BMA Midyear Meeting
May 16-17, 2005
Ten Mile Baptist Church
Perkinston, Mississippi

Senior Adult Conference
Parkview Church, Laurel
May 12, 2005

On The Web at **msbaptist.org**

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MAY 1, 2005 **Vol. 59 No. 9**

Mississippi Baptist

JOURNAL OF THE BAPTIST MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION OF MISSISSIPPI

Major Organizational Changes Made

BMAA holds annual meeting

Joplin, MO - The Baptist Missionary Association held its 2005 meeting April 18-20 and made history with major organizational changes.

Over 1,000 messengers and visitors were present for the meeting. The evening services swelled to around 1,600 at times. 374 churches were represented by messenger with an additional 404 represented by letter only. Two new churches petitioned membership at this year's meeting - Calvary Baptist Church, Eureka Springs, Arkansas and New Beginnings Baptist Church, Ferris, Texas.

The messengers voted to hold the 2007 meeting in Fort Smith, Arkansas. The 2006 meeting will be held in Mobile, Alabama.

Bro. John David Smith, BMA missionary to the island nation of Cape Verde, will bring the 2006 annual message with Dr. Charley Holmes, BMA Seminary president, being the alternate.

The Coordinating Council recommendations to realign certain departments of the Association were adopted mostly as presented. There was however, opposition to many of the new proposals.

Baptist News Service was dissolved with Baptist Publishing House taking over the function of BNS. Bro. Ken Vanderslice, BNS director, will continue to work until the 2005-06 Directory and Handbook is completed.

The Armed Forces and Chaplaincy Department has been put under the umbrella of the National Missions Department. Discussion by Missions Director Grady Higgs indicates that the Chaplaincy Division will continue to operate basically as it has in the past. Chaplaincy Director Col. (ret) Bobby Thornton will continue to head up this work.

Ministers Resource Services and Moral Action Committee were designated 'agencies' of the Association instead of departments and their relationship and operation remains unchanged.

The most controversial aspect of the realignment concerning departments is the placing of the National Camp Ministry (headed by Bro. James Speer) and the Department of Church Ministries (headed by Bro. Donny Parrish) under a realigned Department of Church Resources. This includes the Baptist Publishing House and all of its divisions. Dr. Larry Silvey, director of BPH, will serve as transitional director of Church Resources until the 2006 meeting. Silvey shared his desire to leave BPH and go in a different direction with his personal ministry.

This reorganization puts Bros. Speer and Parrish under the authority of the Director of Church Resources. Discussion concerning this new entity centered on the mission and direction of the camp ministry and more pointedly the ministry of DCM. Dr. Silvey indicated that DCM would continue as a vital part of the ministry.

The constitutional changes authorizing the Coordinating Council and stating the objectives and power of the Council brought lengthy and pointed discussion. Many concerns were shared that this new council would have too much authority and eventually centralize power in too few individuals thus distancing the local church from direct authority over the ministries of the association.

The council members, Bro. Vernon Lee in particular, tried to assure the messengers that this would not be the case. One recommended part of the constitutional changes dealing with the Council was changed to have this group present a report to the association each year instead of making recommendations. The state purpose of the Council is to help coordinate the work of each department of the Association to present a more uni-

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2005-06 Officers of the BMA of America

Current officers of the BMA of America elected in Joplin, Missouri are (left to right) Recording Clerks James Ray Raines of Arkansas, Don Brown of Mississippi, and Greg Medenwald of Mississippi; President Richard Smith of Texas, 1st Vice-president David Watkins of Arkansas and 2nd Vice-president Terry Coleman of Mississippi.

Ten Mile Church, Perkinston to host meeting

State Association to meet

by Dennis Knight
President of the BMA of Mississippi

The bi-annual meeting of the BMA of Mississippi will meet with Ten Mile Baptist Church, near Wiggins, Mississippi, on Tuesday, May 17, 2005, at 9:30 a.m. The State WMA and Brotherhood will meet on Monday, May 16, 2005, at 7:00 p.m. at the host church.

I encourage each of our churches to send messengers to this meeting. Each of our departments and commissions is a joint effort of our churches. Your participation is needed and appreciated.

Below is information for those needing motels in Wiggins:

Best Western - 1-800-528-1234
1 King Bed - $52.00
2 Double Beds - $54.00

Southern Inn - 601-928-5422
1 Single - $38.14
2 Double Beds - $46.86

Western - 601-928-7979
1 King Bed - $45.00
2 Double Beds - $50.00

President's Message

Lifting Up His Name... ...Living Up to Ours

Acts 9:10-18

by Richard W. Smith, President
Baptist Missionary Association of America
April 18, 2005, Joplin, Missouri

Introduction

Some of you will remember when our Association met in Colorado Springs in 1999. While we were meeting, two boys filled with hate entered their high school at Columbine and murdered 12 fellow students and 1 teacher. Franklin Graham writes in his book, The Name, that he was asked to come and speak at a memorial service for the community and nation. He tells about the outpouring of love and support the community received. He writes how nice the memorial service was with flowers, music, words of comfort etc. But after the service as they were walking out, an agitated man approached Franklin Graham and loudly said, "You offended me!" Mr. Graham, knowing this was not the place to cause a scene, looked at the man and quietly said, "Yes, sir?" Three times he said to Mr. Graham, "You offended me!" Mr. Graham writes that at that time he did not know what the man was offended about, but the man assumed Mr. Graham should know. He later found out through the news media. The man was offended that he had used the Name of Jesus Christ. Others, like the president of an inter-faith organization,

BMA President Richard Smith

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South Mississippi Senior Adult Day

Parkview Baptist Church, 930 N 10th Avenue, Laurel, MS

The BMA Department of Church Ministries is excited to announce the South Mississippi Senior Adult Day on Saturday, May 12, 2005, at Parkview Baptist Church in Laurel, Mississippi. DCM is cooperating with Mississippi Commission on Senior Adults to produce this one-day event. The program will begin at 9:30 am and will end at 3:00 pm. The cost for the event is only $15 and includes a fish and chicken lunch with all the trimmings.

George Reddin

Highlighting the event will be the preaching of Bro. George Reddin with his wife Jerene leading the music. Bro. George is the Executive Director of Lifeword Broadcast Ministries. He has been at Lifeword for twenty-five years and Director for the last fifteen. He has pastored BMA churches in Arkansas, Mississippi and Texas. Jerene is the Director of Music Ministries at Lifeword where she has served since 1982. Bro. George and Jerene have two children, Joanna who is the wife of Wade Allen and serve as missionaries in the Philippines and Sam Reddin who is a sophomore at Central Baptist College in Conway. They have two grandchildren, Carly and Caleb. Come and share in the message God will provide through Bro. Reddin.

Special musical guest for Senior Adult Day will be the gospel-singing group, 'New Wine'. Kevin Bishop, the group's lead singer, was diagnosed with an incurable eye disease at age 12 that spread throughout his body. Kevin was given only a short time to live, but God stepped in and performed a great miracle and Kevin was healed and started singing and testifying about God's healing power, not only in body but also in soul. This group is committed to spreading our Lord's word through song.

You will also enjoy the trio 'Brothers In Harmony'. They are twin brothers Sam and David Freeman and Grant Staples. Their music styles of Southern Gospel & Contemporary Christian is one that is greatly received no matter how diverse the congregation. From powerful gospel songs to snazzy southern classics, "'Brothers In Harmony's' music allows them to get on a personal level with whoever their audience is and bring them to a place of commitment with God. Ministry is their #1 objective.

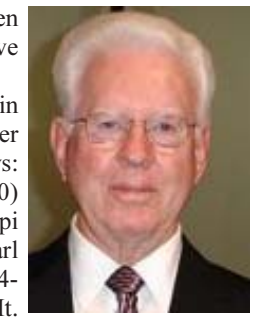
Brothers In Harmony

Call Parkview Church by May 9 at 601-428-7354 to register your group so they can be prepared with adequate lunch. If you need more information about the South Mississippi Senior Adult Day, contact DCM at 1-501-513-3726.

