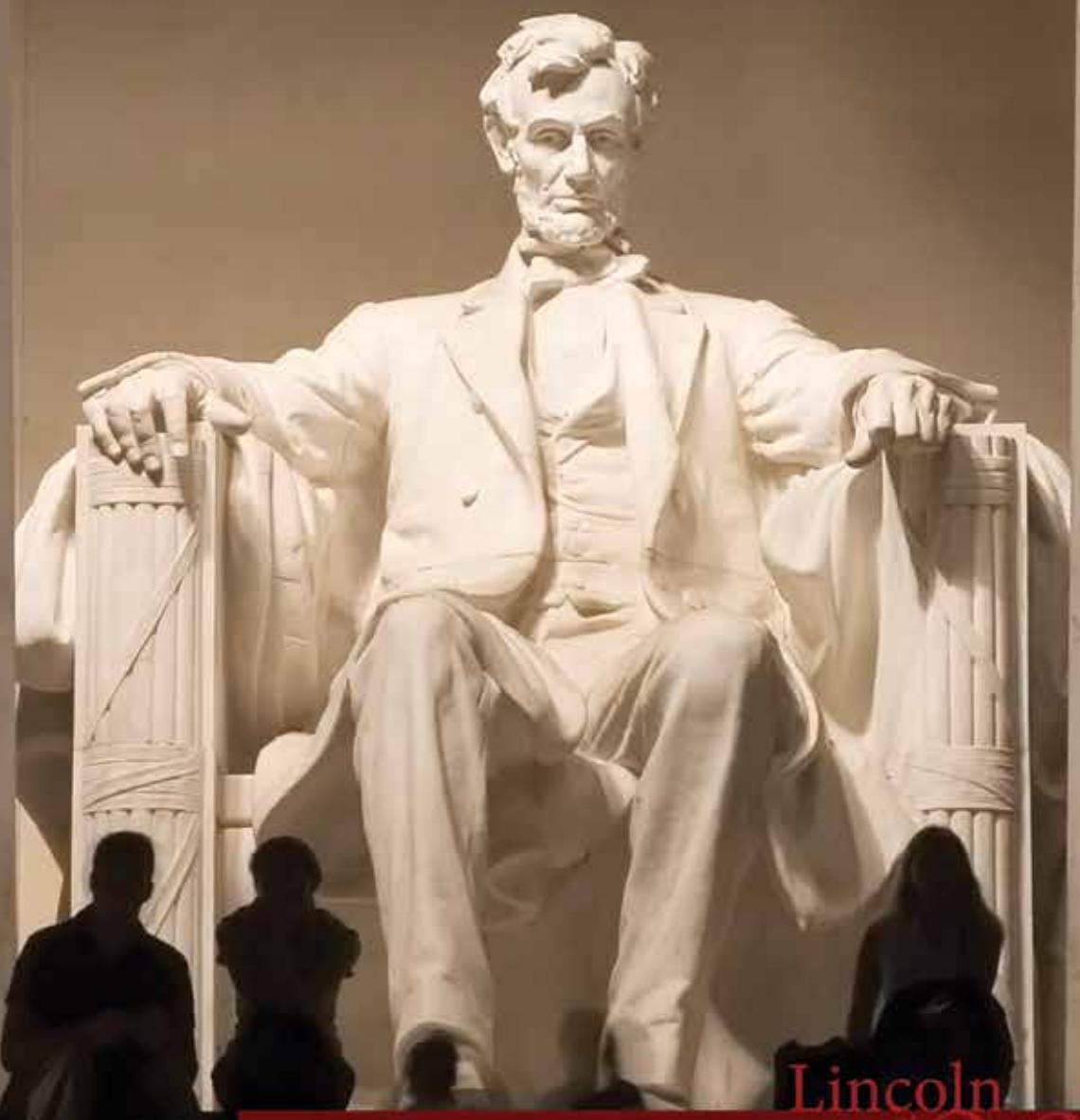


FOR WHOM HE SAVED THE UNION
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BAPTIST BIBLE TRIBUNE

FEBRUARY 2009 | VOL. 59 NO. 6 | \$1.95



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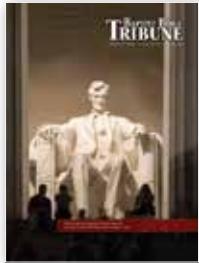
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VOL. 59 NO. 6

BAPTIST BIBLE TRIBUNE

F E B R U A R Y 2 0 0 9

10

America's Sermon

A close look at Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address gives a new perspective on the faith of one of America's most esteemed presidents.



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Indianapolis Comeback

What could have been a devastating setback and total ministry failure, has changed one congregation's approach to "doing" church.



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Team Tanzania

Associate Mission Director Jim Smith spends a little Q&A time covering the effectiveness of team missions.



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On theTable

By Keith Bassham



And on a soap box

You've heard the story, I am certain, about the man who was told by his pastor that the answer to all his financial difficulties could be found in the Bible. The man was excited the next Sunday when he told his pastor that the problem was solved, and the answer, surely enough, was just where he was told. When asked just where he had found his solution, the man replied, "I didn't know where to turn, so I just opened my Bible, closed my eyes, and placed my finger on the page. And right there where I put my finger, I read the words, Chapter 11."

It turns out that churches are not immune to modern financial struggles. A *Wall Street Journal* story coming out just before Christmas gave several examples, including lenders who specialize in church financing now being forced to foreclose on churches at an alarming rate. One pastor of an older and well-established Baptist church reported that only about a third of the pledged amount for a new building had come in, leaving the church on the hook for a much larger amount of debt than planned for. That led to people leaving the church in discouragement, and the problem grew so that the church had to file for bankruptcy protection.

There are lessons for us in the current crisis. Someone asked me after Hurricane Katrina if perhaps God had something to say to us. I replied, "Yes. He's telling us not to live near large bodies of water." More seriously, I think God emphasizes in times of crises things He has already told us. There is a law of sowing and reaping. It is true that a borrower is a servant of a lender. One should not presume upon tomorrow. Do not confuse faith with a foolish jump into the unknown. Keep back

enough of what you earn so that you can help others with needs.

And then you have the common sense arguments. Live within your means. Shop wisely and don't pay full price unless you simply must. Become an environmentalist and reduce, reuse, and recycle. Don't fall for the hype that you must have the latest whatzit to be cool. Avoid consumer debt if at all possible. Find ways to earn income within your hobbies and interests. Remember God and remember others.

Now, I'm off the soapbox. Hey, I think I can use this box if ...

Abraham Lincoln was born 200 years ago this month. In many ways he is both the best-known and least-known of our presidents. I say best-known for obvious reasons. I say least-known because so many legends and myths, things we think we know about Lincoln, are not true. I pointed out, in a recent article, one of the false quotes attributed to our 16th president regarding common people. Others have expressed opinions about his religion (or lack thereof), and all cannot be true since they are so contradictory. However, one documented speech of his, the Second Inaugural, has so much theological content we can at least know some of what Lincoln believed near the end of his life. Randy Eggert, a Baptist Bible College graduate (1987) now serving as an assistant US attorney in Springfield, Missouri, has written an analysis of that speech for this issue of the magazine. Randy is an active member of Park Crest Baptist Church in Springfield, and his career is a good example of the value of an education in Bible and theology no matter what path you are on. Randy told me once that

his BBC training came into play in law school because he was taught the principles of grammatical and historical interpretation of the Scriptures. Those same principles are applied (or at least they should be) to the law.

In addition to Randy's study of the Lincoln speech, I have asked Christopher Beck to give us a little more information on religious references in other inaugural addresses. Chris is the chair of the BBC Communication Department. His dissertation (he holds a PhD in communication from Regent University) analyzed presidential inaugurations. We are fortunate to have people in our Fellowship with the qualifications of Eggert and Beck.

And just before I let you get into the magazine, you might recall that about this time in 2001, there was some news coming out of Indianapolis, Indiana, regarding the Indianapolis Baptist Temple and the IRS. In February of that year, US marshals seized the church property after courts found the church guilty of failing to withhold and pay social security and income taxes for employees of the church. We will not revisit the merits of the case for or against the church, but people have asked about the church since then. Many thought once the property was gone, the church would follow suit. On the contrary, the church is very much in existence, and they are making a big impact in their city. Read the whole comeback story in this issue.

Finally, this is a big month for the Tribune. We are raising our annual February Tribune Offering, and the results of our efforts will be reported in the national Fellowship meeting in Houston, Texas, this month. Do what you can to be there for a great meeting in the Texas sunshine.

PRESIDENTIAL PERSPECTIVE

Gary Grey | President | Baptist Bible Fellowship International



Pastor of my dreams — a good man

I wonder what has happened to the word *good*. I hear God's servants described as: clever, brilliant, courageous, or even super, but very seldom as good. However, God referred to the man called Barnabas as a good man in Acts 11:24. God did not refer to him as Barnabas the genius, or Barnabas the gifted, or Barnabas the wise. Why? According to God's Word, Barnabas possessed the gift of encouragement. Barnabas used the gift God had given him to inspire others with courage, spirit, and hope. That is what encouragement does, it motivates others!

I think of Barnabas as the Baptist Bible Fellowship pastor of my dreams. This dream pastor specializes in others-directed ministries. First, he is a load lifter. He redirects some of his time and energies to focus on the needs of other pastors rather than just his own needs. He enjoys being a performer and not a pretender who responds with just an "I'll pray for you, brother." He is a giver, not just a receiver. He is not afraid to get involved with others serving the same God. He sees the big picture of a world needing the gospel and realizes that it will take all of those who are of the household of faith to reach those without Christ.

The Fellowship pastor of my dreams is also a friend finder. I think of the Apostle Paul just after his conversion. The disciples were afraid of him and didn't trust him because of his past. None wanted anything to do with him, but Barnabas took him in. He saw potential where his brothers in Christ saw a problem. As pastors and workers, we need to be friend finders. We need to make room for each other. What a blessing it is to receive an unexpected phone call or note of

encouragement from another pastor, perhaps someone I have not known well, but someone who just wanted to be an encourager and a refresher — it is like a breath of fresh air to me! Someone has said that those who refresh others many times do so with their presence, with their pen (writing a note), or with their purse (monetary gift). How true this is!

The BBFI pastor of my dreams is a bridge builder. In Acts 11:19-24, the Antioch revival caused great concern. There had been no apostolic guidance or credence, they did not initiate it, and they did not allow it. They sent Barnabas to investigate. Barnabas saw God moving, he exhorted them to keep going, and he encouraged them. As pastors, we need to follow the example of Barnabas and rejoice with others who preach the same gospel as we do as they prosper and accomplish something for God.

I believe that the competition that sometimes happens among churches is a dishonor to the name of Christ. First Corinthians 3:3 describes the contention born of envy, the desire for prestige, and a place of prominence. We are not competitors, we are compatriots. Compatriots recognize their identity as members of the same great kingdom, while competitors have eyes and a heart for only their own little kingdoms.

Barnabas was a bridge builder between old and new. He knew the old by heart, but he could also see the new. He believed in tradition but he also believed in the frontier. Thank God for people who can take the past, link it to the future, and bring people together to further the cause of Christ.

The Fellowship pastor of my

dreams is a disciple developer. Barnabas left for Tarsus to seek Saul. He must have known that Saul was bigger in talent and in genius as well as bigger in breath of boldness and vision. Foremost in Barnabas' mind was the growth of these new believers. He wanted them to have the best possible instructor. As an encourager, Barnabas cared more about people than about his own prominence. A dream pastor realizes that God never puts personalities ahead of purposes!

Finally, the BBFI pastor of my dreams is a failure fixer. Acts 15:36-40 takes us ahead a few years in time as Paul is planning to embark on a second missionary journey with his trusted encourager, Barnabas. Barnabas wanted John Mark to go along and Paul said no. He remembered well that on their first missionary journey, Mark had dropped out, "and the contention was so sharp between [Barnabas and Paul], that they departed asunder one from the other: and so Barnabas took Mark, and sailed to Cyprus."

They must have agreed to disagree, for we are told that Paul took Silas and Barnabas took John Mark. Barnabas may have said to John Mark, "Come on, son, you've got good stuff in you." Later, this was the same John Mark who wrote the Gospel of Mark and the one Paul asked for when he was in prison (2 Timothy 4:11). The encourager Barnabas was most certainly a failure fixer.

These can be discouraging days, and preachers and people need a Barnabas to come alongside them, and inspire them, and infuse them with courage, spirit, and hope. If we do these things, our Fellowship really can be a dream come true.

B B F I N A T I O N A L M E E T I N G

WITH ETERNITY IN VIEW



Larry Maddox
Host Pastor

It has been said that things are bigger in Texas, and I agree! The Central Baptist Church family is extending a big welcome as you join us for the BBFI National Meeting in February. We are anticipating the biggest and best meeting ever and your attendance will make that happen.

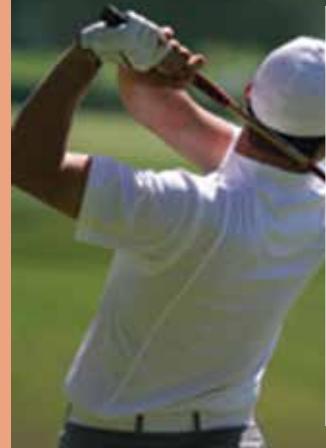
The City of Houston is a booming metropolis with a million things to do and to see. We hope you will avail yourself of the opportunity to explore our city.

Please make plans now to be here as we are challenged to be more aware of our individual responsibilities to the Lord and to His people "With Eternity In View".

FEBRUARY 16-18, 2009

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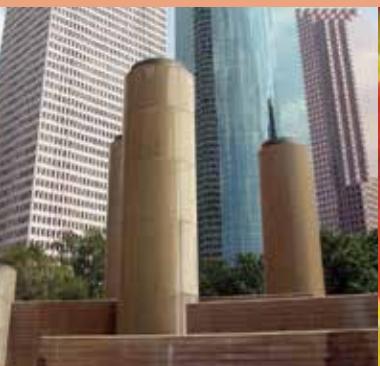


Madeline Nelson
Ladies Ministry
Coordinator,
Central Baptist

Madeline Nelson will be the guest speaker for a ladies meeting on Wednesday morning. **The Women's Ministry** reaches out to the women of Central Baptist Church by offering activities that encourage service and fellowship.

