opportunity to talk with fraternity president Daniel Weaver. He says some of the fraternities did not have very good reputations, so there was a desire among the guys to start something different.

"So we started it here at the university, and we wanted to build around a fraternity that had Christian values and recruit guys who were really on fire for the Lord and wanted to minister and be an example for the campus," he explains.

Weaver says Lambda Sigma Phi holds weekly Bible studies, and all of their members are active church members. He adds that there is mixed reaction to their presence on campus and that they had a bit of a bumpy road when several members wanted to take the fraternity in a different direction.

"The main reason was because they wanted to be able to drink alcohol. We are, of course, a dry fraternity, and they wanted to be able to drink alcohol and do all that other stuff and be a fraternity of good guys," he notes. "About 12-to-14 of us stood up against that and said, 'No, we want to remain a Christian fraternity and be what we were founded upon being.'"

The split, according to Weaver, was a tough decision, but he adds that the Lord has blessed the fraternity since then. He says membership has grown and they have filled up their house and are now able to be on campus debt-free. Lambda Sigma Phi is just one of many Christian fraternities on secular campuses across the U.S.

Check Out the DiscipleGuide Web site!

At DiscipleGuide.org you'll find a wealth of useful resources and information. Popular pages are Teacher Tools, Pastor & Leader Downloads, Conferences, Quick Order Form, and Coloring Sheets. Others include...

- Information on the BMAA
- Recommended resources
- Conference registration
- Associational calendar
- Web links of interest
- Blogs and forums
- Online donations
- Church supplies
- Online sermons
- Latest news
- Downloads
- Literature



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John Adams

Abortion-The Devaluing of Life

David, the shepherd King, declared in Psalms 139... "thou hast covered me in my mother's womb... thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect." We agree with King David that life begins at the time of conception, and that God is watchful even over the embryo in the womb.

One of the most joyful anticipations is hidden in the womb of the mother. Since the invention of sonograms, it is possible to see and marvel at the human embryo. Abortion, therefore, is one of the most traumatic experiences that a person could encounter.

According to the Scripture text, Psalms 139, God designed man, and the complications are beyond us; we can only wonder and adore. Every embryo is a bundle of possibilities. God alone can know the small child in the mother's womb. He knows the

child from the beginning. For this reason we in our Judeo-Christian heritage are firmly convinced that life begins at the time of conception in the motherly womb.

When is human life expendable? And the answer to the question is: NEVER. Yet on January 22, 1973, the United States Supreme Court ruled in the landmark, Roe versus Wade, decision that unborn human beings are not legal persons according to the U.S. Constitution. An unborn baby is the property of the owner, and she can have the child killed at her request. Ours is a peculiar society. We have laws protecting wild-life and dogs, but not defenseless human embryos. The real question today is not when human life begins but what is the value of human life?

I. Abortion is Evil

Time Magazine states, "even in the earliest stages of pregnancy, the

embryo is amazingly babylike. By the ninth week the fetus is kicking and moving, and even today its sex can be recognized at nine weeks." Dr. Everett Koop, author of the book, "The Right to Live, The Right to Die" states "once there is the union of the sperm and egg, and the 23 chromosomes of each are brought together, that one cell with its 46 chromosomes has all the DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid), the whole genetic code that will, if not interrupted, make a human being just like you with the potential for God-consciousness." He asks a crucial question, "At what point can one consider this life to be worthless and the next minute consider the same life to be precious?" Ecclesiastes 11:5 states, "As thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child: even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all."

Since 1973, more than 54,000,000 unborn children have been aborted. Every day an average of 4,257 babies are aborted in the U.S. or 1 every 10 seconds. It is a horrible, painful death considering that the babies heart is beating at three weeks and the embryos nervous system is sensitive to pain.

II. Abortion Is An Error

First, there is a wrong attitude toward human life. Every human being reflects to some degree the likeness of Almighty God. When man dares to take another human life, he lifts his hand in rebellion against the image of Almighty God. - Genesis 4:10. Abortion on demand laws give one person (the mother) the legal right to kill another (the baby) in order to solve the first person's social problem. It's hard to believe that this is happening in our civilized society. A second wrong value is the emphasis on self. That is, that the mother has the right to decide what happens to her own body. The question is raised, is not the rights of the unborn child to be recognized? President Ronald Reagan quoted by the L.A. Times stated, "When they put it simply and say I believe in the right of someone to have a free choice. What I came back with was, that's what a murderer is insisting on, that he's got free choice to decide that he thinks somebody else should be dead." Scriptures to ponder are Job 31:14-15 and Isaiah 49:1.

The main question R.J. Gardner asks is, "what will we do with a human life that has been given to our keeping?" ... Medical Society Jour-

nal

III. Abortion and It's Effect

The effects of willful death is far greater than we can comprehend. Proverbs 24:11-12 instructs us: "If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain; If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? And he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it? And shall not he render to every man according to his works?"

Moody Monthly Magazine asked - "have we been sitting Lot-like, quiet at home, unruffled, even critical of those who are easily alarmed about babies? If the blood of Abel, one innocent adult, cried out to God from the ground, how much more 54,000,000 babies blood since 1973?"