Temple Baptist Church, Laurel

Show your Love Sunday

Come join us as we honor our pastor, Robert Bullock and his wife, Mary Ann. They have been serving the Lord at our church for 30 years. We love and appreciate them very much.



Bro. Robert Bullock

Robert Bullock surrendered to the ministry in September 1958. He was ordained in September 1959. Other pastorates he has had are as follows: Goodwill Mission - Laurel, Mississippi (1958-1960) Salem Baptist Church - Bay Springs, Mississippi (1960-1962) First Baptist Church Henleyfield - Pearl River County (1962-1964) State Missionary - (1964-65) Westgate Baptist - McComb (1965-1969) Mt. Calvary Baptist Church - Picayune (1969-1975) Temple Baptist Church -1975 - present

The Bullocks shared the groundbreaking for our new building in 1980. Our first service in the new building was in March 1981. God has blessed our lives through their commitment and dedication to Him. We would like to invite everyone to be a part of this special day. Sunday School begins at 9:45 A.M. and Worship at 11:00 A.M. Lunch will be served in the fellowship hall following the morning service with afternoon services to conclude this special day following lunch. Special music will be a part of our services. Come and receive a blessing.

BMAA meeting

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fied purpose and direction and to help prevent any duplication or overlapping of direction of the departments.

The Coordinating Council report and a number of those who spoke concerning the future and the direction of the Association stated that these changes were a 'work in progress'.

Chaplains highlighted

The annual message was presented by Chaplain David Norvell and a number of chaplains were highlighted throughout this year's meeting. One highlight for this writer was the report of Chaplain Bo Bankston. Bankston recently returned from serving in Iraq and highlighted some of his experiences. Bankston pastors Woodland Baptist Church, Columbus, Mississippi.

Missionaries elected

New missionaries elected this year include Filomeno Kakilala to Hawaii, James Crews to Idaho, Larry Barker to Romania, and Jamie Haguewood to Peru. March Nicholson and Jason Burns were elected as associate missionaries to Idaho and Colorado.

We will have additional information from the national meeting in our next issue.

Mississippi State W.M.A.

Donna Lawrence, President
1621 Hildreth Road
Columbus, MS 39702

Corresponding Secretary
Mrs. Shirlene Smith, 730 Hwy 533
Laurel, MS 39443

Lawrence

New president thanks Ladies for successful National WMA meeting

by Shirlene Smith
National WMA President

"Thank You" seems like such a small thing to say to so many who worked tirelessly to make our National WMA meeting a blessing to all who attended.

Please accept my special thanks to the Missouri and Kansas WMAs, the Mississippi State WMA, Antioch East Baptist Church, Magnolia, Arkansas, the officers, and those who participated on the program - Shelley Dickson and the ladies from Puerto Rico.

The response to the Shepherd's Bags was tremendous; over 5,000 bags were brought to the meeting in Joplin, Missouri. Over $32,000.00 was given to the WMA project to help with building a mission church in Puerto Rico, the shipping of Shepherd's Bags, and the youth and general funds of the National WMA.

The project selected for 2005-2006 is 5% General Fund, 15% Youth Fund, and 80% BMMI (Baptist Medical Missions International). BMMI Director Dr. Ralph Izard will be happy to visit your church or WMA meeting to inform you of the work of BMMI.

You are also encouraged to prepare and bring Shepherd's Bags to the National WMA meeting in Moble, Alabama, in April, 2006.

Please send your WMA offerings to:

National WMA of the BMAA
c/o Glenda Tipton
P. O. Box 95274
North Little Rock, AR 72190

Make your checks payable to the National WMA and designate your offering for the project or general fund. May God help us to be a blessing to others as we work for Him through WMA in our local churches and with the help and support of our pastors. God bless each one.

Soldiers Return Home

Dear Editor,

I would like to thank you for listing my husband (Mickey Mitchell) in the military section of the paper. He spent a year in Iraq and thanks to our wonderful God he was allowed to return home to his family. It was comforting to know that all the people were praying for him and our family while he was away and please let's continue to pray for all the soldiers and their families that are in Iraq and Afghanistan fighting terrorism. Only God and someone that has a family member that has gone to war know the fear you live with while they are away. God bless all of you that pray for the soldiers and families.

Belinda Mitchell
Community Baptist Church,
Poplarville

Son returns from Iraq

Dear Editor,

Thanks so much for the many prayers for our son while he was in Baghdad, Iraq. He returned home March 18th. I have enclosed a

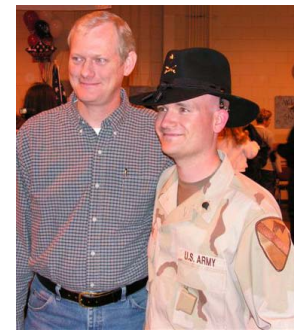

photo of our son, SPC Jessie D. Loague and our Pastor, Bro. Terry Coleman at the homecoming of 1st CAV ROC in Tupelo, MS.

Our son asks that we all continue our prayers for the many soldiers still serving in Iraq.

God is so good.

David and Tammy Loague

Ten Mile WMA Report

The Ten Mile WMA met at Pleasant Hill Church Monday, April 11, 2005. President Myrtis Mallet called the meeting to order. Mrs. Alana Woods opened with song. Mrs. Pat Johnson led in prayer. Pleasant Hill gave us a warm welcome, and Grace gave the response and thanked Pleasant Hill for hosting the WMA meeting.

Mrs. Betty Sellers gave the devotional from Psalm 100:1-5, "Serving the Lord With Gladness." Mrs. Cherie Breland read the minutes. Seven churches were represented.

Mrs. Louise C rawley, State Project Promoter for Ten Mile WMA, gave us a challenge in January to save our change from our shopping at "Wally-World" (Wal-Mart) to give to our state project. Vardaman Street won first place. Pleasant Hill was second. We received over $100.00 (somebody shops a lot at Wal-Mart).

Pleasant Hill presented a great skit on being guilty or not guilty of being a Christian.

Mr. Person was brought to trial by a juror of his peers to find out if he was guilty of being a Christian or not guilty of being one. Mr. Person took the stand and gave his testimony of salvation and how he had been saved from a life of drinking, gambling, etc. He received Christ as his personal Savior and became a new person. He was no longer a lost sinner but a saved sinner by "God's Grace." The jury brought a verdict in of being guilty. He was a Christian. The question was asked could the world tell if we were "guilty or not guilty of being a Christian." I hope we all can be found guilty if we were on trial.

We would like to invite more WMA ladies to join our meetings every quarter. The next meeting will be July 11 at Temple Church in Biloxi. This will be our annual election of officers.

Geraldine Necaise, Reporter

Bad Sermon

I preached a bad sermon Sunday. Like most preachers, I don't preach a "10" every time I step into the pulpit. Every trip to the pulpit does not produce a "home run." It was just not my best preaching. The sermon Sunday was not bad in that it had no Bible base. This sermon was not bad in that it did not present the Lord as Savior. It was not bad in that it did not have a good outline. In fact the outline was catchy and easy to remember. It even had three points with an introduction and conclusion that were appropriate. It was not bad in that it was not a relevant topic for the audience. It was a bad sermon in that it was not quite right-even with all the proper homiletical accouterments..

Leave It To Cleaver

Tony Cleaver

One member remarked that the sermon had helped remind her that she must be more dedicated to the cause of Christ. Another member told me he was helped in the sermon because it showed him how to better process some things in his life that were problematic right now. Other members, and again specific remarks, told me how the sermon reminded them of their important family devotions. These remarks tell me the sermon did something for at least these people with remarks other than the normal, "good sermon pastor" as they go out the door. I really pray that the living Lord will take the bad sermon to the lives of the people for their improved walk with Him. I ask God to allow my worst to be used to encourage their steadfastness to the walk of faith in their family.