Two of the many activities are:
Threads of Love is a ministry to the families of premature babies in the NICU of a local hospital. We sew, crochet and knit premie sized baby items and blankets.

The Mentoring Ministry pairs women for the purpose of encouragement, friendship and accountability for one year.





NASA

Special seminar for missionaries and pastors

Hosted by the Mission Office and taught by Rudy Johnson
Wednesday afternoon — meeting place to be announced

1:00 to 2:00 PM

For missionaries

RAISE MORE OR SPEND LESS

It is based on the simple fact: If your out go is more than your income, your upkeep will be your down fall. How to build and use a family budget. 10 easy ways to save money.

2:00 to 3:00

Break with Q&A time

3:00 to 4:00 PM

For pastors

FIVE PROVEN TOOLS FOR A SUCCESSFUL MISSIONARY PROGRAM



SCHEDULE

Monday

Evening

Ray Redmon,
Missionary to Korea

Bruce Humbert,
Richton Park, IL

Tuesday

Morning

Pat Finley, Winchester, KY

Richard Edwards,
Jacksonville, FL

Wayne Guinn, National
Church Planting Office

Afternoon

Breakout Sessions

Evening

Lance Patterson,
Missionary to Kenya

Gary Grey, Springfield, MO

Wednesday

Morning

John Westfall,
East Greenbush, NY

Tom Wagoner, Dunn, NC

Keith Bassham,
Tribune Editor

Afternoon
Shopping, Memorial City Mall

Evening

Greg Lyons,
Missionary to the **Philippines**

Johnny Hunt, Woodstock, GA

SPEAKERS



Bruce Humbert



Ray Redmon



Pat Finley



Richard Edwards



Wayne Guinn



Lance Patterson



Gary Grey



John Westfall



Tom Wagoner



Keith Bassham



Greg Lyons



Johnny Hunt

HOTELS

LaQuinta - \$79.00 per night,
King and Double same rate
15225 Katy Freeway
Houston, Texas 281-646-9200
We have 75 rooms reserved at this hotel.

Spring Hill Suites (Marriott)
\$154.00 King - \$149 Double
2501 Texmati Drive
Katy, Texas 77494 281-644-4455

Holiday Inn Express
Queen-\$99.00 - Double-\$110.00
22105 Katy Freeway
Katy, Texas 77450
281-395-4800

Comfort Inn & Suites
\$118.50 - 2Q/King - Suite - \$135.15
32025 Interstate 10 West at Mason Road
Katy, Texas 77450 281-392-8700

Candlewood Suites
\$129.99 per night with full kitchen
19998 Park Row Drive - off the Katy Freeway
Houston, Texas 77449 281-578-9993

Super 8 Motel - \$95.00 to \$105.00
22157 Katy Freeway
Katy, Texas 77450 281-395-5757

Hampton Inn and Suites
\$119.00 per night (standard)
22055 Katy Freeway
Katy, Texas 77450 281-392-1000

Crown Plaza Hotel - \$139 per night
I-10 West (Katy Freeway) at Hwy 6
Houston, TX 77079 281-558-5580

DIGRESSIONS

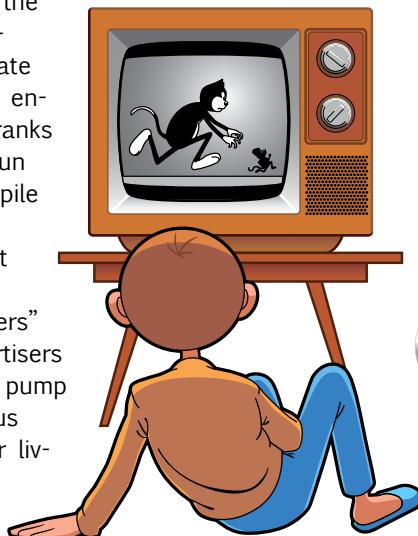
Digressions incontestibly are the sunshine; they are the life, the soul of reading.

-Laurence Sterne

Best/Worst pro-family tv advertisers

When companies lay down money for advertisements during family-friendly programming, the Parents Television Council (PTC) takes note. "The role that television advertisers play in determining what type of content comes into every home in America cannot be overstated," says PTC president, Tim Winter. "We commend the advertisers on our best list that have chosen to associate their hard-earned corporate brands with positive programming that the entire family can watch together." The PTC ranks companies based on the number of ads run during family-friendly programming to compile the "Best Advertisers" list. Companies with the most ads run during programming that would be inappropriate for family viewing receive their place on the "Worst Advertisers" list. "Parents can thank many of the advertisers on the worst list for enabling networks to pump some of the most shocking and outrageous content on the air today directly into their living rooms," said Winter.

Source: *Baptist Press*, www.bnnews.net, "Coca-Cola is best Pro-Family Advertiser" by Erin Roach, December 5, 2008.



10 Best

Coca-Cola
The Clorox Company
Century 21 Real Estate
H&R Block
Ferrero SpA (USA)
CVS Caremark Corporation
Whirlpool Corporation
The Hershey Company
State Farm Mutual Automobile Ins.
Hewlett-Packard



10 Worst

General Motors Corporation
Nissan North America
L'Oréal USA
Pepsi-Cola North America
GlaxoSmithKline Holdings
Reckitt Benckiser
Target Corporation
Kohl's Corporation
Verizon Communications
Toyota Motor North America.



Church foreclosures on the rise as economy slows

Where lenders once saw positive credit risks in accepting church mortgage applications, fewer lenders today are willing to take such risks due to higher numbers of churches defaulting on loans. As church buildings fall under the auction block, some blame a drop in giving — with some churches and lenders reporting a 15% decrease — while others point to the church-building boom that began with mega-churches in the 1990s and overstretched the finances of many congregations.



The Evangelical Christian Credit Union of Brea, California, had foreclosed on only two churches in its 45-year history prior to 2008. Last year alone, they foreclosed on seven church properties. After foreclosing on 10 church properties over the last few years, Church Mortgage & Loan Corp of Maitland, Florida, could not find buyers for the properties (or \$18 million to pay bondholders) and had to file for Chapter 11 bankruptcy early in 2008.

Source: Dow Jones & Company, "In Hard Times, Houses of God Turn to Chapter 11 in Book of Bankruptcy" by Suzanne Sataline, 2008.



of internet users say that the internet has improved their connections to

friends "a lot," and 23% say it has increased the quality of their communication with family members by a similar amount. They say these improvements are particularly useful for keeping in touch with extended family members who may live many miles away.

Source: Pew/Internet and American Life Project, Networked Families, Oct. 2008.

Spurgeon's words still true 130 years later

Scientific thought is supposed to be the way for finding out God and the old Scripture is out of date which says, "Incline your ear, and come unto Me: hear, and your soul shall live." Plain truth is, in this wonderful century, of small account — men crave to be mystified by their own cogitations. Many glory in being too intellectual to receive anything as absolute certainty — they are not at all inclined to submit to the authority of a positive Revelation! God's Word is not accepted by them as final, but they judge it and believe what they like of it.

This is madness! I speak to those who believe in the Scriptures and I say if, indeed, there is a Revelation, it becomes us to be silent before it and accept it without dispute! The Lord knows what is better than we can ever know and if

He has been pleased to speak plainly and solemnly His Word, it is ours to believe what He says because He says it! It may be all very well to prove that such-and-such a Revelation of God is consistent with reason, consistent with analogy, consistent with a thousand things — but the attitude which needs such argument is a spirit of rebellion against God! If there is a Revelation, every part of it is of authority and must be believed. Human thought is not the arbiter of Truth, but the Infallible Word is the end of all strife.

It is not ours to say what the Truth of God must be, or what we think it should be, or what we would like it to be — but reverently to sit down with open ears and willing heart to receive what God has spoken. If an astronomer were to refuse to examine the stars and teach an astron-

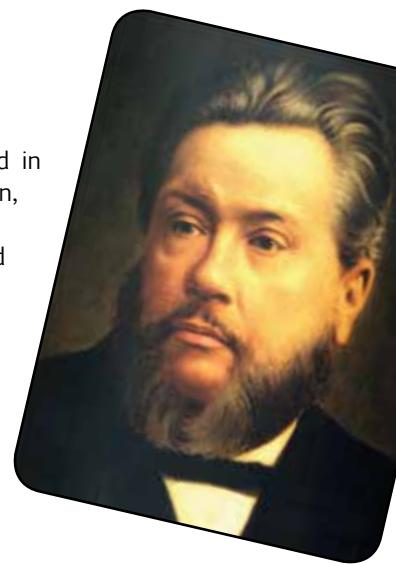
omy invented in his own brain, he would be an idiot! And those who treat theology in the same fashion are not much better!

"Surely," says one,

"we ought to modify our beliefs by public opinion and the current of thought." I say, "NO," a thousand times! The Incorruptible Word of God lives and abides forever and is incapable of modification! To modify is to adulterate, nullify and render it of no effect, so that it becomes another gospel and, indeed, no Gospel.

The thought of tampering with the revealed Truth of God is vicious and ought not to be tolerated by any Christian for a second! The Gospel of Jesus Christ is not a thing which is to be molded according to the fashion of the period — it is "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today, and forever." Whether the Greek philosophy rules or is exploded. Whether some more modern theory blazes up or smolders down is small concern of ours, for we are set to preach the one unvarying Gospel of Jesus Christ sent down with the Holy Spirit from Heaven!

Source: Charles Spurgeon, Forts Demolished and Prisoners Taken (Sermon #1473 on the Web at www.spurgeongems.org)



50 years ago...in the Baptist Bible Tribune

In the NEWS of the WEEK

On Jan. 18, with 4 inches of snow and 10 degrees above zero, Community Baptist church, Garden City, Mich., **James B. Allen**, pastor, had 484 in Sunday school, two professions of faith in Christ, and a total offering for the day of \$1,246.

The first service of Bethel Baptist church, Fort Collins, Colo., **Orville Emery**, pastor, was held last Aug. 27 with 16 in Sunday school. On Jan. 11 there were 79. The church contributes to the support of **Rev. and Mrs. Joel Donahoe**, Baptist Bible Fellowship missionaries to Africa; **Rev. and Mrs. John Collins**, missionaries to Brazil, and **Rev. and Mrs. W. F. Holske**, missionaries to Pakistan. The church had a special Christmas offering of \$50.

McDonough Street Baptist church, Atlanta, Ga., **Hollis Cook**, pastor, had its first service last Sept. 21 with 52 present. The congregation is meeting in the auditorium of a grade school in a good location. They are going to buy property.

Readers of The Tribune having acquaintances and friends in Atlanta who might be interested in this new work should write Rev. Hollis Cook, 434 Copenhill Ave., N. E., Atlanta.

* * * * *
West Side Baptist church, Staunton, Va., **Sam Whitfield**, pastor, had 106 in Sunday school Jan. 11, 75 for the evening service, and a total offering for the day of \$127.75. At the morning service, **William Rexrode** and **Robert S. Smith** were ordained deacons.

* * * * *
Calvary Baptist church, Greeley, Colo., **Warren Norton**, pastor, had its greatest year in 1958. The church gave \$2,500 to missions, \$2,000 of which was contributed through the Baptist Bible Fellowship. The debt on the church property has been reduced to \$4,000.

NEW TESTAMENT BAPTIST CHURCH

Marvin Hooge, Pastor
Phoenix, Arizona

The Lord has blessed us beyond all measure since our arrival in Phoenix. Our son is almost 3 months old and weighs 15 lbs. He is a picture of health.

The church was organized last Aug. 3. Our highest attendance in Sunday school has been 37.

MARVIN HOOGHE.

Call me!

70% of couples who both own a cell phone contact each other once a day or more to say hello or chat;



54% of couples who have one or no cell phones do this at least once a day.

Source: Pew/Internet and American Life Project, Net-worked Families, Oct. 2008.



—AMERICA'S SERMON—

A profile of Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address

by Randy Eggert

Shortly after noon on March 4, 1865, Abraham Lincoln, wearing a new suit of black cloth, took the oath of office for a second time as president of the United States. Prior to taking the oath, Lincoln gave his Second Inaugural Address.

Lincoln's Second Inaugural has been called America's Sermon, because the core of the speech involves a discussion of judgment as a key component of God's will. Lincoln directly quoted three different passages from the Bible, Matthew 7:1, Matthew 18:7, and Psalm 19:9, and these quotations actually are the core of the speech. Only one president prior to Lincoln, John Quincy Adams, had quoted

from the Bible, and that was a throwaway line citing Psalm 127:1 at the end of the speech where Adams said he would rely on divine will to govern the country. Other presidents had been content to refer to Divine Providence or the Creator or other euphemisms to reference God.

In this speech, Lincoln used his understanding of the Bible to take the nation by the hand, lead it before a mirror of God's will, challenge it to look honestly at the reflection cast back, and accept in good faith and humility the righteous prerogative of a "just God." It was an extraordinary statement of government public policy, and it was even more extraordinary coming from

Abraham Lincoln.

Despite the modern hagiography surrounding Lincoln, the 16th president was not a particularly religious person until the end of his life. Lincoln never joined a church, or, as far as is known, took baptism or communion. Lincoln periodically had to refute allegations that he was a skeptic, or even worse, an outright heretic, regarding the Christian faith. Lincoln's path from possible skeptic to a believer in God's sovereignty begins, in part, with his being the son of an unloved father and the path ends with him being the father of a loved son.

Lincoln was our first president to be nominally raised in the Baptist faith.

◀ Photographer Alexander Gardner captured this image of President Lincoln delivering his inaugural address on the east portico of the U.S. Capitol, March 4, 1865.