The problem of "throw-away" life will not lessen. It should press upon the conscience of Americans and Christians with agony and sorrow.

Highlighted Churches that support the MAC

Bethel, Fulton, MS
 Calvary, Fayetteville, AR
 Hattiesville, Morrilton, AR
 Franklin Street, Farmerville, LA
 Landmark, England, AR

ACLU 'emboldened' in prayer lawsuits

OneNewsNow - Forsyth County, North Carolina, is defending specifically Christian prayer at its board meetings.

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) filed suit against the county because some of the prayers end with references to Jesus. Mike Johnson of the Alliance Defense Fund tells OneNewsNow the ACLU recently offered to settle the lawsuit, but county officials declined.

"[The ACLU] said that if the commission will give in, that they will give up the opportunity for allowing prayer -- sectarian fashion -- or, let's be honest and frank about it, prayer in Jesus' name... if they'll give in on that and they'll give the ACLU, get this, \$60,000 in attorneys fees, then they'll make their whole lawsuit go away," he explains.

Johnson is confident prayer will prevail because the Supreme Court ruled in favor of Nebraska's legislature in an ACLU challenge to similar prayer. "I think they're emboldened by the latest election results on a national scale, and I think we're going to see more and more of these lawsuits. And it is quite sad," he contends. "But we've got to defend the truth. We've got to defend our tradition, and thankfully the truth is still on our side."

Pharmacists sue Illinois governor over right of conscience

OneNewsNow - Illinois pharmacists have been granted legal permission to challenge Governor Rod Blagojevich's executive order that forces them to dispense "emergency contraception" against their wills.

The pharmacists sued because the order violated their religious beliefs against selling certain abortifacients like the "morning-after pill." Brian Rooney of the Thomas More Law Center explains why the pharmacists filed suit.

"There is a law in Illinois that allows pharmacists and pharmacies to allow their rights to conscience to take precedence over these kinds of things," he notes.

Rooney believes the governor's executive order requiring them to dispense and sell the drugs was illegal. "When you have a duly enacted statute of law by the legislature, it always takes precedence over an executive order," he points out.

Blagojevich's executive order, according to Rooney, has already hurt the pharmacy industry in Illinois. "There were businesses going out of business," he adds. "There were pharmacists that were being let go -- all because they had deeply held religious beliefs and deeply

held moral beliefs."

The state Supreme Court has ruled that pharmacists should be heard, so a trial will soon be held in a lower court.

Texans boot Planned Parenthood

OneNewsNow - Planned Parenthood has been shut down in the Texas panhandle.

American Life League's (ALL) Stop Planned Parenthood, or Stopp International, says it took a long time, but their campaign against Planned Parenthood finally got some results. "For 12 years in the Texas panhandle, there has been a fight against Planned Parenthood," he notes. "Planned Parenthood, in 1997, operated 19 clinics in the Texas panhandle."

Then the state reduced funding for the organization, and pro-life workers also continued in their efforts to shut Planned Parenthood's doors. "And as of December 31, there will no longer be any Planned Parenthood offices in the Texas panhandle," Sedlak explains. "They will all be gone."

The two remaining clinics in Amarillo have disaffiliated with the national organization. Sedlak says other cities can accomplish the same goal if they are determined, and information on that is available on the Stopp website.

Christian ministry suffers web attack

OneNewsNow - The chairman of the Christian Film & Television Commission says homosexual activists have launched a criminal attack on his ministry.

Recently, Dr. Ted Baehr says he learned about the distribution of a number of emails and blog posts that were supposedly from him or his organization. However, the emails were links to pornography, including homosexual content.

Baehr says he heard of the email attack against the CFTC and MovieGuide through a longtime supporter.

"I went to the link; it was not our site on YouTube. We do have a MovieGuide site on YouTube, and we have MovieGuide.org," he explains. "It was a phony site, but it had my picture that somebody had taken and had... very salacious material, occult material, scientology, a lot of hardcore S&M-type stuff."

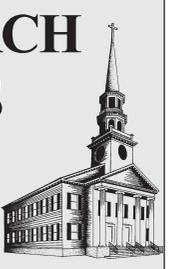
Baehr said authorities have been contacted and the computer address of the source has been found.

He believes the web campaign is in response to his public statements favoring California's Proposition 8. Baehr says the attacks demonstrate that for homosexual activists, tolerance is a one-way street. "In the last

couple of days, the L.A. Times has published some... editorials saying the 'religious right' is the worst thing that has ever happened to this country... [and] another one saying Christians are dumb," he relates.

Criminal charges are being considered, adds Baehr.

CHURCH NEWS



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

Big Creek Association meetings changed

The Big Creek District Brotherhood and WMA will meet with Hopewell Baptist Church on Monday night, January 12, 2009. The date was changed from January 5 because of the BMAA Missions Symposium.

Please make plans to attend this meeting.