Bad sermons are not intentional. Less than best pulpit presentations are not a career goal. Poor preaching productions are not something I diligently pray and prepare for each week. No pastor focuses his efforts and dreams for the service on a bad sermon. I would find it abnormal that a pastor would pray, "O, Lord, let me preach a bad sermon this Sunday." No preacher lingers and labors in his study to bring forth the worst sermon he can for the congregational worship on Sunday morning.

My good wife, who is a great help-mate in the finest and truest sense, and I talked the bad sermon over after church. Although she is my best cheerleader, she is also honest when it is necessary and appropriate. She too agreed it was not my finest hour. It was not bad in the sense of dishonoring God, but it was not the best she had heard. I preached a bad sermon Sunday morning.

What about the lessons for me? I will get over a bad sermon day. The congregation will survive. I remember thinking as a young preacher the church's future depended on my first sermon. I also remember thinking the people had never heard preaching like mine. And indeed they hadn't! In spite of my feelings about this bad sermon, God will be honored through this weakness. Perhaps the real lesson for me here is that when I trust my own sermon production propensity, I get what I can produce-bad sermons.

Lord God of the pulpit, speak through Your servants as we wait eagerly to receive Your word and Your word alone. May we forget ourselves when we speak for You. May we remember Him who suffered, died, was buried, raised, and in great chorus of hallelujah is coming again! May I spend time alone in Your presence to hear You. May I see the hollowness of my own ability as I try to speak for You. My prayer is that Your unction would function in my speaking from the pulpit of Your church house. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord. This I pray in the name of the Preacher of timeless eternity past, of the ever present, and of timeless eternity future. To Him be all praise and glory given. Amen.

Two Prayers for 2005

Dr. Charley Holmes
President

Dr. Philip Attebery
Dean

Seminary class gives me the boldness to witness as we go to places that I never thought of going to share the gospel. The seminary is also teaching me how to train others who are interested in sharing the gospel. It gives me more opportunity to fulfill God's Great Commission. (Missionary from Liberia)

I now have the confidence and ability to share Christ with anyone in any situation. I am most excited about being able to "equip the saints." (A young pastor from Central Texas)

As a BMA church member, have you ever wondered what the seminary is accomplishing? Some people think seminary education is just about creating scholars in the fields of Hebrew, Greek, and theology. While those things are foundational, you can see from the quotes above that our students believe we are accomplishing much more. We are training pastors and missionaries to reach their communities with the gospel and to equip their people to join in the effort.

The seminary needs your prayers so that we can continue developing the next generation of leaders for Christ's Kingdom.

Our association has designated Sunday, May 15 as Seminary Sunday. This year Seminary Sunday is very special in that it falls on the day after graduation. We are asking that pastors lead each church in our association in two special prayers for the 2005 seminary family. In the morning service, pray for God's blessings on our students and the fields where they will be serving when they graduate. In the evening service, pray for our teachers and that the budgetary needs of the school will be met as more churches include the seminary in their regular monthly giving.

When we all pray together, God can give us more results like this, *"I want to tell you that my January class is one of the most significant experiences of my life. I have enjoyed all my classes, but that one literally changed my life and brought me an understanding of the things of God that has changed me forever."* (Layman from near the U.S./Mexico border of South Texas.)

Charley Holmes Phil Attebery

BMA Seminary - 1530 East Pine Street, Jacksonville, Texas 75766-5407
www.bmats.edu 1-800-259-5673

BMA Seminary classes are changing God's servants to change the world.
Pray for them on May 15, 2005 - BMA Seminary Sunday

Mississippi Baptist

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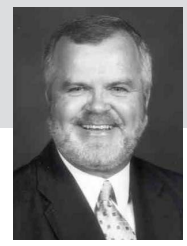
USPS 353-960
P.O. Box 8181
Laurel, Mississippi 39441-8000
(601) 426-3293
for Voice & Fax

PRICE
$20.00 Per Year by Mail
$10.00 Per Year by Email
CHURCH PLAN
$ 1.20 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.

Editorial



Don Brown
Editor

Sometimes you get more than you bargained for

There are times in life when we get more than we thought we would in certain situations. It seems this expression is used more in the negative than it is in the positive, but sometimes it is just the opposite and we really do come out ahead. With salvation, we always find out that God's blessings are more than we thought they would be in the beginning. With this cliche' in mind, please bear with me while I share a time when a number of us traveling together 'got more than we bargained for' or actually more than we expected.

In 1985 Dr. Gerald Kellar and I cosponsored a trip to the Holy Land. What a glorious experience this trip turned out to be. A small group of 18 boarded a plane in Atlanta, Georgia, and after a number of hours we found ourselves in Amman, Jordan. After a night's rest our group began our journey and tour of Israel.

Our guide in Israel was an Arab Christian named Emile. Emile was a personable individual and a professional tour guide who did a good job, but who also was interested in just the basics as far as information was concerned. He also was interested in keeping us on schedule. We were all repeating Emile's favorite phrase "Shake-A-Leg" by the time our trip was over.

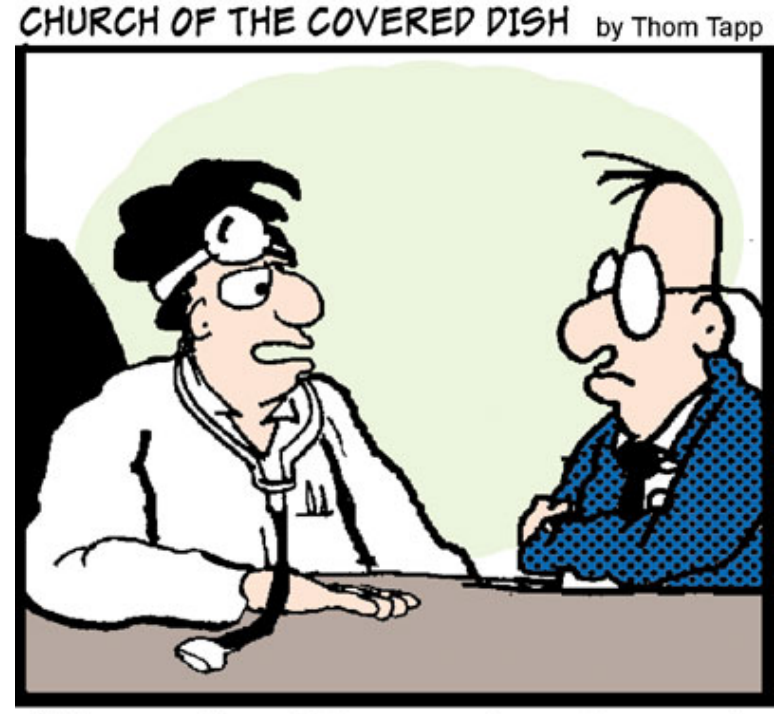
On more that one occasion we would be visiting an historic biblical site and Emile would give us the standard 'tour guide' explanation of its importance. Naturally we would ask questions wanting more in-depth information than was volunteered. Sometimes our guide was able to satisfy our inquiries, but as our questions became more detailed, Emile's vast knowledge of his homeland and its history became smaller and smaller.

Our questions were sincere and honest and when our guide was unable to satisfy our search for more knowledge, we began to ask those intellectual giants who were traveling with us. There were a number of older and experienced pastors in whom we had confidence. We also had a couple of earned doctorates traveling with us who we knew would be able to answer our deep theological and historical questions. Whenever we had a question of great importance we would start with our tour guide Emile. When he would be unable to provide a satisfactory response the habit of our group became to start with the older, more educated and experienced among us and work our way down the list until we were satisfied.