Lincoln's father, Thomas Lincoln, was a member of a Primitive Baptist church in Kentucky when Lincoln was born, and when the Lincoln family moved to Indiana in 1816, the family attended the Little Pigeon Baptist Church, another Primitive Baptist congregation. Primitive Baptists were strongly Calvinistic in theology, anti-slave in political outlook, and because of the lack of educated clergy on the frontier, susceptible to emotionalism in preaching.

Lincoln recoiled against the emotionalism and uneducated nature of the clergy who apparently graced the pulpit of the Little Pigeon church. On one occasion, Thomas Lincoln angrily disciplined his son after catching him after a Sunday service behind the church mocking and mimicking the preacher's sermon to the delight of the other teenage boys who were Lincoln's audience. When Lincoln moved with his family to Illinois in 1830, there is no record of him joining as an adult with the Primitive Baptist congregations in New Salem or Springfield.

He had a distant relationship with his father. Thomas Lincoln was not a well-educated man and Lincoln was apparently embarrassed by him as he began his own rise in Illinois politics. He did, however, carry vestiges of his father's worldview as he developed in adulthood. Lincoln, as a young man, maintained a belief in some unknown power or force that compelled a person to a certain action or result apart from free will, which Lincoln labeled "the Doctrine of Necessity." He credited his upbringing with instilling within him a strong aversion to slavery. Thomas Lincoln's anti-slavery beliefs, springing from his church's teaching, were one factor in the family's move from Kentucky to Indiana in 1816. Lincoln, like most Americans of his generation, had a deep knowledge of the Bible as a book. He memorized large portions of the Bible, along with John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, Parson Weem's *Life of Washington*, and portions of Aesop's *Fables*.

Well liked and a good storyteller, the

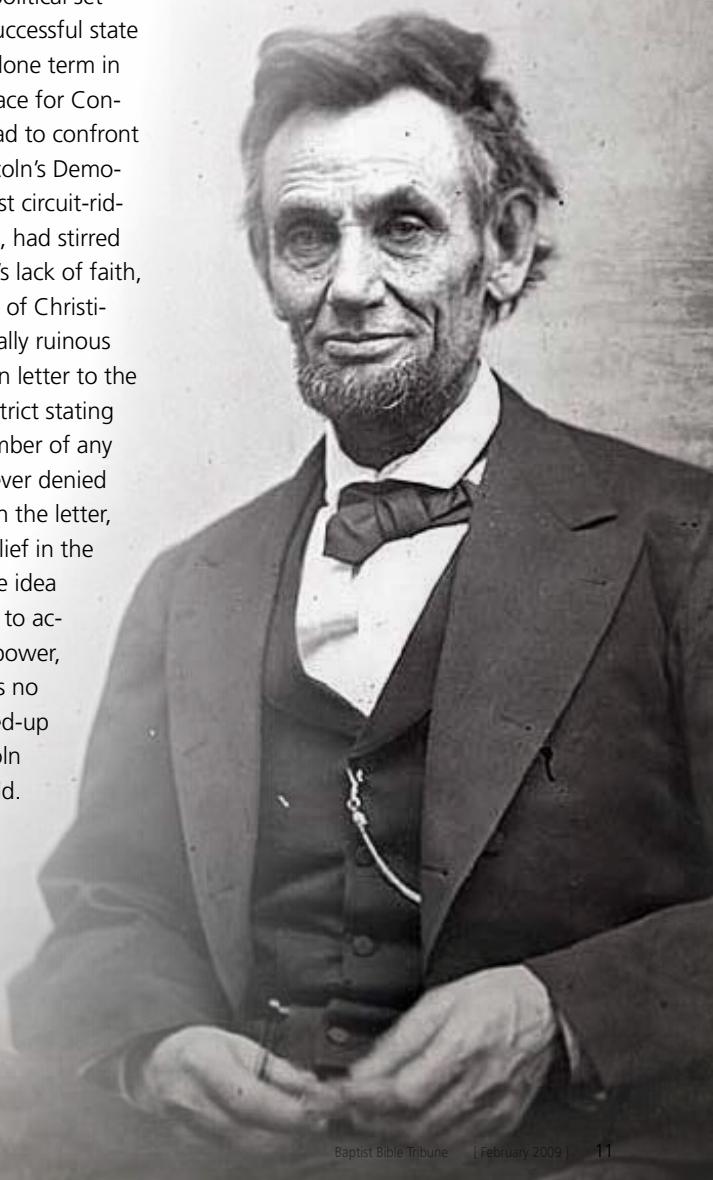
ambitious young Lincoln embarked on a career of politics and the law. He began his political rise in New Salem, Illinois, and then in the state capital, Springfield. Along the way, Lincoln dealt with, as he called it, "this sad world of ours." His first love, Ann Rutledge, died before they could be married. His eventual wife, Mary Todd Lincoln, had a temper and haughty disposition, and as the tragedies that enveloped Lincoln also affected her, she turned to spiritualism, and eventually became mentally imbalanced. Lincoln was never close to his first son, Robert. Their second son, Edward, died at four years of age in 1850. Lincoln was deeply troubled by the loss, but at the time did not attempt to rationalize his death as part of any divine plan. After Edward's death, the Lincolns had two more children, William, nicknamed Willie, who Lincoln doted on, and Thomas, named after Abraham's father.

Lincoln also confronted political setbacks. While he served as a successful state legislator, he only served one lone term in Congress. It was during this race for Congress, in 1846, that Lincoln had to confront questions about his faith. Lincoln's Democratic opponent, the Methodist circuit-riding preacher Peter Cartwright, had stirred up ugly rumors about Lincoln's lack of faith, intimating he was a "scoffer" of Christianity. To confront this potentially ruinous charge, Lincoln issued an open letter to the voters of his congressional district stating that while he was "not a member of any Christian church" he had "never denied the truth of the Scriptures." In the letter, Lincoln further defined his belief in the "Doctrine of Necessity" as the idea the "human mind is impelled to action, or held in rest by some power, over which the mind itself has no control," again a more dressed-up version of the Calvinism Lincoln had been exposed to as a child. Lincoln was passed over for the United States Senate twice, in 1856, and more famously, to Steve Douglas in 1858. While he was a successful and prosperous attorney, political success seemed to

elude him. Lincoln became depressed at the losses and wrote in 1856 that for him "the race of ambition has been a failure — a flat failure."

During these times of growth, trial, and political maturity, apart from his letter describing the "Doctrine of Necessity" in 1846, Lincoln did not evidence any deep religious impulse or thought. Lincoln's law partner, William Herndon, openly disgusted with the post-assassination portrayal of Lincoln as an overtly religious man, stated that Lincoln had lived and died as "an unbeliever." Herndon can be somewhat discounted as an unreliable witness, himself being an occasional ally of the 19th century agnostic Robert Ingersoll in attempting to turn Lincoln into an American Voltaire rejecting traditional Christianity.

▼ President Lincoln sat for this portrait by Alexander Gardner on February 5, 1865.



But both Herndon and Ingersoll are correct insofar that Lincoln, prior to his election in 1861, was a man untroubled by a deep religious conviction that was the hallmark of the age in which he became president.

Lincoln had the misfortune of being both the catalyst for and the president during the bloodiest war in the nation's history. Southern politicians had promised that they would foment rebellion if Lincoln, the "black Republican," became president, and they kept their word. Eventually, 600,000 Americans, north and south, died in the rebellion, and Lincoln, a man averse to cruelty and bloodshed, could not help but wonder what role he had played in causing it.

Also, in February of 1862, at the beginning of the war, Lincoln's beloved Willie died. Willie's death drove Mary Todd Lincoln to psychic mediums for comfort. In Lincoln's case, it suffused the remainder of Lincoln's life with the personal grief from the loss. Lincoln never overcame his belief in the "Doctrine of Necessity" and was fond of quoting a line from Hamlet:

*There's a divinity that shapes our ends
Rough-hew them how we will.*

In a letter to a grieving daughter of an old friend from his days as a circuit-riding lawyer in Illinois, after her father had died in a battle in Mississippi, Lincoln told her to remember that despite the pain "[y]ou are sure to be happy again" adding that while in "this sad world of ours, sorrow comes to all," to the young, it "comes with bitter agony, because it takes them unawares. The older have learned to ever expect it."

But underneath the fatalism, Lincoln began to understand that a benevolent God was ordering his life for a purpose. Lincoln was neither the first nor the last man to be driven back to the faith of his childhood by personal tragedy. But the journey back was more poignant under the tremendous pressure the prosecution of the war made on Lincoln. The president rented a pew at the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church in Washington, and had a series of discussions with the pastor, Phineas D. Gurley, about the death of Willie and the assurance that the child was

in heaven. Lincoln began to pepper his remarks and speeches with direct references to God, something that he had not frequently done before his election.

Lincoln told members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in May of 1862 that he placed his "whole dependence upon the favor of God." In an interview in October of 1862, Lincoln asserted that he was a "humble instrument in the hands of our Heavenly Father" who desired that "all my works and acts may be according to His will." Lincoln stated that if he had his way, the war would have never commenced, and would already be over, but he confessed that through some "wise purpose of his own, mysterious and unknown to us" God allowed the war to continue and that even though he could not understand why, with his "limited understanding" Lincoln was confident that "we cannot but believe, that He who made the world

The will of God prevails. In great contests each party claims to act in accordance with the will of God. Both may be, and one must be wrong. God cannot be for and against the same thing at the same time. In the present civil war it is quite possible that God's purpose is something different from the purposes of either party — and yet the human instrumentalities, working just as they do are the best adaptation to effect His purposes. I am almost ready to say that this is probably true — that God wills this contest, and wills that it shall not end yet.

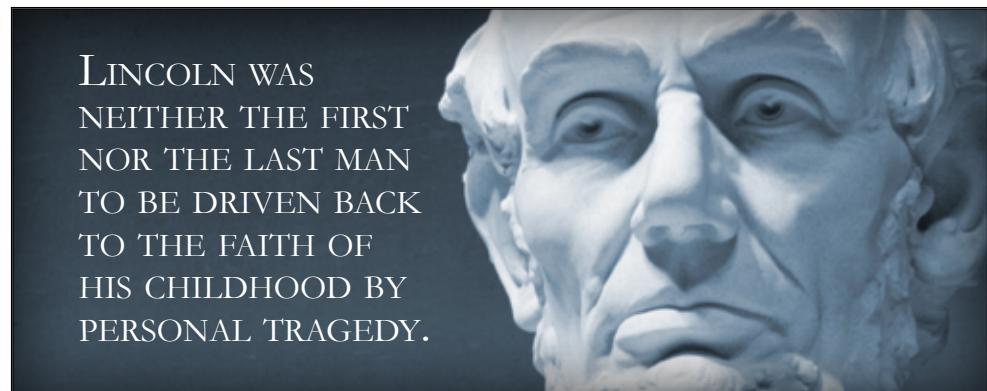
That Lincoln read the Bible prior to becoming president is without question. As most Americans of the mid-19th century, it was probably one of the first books that Lincoln read. Prior to his election, Lincoln had used Jesus' rebuke to the Pharisees

LINCOLN WAS
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still governs it." In 1863, Lincoln invoked the "gracious favor" of "Almighty God" in issuing the Emancipation Proclamation and hoped that the nation, "under God," would have a "new birth of freedom," in the Gettysburg Address.

Some biographers dismiss these references to God as examples of "civic religion" designed to play to public opinion. Lincoln's internal thoughts, however, reveal a man not making allowances for public opinion, but instead struggling with how God might be using him in the nation's great struggle. In a private note that Lincoln wrote in September of 1862, he foreshadowed arguments that he would use during the Second Inaugural Address:

concerning attributing Christ's miracles to Satan in his "House Divided" speech in 1858. Such biblical references were easily recognizable to the Americans of Lincoln's day who would have known instantly from where the reference came. These references were more than just rhetorical flourishes on Lincoln's part. In the summer of 1864, Lincoln's old friend, Joshua Speed, found Lincoln reading his Bible. Speed complimented Lincoln on being so "profitably engaged" but stated that if Lincoln had recovered from his "skepticism," Speed had not. Lincoln admonished his old friend he was wrong, and advised that "take all of this book upon reason that you can, and the balance on faith, and you will live



and die a happier and better man."

When Lincoln received a Bible from a delegation of Baltimore African-Americans in September of 1864, he told them that the Bible was "the best gift God has given man." Lincoln further stated that "[a]ll the good the Saviour gave to the world was communicated through this book. But for it we could not know right from wrong. All things most desirable for man's welfare, here and hereafter, are to be found portrayed in it." It is hard to believe that Lincoln, with his reputation for honesty, would feel the need to be so lavish in his praise for the Bible if the sentiment was not heartfelt.

So, as the time for Lincoln's Second

Inaugural Address approached, Lincoln had, as historian David Donald noted, gone through a "process of crystallization" about the role of God in his life. God reigned, and Lincoln, in faith, trusted that God would appropriately direct his paths. Lincoln had already expressed these themes in his writings and speeches to smaller audiences. Now, Lincoln would express these thoughts to the rest of the nation and the world.

Inauguration Day, 1865, dawned cold and wet. Rain the previous week had turned the dirt streets into thick, muddy rivers, and the mud got everywhere, including the thick woolen pants of the male spectators and the long dresses of the women. Rain continued into the morning of March 4, and the large crowd which had come to observe the event was thoroughly soaked by the time the ceremonies began. Before Lincoln began to speak, after noon, sunlight penetrated the clouds, illuminating the rostrum where Lincoln was

standing and thrilling the crowd.

Lincoln's speech, at 703 words, is the third shortest Inaugural Address as of January of 2009, and 44 of those words are direct quotations from the King James Bible. Lincoln did not use the occasion of the speech to boast about the recent war success. It was, in fact, absent the triumphalism so much the hallmark of modern American politics.