Mississippi Baptist Opinion Page

Journal of the Baptist Missionary Association of Mississippi

Church of the Covered Dish BY THOMAS TAPP

A Personal Note

All too often we do not communicate on a personal level. I want to take this opportunity to speak as personally as one can in a newspaper column.

January has been set aside as the Special Emphasis time for your Publications Department. This is a time when we ask our supporters to rally to the financial needs of this ministry. I have been your editor for over 30 years and for each of those years you have rallied to our need and provided those extra funds that have been necessary to maintain a fiscally responsible operation.

We each have important financial responsibilities. Our families, our local church, all of the other ministries of our Association, and other obligations. Our National Missions Department begins its "50 Days of Prayer & Giving" in January with their special offering set for the last Sunday of February.

Considering the recent economic downturn in our nation and the great possibility that many of our members and churches will be impacted, we must not lose focus of our goal of reaching the world for Christ. We were not told to go when times were good, when we felt like it or when we thought we could afford it, but simply to GO and TELL.

I simply ask that during January you take time to pray for this work and to give to this effort. May God bless us as we labor for Him.



Don Brown
Editor

Letters From Our Readers

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

Notice concerning constitutional and doctrinal statement changes

Dear Readers,

I have received a request from BMAA President Philip Attebery to print the following reminder concerning proposed changes that may be presented at our annual meeting. Please read the following note and make plans to comply with these requirements if you plan to bring any such proposals.

Re: Article XXI of the Statement of Principles of Cooperation. Basically, it is that proposed amendments to the Statement of Principles of Cooperation and/or Doctrinal Statement must be submitted in writing to the clerks of the association no later than February 1, 2009.

Thanks for your help!
Philip Attebery, Dean
Baptist Missionary Association
Theological Seminary
1530 East Pine St.
Jacksonville, Texas 75766
903-586-2501
www.bmats.edu

Any such changes must follow the procedures set up by our Association.

Don Brown, editor

AVAILABLE FOR SERVICE

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

Larry Pierce

Bro. Larry M. Pierce is available for pulpit supply and pastoral service wherever the Lord leads. He lived in Lucedale and may be reached at 601-766-9709 or 601-508-6304.



"This concludes this morning's sermon. for opposing views visit www.heresy.com"

Nine Things To Do In 2009

from page 1

in the word because that is how we grow as Christians. A Bible study forces you to stay on your toes and into the Word. I Peter 2:2 tells you how to grow as a Christian in 2009.

6. Visit the sick - This is a command in Matthew and other places. Once a month visit a sick shut-in from your church or just go to a hospital or nursing home. This is not your pastor's job. It is yours. What a glorious opportunity to minister. There are a lot of sick people out there, and there are lots of ways to minister to them.

7. Visit the lonely - Take 15 minutes each month and stop by someone's apartment, home or trailer who lives alone. Loneliness is a great problem in this disconnected society we live in. Just a short visit will do wonders for these people. Just listen. You don't have to take a gift or food unless you want to. Just smile and nod. What a blessing you will be.

8. Find a prayer partner - The best thing to help your grow spiritually would be to get into a mentoring group. There are many books on how to do this available on line at www.travisplumlee.com. If you don't want to get that intense, then at the very least get you a prayer partner. Covenant together and do James

5:16. We all need someone else to pray with and pray for. It will increase your prayer life and bless you as you find someone who you can grow close with in prayer.

9. Work on your attitude - Everyone can improve in this area. We can take control over our thinking. With God's help we can conquer our negative attitude. II Corinthians 10:4,5. Attitude is a choice. Remember what I always say. Misery is a choice. Piti-ful is pathetic. In '09 choose power over pity, better over bitter and victory over victim. Have a great 2009 for the glory of the Lord.

Mrs. J.B. Whitten, Pastor's Widow, Dies

Joyce Marie Evelyn Whitten, 76 of Humble, Texas, died December 23. She was the widow of BMA Minister James B. "J.B." Whitten. Survivors include two sons, James A. Whitten of Mineola, Texas and Don R. Whitten of Humble, Texas; four daughters, Carolyn Barnes of Lubbock, Texas, Paula Parkey of Odessa, Texas, Patsy Pridgin of Broken Arrow, Oklahoma and Rhonda Murray of Midland, Texas; three brothers, John Sons of Mission Viejo, California, Haskell Junior "J.R." Sons of Tucumcari, New Mexico and Roy Allen "Sonny" Sons of Lubbock, Texas; a sister, Jo Ann Whitten of Mesquite, Texas; 17 grandchildren and 19 great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were held December 27 at Pilgrim Rest #2 Baptist Church with Don Whitten officiating.

2009 Pastor's Retreat Pastors to meet at Skyway Hills

The 2009 BMA of Mississippi Pastor's Retreat will be held on January 26-27, 2009, at Skyway Hills Baptist Church in Pearl. Bro. Kenneth Bobo will be the featured speaker. He will be conducting four sessions; Monday afternoon and night and Tuesday morning. All ministers are encouraged to attend. A complete program will be published in our January 15 issue.