We discovered quickly of an informational storehouse that was traveling with us. That storehouse was in the person of Jentry Bond. At the time of our trip Jentry was a young instructor at Southeastern Baptist College. He had never been to the Holy Land, but his vast knowledge made our trip much more real and enjoyable than if we had to rely on Emile for all of our instruction. In our tour guide we had less than what we desired, but in Jentry Bond we had more than we bargained for. It took only a day or two until we realized that if we truly wanted to know the significance of a particular place or the events surrounding a particular area we were visiting, that the prudent move was to go straight to Bro. Bond.

Dr. Jentry Bond

When Dr. Jentry Bond became president of Southeastern Baptist College a number of years ago we also got more than we probably thought. What a blessing he has been to our work and the work of Southeastern College. He has done a good job and we are blessed to have men like Dr. Bond among us.



"You need to cut down on stress. I suggest you quit preaching and join the bomb squad."

GMA Girls

GMA Promoter Beth Caldwell
166 Twin Creek Rd,
Lucedale, MS 39452
601-947-6011

Sunbeam Prom. Linda Dertinger
132 HowardHill Road
Soso, MS 39480
601-729-2908

State GMA Camp report

by Emily Coleman
Mississippi GMA President

Hello all Mississippi GMAers! Didn't we have a great State Camp this year! I want to thank everyone who had a part through prayer and support in such a great camp. As the President for 2005-2006, I want to ask for your continued prayers and support. Without you the GMA would become nonexistent. This year at camp we went above and beyond our project goal and our attendance. There were also five girls who will never be the same again. They received Christ as their Savior and are now our knew sisters in Christ. Praise the Lord! I hope everyone enjoyed camp as much as I did.

Craft Time - making picture frames

Our theme this year was "Because He Lives" taken from John 14:19b and I was reminded of so many great things that I had forgotten about. The verse that we used as our theme states "…because I live, ye shall live also." Jesus was talking in this verse and said that we live because He lives. Isn't that such a great truth that we need to remember every day that without Him we would perish and life wouldn't be worth living. I wake up every morning and remind myself that the Lord has blest me with another to day to live for Him.

Next year's theme is "Inward Beauty" taken from II Peter 1:5-7. I know that this verse will be used to touch some young girl's heart. Our project for this new year is 25% General Fund, 15% Video Ministry, & 60% John David Smith Ministry. Camp will be on March the 5 & 6 2006. I want everyone to mark their calendar immediately and plan on coming to another great GMA Camp!

As a National Officer, I want to encourage everyone to go to the National GMA Camp at Gary, Texas, on June 14-17. This year's theme is "Daughters of the King" and our camp speakers are Bro. Michael Hight and Bro. Buddy Johnson. The National Officers have planned a great camp this year and would like every GMA to take part in it! Whether you have one GMA girl or 50, please pray about attending it will be well worth it. For more information contact Nicki Prickett @ (601)928-4826 or Nicklp@aol.com OR Ruby Poteet @(870) 879-1378.

I leave you with the fact that you will be hearing from me again soon as well as the other New State GMA Officers. So, keep you eyes open for more articles and information coming to you from you new state GMA Officers. May the Lord bless you in your daily walk with Him.

Snack Shop

School Counselor Under Fire for Excising God from Pledge

(AgapePress) - A middle school employee's politically correct version of the Pledge of Allegiance has caused a stir among students and outrage among parents in a Colorado school district. The controversy arose when eighth-grade counselor Margo Lucero filled in for the absent principal of Everitt Middle School in Wheat Ridge.

Among other duties, Lucero took over the responsibility of making announcements and reciting the Pledge over the public address system in the principal's absence. However, when she came to the part that usually states "one nation under God," she replaced the traditional words with "one nation under your belief system."

Rick Kaufman, a spokesman for Jefferson County Public Schools, says the school counselor's actions were unacceptable. "We have a responsibility to uphold state policy," he explains, "[T]he Pledge of Allegiance is the accepted pledge in the United States at this point in time. And that is what we expect our staff who are reciting the Pledge of Allegiance to do -- to recite it exactly as it is written and accepted."

"Regardless of her intent, it's inappropriate," the Jefferson County Public Schools representative says. "It's not an expectation that we have for our staff members to alter the Pledge of Allegiance -- and we've shared that with her as well as with the students and staff at that school, and also with parents."

Annual Message

from page 1

picked up on it, and were quoted as saying, "I felt like Franklin Graham was trying to terrorize us into heaven instead of loving us into heaven."

Why does the Name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ cause such a stir? Now that we live in post 9/11 there has been a heightened interest in Islam. One California school district went so far as to require seventh-grade students to learn the tenets of Islam, study important persons in the history of the religion, learn verses from the Koran, and even pray in the name of Allah. Can you imagine the lawsuits that would raise their ugly heads if a teacher suggested, much less required, students to memorize Bible verses or pray in the Name of Jesus Christ? I don't have to tell you why the Name of Jesus causes such stir. Jesus Christ represents the division between good and evil, God and Satan, light and darkness, righteousness and sin, heaven and hell.

This evening each of us has walked into this meeting with concerns, problems left at churches but still in our hearts, opinions on upcoming recommendations, but when we leave here, we must be united, renewed, revived, convicted and thoroughly persuaded, that regardless of the cost, our main business is Lifting Up the Name of Jesus Christ!

Our text tonight is a familiar passage. The early churches were more than aware of a known enemy by the name of Saul. This guy had a lot of guts, passion and drive. He had no tolerance for the Name of Jesus Christ or anyone who lifted up that Name. That is until the Lord got hold of him, blinded him, humbled him and sent him to a man by the name of Ananias.

God told Ananias to go see this man. God had a message, a lesson, a word not only for Saul, but for Ananias as well, just as He does for you and me tonight. Saul was a chosen vessel to bear and lift up the Name of Jesus Christ. The Baptist Missionary Association of America is a chosen vessel to bear and lift up the Name of Jesus. I say to you tonight, that if we, the Baptist Missionary Association of America, truly live up to our name, we will be lifting up His Name.

I. We lift up His Name by being true to Baptist Doctrine.

You can hardly blame Ananias for not wanting to meet with Saul. After all, Saul had quite a reputation - a reputation for being a part of the movement to make Christianity extinct. A devout Hellenistic Jew of the tribe of Benjamin, born in Tarsus, Saul was a member of the Pharisees. Saul sought the arrest, trial, conviction, and punishment (with imprisonment the norm and death the ideal, it would seem) of those in Jerusalem.

His career as a persecutor of Christians seems to have begun with Stephen, but it quickly spread to all of the Christians in Jerusalem (Acts 7:58–8:3). Saul was not content to punish some and to drive the rest from the "holy city." He did not want to merely contain Christianity or to drive it from Jerusalem. He wanted to rid the earth of Christianity and the Name of Jesus Christ. His opposition to Christ and His church took on a "missionary" spirit. Saul went to other cities where he sought to arrest Christians and to bring them back to Jerusalem for punishment. Damascus, a city some 150 miles to the northeast of Jerusalem, was one such city. Word was out that Saul would soon be arriving.

No wonder Ananias questioned the leading of the Holy Spirit. You want me to go meet with who?!! The Lord let Ananias know that Saul was a chosen vessel with a very important purpose. He would bear the Name of Jesus. He would lift up and carry the Name of Jesus to the Gentiles, before kings and to the Jews. But before this could ever happen, Saul needed to get good and lost so he could get good and saved. Saul needed to be saved first of all from himself and his own self-righteousness. Saul was religious but lost.

continued on page 6

Sofilthy's Attic

by Barbara White

Respect for preachers and/or ministers

In a sermon that I heard recently, the point was made that there seems to be no respect for ministers and/or preachers (there's a difference) anymore.

Well, that got my wheels to turning concerning some observations that have been made.

In Exodus 39 explicit instructions are given for the dress for the priests who were "set aside" to minister to God's people.

In our day and time it seems that some ministers and/or preachers try so hard to "fit in" with other people by dressing more casually that they don't have the appearance of being "set aside".