Instead, Lincoln began the speech by noting that the "progress of our arms" was well known to the public so Lincoln would

limitation of slavery in the United States, this cause had become overwhelmed by the "magnitude" and "duration" of the war. Emancipation had become law, and the Confederate Congress was discussing arming slaves in order to fight for southern independence, with the promise that they would be freed for their service. The war itself had dislocated large numbers of slaves, and it would be impossible to return them back to their masters. Some of

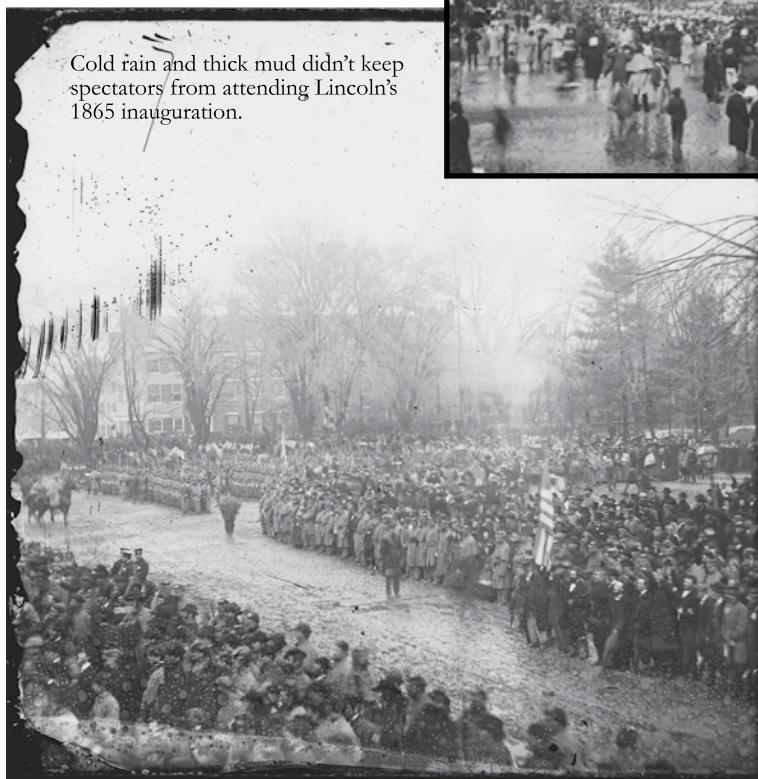
these former slaves were fighting in the Union Army. The primary cause of the war then, slavery, had essentially ceased, yet the war continued.

Lincoln pivoted in the speech and focused upon the dilemma of trying to explain to the na-

tion why the war should continue. "Both read the same Bible, and pray to the same God; and each invokes His aid against the other" Lincoln said, noting the inconsistency of men who seek to enlist God in their cause instead of seeking to enlist in God's cause. Lincoln, despite his admonition to "judge not that we be not judged" did implicitly judge unworthy a cause that asked a "just God's assistance in wringing bread from the sweat of other men's faces."

Lincoln invoked the imagery of prayer three times in the speech, first in noting that both sides prayed to the same God and asked for his aid against the other, second, that prayers of both could not be answered or answered fully, and third, that the nation fondly hoped and fervently prayed that this "mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away." Lincoln believed in prayer, and was observed praying on numerous occasions in the White House. Lincoln, however, made clear in his comments here that sometimes, despite the fervor of the prayer, the answer to that prayer may be the opposite of the request. Why was this

Cold rain and thick mud didn't keep spectators from attending Lincoln's 1865 inauguration.



not give a further report except to note that "with high hopes for the future, no prediction in regard to it is ventured." Lincoln then focused on the ultimate cause of the war, the institution of slavery in the southern states. Lincoln noted that while both sides deplored the bloodshed of the war, one side "would make war rather than let the nation survive; and the other would accept war rather than let it perish. And the war came."

Lincoln noted the irony that while the cause of the war was the expansion or

so? Lincoln's answer forms the core of the speech:

The prayers of both could not be answered; that of neither has been answered fully. The Almighty has his own purposes. "Woe unto the world because of offences! For it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh!" If we shall suppose that American slavery is one of those offences which, in the providence of God, must needs come, but which, having continued through His appointed time, He now wills to remove, and that He gives to both North and South, this terrible war, as the woe due to those by whom the offense came, shall we discern therein any departure from those divine attributes which the believers in a Living God always ascribe to Him?

Lincoln speculated that if the war was the "woe" due for the terrible offense of slavery, then this fact was evidence of, not evidence against, the "divine attributes which the believers of a Living God always ascribe to him." Lincoln said that while "fondly we do hope — fervently do we pray — that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away" it was more likely that God's will required a *quid pro quo* punishment to pay for the offense," until all of the wealth piled by the bondman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash, shall be paid by another drawn by the sword." Lincoln, quoting Psalm 19:9, concluded whether God willed the war to end immediately or to last longer, the nation should trust that the "judgments of the Lord, are true and righteous altogether."

Lincoln urged the nation to seek God's

will in the ordering of its affairs. Lincoln did not presuppose that his will was automatically God's will for the nation, and he had found that sometimes, in the course of life, God's judgments and his will were not readily comprehended by men. The Second Inaugural Address marked Lincoln's final acceptance that it was part of the Christian experience to stand for righteousness even when God's will hammered away the common supports of our lives. Therefore, Lincoln opens his closing paragraph:

With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in...

This urge to strive on with "firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right" should be seen as more proof of the process of crystallization in Lincoln's mind

WHEN THE PRESIDENT INVITES GOD TO THE INAUGURATION

By Christopher L. Beck

January 20, 2005, President George W. Bush closed his Second Inaugural Address with the benediction, "May God bless you, and may He watch over the United States of America." Bush had closed his First Inaugural Address in a similar way. In that speech, he also indirectly quoted from Ecclesiastes 9:11. However, Bush was not the first American president to invoke God's name in an inaugural address. These speeches abound with references to God, the Bible, and even Christianity.

George Washington's appeal to the Almighty

George Washington, on April 30, 1789, said in his first inaugural address:

[I]t would be peculiarly improper to omit in this first official act my fervent supplications to that Almighty Being who rules over the universe, who presides in the councils of nations . . . that His benediction may consecrate to the liberties and happiness

of the people of the United States a Government instituted by themselves for these essential purposes. . . . No people can be bound to acknowledge and adore the Invisible Hand which conducts the affairs of men more than those of the United States.

Washington concluded by recognizing God as the "benign Parent of the Human Race" who had "been pleased to favor the American people" during the process of establishing a new form of government. He also expressed his desire to see God bless America in the future in areas "on which the success of this Government must depend."

In fact, seven "religious activities" took place at Washington's first inaugural, according to House Resolution 888 (introduced in Congress in 2007 by U.S. Representative Randy Forbes). These were:

- (1) the use of the Bible to administer the oath;
- (2) affirming the religious nature of the

oath by the adding the prayer 'So help me God!' to the oath;

- (3) inaugural prayers offered by the president;
- (4) religious content in the inaugural address;
- (5) civil leaders calling the people to prayer or acknowledgement of God;
- (6) inaugural worship services attended *en masse* by Congress as an official part of congressional activities; and
- (7) clergy-led inaugural prayers, activities which have been replicated in whole or part by every subsequent president . . .

John Adams on Christianity

Following Washington, John Adams became the nation's second Chief Executive. In his March 7, 1797, address, Adams described qualifications he brought to the job, including his "veneration for the religion of a people who profess and call themselves Christians, and a fixed resolution to consider a decent respect for Christianity . . ."

toward an acceptance of God's sovereignty. Lincoln, in his Cooper Union address in 1860 had used a similar phrase to encourage Republicans to stand firm against attempts by southerners to water down Republican opposition to slavery expansion in the territories. Then Lincoln said "[l]et us have faith that right makes might, and in that faith, let us, to the end dare to do our duty as we understand it." In 1860, Lincoln had invoked human understanding to know the duty of the citizen. In 1864, a more reflective Lincoln invoked God to help the citizen better see his duty.

We 21st century Christians should pay the same compliment to God's Word that Lincoln did by taking it seriously. It is easy to overlook that the Bible does not promise a life freed from pain or suffering in the performance of Christian responsibility. What is right, truly right, under the Bible, is not now, and will not be, popular in the

modern culture. But it does not make it less right or lessen the responsibility of the Christian to act according to the dictates of his conscience as directed by God. How this responsibility is borne will tell a watching world what kind of people we are.

In September of 1901, a group of men gathered around a coffin in Springfield, Illinois, to perform an important task. A new crypt to contain the coffin of Abraham Lincoln had been prepared. To prevent grave robbers from stealing Lincoln's body and holding it for ransom, as a group had attempted to do in 1876, Lincoln's coffin was to be placed into a cage, lowered into a hole in the crypt, and was then to be covered with two tons of cement ten feet thick. Before this occurred, a hole was cut in the coffin over Lincoln's face and 23 persons were allowed to see inside to authenticate that Lincoln's body was still in the coffin. What they saw was

the remarkably well-preserved face of Lincoln's corpse, wearing the black cloth suit he had worn on March 4, 1865, the day of his Second Inaugural.

After each man looked inside, the coffin was sealed, and the body of Abraham Lincoln was lowered into the crypt and covered with concrete. Although that face can now only be seen in faded photographs, the measure of the man can still be taken by the words he left behind to the nation he served and to the God whose will he searched for and eventually accepted.

Randy Eggert is an assistant U.S. Attorney serving in Springfield, Missouri. He received his biblical training at Baptist Bible College. This article represents the views and opinions of the author and is for the information and convenience of the public. It does not constitute endorsement, recommendation, or favoring by the Department of Justice.



Adams also prayed for God to "continue His blessing upon this nation and its Government and give it all possible success and duration consistent with the ends of His providence."

Thomas Jefferson praises American religion

America's incoming third president, Thomas Jefferson, in his March 4, 1801, inaugural address, commented on the concern expressed by some that "man can not be trusted to govern himself." Jefferson, not known as one of America's most religious presidents, noted among other things the positive influence of religion upon American society. He said the nation was:

... enlightened by a benign religion, professed, indeed, and practiced in various forms, yet all of them inculcating honesty, truth, temperance, gratitude, and the love of man; acknowledging and adoring an overruling Providence, ... what more is necessary to make us a happy and a prosperous people?

Closing his Second Inaugural (March 4, 1805), Jefferson publicly acknowledged the need for God's help.

I shall need, too, the favor of that Being in whose hands we are, who led our fathers, as Israel of old, from their native land and planted them in a country flowing with all the necessities and comforts of life; who has covered our infancy with His providence and our riper years with His wisdom and power, and to whose goodness I ask you to join in supplications with me that He will so enlighten the minds of your servants, guide their councils, and prosper their measures that whatsoever they do shall result in your good, and shall secure to you the peace, friendship, and approbation of all nations.

Dwight Eisenhower leads in prayer

Appeals for God's blessings and help were not only made by the Founding Fathers.

Dwight Eisenhower's First Inaugural Address (January 20, 1953) contains one of the boldest appeals to God. In

his prayer, Eisenhower asked "Almighty God" to "Give us . . . the power to discern clearly right from wrong, and allow all our words and actions to be governed thereby, and by the laws of this land." Eisenhower also prayed for cooperation among those of differing political persuasions "so that all those may work for the good of our beloved country and Thy glory. Amen."

America's need for God

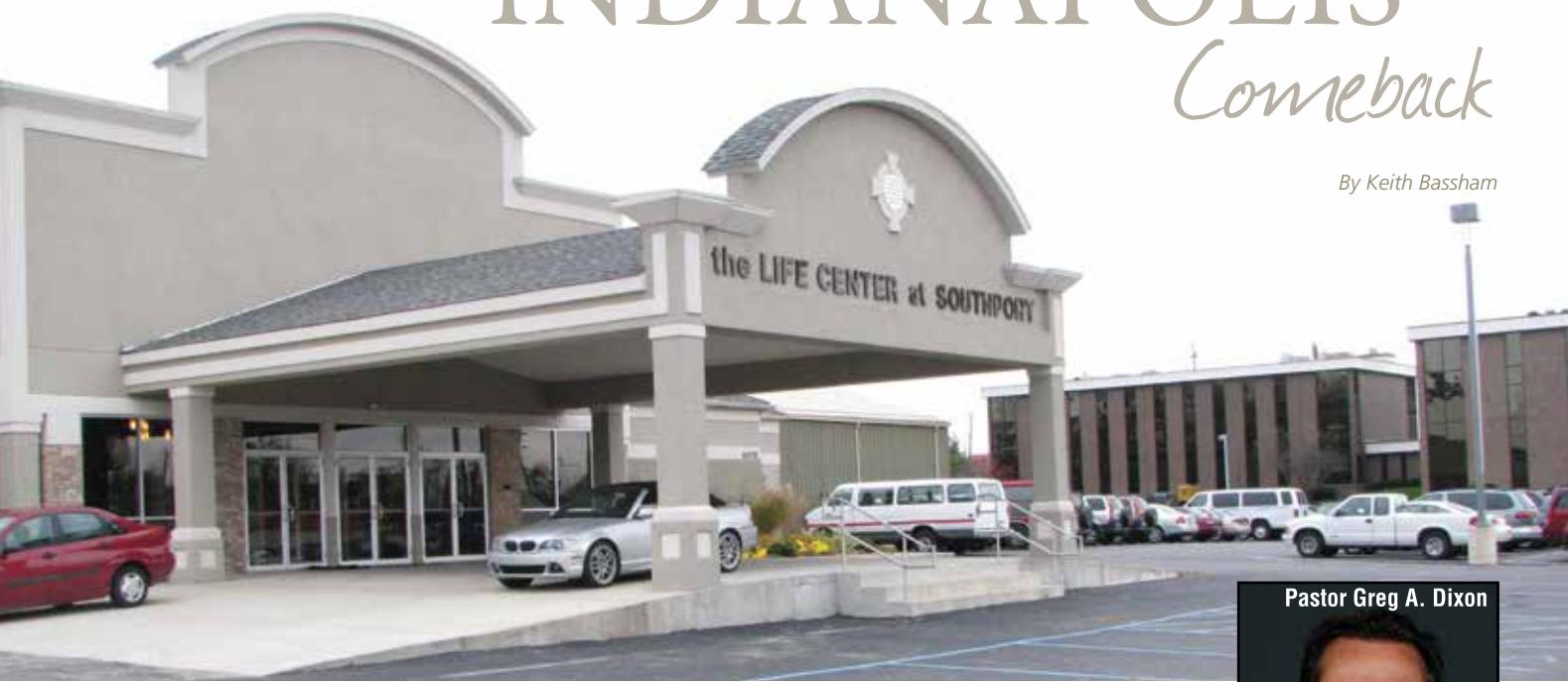
References to God and prayers for His blessings permeate the inaugural addresses of American presidents just as they permeate American history itself. They remind us, as Americans, not only of the personal beliefs of our presidents, but that we are not a self-made nation, but rather a nation whose success and continued existence are dependent upon the grace and the blessings of God Himself.