Leon Carmical, Chairman
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PRICE
\$20.00 Per Year by Mail
\$10.00 Per Year by Email
CHURCHPLAN
\$ 1.30 Per Month

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

Postmaster: Send address changes to the *Mississippi Baptist Paper*, P.O. Box 8181, Laurel, MS 39441-8000.



Seeing God In The Sanctuary

(Psa. 63:2)

David saw God in the sanctuary: in the place of worship; in the sanctuary of praise. How long — if at all — has it been since we saw God in the sanctuary place of worship and praise? In the Scriptures, Jesus was seen many times in the sanctuary or the Temple of His day. We may come to these kinds of places to see Jesus.

- He was adored by Simeon and Anna (Luke 2) as a child. "This is the Messiah!" We need to see Jesus as



Leave It To Cleaver

Tony Cleaver

the fulfillment of God's promise to humankind. This is the anointed one of God!

- He was a teacher to the religious. (Luke 2) We see Jesus in the sanctuary as a child confounding those who were the experts of religiosity. He cut through to the heart of the matter about His Father's house. How long since we have listened and obeyed these kinds of words in the sanctuary of worship?

- He was feared by those who despised the house of God. (John 2) He made a whip of cords to drive away those who desecrated the place of prayer. How often something other than prayer passes our lips when we go to the house of God. We must see Jesus in the sanctuary of worship as welcoming those who have come to pray.

- He was the sacrificial Lamb of God in the sanctuary. (Matt. 27:51) At the very moment of His death on the cross the veil of the Temple (the very thick veil that enclosed the Holy of Holies) was torn from top to bottom. At the very moment His flesh was torn, this curtain was torn to signify the way to God is open. Let us go to the sanctuary to see that the way to God is open in Christ.

- He will be the sanctuary itself. (Rev. 21:22) John saw no Temple in the New Jerusalem. The Lamb himself was the Temple. Those who are His look to this day when we will be forever in the sanctuary of God. We shall be in His presence completely. David saw the Lord in the sanctuary when he worshiped. Jesus has been in the sanctuary in the Scriptures. Jesus was in the Temple during His ministry as shall be that Temple one day. In our worship, let us go to Jesus — the sanctuary of God. Let us worship God!

Mississippi Baptist

JOURNAL OF THE BAPTIST MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION OF MISSISSIPPI

On The Web at www.msbbaptist.org

Extra, Extra *READ ALL ABOUT IT*

Your Support Appreciated!



Don Brown
Editor

LAUREL, MS - Editor Don Brown urges all of the supporting churches of the Baptist Missionary Association of Mississippi to make a special effort to help raise additional operating funds for the Publication's Department *Special Emphasis Drive* during **January 2009**.

Brown stated that the January Emphasis offering each year needs to raise about 10% of the department's annual operating income. "*Our goal for this year is to raise at least \$10,000,*" Brown said. He continued, "*We are asking each church to give a generous offering to help us maintain a good fiscal operation.*"

January 2009 - Special Emphasis Our Need - \$10,000

That I may publish ... and tell of all thy wondrous works.

Pslam 26:7

A generation immersed in media

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--A new report indicates that the average child in America now spends 45 hours a week immersed in the media -- a multiple of the hours spent with parents or in the classroom.

Commonsense Media, a group that advocates for better programming in the media, commissioned and released the report. Researchers looked at 173 studies done on media and its effects on children and adolescents. The results are sobering. Taken together, these reports strongly suggest that significant exposure to the media is related, among other concerns, to behaviors such as smoking and early sexual activity, as well as low academic achievement and obesity.

As USA Today reports:

"Parents and policymakers need to take action to protect children from being harmed by TV, the Internet and other types of media, a report says.

"Researchers have done individual studies for years to learn how media affect children. A review released today, which analyzed 173 of the strongest papers over 28 years, finds that 80% agree that heavy media exposure increases the risk of harm, including obesity, smoking, sex, drug and alcohol use, attention problems and poor grades."

In one sense, this report should not shock any informed parent or observer. The report does offer something new, however, in its analysis of so many published scientific reports and studies. The sheer quantity of the data is impressive. One obvious point comes to the fore -- there has already been



sufficient concern to prompt the development of the 173 separate studies considered in this report.

Dr. Ezekiel Emanuel of the National Institutes of Health commented, "The idea that this is having a really measurable adverse impact on health makes it important to take this seriously." What isn't measured in these studies, of course, is the adverse spiritual effects of so much media exposure.

Beyond the question of quantity -- 45 hours of media immersion on average -- there is the question of media content. Anyone with the slightest awareness of media content knows the problems. Media of all forms and formats are saturated with violence, sexuality, morally troubling themes, alcohol and tobacco use, and the use of drugs.

Furthermore, the boundaries of acceptable content are being pressed back season after season.

What was once limited to adult theaters soon makes

its appearance in the mainstream media. Themes once off-limits to media in any form are now common on mainstream television. The emergence of the Internet, modern video games, MP3 players and sophisticated cell phones offers yet more opportunities for increased media immersion and exposure to troubling programming and content.