Mercy me, we have preachers who come to our Nursing Home to deliver God's Word to these people and they dress in blue jeans, polo shirts and tennis shoes. So, buddy, you want respect, dress like you want respect. Looks to me like a minister and/or preacher would be so glad he doesn't have to wear a robe with pomegranites and bells all around the bottom that he wouldn't mind wearing a shirt and tie when he is "ministering".

Youth Department

P.O. Box 4247, Laurel, Mississippi 39441 • (601) 649-0502
Email - youthdept@bmaofmsyouth.org

Passionate Study

II Timothy 2:15 "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

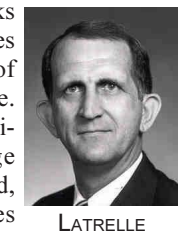
II Timothy 3:14,15 "But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them: And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."

Paul wrote to Timothy as a young man to offer him instructions about the Christian life. He writes to strengthen Timothy's loyalty to Christ in the face of the suffering and persecution that would come. Timothy was to handle the Word of God accurately, faithfully instructing others in the truths of the faith.

Study implies greater mental concentration, usually it also suggests more care for the details and more of an effort to comprehend fully or to learn all the possibilities, applications, variations, or the like.

How are we to give our kids a mature and passionate love for the Word of God. Our kids won't catch something we don't have. Study involves hard work and diligent labor. It is an intensive intellectual effort.

Study involves knowledge. Knowledge is reliable information about God. There are many kinds of knowledge. Due to today's technology our kids can learn more in six months than it took our parents to learn in a life-time. I will mention only two kinds of knowledge. Sinful knowledge and Saving knowledge are available today in a vast supply.



Latrelle Windham
Director

The T.V., books and other sources provide plenty of sinful knowledge. The source of spiritual knowledge comes from God, nature, scriptures and experimentation.

What is our attitude about knowledge? We are not to be puffed up with knowledge. We are instructed to grow in knowledge and to be filled with knowledge.

The second thing involved in study is learning (personal application of the truths of God's word). Learning is knowledge acquired through experience or instruction. As we study God's word we need to meditate in His Word. Meditation is quiet contemplation of spiritual truths. The value of meditation is understanding, spiritual satisfaction and superior knowledge.

The third thing involved in study is wisdom. Wisdom (a pattern of seeing from God's point of view). Wisdom is knowledge guided by understanding. There is wisdom in the leadership of the Holy Spirit. Wisdom comes from God, the Lord, God's law, righteous living. The value of wisdom is more important than gold, silver or rubies. Wisdom keeps us from evil, folly, and many other things. It insures stability and makes us strong in the Lord.

Sit down with your kids, grandchildren and church kids, read the world of God together. This can be done at home, before bedtime, early in the morning, at church and at camp during quiet time.

Give your child a passionate love for God through a study of His Word.

Senior Adult Conference
Thursday May 12
Parkview Church, Laurel

Military Service Prayer List

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

CPT Lawson "Sonny" Brannan, *Stringer, MS*
George Rogers, *Wiggins, MS*
Scott Clanton, *Pineview, Lucedale*
Anthony Tanner, *Movella, Lucedale*
Miles Farragut, *FBC of Shady Grove, Laurel*
Kenneth Smith, *Hattiesburg, MS*
Wayne Mack, *Seminary, MS*
Anthony Hodge, *Purvis, MS*
Thomas Temple, *Laurel, MS*
David Cunningham, *Forked Oak, Booneville*
Jacob Blakeney, *Mineral Springs, Taylorsville*
Lance Holifield, *Mineral Springs, Taylorsville*
Phillilp Holifield, *Mineral Springs, Taylorsville*
Robert Shavers, *Pleasant Hill Baptist Church*
Jeff Necaise, *Pleasant Hill Baptist Church*
Michael Wright, *Pleasant Hill Baptist Church*
Harold (Scooter) Bond, Jr., *Laurel*
Harold (Tink) Compton, *Faithview Church*
Jeff Schonewitz, *Saucier*
Michael Casey, *Gulfport*
Larry "Dean" Welborn Jr., *Carnes, MS*
James Reeves, *Westlawn, Picayune*
Ronnie Spiers, *Westlawn, Picayune*
Mickey Mitchell, *Community, Poplarville, MS*
Patrick Garrett, *Poplarville, MS*
Darryl Gipson, *Poplarville, MS*
Ken Bullock, *Skyway Hills, Pearl, MS*
Lemuel Kendrick, *Lee's Chapel #2, Picayune*
Albert C. White, *Mclaurin, MS*
Craig Landry, *Benville Church, Picayune.*
Janet Hilbun, *Sand Hill, Lucedale, MS*
Barron Horn, *First Baptist, Bay Springs, MS*
Jessie David Loague, *Bethel, Fulton, MS*
Dustin Wills, *First Windsor Park, Ocean Springs,*
CPT. William "Lee" Henry, *Richton, MS*
Justin Johnston, *Summerland Baptist*
DeWayne Trest, *Wildernss, Vicksburg, MS*
Roger Johnson
Josh Senter
Shane Cromeans
Dusty Gray
James Riley
Michael Lindsey, *Mt. Plesant, Mantachie, MS*
Randol Harlow, *Nettleton, MS*
Joshua S. Pierce, *Corinth Church, Lucedale*
Alan Fiscarckly, *South Green Church, Tupelo*
Russell S. Taylor, *Paramount Church, Perkinston*
Craig Fillingane, *Cypress Creek Baptist Church*
Jeff Lott, *Ovett, MS*
Michael Patrick Boyd, *First Baptist, Bay Springs*
Michael Garrick Boyd, *First Baptist, Bay Springs*
Lester Davis, *East Main, Lumberton*
Thomas S. McGill, *Groton, CT*
Johnny R. Hunt
Jason Rivers, *Ellisville*
Tommy Mitchell, *Purvis*
Jake Driskell, *Lebanon, Laurel*
Will Norris, *First, Henleyfield*
Trevor Saltsman, *Westview, Oxford*
Russell Robertson, *Temple, Lucedale*
Tim Cooper, Ozark, Mantachie
Wesley Grissom, Hopewell, Fulton

Children's Home

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

A Time for Growing

This time of the year is a time for growth. That is what springtime is all about. God made it that way. As we observe everything as it grows it is a living reminder to you and me that we belong to a faithful God who loves us.

Sidney Davis
Director

Springtime ought to be a time of growing for all of us who belong to Jesus Christ in a spiritual sense. And as summer approaches we must keep in mind that we must never take a vacation from spiritual growth. It is with this idea in mind that we ask for your continued prayers for the ministry of the Children's Home that we might experience the freshness that comes from the spiritual blessings that the Lord has to give to us as we respond to His leadership in this ministry.

Yes, springtime reminds us of the beginning of the growing season. There are many in our world today who need to be saved and this would be a good time for those that are lost to start their course of growth by being born again. Also, many of God's children need to use this time to renew their commitment to the Lord so that their growth will be more fruitful to the glory of God.

Pray with us at the Children's Home that this will be the best growing season ever as we use this sowing and growing time to the glory of God. The opportunities are limitless around the world for the Lord's people to reach out and minister to hurting people. It is good to know that as 2005 makes its way into the pages of history that our God is still on His throne and is moving in the hearts of men through His Holy Spirit.

Special Offerings

Special offerings received are as follow: Spring Hill, Laurel, $125; New Bethany, Ellisville, $230; Mt. Calvary WMA, Picayune, $15; Buffalo, McLain, $300; Buffalo Children, McLain, $110.80; Providence, Amory, $100; Lee's Chapel #2, Picayune, $25; East Central Youth in Harvest, $32.74; Bro. & Mrs. Carl Seals, Seminary, $30.00. We appreciate each of these special gifts as well as regular monthly offerings.

Men

Want some time off? Send your wife to the BMA Christian Ladies Retreat September 23-24, 2005, at the Jackson Hilton

Missionary Commissioning Service

At the conclusion of the Missions Department report at the recent BMA of America meeting in Joplin, Missouri, a commissioning prayer was led for all new and current missionaries serving the BMA around the world. Anumber of messengers gathered at the front to pray for our missionaries and their work.