Chris Beck is Communications Department Chair at Baptist Bible College in Springfield, Missouri.

INDIANAPOLIS

Comeback

By Keith Bassham



Eight years ago this February 13, at 8:40 a.m., United States Marshals entered the property of Indianapolis Baptist Temple in Indianapolis, Indiana, with the intention of seizing the church property on behalf of the Internal Revenue Service for the alleged failure to withhold and pay income and social security taxes for employees of the church. The judgment eventually came to something between five million and six million dollars.

The church, pastored at first by Greg J. Dixon and then later by his son, Greg A. Dixon (since 1996), had argued for several years that a New Testament church was not subject to federal tax laws, and it continues to maintain that position. In fact, taxes were paid by the individuals who had received income from the church and school, and the government never disputed that. The church never taught that Christians should not pay taxes. The church also attempted to change its corporate status in efforts to satisfy lawful demands without compromising church integrity.

In short, the arguments failed to persuade the court the church was in the right, and after all appeals were ex-

hausted, the church's physical property was seized for the debt. That property, including furniture and books, was sold at auction March 23, 2001. Thus ended the case United States of America vs. Indianapolis Baptist Temple. At least, that ended the court case, and in the eyes of many, it was the end of the church. But for Dixon and the Temple church, it was a new beginning.

For example, today, on the former site of the church stands a charter school, Christel House Academy. Inside the school, members of Indianapolis Baptist Temple teach regular Bible classes. Not too far away, other IBT members are involved in inner-city ministry among children, and a little further down the street, Indianapolis Baptist Temple is helping sponsor a Hispanic congregation. On the weekends, the IBT members gather Sunday mornings and evenings at The Life Center at Southport for regular worship services, and during the week, the Life Center is host for community events. That is hardly the stuff of a failed church.

On the contrary, in a conversation with me in late 2008, Dixon said, "If the

IRS had not taken the property, I don't know that we would be the church we are today."

But that's running with the story a bit. Ecclesiology 101 for Baptists teaches that people are the church, and buildings are not. That said, in many cases, the loss of property would be considered a deathblow. Dixon had evidently planned for the eventuality. Services were held the next Sunday, and for several months after, the church met in a local school building, and then later a banquet facility in a hotel. Greg preached in a conference later that year about being a church without walls, and he and his congregation were living out the sermon.

Eventually, however, they found an alternative. Today, they lease (they do not own) a 76,000-square-foot facility into which the congregation poured tens of thousands of dollars in renovations with the idea that they would not only have a home for their church and activities, but a place for ministering



to the community. The Life Center at Southport became home for the main congregation of IBT, but the very large building is at work nearly every day of the week hosting a 6,000-foot youth center with a café and meeting rooms, sports (racquetball, tennis, etc.), a cheerleading school, counseling rooms, offices, and events for home school groups. Sunday afternoons, a Burmese Baptist church meets at the Life Center. Income from these activities makes the lease payment for the church.

The Sunday services at IBT have a contemporary feel in an attractive, modern auditorium. Four hundred to five hundred people gather for Sunday morning worship. The people sing. They teach. They support missionaries, and they had just completed a successful mission conference just days before my visit. Four students from IBT attend Baptist Bible College in Springfield (Dixon and several staff members are BBC alumni). There is no hint among them that the church ever had any struggles — no anti-government rhetoric, no trace of bitterness. And with a joy that is plainly visible to any observer, Indianapolis Baptist Temple and Pastor Dixon are focused upon reaching their city with the gospel.

Five ministries are functioning

IBT Staff Men and Women

Front Row
Wanda Britt
Consuelo Stofer
Kim Dzula
Shannon Hunsley
Anna Biddinger

2nd row
Doug Thompson
Carole Sparks
Dennis Stofer
Greg Dzula
Scott Hunsley
Chad Biddinger

Back Row
Matt Roller
Bekah Roller
Ellery Hunsley
Jeannie Hunsley
Kathy Dixon
Greg Dixon
Toby Digrigulliers



now, and Dixon plans for 20 more in a plan he calls Operation Saturation. He says, "What we're doing in the city is changing hearts, changing lives, changing destinies."

Crown of Life Baptist Church, in

a converted house. According to leader Toby Digrigulliers, it has a laid-back and casual approach. He said, "We've had to become missionaries in our own land." Dixon says by beginning with IBT people in these new congregations,

Sunday services, November 2, 2008



a high-poverty, high-crime area on the east side, began with 12 or 13 people meeting. They have reached a high attendance of 158. Ministries under the leadership of Greg Dzula include outreach to children through Bible classes and youth camp.

Soon after, IBT began a Hispanic church at the Crown of Life property calling it Iglesia Bautista Betesda Corona de la Vida meeting on Sunday evenings. Immigrants from Mexico, El Salvador, and Colombia make up the congregation led by Pastor Herminio Lopez.

West Side Baptist Church began in

the church is doing far more than if they had stayed on one property. He said, "We would not have reached these people by simply adding. We had to divide in order to multiply."

The church also has a children's outreach in a property owned by Indianapolis Area Youth Ministry near downtown. IBT staff and members travel to the area Sunday afternoons to provide activities and worship for inner-city youth. Noting that most independent Baptist churches are not active in inner-city ministry, Dixon says, "I think that if murders and other crimes go down, and there are fewer teens having babies, and fewer drugs

on the street, that would be a good thing, right?"

Plans for the future include 25 churches in the Indianapolis urban area, 100 Bible studies, and more. Dixon says, "The Lord has blessed us beyond our expectations."

Team TANZANIA

By Jim Smith | BBFI Associate Mission Director

Recently, I had the opportunity to interview [REDACTED] Tanzania, regarding their team [REDACTED]. Their successful team approach to ministry was considered by some to be revolutionary back in the 80s. John and Julie Kirkland and [REDACTED] having been friends for years, wanted to go as a team to Africa. At the beginning they went to Kenya, and then Team Tanzania took shape in 1990 when they moved to Dodoma, Tanzania. I asked [REDACTED] specifically about the idea of working together in a foreign country as a team.

JS: Thanks for taking time to answer some questions for our readers regarding the concept of doing ministry as a team. As fundamental Baptists, we sometimes pride ourselves in being independent to the point of being mavericks. What are the benefits of the team approach?

****:** Assurance and strength: Enormous strength and courage in facing a new culture and change is drawn from another family.

Companionship and morale: Not only does the missionary have the partner-

ship of a coworker, but the wife (often tied to home by young children, schooling, and day-to-day chores) has the companionship and camaraderie of another woman in similar ministry.

Gifting: Team members with varying gifts, abilities, and passions in ministry can complement each other and share responsibilities in ministry.

Work distribution: Using their spiritual gifts and natural talents together, responsibilities can be divided and shared. Ministries can be expanded and developed without such a strain on one man and his family.

Finances: Ministry expenses can often be shared, easing tension on tight missionary budgets. These are just a few of the benefits, but there are dozens more.

JS: What would be the dangers in a team approach?

****:** Major hazards of a team “marriage” go hand in hand with those of a normal marriage: communication failure, jealousy, conflicting thoughts and feelings, etc. There are three keys that we have found to ensure a long-lasting bond: 1) spiritual unity, 2) communication, and 3) commitment.



Team Tanzania comes together at least once a year to encourage each other in the work...and to have some fun!

JS: Did you get any negative response to this approach initially?

****:** We promoted the team idea with such naive enthusiasm, we probably missed a few raised eyebrows or ignored some negative responses. I can only remember one pastor who openly stated “That’s never going to work, and I can’t support it.” Several others questioned, “Who is going to be the leader? How is that going to work?” But far outweighing any negative response was the tremendous support we received from people in the pew. After our presentation, people would come to us bubbling with enthusiasm, expressing their excitement to hear that two missionary families, friends from youth, were joining up and heading to Africa with the gospel.



JS: Have any of those who were negative at the beginning come around to support your approach now that they see it has worked so well?

**: The team concept is no longer new in the BBFI. We have been thrilled to see a whole new generation of teams forming and heading to the mission field. I can't say that specific pastors have come full circle to support our team and ministry here in Tanzania, but I suspect that pastors and churches as a whole are much more responsive to the team idea now than 20 years ago.

JS: How many are on the team today?

**: Team Tanzania consists of nine

families and one single missionary, all working at different levels within the team. Some work side by side in the same daily ministry. Others work in the same locale but in separate ministries, cooperating together. Others are in a location on their own, but teaming together in our national Bible school and national pastor training, youth camps, etc.

JS: Where are the team members geographically?

**: Currently in three locations: In the capital, Dar es Salaam, in the cities of Morogoro and Arusha, and in the district of Hanang.

JS: How often and where do you meet?

**: As a nationwide team we meet annually for a week each April. This is one of the highlights of our year, as we come together for worship, teaching, games and competitions, prayer, and strategy sessions. Throughout the year we meet whenever we can for holidays, Bible school and training events, and vacations. Once each year the men try to take a motorcycle safari where we bike into the bush, camp, cook over an open fire, and chase zebra, giraffe, and wildebeest. The ladies also have a special retreat each year.

JS: To what do you attribute the success of Team Tanzania?

**: The conviction that teamwork is biblical, practical, and worth the effort. We work hard at building a spirit of camaraderie with new missionary families, a genuine respect for one another and our ministries, and continually recasting the vision

of a united effort in Tanzania. As you alluded earlier, teaming isn't natural for independents. So, it requires a high level of commitment, good communication, and prayer.

JS: How would you advise young missionaries just beginning a career in world evangelization?

**: Reread the missionary ministry of the apostles as recorded in Acts. Study again the evangelism ministry of the disciples of Christ. Be reminded of the words of the preacher in Ecclesiastes 4 "Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labor...." Then seek out that man or that family that God has prepared to be the start of your team. You will recognize them because their minds and hearts will resonate with yours. Get together and pray. Dream big dreams and follow the advice of our former mission director, Dr. Carl Boonstra, "Think what we can do together!" Then, as you prepare and go to the field, be a learner every step of the way.



Baptist History

BY THOMAS RAY



Abraham Marshall The Eloquent Baptist Pioneer

Abraham Marshall was a worthy successor to his illustrious father, Daniel Marshall. The elder Marshall and Shubal Stearns were the founders of the Separate Baptist movement in the South.

Abraham was born in Windsor, Connecticut, in 1748. He was converted at the age of 19 at Stephen's Creek Baptist Church in South Carolina and was baptized by his father in the Savannah River. Immediately after his conversion, Abraham began his preaching ministry. The first 20 years was devoted almost exclusively to itinerant preaching. Upon the death of his father in 1784, he assumed the pastorate of the Kiokee Baptist Church, a church he would serve for the next 35 years. But he would never desert his first love, the itinerate ministry.

His extensive "labors were not confined to a single city or town, to any one county or state, still less to a single church." Abraham possessed a gift not afforded to most of his contemporaries — the ability to clothe his messages in eloquence. A biographer wrote, "His voice was one of great power, melody and flexibility. In nothing, perhaps was he more remarkable than the power of description. He would portray the glories of heaven with such matchless force and breadth, that his hearers could scarcely remain upon their seats; and he would depict the miseries of the lost in such terrible, burning language, as almost to make the hair stand erect upon your head."

No man founded more churches in Georgia than Abraham Marshall. One of the churches he founded was First Baptist Church of Augusta, which he organized in 1817 and pastored until May 1819. Marion Symms, historian of the First Baptist Church of Augusta, describes "Marshall riding down the streets of Augusta on his old white horse, his saddle bags packed with New Testaments and tracts which he freely distributed, at the same time inviting all to come and hear the Gospel preached at the Court House. Often, merry groups of young people would go expecting amusement, but they left us their testimony that having heard Abraham Marshall they stayed to pray."

One of the most remarkable events in Abraham Marshall's ministry began on May 10, 1786, when he left Kiokee on a trip to Connecticut, which ended six months later on November 17. He had ridden horseback approximately 3000 miles through 11 states preaching a minimum of 197 times. Conversions on the trip were counted in the hundreds.

But the numbers who heard him were astonishing. In New England, he spoke time after time to hundreds and on one occasion to 3,500 eager listeners. Not since the days of Whitfield had such large and enthusiastic crowds gathered to hear the gospel preached and never by a Baptist preacher. Benedict, the historian, states that, "Crowded assemblies followed him wherever he went." It is calculated that Abraham Marshall preached to between 40,000 and 50,000 on his journey to and from New England.

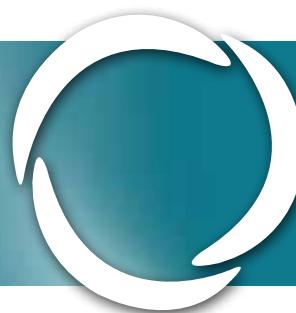
One of his greatest personal triumphs while in New England was the winning of his cousin, Eliakim Marshall, to Baptist principles. Eliakim had been a



The commitment of circuit riding preachers was illustrated by this cover of Harper's Weekly.

much respected and highly esteemed pedo-baptist minister for 30 years. After several discussions with Abraham, Eliakim became convinced that infant baptism was unscriptural, and in spite of family opposition, he and Abraham Marshall went to a nearby river where Abraham preached a sermon on baptism and immersed Eliakim in the presence of hundreds who had never witnessed a baptism according to the biblical pattern. On the following day, Abraham had the privilege of delivering the sermon at Eliakim's ordination, who was faithful to his decision and embarked late in life on a new ministry in the Baptist denomination. The next day, Abraham left on his return trip to Georgia.