Another relatively new phenomenon is the digital revolution and the transformation of media consumption from a largely communal activity to one that is more and more solitary. The television set used to be located in a family gathering place and families watched television together. No longer. Now, televisions are distributed throughout various rooms in most houses, and viewing is increasingly solitary. Millions of American children and adolescents have televisions in their bedrooms -- many combined with digital recorders, video games and other components.

Add to this picture a virtual explosion in the number of children and teenagers with computers and Internet access in bedrooms. Today's children, equipped with iPods, cell phones, laptops and portable video players, are seldom more than a few feet (if not inches) separated from media technologies.

Parents should look to this new report with interest and concern. The adverse effects of immersion in the media are now beyond refutation. Does anyone really believe that all this media exposure has no ill effects on children and adolescents?

Christian parents come to this issue with deeper concerns. Like other parents, we are rightly concerned about the dangers of obesity and other effects related to physical health and well-being. Beyond this, however, we must be concerned with the effects of media exposure on the soul. Though perhaps impossible to measure by scientific study, we have good reason to be concerned that media immersion of this sort leads to a deadening of the soul and hinders the development of spiritual health and maturity.

Here are some suggestions parents might want to consider. 1. Limit the total media exposure experienced by your children. The statistic that the average child and adolescent is im-

mersed in the media for 45 hours a week should be sufficient motivation for parents to hit the brakes and gain control of media exposure. Access to entertainment media should be a privilege earned, not a right assumed by the child.

2. Do not allow children and teenagers to have televisions and Internet-connected computers in the bedroom. There is simply too much danger in unsupervised media exposure, and too much temptation in terms of both quantity and content. No child needs a television in the bedroom, and a computer connected to the Internet is an invitation to disaster.

3. Make entertainment media a family experience. There is a massive difference in the experience of a child watching programming alone and that same child watching with a parent. Parents should be in unquestioned control of media decisions. Parents should also be eager to discuss what is seen with teenagers and children, helping them to grow in discernment and judgment.

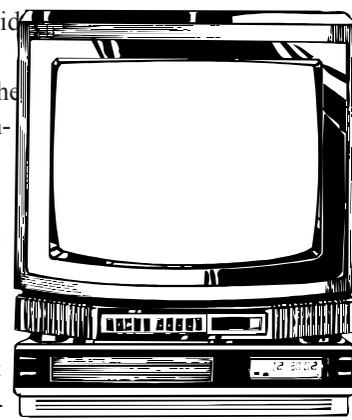
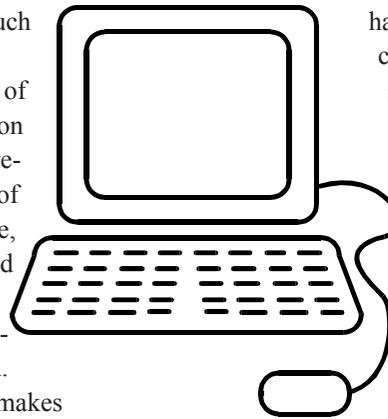
4. Parents have to do the hard work of actually knowing what their children and teenagers are watching, playing, hearing and experiencing through media exposure. No one said parenting was supposed to be easy.

5. Realize that a revolution has taken place in the lives of children and adolescents. The emergence of social media technologies means that children (and adolescents especially) now expect to be in constant communication with their peers. This is not healthy, sane or helpful. All of us -- children and teenagers included -- need a break from this immersion. Put a charging dock in the kitchen and confiscate cell phones as the kids come in the door. That will send a message the old fashioned way -- in person.

6. Take a regular look at what your child is posting and what others are posting on his or her social media sites. Look at the instant messaging exchanges and e-mails. You are the parent, after all, and your child's access to these technologies should come with the open and non-negotiable requirement that parents see it all.

7. Remember that saying "no" is a legitimate option. I do not believe that saying "no" is always the right response. The media bring opportunities for good as well as for evil. Children and teenagers who are never allowed access to media technologies and entertainment will emerge into adulthood with no powers of discernment. But "no" is sometimes the best and only appropriate answer, and parents should always be ready to use it when needed.

Today's generation of children and adolescents is, by all accounts, a generation immersed in media. This new report reminds us that this exposure cannot come without real costs. Let's hope America's parents are paying attention.



Mississippi W.M.A.

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Northeast District WMA Report

On November 11, 2008, 43 WMA members and 2 visitors met at First Baptist Church, Mantachie and enjoyed a bountiful meal of soups, sandwiches, and desserts before the quarterly meeting was opened with a song.

Supporting the Moral-Action Commission was chosen as a project until August, 2009. We were reminded of the national project, Missions Literature Ministry, and encouraged to give liberally to it.

Sarah Tollison presented special music before and after the devotional by Nick Lentz. Bro. Lentz renewed in our minds the struggle the Pilgrims had to come to America, survive the journey across the Atlantic, and struggle through that first severe winter. Then, they chose to thank God for their blessings by enjoying a feast with the American Indians. He reminded us that we can thank these Pilgrims for many of the blessings we now enjoy.