Annual Message

from page 5

Doctrine is important because we don't need more religion. We need for folks to get saved. Baptists unashamedly believe and teach, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." (Ephesians 2:8-9) Ananias led Saul to the Lord, Jesus Christ. The moment Saul was saved he received the Holy Spirit and then, not before, Saul could be baptized.

I have a lady in my church that read John Grisham's novel, A Painted House. She likes to give me things that will give me a good laugh. The book tells the story of a seven-year-old named Luke growing up on an Arkansas cotton farm. Little Luke is a Baptist, and from time-to-time, he offers observations about his faith family. Here is one: "The line between Baptists and Methodists was never straight and true. Their worship was slightly different with the ritual of sprinkling little babies being the most flagrant deviation from the Scriptures . . .And they didn't meet as often, which of course, meant they were not as serious about their faith. Nobody met as much as us Baptists. We took great pride in constant worship. Pearl Watson, my favorite Methodist, said she'd like to be a Baptist, but she just wasn't physically able."

Young Luke identifies two traits about Baptists. One is that they tend toward hyperactivity in the life of faith! The second is that they baptize in a distinctive way. With the latter, he hit upon one of the bedrock principles all Baptists share: we don't baptize babies. We only baptize believers.

They tell us today that we live in a post-denominational time. The root meaning of the word, "denomination" simple means "name." So a non-denominational church is a no name church. Their theme is: it doesn't really matter what you believe, just love Jesus. But the Scriptures beg to differ. This same Saul, later named Paul, writing to the Galatians challenges them on perverting the gospel. There is only one gospel and that is the gospel of Jesus Christ. Saul became a champion "for by grace are ye saved, not of works, lest any man boast." What you believe about the Bible is still important.

We must lift up the Jesus of the Bible. Denominations have become refuges for traditionalism with the attitude of "we have to maintain our heritage," even when they don't know what that means. That is bad for Baptists. The challenge that our generation is facing, whether we like it or not, is to teach the truth of God's Word. The truth of God's Word will make people a Baptist by conviction. That is what happened to Saul. He had to get saved first before he came to understand the truth of God's Word.

This past Wednesday evening I went out with an evangelism team and we knocked on doors. Every time we were given the opportunity to ask people about how to receive eternal life, they all gave a "good works" answer.

What does it mean to be a Baptist? Being a Baptist means that you are a born again individual that was baptized, by immersion, after your salvation experience and that you belong to a local, autonomous New Testament Church that believes and upholds certain fundamental truths. (I don't have time to list these truths, but I hope you know what they are.) I love what A. T. Robertson said, "Give a man an open Bible, a conscience in good working order, and he will have a hard time to keep from being a Baptist." When we are true to what it really means to be a Baptist, then folks will come to know the Jesus of the Bible and receive salvation and Romans 10:13 will ring out, "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, shall be saved."

II. We lift up His Name through our Missionary Mandate.

God called Saul to be a missionary. He had not even had the privilege yet to learn the Great Commission. He did not even know yet that a true disciple is a fisher of men. This man was pegged to go to other races and cultures with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The Great Commission is not an option. Now let me just stop here and say something. Every once in a while someone will say or write an article about how sick and dying the BMAA is. We can talk about this until we are blue in the face, but every pastor here knows what I am fixing to say is true. There is only one thing that makes your church grow - evangelism. Making disciples is what makes a church grow.

The missions department, camp ministries, DCM etc. can only give you tools and encouragement, but they can't win souls for you and they can't disciple your members!!! The last time I checked, Jesus said, "I will make you fishers of men." If our churches are not growing and if the BMA of America is not growing, it is because we are not fishing for people – we have lost our missionary, evangelistic, church planting zeal! Listen, I feel real strong about this. Last year there was talk about agendas and mandates. The BMA of America only has one mandate and that is to make disciples. Everything else pales in comparison.

I love the emphasis and vision that Bro. Higgs is giving our association - to see every church become a Great Commission Church and every member become a Great Commission member. I love it that Dr. Holmes at our Seminary is teaching and training our students in Evangelism Explosion so they graduate as fishers of men. I love it that Donny at DCM (Department of Church Ministries) is providing

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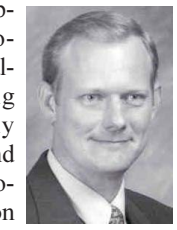
Christian Action Commission

Baptist Missionary Association of Mississippi
P.O. Box 11, Fulton, MS 38843 - Phone 662.862.7375
Fax: 662.862.5351 - e-mail:bethelbc@intop.net
Web Site: http://user.intop.net/~bethelbc/commission.html

Thanks to all who viewed the CAC booth at the national meeting in Joplin. Again the display was well received and I appreciate the opportunity to promote Biblical morality. Also during April it was my privilege to attend the Ten Mile Association meeting on the 8th at Biloxi Creek where Bryan Williamson is the pastor, the Harmony Association meeting on the 8th at our Hispanic mission in Ripley where Elvis Garcia serves, the Brotherhood breakfast on the 10th at East Fulton with Dewitt Bain, the Gulf Association at Woodlawn on the 14th in Picayune with Wayne McMahon, and Rolling Hills in Jacksonville, Florida on the 24th with Ronald Beasley. Praise the Lord for traveling safety and a continued sense of excitement about this ministry.



Terry Coleman
Director

National we rejoice in Kansas passing an amendment for traditional marriage. We grieve over Connecticut allowing same sex unions. Pray for America. Prayer is a command. President Woodrow Wilson said, "Liberty does not consist in mere declarations of the rights of man. It consists in the translation of those declarations into definite actions." As Christians we must put our faith into action! According to Matthew 5:13 "ye are the salt of the earth." For salt to have an impact it must be applied. As Christian salt shakers we must sprinkle on every area of our lives including matters of government.

Pray of our leaders to make wise moral decisions. Pray for the Mississippi Legislature as they end their regular session this month. Be stirred to pray. Be stirred to live righteously. You can make a difference!

Church and homes rebuilt

'Go Forth' mission to Grenada provides housing

by Ashley Anderson

The Go Forth mission team would like to thank all who contributed to our mission effort to the island of Grenada. The team departed for Grenada on March 28th and returned on April 4th. God did many wonders among us in Grenada, and we are still praising Him for it today! First, we were blessed to rebuild Providence Baptist Church which was destroyed by Hurricane Ivan and to be present for the first worship service held in the new building. Pastor Kasimer Thomas and his church family were overjoyed at this modern-day "restoration of the temple!" The team was also able to rebuild the homes of four church members left homeless by the storm last September. Lumber and supplies were left for others to use for repairing their homes.

A church building comleted by crew in Grenada

While the building teams worked, others were with the children, singing songs, playing games and most importantly, sharing Jesus. Fifty souls were led to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ! Many strong bonds were forged, and correspondence with our brothers and sisters in Grenada has become a regular occurrence. We thank God for the many beautiful friendships He gave us while we were there and for the privilege of being a part of His work.

The mission team included Pastor Coy Rice, Kenya Rice, Jason Anderson, Ashley Anderson, Chad Wolverton, Mike Anderson, Susie Anderson, Rick Cark, Jason Sherman, Tray Lamkin, Kendyl Rice, Chase Hamilton, Jim Miller, and Betty Miller, (North Gautier Baptist Church; Gautier, MS), Bryan Shavers, Philip Cole, and Marty Jones, (Pleasant Hill Baptist Church; Saucier, MS), Pastor Sam Johnson and Ron Groue, (Woodhaven Baptist Church; Ocean Springs, MS), Pastor Ray Boone and Joanne Boone, (Broadmoor Baptist Church; Meridian, MS), and Pastor Buck Hughes (River Oaks Baptist Church; Baton Rouge, LA).