For the next 33 years he labored faithfully and consistently until his death on the evening of August 15, 1819, at the age of 71.



NCPO projects hit 2009 running

Riverside Baptist Church, pastored by Ben Seyden, hosted the Illinois State Fellowship meeting for December 2008. It was an exciting opportunity for the Illinois pastors to see the state's newest church plant. Riverside is a church plant out of Sauk Trail Baptist Temple, pastored by Bruce Humbert. Members of Sauk Trail Baptist Temple helped to co-host this event which had 75 in attendance on Monday evening and a total of 27 pastors and staff in attendance.

Riverside is meeting in Bible study groups during the week. The launch strategy is: beginning in January, a postcard introducing the new church will be personally delivered to every door. Continuing in February, a specially-designed tract explaining who they are and what they believe along with an invitation to join in the launch service on April 5 will be personally delivered to the same doors. In March, Easter eggs with a prize and another invitation to attend the opening service will be distributed to the same doors. What

an opportunity for your church teens or adult classes to assist in a new church plant! Seyden and the people of Riverside invite you to help them canvas and deliver these materials door to door. Those of you who because of distance can't help canvas could help with an offering to cover the cost of the promotional materials.

Seyden informs me he is still in need of personal support as he only has about 70 percent of his family needs underwritten. Support can be sent to Riverside Baptist Church, 175 S. Wall Street, Kankakee, Illinois 60901.



Lifepointe Baptist Church and pastor (back right)

BBF BUILDERS MAKING A DIFFERENCE

We have three teams involved in three different projects. Brent Anderson and a team of builders are in the Chicago area constructing a new building for Green Garden Baptist Church, pastored by Jayson Workman. Green Garden is a church plant about a year and a half old. God is wonderfully blessing the young preacher and his ministry.

Ron Trosclair and a team have been working in Galveston, Texas, at Bible Baptist Church, where Dennis Hankins pastors. The church



The Illinois State Fellowship meeting attendees at Riverside Baptist Church, a church plant of Sauk Trail Baptist Temple.

was virtually destroyed by Hurricane Ike. Seventy-five percent of the city of Galveston was under the ocean. The church had seven feet of water inside the building. Trosclair and his team have been busy repairing drywall, and several churches have sent teams to help in this effort. Many of you have

sent funds to help in this effort as well. Over \$30,000 came in to assist the churches in their time of need.

Jack Reed and a team have been involved in Bentonville, Arkansas, with church planter and Pastor Mike Brinson and the Lifepointe Baptist Church. They began meeting in June and had a high attendance of 38 the first Sunday of January. Because of growth, a new place to meet had to be found, and a 2,500-square-foot storefront fit the bill. Jack and his team have been building walls to ready this new facility for use by the new church.

Pray for the BBF Builders as they labor to make a difference and pray for the pastors and churches they are helping.



World Scope

Jon Konnerup | BBFI Mission Director



When Was the Last Time?

We would all agree 2008 was a very unusual year. Although many were dealing with repercussions of the financial slide around the world, the BBFI had a high number of 46 individuals being approved as missionaries. However, 2009 is expected to be even harder with regard to the economy, retirement, and jobs. This may result in less funds available for giving to the work of the Lord. We are already experiencing a decline of those coming to be approved as missionaries. In fact, 2009 could be our lowest year in a long time.

According to scripture and our BBFI philosophy, these laborers should come from our churches and be supported by our churches. I know there are many in the training process in their churches, our colleges, and internship programs, but I constantly think about what Jesus said in Matthew 9:37 and 38:

Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.

After seeing the multitudes and their spiritual condition, Jesus knew the laborers were few. In response, He told His disciples to pray for more laborers. I believe this is the key — praying for more laborers. When we spend time on our knees, we are right where God wants us to be — in an attitude of prayer. I also believe God still answers prayer. When we pray for more laborers, several things are possi-

ble: God will send the one who is praying, He will send someone else whose heart is tender, or He might do both.

Perhaps the proper question to ask then is do we really believe the harvest is plentiful? Do we understand that laborers are few and that we need more of them? If we do, when was the last time we prayed, "Lord of the harvest, send forth laborers?"

For our churches to fulfill the Great Commission, we must be on our knees praying for more laborers to go from our church and other churches. The leaders of these churches must set the example by providing and encouraging opportunities of prayer once the need is strongly expressed. Every church member needs to be mobilized to pray for more missionaries. Sunday school classes and other small groups need to take ownership of this task. Keeping missionaries, unreached people groups, and the lost of the world before the church (from children to senior saints) is the way to develop an attitude of prayer for more servants globally.

This means that parents who dedicated their children to the Lord when they were young ought to be willing to encourage their children to go to the regions beyond. Yes, our world is volatile in many places. But it is better to be in the center of God's will in a foreign land than out of His will at home. According to James 4:14, our lives are but a vapor when compared to eternity. What we do during this short life makes a huge difference for eternity. When our churches are mobilized to pray, God moves and eternity

is impacted.

Youth pastors play a key role in our efforts to send more laborers. They have a strong influence with our youth and must encourage missions and the ministry as a viable option for their teens. I have met young people who have surrendered to serve God full time because they were taught and challenged to pray for the lost world and for more missionaries. During the time on their knees, God spoke to them and they accepted the call to be the ones to go.

Of course, this all starts with the pastor. If the pastor of the church is not praying for more missionaries and communicating this consistently to the church, few youth pastors, young people, and parents will take this matter seriously. Someone must cast the vision, lead in the task, set the goals, show the way, mobilize their church, and pray.

The bottom line is, do we have the same vision Jesus had of the lost multitudes? If we do not, then we will not be praying, few will surrender, few will be approved, and few will be led from living in darkness to living in the light of Jesus Christ.

However, we can make an eternal difference in our world when we see the world as Jesus saw it, when we see the multitudes of lost souls, when we realize the need for more missionaries, and when we understand that the action to be taken is prayer. When was the last time you prayed for more servants to go and tell the good news to the world? The harvest is plentiful but the laborers are few.



Charles Lyons, Pastor
Armitage Baptist Church
Chicago, Illinois

Preview of a Postmodern Church Plant

By divine direction, Paul was led to Philippi. "...We're forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia..." "...They assayed to go into Bithynia; but the Spirit suffered them not..." "...Come over into Macedonia..."

Philippi is an expression of the first century Roman world. There was no one true God, the source of absolute truth. There was no grand metanarrative that makes sense of reality. Philippi is an artist's rendering of what a postmodern culture will look like. Luke calls Philippi "the chief city of that part of Macedonia." This heathen city with a theater that probably seated 50,000 people, this city that virtually straddled the Egnatian Road, was a godless metropolis on an interstate. God has been all about penetrating the darkness ever since man's fall. God doesn't lead away from the fight but into the fight. In preparing His chosen people to take possession of the Promised Land, He told them He would lead them to the enemy. Jesus set His face toward Jerusalem. Paul does not happen to come to Philippi, God sends him.

No Church

There was no church in this city. I don't mean a church of our breed, brand, or stripe. I mean no church. This wasn't like planting a church where there were already several New Testament congregations. Like so many unchurched and under-churched areas today, this place had a real need.

Apparently, the city could not meet the minimum requirement of ten Jewish men to constitute a synagogue. The prevailing worldview was

pluralistic. Lacking any knowledge base of divine revelation, relativism ruled. Only a group of women gathered by the river, outside the city due to Roman prohibition, were to be found. (Oh, those zoning laws!) So, the upshot is this: Paul saw a man saying, "Come over to Macedonia..." When he got to Philippi, he found the man was a woman! Lydia, the travelling business woman, and her prayer group birthed the exemplary Philippian church. Luke says, "The Lord opened Lydia's heart." God was drawing these women to Himself. As we look over the stark, barren, spiritual Sahara that is the postmodern landscape, let's remember God is working in advance of our working. In fact, God's work holds the promise that our work will bear fruit.

Opposition

God allows relentless resistance to His gospel work. Expect it. Paul was never surprised at opposition. He never let it stop him. The demonized girl followed Paul and Silas around for what Luke calls "many days." Paul finally had enough and commanded the demon out in Jesus' name. Historically we know that God uses opposition to advance His purposes and show His glory. Why do we think something must be wrong or we must be out of God's will if we get a little opposition? God uses difficulty all the time. Remember, it's not just about overcoming opposition; it's that God uses opposition to get the job done. It's often a set-up for something supernatural.

Riled-up businessmen, the crowd, the magistrates, all formed an opposition coalition. It's noteworthy that they

were not necessarily anti-message. They were stirred up because their lifestyles had been impacted.

Supernatural Display

Arrested, beaten, and jailed, the apostle and his partner should have been filled with doubt and despair. This church-planting effort was a bust! Anybody could see it. But Paul and Silas saw it as an opportunity to demonstrate true trust, real faith. Their prayers and songs ring off the stone prison walls. The earthquake changes everything. One moment they are thinking they're

God has been all about penetrating the darkness ever since man's fall.

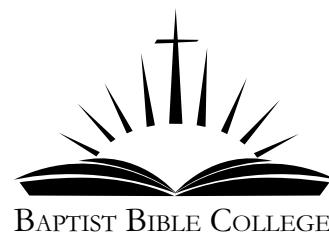
powerless and stuck; the next they are winning the jailer to Jesus and holding a baptismal service. Do you think Lydia, friends, and an ex-soothsayer are shouting and crying at this point? Let's never forget that God shows up in His time and in His way.

God Saves

That's right, God saves all who repent and believe. The jailer and his household are added to the nucleus of believers. From a disenfranchised, out of the city limits prayer group to shaking up city hall, God's gospel changes lives. It is the power that changes everything. It is His power that planted churches in first century heathen urban centers. It's His power that continues planting churches in 21st century postmodern cities.

VIEW FROM BBC

Jim Edge | President | Baptist Bible College



The Significance of Baptist Bible College

There has never been a time in my life when Baptist Bible College has not played a significant role in my spiritual development. I was born and raised in Springfield, the home of BBC. I received my early spiritual training at High Street Baptist Church where many of my Sunday school teachers were BBC students gaining their experience by teaching kids like me.

When I was in the sixth grade, my Sunday school teacher was Leroy Eldridge. Leroy is currently pastoring Temple Baptist Church in Titusville,

Leroy and have a chance to go out anywhere with him, I drive.

Listening to testimonies about the significant role that Baptist Bible College has played in the lives of former students and current students is one of the most encouraging things I can think of. Only a couple of weeks ago, I attended the funeral of one of our former employees, Camille May. I sat and listened to her husband, Tim, give a testimony about their meeting each other at Baptist Bible College. Tim then explained with tears about Camille's love for her alma mater. I

be used of God to affect our nation or even to have a worldwide ministry. I believe it is possible. It is also important to know that many of our current students are finding their life's mates just as Tim and Camille did 35 years ago. I am excited that Baptist Bible College has given so many people a place that has become a focal point for their life's work.

Those victories do not come without cost. Baptist Bible College is not a problem-free organization. We had difficulties in our formative years while we were achieving wonderful victories at the same time. We continued experiencing difficulties during our entire 59-year history while we were also seeing great accomplishments. We have challenges today, but we also observe great accomplishments from our students and staff. I prefer to acknowledge what great things the Lord has done and is doing as opposed to pointing out and emphasizing the problems and difficulties.

We need wisdom from the Lord to adequately address the challenges. We need the prayers of our friends. We need the sacrifice of all of our supporters. But most importantly, we need to see a continuation of servants who are willing to give their lives to a cause greater than their selves. Our world is in greater need today for servants of the most High God than perhaps at any other time in history. Let us give our God and our world the best we can.

I am excited that Baptist Bible College has given so many people a place that has become a focal point for their life's work.

Florida. He and his date (who is now his wife) picked me up to take me to our Sunday school Christmas party. On the way to Springfield from our farm, Leroy failed to stop at an intersection. The car went over an embankment and then nose-first into a plowed field. These were days prior to seat belts. I took out the windshield of his car with my forehead. Never has a teacher taken so literally the need to make an impact on those he teaches. Just for your information, when I see

was thrilled to understand the importance of Baptist Bible College and the significant role the school played in their life's work. I was humbled and also challenged to show my love for Baptist Bible College vocally and with my support more than I ever have.

Many of our students are currently teaching Sunday school and ministering in children's programs just as they did when I was a little boy. I sometimes wonder if one of today's students is teaching a little kid that might

Baptist Bible College President Jim Edge will host an informational meeting for pastors of the BBFI Tuesday, February 17, at 2:00 in the afternoon at Central Baptist Church in Katy (Houston), Texas. Those interested in the future of BBC should attend.



Anticipation

I remember the classic ketchup commercial with Carly Simon belting out *Anticipation* while ketchup slowly, tantalizingly, deliciously crept down the neck of its inverted bottle. Nearby, a little boy watched with wide eyes waiting for the ketchup to fall down on his hamburger (or whatever). It still makes me hungry!

It is a great thing to anticipate something good, but when you can just see it on the horizon, that's a keeper. At Boston, even in these economically challenging times, we are anticipating more and more progress. I can already see it.

Take this new semester. Our enrollment actually went UP! In higher education, you build into your annual budget a five to eight percent tuition decline for the second semester as a standard practice. But we don't fly by those rules in Boston. Half of the time we grow in the spring semester, and we did it again this year! We are anticipating much greater news next fall. I know, the economy is in the tank. But hard times never touch heaven's hand. It's going to be harder (and typically more expensive) than ever to use the overladen state college systems this fall. Their budgets are getting cut as their demands increase by default. Then, I just met with a group of college presidents in our city. They were all scared because enrollment for the fall of '09 looks bad. The scenario is simple — many parents just can no longer arrange financing for typical private college tuition. Where do you go if the college is unaffordable because you can't take out a home equity loan any longer? I know! Why not Boston Baptist College — where churches are helping more than ever to keep Chris-

tian education affordable, quality is never in question, and fundraising is to help students? Why not go to college where the cost is modest and the value is eternally incalculable?