Our next meeting "is our annual missions 'banquet on February 10, 2009. Please make a commitment to be a part of this fellowship which will be hosted by Greenwood Baptist Church, Fulton, with a meal being served at 6:00 P.M. We will look for you there.

Patti Harlowe, president
Beth Haden, reporter/historian



ABS * Camp Ministry



LATRELLE WINDHAM
DIRECTOR

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Special Needs: Children, Youth and Young People

Your State Youth Department's ministries to these three age groups through the years have been successful.

With the first age group the parental obligations toward them are very important. Parents are to give nourishment to their children when they are this age. Hannah gave her first born to God. A Mother's prayers and a Father's encouragement changed the destination of an entire nation. Never underestimate the power of prayer or the value of one godly home. Most people would sing if they could keep their son, but Hannah sang because she could give her son to the service of the Lord.

Children need training. We need good parents to teach their kids when they are small to manifest Christlikeness in the home. If they do not learn this at home, most likely

they will not be obedient as they continue to grow. They need to learn to take orders at home. A loving home environment contributes greatly to our children's growing up.

Our parents should give instructions to their children. Instructions are teachings or exhortation on aspects of the Christian life and thought.

Some special needs of those who are considered youth and young people, and the early age of life include God's Word being taught. Knowledge of God is the greatest knowledge, and is the chief duty of mankind.

Giving encouragement to young people is a special need. Encouragement is inspiration to hope and service.

A very important need of young people is soberness. It is characterized by self-control, seriousness, and sound moral judgement. Sober

means in one's right mind.

Counsel is an important need in the life of young people. Because of Jesus Christ, you have a family. The members are at different stages of spiritual development, but all can receive the word of the Lord and grow. How wonderful it is when the "little children" become young men and the fathers!

The good of our kids are seen in these things; enthusiasm, Godly fear, marriage, children, hardships and Godly example.

Saying 'I'm Sorry'

A pastor's son and his mom had been shopping and the boy had not behaved himself. As they were driving home, he could sense her displeasure and said, "When we ask God to forgive us when we are bad, He does, doesn't He?" His mother replied, "Definitely, yes." The boy continued cautiously, "And when He forgives us. He buries our sins in the deepest sea, doesn't He?" The mom replied, "Definitely, yes."

The boy was silent for a while and then said, "I've asked God to forgive me, but I bet when we get home, you're going fishing for those sins aren't you?" The mother replied, "Definitely, yes!"

Too often, we "go fishing" for other's faults against us, but we're unwilling to look in the pond in our backyard and take care of what we find there.

The words "I'm sorry" are some of the most powerful words in our vocabulary. With their utterance, relationships can be healed, grief can be improved and the scars of past wounds can be remedied. It begins with taking an honest look at the baggage we may be carrying.

I realize I'm not perfect and that I am the world's biggest aggregator. I sometimes forget that I may hurt someone's feelings. In saying that, if I have offended you please let me know so I can say "I'm sorry." And if someone has offended you, go to them, in love, and explain that they have hurt you. Most of the time a person does not realize they have offended you. So how can someone apologize to you if they don't know they have offended you? Love, and God, can heal a broken fellowship. — Shelby Race, minister of music, Calvary, Fairfield, Texas from *Baptist Trumpet*

CHILDREN'S HOME

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

A New Year Before Us

Everyone wants to be a success. No one wants to be a loser. I'm sure you've seen big strong football players sitting on the bench weeping because their team lost a football game. The world remembers a winner and forgets a loser. Some of us have won victories in the past year. Let us thank God for them and give Him better service in the coming year. Some of us have lost battles in the past year. Let us thank God for another chance.

We are now looking out upon a New Year. We are taking a journey into the unknown. With Joshua we can say, that "we have not passed this way heretofore." Joshua 3:4. God wants His people to be joyous in heart. The whole secret lies in putting God first in the New Year. In the sixth chapter of Matthew we hear Jesus talking about material things—about food and raiment and the needed things of life. Then He says, "Seek you first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you." I believe that the Lord will give you everything you need in the New Year and cause your heart to sing with joy if you give Him first place.

Recent Church Visit

On Sunday, December 14, we were with the Lee's Chapel #1 Baptist Church near Carriere and Pastor Donnie Boutwell. The children at the Home rendered special music and I shared a message from God's Word. The Home was presented a special offering received by the church. Afterwards we enjoyed a meal together and a time of fellowship.



SIDNEY DAVIS
DIRECTOR

Food and Miscellaneous Rally

It was good to be with the Washington Baptist Association which met with the Harmony Baptist Church in Hurley and Pastor Milford Magers on December 19 for their annual rally for the Home. I had the opportunity to give a report on the ministry of the Home and deliver a message from God's Word. We want to say thank you to each church and individual who helped make this rally a good success.