A sincere "thank you" goes out from the heart of each team member to all of you who supported the mission effort. Whether your gift was time, prayer, effort, or money, God used you, and you had an important part in what He accomplished for the kingdom on the tiny Caribbean island of Grenada

Above is a home that was built in Grenada

Plans for another mission to Grenada are already underway. Many of us feel the Holy Spirit leading in the direction of an ongoing ministerial work there. Please be praying for God's will to be done in all areas of this ministry, and watch the mail for the upcoming release and distribution of a DVD highlighting the trip.

Annual Message

from page 6

conferences on how to effectively make disciples. I love it that our Baptist Publishing House is providing doctrinally sound materials. I love it that every year Farley Street Baptist Church sends children and young people to Daniel Springs Camp and every year without exception, they send some back saved. That East Texas fishing hole is a good one. I'd be crazy not to send kids there if I am serious about fishing for men.

Here it is: you are either a maintenance church or a missionary church. If you are a missionary church, then making disciples is your passion. Can we be real honest tonight? Our main problem is not how we structure our department. Our main problem is we have lost our missionary, disciple making, soul winning, evangelistic passion!

Our mandate is to go and make disciples. Saul, who was later named Paul, took that mandate serious and it has been said that he is one of the greatest missionaries to ever live. This brings me to our next point.

III. We lift up His name through Association together.

Ananias did not want to associate with Paul. Can you blame him? Brethren, it was not an option. God said, "Go do it."

I have a personal story about association. Let me tell you a little bit about myself. I am very conservative in my theology and if I may be so honest, I lean toward being legalistic. I'm not proud of that. If God would let me, I could be so strict and legalistic. I always want to put things in a box and if I could, I'd like to put God and the way He works in a box.

God knows how to get us where He wants us. Before I went to Jacksonville College I prayed that God would give me a preacher roommate. One just like me, someone who was going to set the world on fire, straighten everyone out and learn it is this way or no way. God gave me Shelby Race and Donny Parrish as roommates. They are two of my very best friends and have been since college.

Now picture this. There I was, trying my hardest to get God, the BMA and everything I knew in a fine perfect box. And God gave me Shelby Race and Donny Parrish as my roommates. First of all, Shelby knows there is a box, but he is not coming near it. Donny does not even know there is a box and doesn't want to know. Yet these two young men God gave me as roommates love God with all their heart and they love His Word and they want to reach people for Christ.

Now I wanted us to have organized devotionals, but God had something much better in mind and it turned out to be more fun. It is called debating and arguing Scripture. I remember one night when a young man wanted to teach us about Calvinism. He had a flashlight and turned off the light. Then he told us that God has shone His light on each one of us. He went on to explain and it made a lot of sense to me until Donny ruined the whole thing and turned on the big light and said, the Bible says Jesus is the Light of the World. God's Truth became clear.

Donny and Shelby challenged me, as I hope I did them, about what and why we believe. I learned one of the greatest things about God from them and I will be forever grateful for it. And that is, God's ways are not my ways. His ways are much higher.

I learned from those two guys that there are some things I must not compromise. The fundamentals of God's Word cannot be compromised. What a relief as a pastor to have the freedom to say to some folks, if you do not believe in the virgin birth of Jesus Christ this is not the church for you. I also learned that in non-essential beliefs we are to have liberty as Paul told the Romans over eating meat. Then in all of our beliefs we show charity.

Jesus said that unity is important. It is really important in a church family. Let me tell you why we need to associate with one another. First of all like Saul, we each need help. I do not know where I would be without S.T. Sullivan, Don Collins and Jack Courtney who were my pastors in Oklahoma City; or men like Curtis Carroll, and the man who has had the greatest impact on my ministry, Leon Gaylor. Also men like J.C. Henderson and Gaylan Henry who worked with me and helped me and refused to give up on me.

Second, we can accomplish more together than we can apart. Can you believe how much is being done in the BMA of America? Who would have believed that God would allow us, a small group of Baptists, into the former Soviet Union, or to be ready when the doors opened in Iraq? My church alone could not do that, but together as an association we can.

Third, because God's Word says it and models it, we need to associate to do mission work. The churches joined together to send out this same man, now named Paul, to go to other places. Of all people, can you believe they sent out Paul? Aren't you glad we can still do this today?

In the late 1700's there was a man by the name of William Carey - a shoe cobbler by trade. A coworker by the name of John Warr faithfully witnessed to William even though William resisted for some time. Eventually the wooing of the Holy Spirit drew William to salvation. Then William devoted himself to the study of Scripture. Believe it or not in William Carey's day, the idea of sending out missionaries was not widely supported.

One day at a pastor's meeting, William Carey stood and proposed that the Great Commission was a mandate for every generation. That is when a man stood and said to William, "Sit down, young man, sit down and be still. When God wants to convert the heathen, He will do it without consulting either you or me." William Carey backed off that day, but for eight years he studied and God fanned this passion in his heart until the day he preached a fiery sermon entitled, "Expect great things from God, attempt great things for God." His holy enthusiasm stirred the pastors to start a "Baptist Society for propagating the Gospel among the heathen."

It was not enough though for William Carey to just talk about missions. He went to India as a missionary himself. For more than forty years he gave himself to the Indian people. Just before his death

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Southeastern Baptist College

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

Dr. Jentry Bond
President

Graduation Set

Our 2005 graduation exercises will be held Friday, May 13. We invite all of our freinds, supporters and the families of each graduate to join us for this occasion.

We congratulate each graduate on this milestone in their lives and we wish them the best as they continue their education or enter into ministry.

Associate of Arts Degrees
Honors
Phillip A. Cole

Associate of Arts Degrees
High Honors
Rodney A. Goss

Associate of Arts Degrees
Joel Christopher Berry
Nathaniel Brown
Hubert Aaron Dyess
Kim Hutchinson
Gregory M. Hillman
James E. McLaurin
Linncoyaa B. Rice
Robyn Michele Strickland
Enna M. Taylor
Van C. Williams I

Bachelor of Science Degrees
Honors
Bennie S. Clark

Bachelor of Science Degrees
Bryan K. Atwood
Robert Dale Burch
Larry J. Dennis, Jr.
Gregory M. Hillman
Buck Hughes
William W. Hutchinson

Certificate in Bible
Sidney Tucker

Diploma in Bible
Percy Pollard

Annual Message

from page 7

in 1834, William Carey told a friend, "You have been saying much about Dr. Carey and his work. After I am gone, please speak not of Dr. Carey, but rather of my wonderful Savior." When we associate, it lifts up His Name. Everyone should hear His Wonderful Name.

Every once in a while you hear someone say, "I'm gong to leave the BMA." But I want you to think about something. Does it amaze you, like it does me, that we believe in the local autonomous, independent church – no hierarchy, no denominational control? Every church is self-governing under the Headship of Christ, and yet so much is being done. The world says it can't work, but they don't understand this is God's way.

You can go into a McDonald's anywhere in the world and the Big Mac will taste almost exactly the same. But you ought to be able to go into a Baptist congregation and taste the unique flavor of that local congregation. We are not "McBaptists" or "McAssociationalist!" There is no such thing as The Baptist Missionary Association Church. The only "the" in Baptist church life is THE local Baptist church. You know what the BMA is to me? Donny and Shelby, Gaylan and Linda Henry, the wonderful members of Farley Street Baptist Church, Leon Gaylor, missionaries like John David Smith and Buddy Johnson, etc.

IV. We lift up His Name through our American Citizenship.

The Scripture makes it very plain that Saul would lift up the Name of Jesus before governments when it specifically says, "and kings." I love America, but I don't have to tell you our beloved country is in trouble. At the very core of our problems is religious liberty. This battle is not new to Baptists. Baptists believe that the church and state must maintain separate identities and functions for the good of both. Throughout history, whenever religion has controlled the state or state has controlled religion, both have been corrupted.