I do expect more students. I also expect our campus to continue to expand. I don't talk about new buildings much until they are done. I've learned that delays can come in almost any form, and here in Boston we've experienced just about every obstacle possible. But I am anticipating more construction in Boston, and for good reason. After our most recent neighborhood meeting, our most verbal opponent sent me an email that was practically cordial! Two men on our team, Randy Ward and Joe Sawyer, have worked tirelessly on community relations for our campus. All across the world God's people have prayed. People have told me we would never develop more campus here in Boston. Let me put it this way...the ketchup is moving.

Boston is also anticipating its best year ever because we have a growing network of churches that believe in us and partner with us. I got to thinking — what a great team of churches we have...pastors who are leading their churches and sharing the vision of Boston Baptist College. I'm grateful that almost every pastor who visits here leaves surprised by our facilities, students, staff, and spirit. Who wouldn't want to be a part of the energy, the passion, the commitment, the present, and the future that is Boston Baptist College? It is fun to see the future coming your way.

What we expect in Boston, though, is so much more than headcounts,

building projects, and an expanding base. We expect to make a difference. As we say so often, Boston Baptist College is "to think Biblically, to discover globally, and to impact eternally." That's not just a marketing ploy. It IS us. That's why we anticipate the prog-

Let me put it this way... the ketchup is moving.

ress that's coming our way. We have something to do — something that must be done. We anticipate eternal impact. I got a letter from a recent graduate who is now a youth pastor. He's making an impact. I received a Christmas card from another grad who is getting ready to start a new church — more impact. I just saw an update from a graduate of ten years ago who is leading his church into a new building — Long Island impact! And I walk down the halls with graduates-to-be every day, talking, dreaming, planning with them...works to be done for Jesus — future impact, eternal impact. That kind of stuff will widen your eyes for sure!

Anticipation is more than just wishful thinking. It's faith, and common sense, and planning, and observation, and hard work. So to friends like John, and Tim, and Archie, and Tracy, and Dan, and Bruce, and Phil, and Ed, and Bill (and all the others), I say thanks and let's hit it even harder. Boston is on the move. Good stuff is coming — I can see it for sure! And this is so much better than ketchup!

Technology broadens classroom experience at BBC

Springfield, MO

During the fall semester at Baptist Bible College, Barbara Lingo, Chair of the Intercultural Studies Department, connected her students to foreign workers on the field through technology in her classroom. By video conferencing, Scott Hudgins collaborated in a course entitled "Introduction to Islam."

Scott has his Masters Degree in Islamic Studies, having spent several years in the Middle East, and he has a strong background in Arabic. "It was a great opportunity for our students to learn from Scott's experience and knowledge. Who better to learn from than those who have been there," said Lingo.

Hudgins taught a number of class sessions from his home in South America, but with the assistance of the new technology, the students were also able to ask questions and interact per-

sonally with him. "One of the greatest challenges we face as professors is to adequately communicate the diverse worldviews, cultures, and languages

edge of Muslims and how they think compared to a Christian...will be very beneficial for our future ministries. There is no doubt in my mind that we will encounter Muslims in our ministries either here in the United States or overseas. This class is a good springboard for continued studies to make us effective in our future encounters."

"We at BBC are committed to use this and other means of communication in the classroom to equip the students to the very best of our ability," says Lingo.



of our world to the students. However, technology is allowing us to link with our personnel on the field and effectively accomplish that goal in the classroom," states Lingo

Stan Sherwood, a student in the class, said, "I really enjoyed the sessions we had with Scott. Scott's knowl-



Record-Breaking Year at LBU

Shreveport, LA

By Neal Weaver

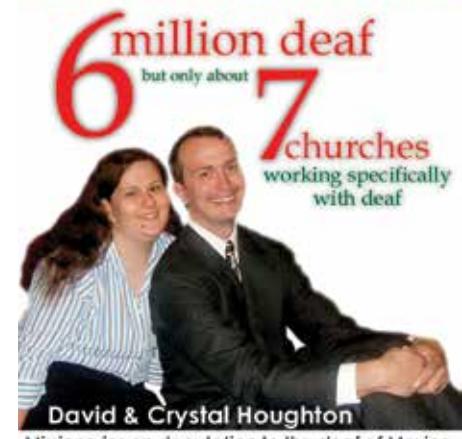
The year 2008 was a record-breaking year for Louisiana Baptist University with its highest total attendance and best year for new enrollments. We now have students studying in 40 countries through distance education, and the university has also experienced growth in its on-campus program.

Last year, the university's INSTEP Program was able to expand to 22 Bible Institutes located in 20 third-world countries. All INSTEP Institutes are administrated by BBFI missionaries using LBU courses.

This month, the university added

Brent Shoalmire to its faculty. Brent is a graduate of Louisiana Tech University and in May will complete a Master of Arts in Bible from LBU. The university will also launch its new Moodle Program that allows our teachers and students to communicate through interactive websites in educational ways. It is a state of the art program used by many colleges and universities including Baptist Bible College. The university will initially only offer approximately 100 courses online but will gradually add most of its 300-plus courses listed in the catalog.

In Mexico there are



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GERMANY

I find it very hard to discuss faith with my elderly neighbor, Frau Kraus, a life-long traditional Catholic. Much of her talk revolves around the graveyard: deceased acquaintances, watering plants on the family plot, and wondering whether her daughters will visit her grave. One day, in the middle of all this, she said unexpectedly, "I wonder what it will be like to be dead, if it's really like they tell us." I took the rare

Renae Thompson



opportunity tell her some verses from the Bible about my hope of heaven. She listened quietly, and then went on to describe a flower arrangement for the grave. Please pray for more opportunities for meaningful conversation with her.



Carroll & Bonnie Jolley

We had been witnessing to a 28-year-old man in our village. He constantly refused God's Son. He drank heavily, and in one of his drinking sprees he jumped in front of a speeding train leaving behind his widow, a three-year-old daughter, and a

INDIA

one-year-old son. However, out of every tragedy some good always comes. His widow started coming to church and she has accepted the Lord as her Savior. We are confident her children will accept Him as they grow up hearing the old story of Jesus and His love.

BOSTON BAPTIST COLLEGE
Join the Surge!

“Attending Boston Baptist College gave me two very important advantages in my ministry preparation. First, I had the opportunity to serve in new church plants. This allowed me to see the ups and downs of start-up ministries. This experience has come in handy by reminding me not to be discouraged but to press on while working on a new mission field. I know that the hard work will pay off as we continue to build relationships and share Christ’s love with others. Second, the affordable tuition at Boston allowed me to get an accredited degree without the burden of graduating with a huge amount of debt.”

Megan Rogers
’08 Alumnus
Sierra Leone
BostonSurge.com

SPAIN

About 20 years ago, a lady named Esperanza was saved and baptized in our church. She has held to the hope that her husband, Cecilio, and children would be saved, though they had never shown any interest in spiritual things. Recently, Cecilio had to have part of his leg amputated due to diabetes. Some of our members visited him in the hospital, which left a real impression. For the last two Sundays he

Marvin & Becky Robertson

has gone to church with his wife! Because he does not yet have a prosthesis, Esperanza pushes him to church through the streets of our city, a distance of almost one mile. Afterwards, one of the men in the church pushes him back home. Join us in praying for Cecilio's salvation.



Doug & Donna Stamper

Recently, Pastor Dan Gathu and I visited Veronica, one of our members who works in the pineapple plantation canning house. Due to the election violence earlier this year, Veronica lost her house and had to leave for a while, but came back when she was given a house in the plantation housing development. At her house in Angel Estate, she cut a fresh pineapple for us to enjoy while she welcomed a

KENYA

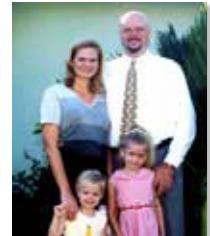
few neighbors to come meet us. We were able to encourage Mama Ian in her walk with the Lord through some troubling times and lead Atieno to Christ. The pineapple was probably the best I have ever tasted, but the chance to see a soul come to Christ from Angel Estate was even sweeter. Pray for Atieno as she begins her walk with the Lord and for Veronica that she might be able to see many more of her new neighbors come to know Jesus Christ.

NICARAGUA

Rosa is a single mother who comes to our Managua church. She is very active, helping with the ladies activities and as the Sunday school superintendent. She has two boys and a hard life as a school teacher only making \$130 a month. Her youngest son has a crippling disease which is causing him to slowly lose the ability to move his legs. At his last doctor's visit, Rosa was told not to return until she bought her son some special braces for his legs because there was nothing else they could do for him. She didn't have the money, and her only alternative, she thought, was to get a second job on the weekends. She met with our pastor's wife, Carla, and told her that she would have to stop help-

Brian & Rachael Weed

ing in Sunday school and church activities. Carla gave her some advice — seek first the kingdom of God and let Him handle the rest. She chose to keep God in first place. As she left, she ran into a lady who told her about a foundation that was helping handicapped children. Rosa quickly submitted all her papers requesting help and prayed. When they called her, they told her that not only the leg braces had been approved but that they were going to give him the special boots that he also needed. God really does take care of us when we put Him first!



David & Carla Rohr



On Tuesday, we met in Barbara's home. Both she and Anderson gave testimony of their salvation and they both wanted to be baptized. They were concerned their tattoos would exclude them from being baptized, and were very relieved to discover that God's grace is awesomely sufficient. On Saturday, they called because they were fighting. After two

BRAZIL

hours of counseling, they were able to see that Satan was trying to destroy their relationship because together they were encouraging each other to love and serve the Lord. On Sunday night, they were baptized. On Wednesday, they waited for me at the front door of the church. "Pastor, what do we have to do to be married in the church?" They scheduled their legal ceremony for Friday, November 21; on the 22nd they became man and wife before the Lord!

"P.L.A.C.E. is a valued and vital part of our Volunteer ministry here at Mid-Way Baptist Church. I encourage each pastor to attend this workshop or send one staff member to attend."

Dr. Larry Upchurch, Pastor, Mid-Way Baptist Church

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- Receive personalized testing in the 5 ministry assessments
- Understand the impact of applying your "complete" skill set
- Practice ministry training as well as observe others in the same role
- Understand the consequences of not aligning your ministry needs with proper ministry skills
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Harmons celebrate 25 years at Louisville Baptist

Louisville, OH

On the first Sunday of November, a special service was held to celebrate Mike and Kathy Harmon's 25 years of ministry at Louisville Baptist Temple. To help honor the Harmons, their children, Nate Harmon and Kristy Slayden, as well as their families, took part in the service. A slide show was played with highlights of the Harmon's ministry. After a message by the Harmon's son, the congregation celebrated with a lunch fellowship, followed by Nate and Rochelle Harmon performing special music and another sermon by their son-in-law, Jon Slayden. In appreciation for their hard work and faithful service, the church presented the Harmons with a special vacation package and showered them with cards of gratitude and encouragement for their past and future ministry.

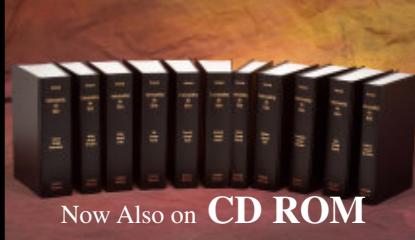
The Harmons went to Louisville



Baptist Temple in 1983. There were 50 present for their first service and \$6.72 in the bank. Today, Louisville Baptist Temple averages 250-300 people and supports 105 missionary families and projects. The church has recently purchased an 80-acre piece of property on

which they hope to build new facilities. Harmon and the members of the Louisville church believe strongly in the discipleship program, and because of this ministry and God's faithfulness, the church has seen tremendous spiritual growth in the lives of its members.

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Tracy Roby, Sending Pastor
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Ohio Pastors Host Regional Church-Planting Fellowship at Camp Chautauqua

Hillsboro, OH

On November 10 and 11, Ohio State Chairman Dan Lamb and the pastors of the state hosted their second annual Regional Church-Planting Fellowship Meeting. Pastors from Michigan, Kentucky, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Indiana were invited. The meeting was held at Camp Chautauqua with meals and lodging provided at no charge. Guest speakers included Jonathan Falwell, pastor of Thomas Road Baptist Church in Virginia, Duke Hergatt, pastor of Temple Baptist Church in New York, and Dennis Nunn with Living The New Life Ministries in Georgia. During the preaching, a 16-year-old young man surrendered to full-time ministry.

There were over 225 in attendance. Nine foreign missionaries were present and each shared their burden to plant churches around the world. Fourteen church planters from six different states shared their testimonies of people being saved and added to New Testament Bible-believing churches.

Breakout sessions were held on Tuesday with topics such as music, youth, personal and church finances, evangelism ideas, children's ministries, the multi-cultural church, ideas that work, and raising PKs/MKs. A session was also held for the ladies.



Guest speaker Jonathan Falwell shares a charge at the church-planting meeting

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Churches had great Christmas outreach in 2008

Christmas dinner theater

Crossroads Ministries
Finleyville, PA
Pastor John Arnold

I woke up on Tuesday singing "Four Tickets to Christmas." Our 2008 edition of the Christmas Dinner Theater was a blessed outreach opportunity, and 1,100 people came to enjoy a catered meal and musical drama over the course of four evenings.

The program was developed over the course of three and a half months. It is the largest outreach of the year for our church.

We asked our people to invite their coworkers, employees, and neighbors. Sandy and Ron invited their neighborhood and brought 63 neighbors. After the event, they invited the entire group

to their house.

We have been praying for the car cruise community for a few years and invited 11 couples to be our guests; they all came. From these 11 families, three have recently come to Christ. After Friday's presentation, Dave, builder of a beautiful 1956 Chevrolet, came to me and threw his arms around me, weeping and thanking us for all we have done to introduce his family to Christ. His family is now working their way through the Purpose Driven Life.

Each family is invited to pose for a Christmas picture in a beautiful fireplace setting. The picture is then sent to the family and is always a hit. Many who attend the musical each Christmas are unchurched and at the end of the program the gospel is always presented. We also wrote the gospel into the drama. Our people are strong believers

in this yearly outreach because there are a number of families in our church who were reached at a previous Christmas event.