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ABS ASSOCIATION OF BAPTIST STUDENTS

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ABS

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

TUESDAYS 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM
COCHRAN CENTER ROOM 229
1ST MEETING JANUARY 20, 2009

JONES COUNTY JUNIOR COLLEGE

WEDNESDAYS 7:50AM - 8:20 AM
CHAPEL IN FRONT OF STUDENT CENTER
1ST MEETING WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 21, 2009

SOUTHEASTERN BAPTIST COLLEGE

MONDAYS 12:00 - 12:45
CAFETERIA ROOM
1ST MEETING JANUARY 19, 2009

NAME _____

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BMAA Equipping Center Locations and Schedules

Bethel Baptist Church, Fulton, Mississippi	
January 24, 2009	Mission Possible: Winning Your Community For Christ
March 7, 2009	Sunday School Materials That Work!
June 20-21, 2009	It All Rises and Falls on Leadership
Magnolia Baptist, Hattiesburg, Mississippi	
January 24, 2009	Building A Small Group Ministry/ Becoming An Effective Teacher
March 7, 2009	Mission Possible: Winning Your Community For Christ
June 21, 2009	Sunday School Materials That Work!

JANUARY 2009 SPECIAL EMPHASIS
MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST

BMA OF MISSISSIPPI MISSIONS DEPARTMENT

4226 HIGHWAY 15 NORTH, LAUREL, MISSISSIPPI 39440 - (601) 428-8616
Rayburn Freeman, Director



Greetings in the new year of 2009. The Missions Office staff and I trust that you, your family, and Church enjoyed quality time together during the Christmas and New Year season. We are looking forward with enthusiasm to a year of Growth in Missions and the Revolving Loan Fund.

It is my desire to personally thank you and your church for interest shown in the Debt Reduction Emphasis for our mission projects. The D.R.E has enabled Missionary Wallace Williams and Divine Grace of Long Beach and Missionary Kevin Marr and LifePointe of Hernando to go off mission support December 31, 2008. Missionary Marr and LifePointe are planning to organize LifePointe Mission into a New Testament Church. The service will begin at Noon on January 24, 2009. Information from Missionary Williams concerning an organizational date for Divine Grace is forthcoming.

In the new year we are trusting the Lord to give us another missionary to possibly work

in the Tupelo area, however other fields are also waiting. Two Caucasian men, one of whom I will be talking with at some date in January have expressed some interest in Mississippi missions. Additional plans concerning the Hispanic and African American work are also being discussed. Monday, December 15, 2008 a sub-committee of the Oak Grove Missionary Committee and I met to discuss the possibility of a Hispanic work in the Hattiesburg-Petal area.

The present economic situation has delivered some woes. We may be down a bit, but we are not out. In a previous report it was mentioned that BMA general missions giving for the year of 2007-08 was cut by about 50% of our churches, that's the down side. However, at the same time the increase of the remaining 50% almost offset the reductions, that's only a part of the up side. Another is to just think of what we can do under the Master's leadership. To enable our mission program to move ahead I am asking the

personal, prayerful, financial help of each Church, Pastor, Missionary Committee, and Missions Coordinator. In a continuing and constructive effort of building our mission outreach it is imperative that we not forget an important part, the foundation structure, that is local and state missions. The excitement and beauty of the structure's overall visibility is always relished with enthusiasm, but without having shown concern in the foundation its beauty will soon fade. Jesus does say the uttermost, but its Jerusalem upon which the uttermost rest. Can we do it, will we do it? I believe so!

In Christ,
Bro. Ray

Revolving Loan Fund Report

We want to wish everyone a happy and prosperous New Year. We look forward to what God will accomplish through all our lives in the year 2009.

We have realized good progress on our Debt Retirement Program. As of December 29, 2008, the following are current loan balances on our emphasis areas: New Beginnings \$283,982; Grace, Guntown \$327,715; Divine Grace, Long Beach \$185,086; Maple Street \$140,725; Homestretch \$13,507; and LifePointe \$79,089. We are thankful for all the combined help on these projects. This DER will continue through March 2009.

The Stock market has been holding steady for the past several weeks. We are hopeful that is a sign that the economy is beginning to level out. We are looking to God to help us and guide us in the New Year.

Dosson L Lee,
Manager of RLF



Sofilthy's Attic

by Barbara White

Red Stew

I was reading lately about the great swindle that is recorded in Genesis 25. Jacob had cooked a pot of red stew. Could that have been chili? You know chili is a big thing now. They have "chili cook-offs" frequently. Do you suppose Jacob won a chili cook-off? Anyway, it must have smelled powerful good as Esau came in from the field and when he smelled it he lost all of his common gumption.

Have you ever lost your common gumption when you smelled something good to eat? Or saw something so pretty, you just had to add it to your credit card? Or wanted a house so badly you signed a mortgage that you knew good and well you couldn't afford?

Apparently lots of folks have done this because our economy is in such a state because of it.