We do not believe, however, that this truth prohibits the involvement of Christians in public life. Christians must be involved in public life at every level. Baptists have stood as guardians of religious liberty and the understanding of the distinctive roles of the church and state. Americans need to know, and all of us need to remember, that the constitutional rights protecting freedom of religion are due largely to the impact of Baptists from colonial days to the present.

Baptists, including John Leland, a preacher from Virginia, and James Manning, the president of a Baptist college, (Rhode Island College, which later became Brown University), played an important role in the ratification of the United States Constitution. James Madison introduced amendments to the Constitution to safeguard religious liberty after conferring with John Leland. When James Madison died, the one who eulogized him declared, "The credit of adopting the Constitution of the United States properly belonged to a Baptist clergyman, formerly of Virginia, by the name of John Leland." (The Baptist People, by P.E. Burroughs. P. 65.)

May I remind you of what one of our greatest presidents to ever serve said, "We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of heaven. We have been preserved these many years in peace and prosperity. We have grown in numbers, wealth, and power, as no other nation has ever grown. But we have forgotten God. It behooves us, then, to humble ourselves before the offended Power, to confess our national sins, and to pray for clemency and forgiveness." – Abraham Lincoln. His words are prefect for today. We must not allow others to take away this great religious freedom that has been such a blessing for our nation. We must not allow them to re-write and take His Name out of our history.

Patrick Henry once declared, "It cannot be emphasized too strongly or too often that this great nation was founded, not by religionist, but by Christians; not on religions, but on the Gospel of Jesus Christ. For this very reason people of other faiths have been afforded asylum, prosperity, and freedom of worship here."

In Acts 4, Peter and John were told to no longer speak or teach in the Name of Jesus Christ. "And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered and said unto them, whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." v. 18-20 When you have been saved by the wonderful grace of Jesus Christ, you cannot but speak His Name. If your Christianity does not affect your Citizenship, then brother, you don't have the real thing.

Conclusion

I started this message off by telling you a story about Franklin Graham. I want to close by telling you one about his father, Billy Graham. In January 2000, leaders in Charlotte, North Carolina, invited their "favorite son," Billy Graham, to a luncheon to honor him. After many wonderful things were said about him, Dr. Graham stepped to the rostrum and told this story: Albert Einstein, the great physicist was once traveling from Princeton on a train when the conductor came down the aisle, punching the tickets of each passenger. When he came to Einstein, Einstein reached in his pocket and couldn't find his ticket. He looked everywhere and couldn't find it. The conductor told him not to worry about it, he knew who he was and knew he had purchased a ticket. The conductor continued down the aisle punching tickets. As he was about ready to go to the next car, he noticed Dr. Einstein down on his hands and knees looking for his ticket. The conductor rushed over to him and said to him please don't worry about it, you don't need a ticket. I know who you are. Einstein looked at him and said, "Young man, I too know who I am. What I don't know is where I'm going."

Billy Graham then said, "I am wearing a new suit. My wife, children and grandchildren wanted me to have a new suit for this occasion and one more occasion. You know what that occasion is? This is the suit I'll be wearing when I am buried. But when you hear that I am dead, I don't want you to immediately remember the suit I'm wearing. I want you to remember this: I not only know who I am, I also know where I am going." May it be said of us that not only do we know who we are; we know where we are going. We are the BMAA! We are Baptists in theology! We are Missionaires to the lost! We Associate to do God's work! We are citizens of America! And everything we do should be for the glory of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! When we live up to our name, we will be lifting up His Name.

Last year right before Bro. Doug Brewer stepped up to preach he asked me, "Should I give an invitation?" I hadn't thought about it. Now I have had a year to think about it. You know what, I wish we as pastors and messengers had more time to pray together. I hope God has used this message to speak to your heart. We must be united, renewed, revived, convicted and thoroughly persuaded, that regardless of the cost, our main business is Lifting Up the Name of Jesus Christ. I want to give you the opportunity to commit to that and the opportunity to pray with one another.

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.

Bethel, Fulton

A big howdy from all of us at Bethel. There has been a New Member's class in April at 5 pm taught by Bro. Terry. Brother Tracy was in revival at Lebanon Baptist Church in Laurel April 4-8. On the 8th there were several who attended the Harmony Association meeting at the First Hispanic Baptist Church in Ripley.

The Senior Youth had an activity on the 16th and what a time they had! Bro. Terry attended the national meeting in Joplin, Missouri, the 18th-20th. Our Primary Youth had an activity on the 23rd and they enjoyed a trip to the Buffalo Park in Tupelo. Thanks to all the sponsors who made this possible.

The Northeast Mississippi Ladies Retreat was held at Bethel on the 30th. Maggie Chandler from Arkansas was the guest speaker. Everyone who attended had a great time. The Lord is still blessing us here at Bethel. There have been seven additions since last report. When you are in our area you are always have an invitation to come and visit us.

Terry Coleman, pastor
Joyce Cooley, reporter

Pleasant Hill, Saucier

Pleasant Hill Church will be having revival services beginning Sunday morning, May 15 through Wednesday, May 18. Bro. Kenneth Bobo will be bringing our messages. Sunday morning we will have Sunday School at 10:00 am., worship service at 11:00 a.m., and dinner on the grounds following morning worship service. There will be no church service on Sunday night. Evening services during the week will begin at 7:00 p.m. For more information, you can call our church at 1-228-832-0108.

Cathy Rhodes
Special Events Committee

Community, Poplarville

Community Baptist Church in Barth near Poplarville, will be having revival May 8-13, with Bro. Travis Plumlee as the evangelist. We are excited to have him we want to invite everyone that can to attend the services. On Sunday the 8th we will have Sunday School at 10:00 a.m. with morning services at 11:00. We will have dinner on the grounds and an afternoon service. Monday through Friday services will begin at 7:00 p.m. If you can't attend please be in prayer for the services and Bro. Travis.

Available For Service

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

David Clark

Bro. David Clark is available for pastoral service or pulpit supply as the Lord leads. He may be contacted at 601-426-6896 in Laurel.

Matthew Roberts

In a recent worship service at Mt. Calvary Baptist Church, Picayune, Bro. Matthew Roberts made known God's calling upon his life to preach the gospel. He will be enrolling at Southeastern Baptist College this fall and is now available to preach. Matthew may be contacted at 601-798-0565. You may also reach him by calling Mt. Calvary Church at 601-798-4897. Bro. Matthew has a heart for lost souls and desires to be used in any capacity that God would so direct.

Wayne Rice, pastor

Sidney Farmer

Bro. Sidney Farmer is available for pulpit supply and pastoral work as the Lord may lead. He and his wife Becky have three sons. He has pastored BMA churches in Mississippi and Alabama. He can be contacted at 601-794-8851.

Kevin Sanford

Bro. Kevin Sanford is available for preaching appointments. He and his wife Allison have one son. He may be contacted by calling 601-297-3350 or by contacting Midway First Baptist Church at 601-264-6647.

Wayne Martin

Bro. Wayne Martin has recently surrendered to the ministry at the Midway First Baptist Church of Sumrall. Bro. Wayne and his wife Jackie have three children ages four, two, and one. They live at 11 Zeb Circle in Purvis, MS 39475. Bro. Wayne is interested in preaching appointments. He may be contacted at 601-744-0078, 601-270-1688 or by contacting Midway First Baptist Church at 601 264-6647.

Leon Carmical, Pastor

David Lewis

Bro. David Lewis, 46, is available for pastoral service, pulpit supply and revivals as the Lord leads. He is a graduate of Southeastern Baptist College in Laurel, Mississippi and the BMA Seminary in Jacksonville, Texas. He has pastored churches in Mississippi, Texas, Arkansas and Oklahoma. You can contact him at 662-327-8949, or through his pastor, Bro. Bo Bankston, at 662-327-7432.

Donald Sims

Donald Sims is available for pulpit supply and pastor call as The Lord may lead. He has pastored several churches in Mississippi. He and his wife are members of Bethel Church in Wiggins. He may be contacted by calling 601-528-9215.