Largest attendance in three years

Gentle Shepherd Baptist Church
Lincoln, NE
Pastor Gary Fuller

We had the largest attendance we've had for maybe three years. Almost double a normal Sunday. In fact, the past eight weeks have been the best run in attendance for over three years. We had seven saved, six of them adults! Add to that, we had eight adults profess Christ earlier in the week as a result of a funeral.

We had a young lady attend yester-

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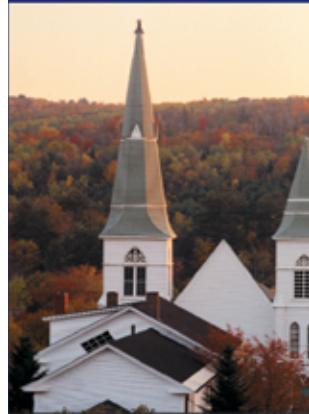
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day who has been away from the Lord for quite some time. She rededicated her life and is on fire again. A tremendous story of God's mercy and grace there.

Four services in one weekend

Cape Cod Baptist Church
East Falmouth, MA
Pastor Ben Feldott

As some of you know, Christmas has become one of our big outreach weekends of the year. Last weekend, we added a service for a total of four and had 1,289 in attendance, with 15 making salvation decisions. I am pretty proud of our people. They pull this off on one acre of land and in a 7,000-square-foot building. Eleven years ago, we moved

into this building with 30 people and now we are praying about the next phase in a relocation.

The weekend featured over 100 of our people in our choir/band/worship team and a small kid's choir. We created a video for our people to share with their friends online and it has been viewed more than 1,000 times in the last 24 hours.



Full house for Christmas

Graceway Baptist Church
Springfield, MO
Pastor Bob Stephenson

Our Christmas musical was this weekend. Full house at all performances and one person received Christ at each. Tons of visitors. Great weekend. I know some people say it's "old school," but a 50-voice robed choir still works for us. And our Break of Day Players

(continued)

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Christmas outreaches

(continued)

(the Graceway drama ministry) did an outstanding job. I heard several people remark it was the best Christmas musical they had seen in a church.

Big offering and outreach to homeless

Midway Baptist Church
San Diego, CA
Pastor Jim Baize

It all started last Sunday with a large offering to get us into the black financially. It continued with our folks serving between 75-100 homeless people a sit-down dinner and then putting on a Broadway musical for them. Last, we sent them home with a bag with socks, a hat, a blanket, and non-perishable food.

Then we had our musical for our people and had great crowds Saturday and Sunday night. We had a baby dedication this a.m. and handed out new member certificates. I think we had around 30-35 saved this weekend. God is always good.



Showing love to neighbors

Smith River Baptist Church
Smith River, CA
Pastor Steve Alexander

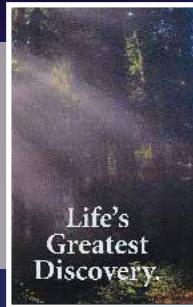
We have a large Hispanic population in our area made up of farm workers and lily growers. We wanted to do something different this year to show the love of Christ at Christmas to our Hispanic neighbors. So, instead of an adult Christmas party, we held and sponsored a Hispanic Christmas dinner. We decorated half our gym and made it look

really nice. We put up our round tables and had them decorated, served a turkey and ham dinner with all the fixings, desserts, etc. Then we played Mexican Christmas music while they ate.

Our Awana children sang two songs. Then we gave away stocking gifts for ages one to Jr. High. Hanging on a decorated wall divider (in the center of the gym) were stocking hats. Then in baskets on the floor were winter gloves, scarves, and more hats. We told the folks who came if they could use them they were welcome to them. Everything was taken. We had 100 people show up. So many left saying, "Thank you," and they so appreciated it. It was a great way for us to minister and get our foot in the door of their lives

We are in 40 Days Experiencing Jesus through the Holidays. Had a bulletin insert with a theme each week, and verses to read each day and thoughts to write down. Then every day a different special prayer request for missionaries, staff, church ministry, country, and we did this from Thanksgiving Sunday through January 1.

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Camille May

Ozark, MO

Camille Lynn Sciscoe May, 56, went to be with her Lord on Thursday, December 18, 2008, after a long battle with cancer. Born in 1952, in Bloomington, Indiana, Camille graduated from Bloomington High School in 1970. She graduated from Baptist Bible College in 1974 and 2005 and served her alma mater as the librarian for 23 years. Camille was a member of Victory Baptist Church in Nixa, Missouri. She was a loving and gracious wife, mother, grandmother, daughter, sister, and friend. She will be missed by many, but we rejoice in the fact that we will be together in heaven someday.



Camille is survived by her husband, Tim May; her daughter Annette Brummett and husband, Chris; grandchildren, Emileigh and Hailey; her parents, brothers, and sisters. Funeral services were held in Cherry Street Baptist Church on Monday, December 22.

The family suggests memorial donations be made to G. B. Vick Memorial Library at Baptist Bible College, Springfield, Missouri.

2009 May Fellowship and Homecoming Baptist Bible College

Walk in the Light **May 11-14**

Start Making Plans!

I would like to take this opportunity to invite all of the Tribune readers to come and be a part of this year's 59th Annual Commencement Exercises and Fellowship Week activities on the campus of Baptist Bible College, May 11-14. The theme for this year's meeting is Walk In The Light based upon 1 John 1:7, which states "...if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another..." I strongly encourage everyone to attend what will truly be a magnificent time of reflection and spiritual rejuvenation. Old friendships will be renewed once again, while new ones are established. This is your chance to encourage and be encouraged all at the same time!

As you make plans to attend, I recommend that you visit the BBC website at www.baptist.edu often to obtain the latest information regarding featured speakers, ministry break-out sessions, alumni reunions, special BBC hotel rates, and much more.

I look forward to seeing you in May!

Greg Corcoran
Lead Event Coordinator

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Remarkable Alternative Energy Source Discovery!

By Doug Kutilek

While reflecting deeply on the recent coldness of the weather outside, the stinging sharpness of the winter winds, and the constant chorus of media voices singing the praises of alternative energy sources, I had a near-epiphanic experience in which I saw with almost perfect clarity the solution to this continuing “crisis,” especially as it applied to my own circumstances.

Though having no training as an engineer or chemist, I quickly devised a means for producing an intense and self-sustaining exothermic reaction in an enclosed metal vessel, through the rapid but controlled oxidation of various naturally-occurring, abundant, and fully renewable hydrocarbons, thereby producing heat in sufficient quantities to quickly make our middleclass American home comfortable in the midst of winter’s chill. And the beauty of the whole thing is that this process of energy extraction is not owned or controlled by any government, foreign or domestic, or any corporation, is not patentable, but is free to all, and at potentially no cash expenditure whatsoever!

But wait, there’s more!

The waste by-products (if we dare speak of them as “waste”) of this most remarkable of cutting-edge energy-extraction processes are three — 1. water vapor, which is returned in gaseous form into the earth’s massive hydrologic cycle; 2. a moderate quantity of a solid mineral residue that is rich in trace elements, and is suitable as a stimulant to plant growth when applied to the soil, but which can be effectively employed in some circumstances for its insecticidal properties (non-toxic to man or pets, and not harmful to the environment), and can even be utilized in the manufacturing of certain kinds of personal hygiene products; and 3. carbon dioxide — the very stuff we exhale as we respire, and which constitutes an absolutely essential component for all plant growth on earth, whether grass in lawns, flowers in beds, vegetables in gardens, trees in forests, crops on farms, or seaweed in the oceans; all are utterly dependent on a ready and abundant supply of carbon dioxide, as much dependent — indeed, even more dependent — as they are on the presence of nitrogen, potassium, phosphorus, sulfur, calcium, and dozens of other elements to survive and grow. Without this carbon dioxide, it would be the end of life on earth as we know it.

Add to all this the highly touted benefits of a closely, but necessarily, connected companion in-home exercise program — requiring no membership fees, and no special outfit, shoes, or equipment (okay, maybe a little bit of special equipment) — that may take inches from your waist and add years to your life span, as the infomercials say.

“Surely,” you exclaim, “you are making all this up. Nothing could achieve all of these direct and indirect benefits, with no detrimental consequences. This is simply too good to be true.” But I solemnly affirm that every word is true.

In short, in my near epiphanic experience, I decided to kindle a wood fire in our Buck stove.

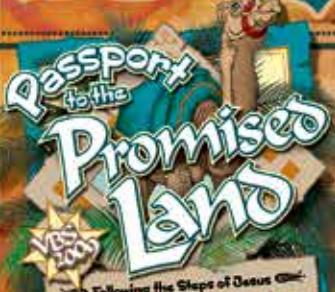
The wood, mixed hardwoods with just a touch of conifer, had been previously cut to length by my own two hands (employing suitable handsaws — rarely a powered one), split to the proper diameter (as needed) by those same two hands and arms, neatly stacked, naturally air-dried to perfection with no additional effort, toted to the wood rack on the back patio in a wheelbarrow, carried into the house a boxful at a time, and fed into the firebox as needed to continue the all-important exothermic reaction (“stoking the fire” is, I believe, the technical term). The wood, the thinnings and prunings from my own modest stand of trees, supplemented with waste wood gleaned from a variety of sources through the year, cost me nothing but time and energy, and enabled me to productively engage in that much-commended aerobic exercise, performed amidst fresh air and sunshine (rather than in some dank and malodorous exercise facility), to say nothing of the side-benefit of time alone for thought and reflection.

The water vapor and carbon dioxide — heated far beyond the ambient external air temperature — naturally rise up and out through the flue, leaving behind a growing quantity of wood ashes, an excellent soil fertilizer, reportedly also an effective deterrent of peach-borers and ants, and in a pinch useable as a source (via leaching) for caustic lye, a necessity in the manufacture of lye soap.

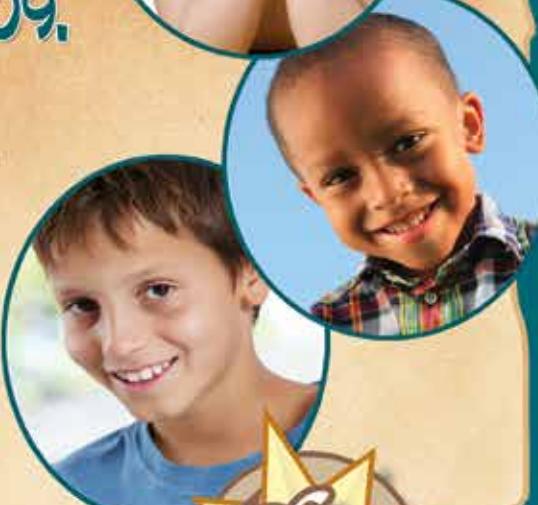
Through natural regeneration of existing trees, supplemented by my own planting of hundreds of others, this wisely- and properly-maintained “wood yard,” in the capable hands of a well-informed and far-seeing woodsman — that would be me, thank you — can and will yield a never-ending supply of complex hydrocarbons — firewood — to exercise the body, warm the house, and with its by-products, promote healthy plant growth.

So, to resolve my own energy crisis — just a bit of a chill in my study — I initiated the controlled oxidation of natively-grown and harvested hydrocarbons, and was soon basking in the warmth, with a smile of serene satisfaction on my face that I can stay cozy warm endlessly, without monetary expenditure or dependence on reportedly scarce outside energy sources under the control of others.

I have built me a fire.



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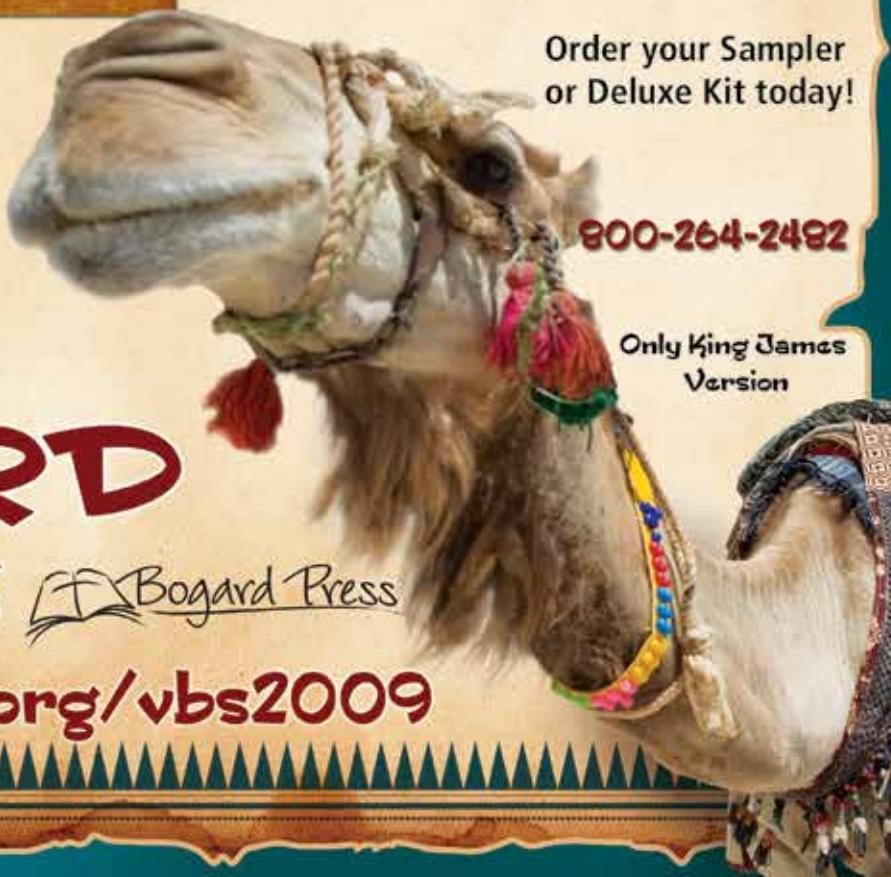
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