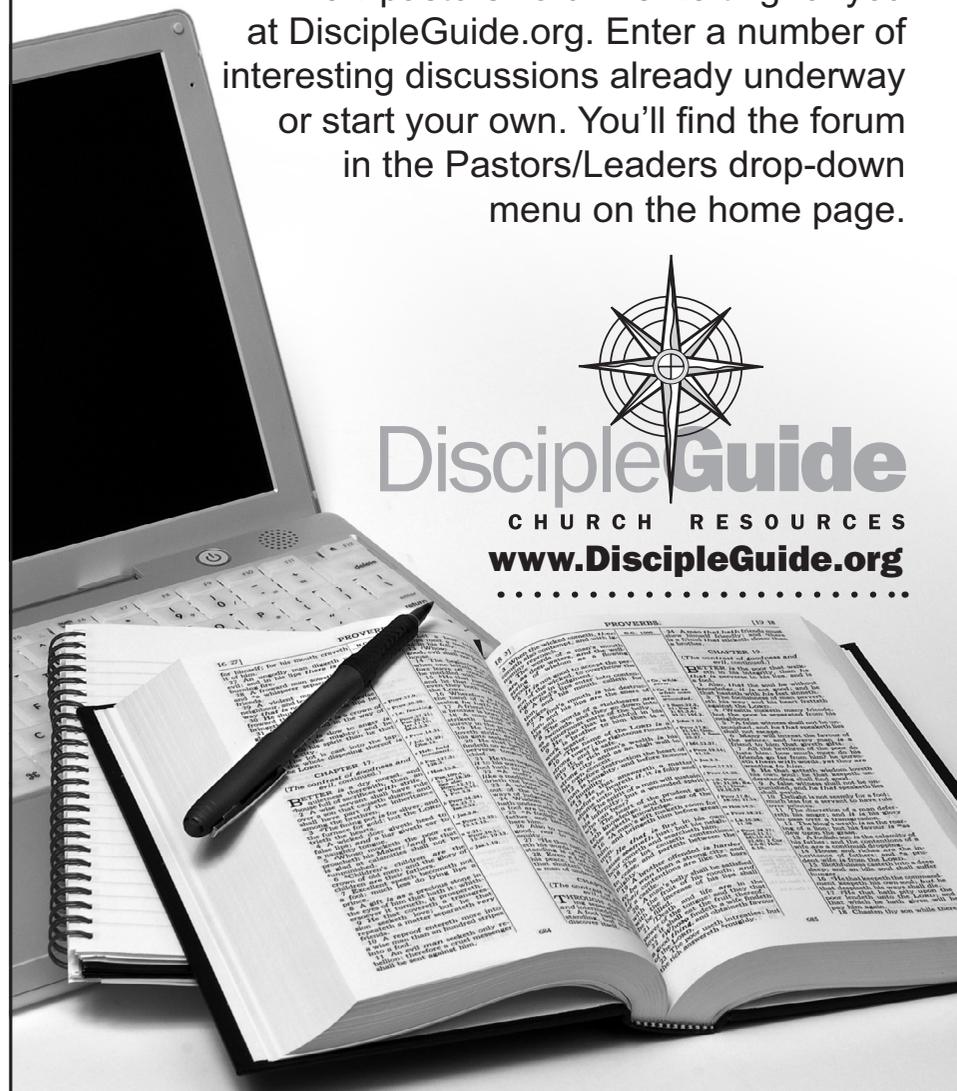
The principal is the same - all for the want of a bowl of red stew!

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Kids from religious, intact families fare better

WASHINGTON (BP)--Children living with both biological parents or adoptive parents who attend religious services regularly are less likely to exhibit problems at school or at home, a new analysis of national data shows.

The study by psychologist Nicholas Zill, the founder of Child Trends, and statistician Philip Fletcher found that children in such a situation -- when compared to children not living with both parents and not attending religious services regularly -- are 5.5 times less likely to have repeated a grade and 2.5 less likely to have had their parents contacted by the school because of a conduct or achievement problem.

Additionally, intact families who have regular religious participation (defined as at least weekly or monthly) are less likely to report parental stress and more likely to report a "better parent-child relationship," the analysis, which focused on families with children ages 6-17, says.

The study, co-released by the Family Research Council and more than 30 state family councils as part of FRC's Mapping America project, was based on interviews in 2003 with parents of more than 100,000 children and teens by the National Center for Health Statistics for the National Survey of Children's Health.

The data "hold[s] up after controlling for family income and poverty, low parent education levels, and race and ethnicity."

"An intact two-parent family and regular

church attendance are each associated with fewer problem behaviors, more positive social development, and fewer parental concerns about the child's learning and achievement," Zill and Fletcher wrote. "Taken together, the two home-environment factors have an additive relationship with child well-being. That is, children who live in an intact family and attend religious services regularly generally come out best on child development measures, while children who do neither come out worst. Children with one factor in their favor, but not the other, fall in between"

The authors said that children in an intact religious family "are more likely to exhibit positive social behavior, including showing respect for teachers and neighbors, getting along with other children, understanding other people's feelings, and trying to resolve conflicts with classmates, family, or friends."

Pat Fagan, the director of FRC's Center for Family and Religion, said the study should impact social policy.

"Social science data continue to demonstrate overwhelmingly that the intact married family that worships weekly is the greatest generator of human goods and social benefits and is the core strength of the United States," he said in a statement. "Policy makers should strongly consider whether their policy proposals give support to such a family structure. Children are not the only beneficiaries but also all of society."