

BAPTIST BIBLE TRIBUNE

FEBRUARY 2014 | VOL. 64 NO. 6



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IT ALL WORKS TOGETHER

A message from the *Baptist Bible Tribune* Editor to pastors of the BBFI

A few days ago, I was preparing some material I will be presenting in a state fellowship meeting regarding the history of our Fellowship. I paused for a long time over one document — the minutes of the organizational meeting of the Baptist Bible Fellowship. I won't rehearse the entire episode, but I want to point out that the meeting was not called for that purpose, that is, organizing a fellowship. The meeting was supposed to make plans for a college, but by the end of the day, the Baptist Bible Fellowship was formed and named, complete with a proposed college, a missionary vision, and a publication. Reading the minutes, I was struck how it all just seemed to work together.

And here we are, more than 60 years later, still working together. Take the *Tribune*, for instance. The *Tribune* is not like most magazines you receive. It tells the story of the Baptist Bible Fellowship — our pastors, our missionaries, our churches. No other magazine in the world does that. And it is funded differently, too. We do have individual subscriptions and advertising, of course, but the bulk of our budget comes from monthly support and bundle subscriptions (churches send us money in exchange for a bundle of magazines monthly). That explains our focus on the Fellowship. It is another way of working together.

Another large part of our budget we raise through the annual February Tribune Offering, which is given above the regular monthly support, much like the

May college offerings. In the past, the offering helped with the extras, but the past few years it has become a vital part of our budget. Frankly, I need your help more than ever.

In December we communicated with the National Directors and State Fellowship Chairmen to enlist their aid. Last month, we contacted all our churches and provided the pastors of those churches with a commitment card and brief letter much like this column. Between now and the National Fellowship Meeting in Texas we will be receiving commitments, and I hope to announce at that time that our pastors, missionaries, and churches have once again chosen to keep the *Tribune* in business, telling the good news of what God is doing in the Fellowship.

I urge our pastors not to think that a large commitment is necessary. Compared to the budgets of the Mission Office or our colleges, the *Tribune* budget is quite small. If this is your first time, a gift of \$15 is what it takes to cover the cost of an annual subscription, and all gifts are appreciated. As a starting point, why not pay for your subscription and perhaps one more?

Whatever you decide, we at the *Tribune* will appreciate your participation in the February Tribune Offering. All commitments and gifts should be sent so they arrive at our office by February 10, 2014. If you have questions or need more information, please email me at editors@tribune.org or call 417.831.3996.

A partner in the work,
Keith Bassham
Editor, *Baptist Bible Tribune*

TOGETHER, IT ALL WORKS. WON'T YOU JOIN WITH US?



ON THE TABLE
Things that work

by Keith Bassham | Editor

Last spring, my wife and I bought a nearly new car, and for the first time in a long time, we drive a vehicle manufactured in the current decade. One thing that drew me to the car is all the technology. I can receive reports from all the major internal components, including the news that one or more of my tires needs inflating. I can also turn my car into a gigantic smart phone (albeit an expensive one) and get traffic reports or directions to destinations, and of course make phone calls. Once, I asked the car to generate a status report and to communicate the results to my email. Within a minute or so I received an email telling me my fuel level was low.

Obviously, I am no Luddite, but I do have a healthy distrust of overly complicated systems, and that includes the high-tech features in my car. All those screens and lights and flashy digital add-ons will not comfort me the day I put my key in the ignition and the thing does not start and take me where I need to go. The fact is, I would prefer my high school ride, a 1963 Falcon that started and went down the road (pretty fast as a matter of fact), to any 21st century techno-marvel that couldn't get out of the driveway.

Simply stated, I appreciate things that work.

This issue of the *Tribune* is illustrative of how the different components of the Baptist Bible Fellowship work. In these pages, you will see local churches, pastors, missionaries, and Fellowship agencies and personnel, all working together to change large chunks of the present world, and preparing people for the world to come.

There may be some other organization out there more cool, or more jazzy, or more techno-savvy, but in the past 60 some-odd years we have demonstrated that plain men and women, motivated by the Spirit and trained in the Word of God, can work together with others within the context of a fairly simple organization to plant churches worldwide and train Christian workers. For sure there have been tweaks and missteps (sometimes the tweaks were the missteps), but the basic structures and ideals remain intact.

This was brought home to me again when I recently addressed some pastors in the Kansas BBF about our Fellowship's history. Reading back through the documents and the organizational records, it appears our founders were asking, "How can we evangelize the most people and best preserve the results, while allowing for the widest participation possible with the leanest of organizational overhead?" Now, I cannot prove anyone actually voiced that question, but the organization they came up with, the Baptist Bible Fellowship, is surely the answer to that question, if it had been asked.

This month our Fellowship will assemble in the heart of Texas to reaffirm our commitment to the ideals of our founders, and, I hope, to seek out ways we can work together better than ever.

Keith Bassham

BAPTIST BIBLE TRIBUNE

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PRESIDENTIAL PERSPECTIVE

Perils of the plateau



by Linzy Slayden | President | BBFI

Most of us associate danger with a soaring mountain peak or a dark valley, but the plateau may be the most dangerous place of all.

When we are on the plateau, the path is easy because we are not climbing. Unlike the valley, the plateau has more light, few if any hidden enemies, and the atmosphere is much more encouraging. After hours of climbing, we are grateful to reach the plateau and have a chance to rest.

But if we stay on the plateau, the climb has been in vain. We may settle down, get accustomed to the achievement, and start to waste our gains. We are better off fighting our way through the valley, or working our way up the slopes, than staying on the plateau where there is no challenge to our courage, our muscles, or our faith.

We all know plateaus are necessary, that we must occasionally stop, rest, and get our bearings. But if we stay on the plateau, we are facing a great peril. The minute we have “arrived,” we can easily become comfortable; and it is just a small step from comfort to complacency. Once we become complacent, we stop growing, which can be the first step of a downhill slide and loss of spiritual power. When we stop growing, we stop living and start merely existing.

Life is not a destination; it is a journey. Once we think our journey is over, that our reason for climbing has ended, then we lose our enthusiasm and challenge, and life becomes boring.

I think it is a danger to have the attitude “I have arrived!” This false satisfaction will not help us finish the journey. When we get on a plateau with this attitude, it is easy for us to stray from the original calling of God upon our lives. The person who has “arrived” can be proud of himself and critical of others.

There is also the peril of false security. Granted, the plateau may appear safer than the valley or the peak, but it is not. We are never safer than when we are growing.

We all need new challenges to keep us from the perils of the plateau. We need intellectual challenges to keep us thinking. We need physical challenges to keep us moving, and spiritual challenges to keep us digging deeper into the Word and trusting God more. F.B. Meyer once said, “I don’t want my life to end in a swamp.” But how many lives are stagnant pools because nothing new is coming in, and nothing useful is going out?

We have to keep climbing, and we dare not become complacent. This is especially true in the ministry. There are times when we get on a delightful plateau, but we shouldn’t stay there. This is one of the many reasons I like our Fellowship meetings. They refresh and challenge me for the journey. The February BBFI meeting in Austin, TX, promises to be a special time. I hope you will make plans to be there.

WORLDWIDE MISSIONS

New year for world missions



by Jon Konnerup | Mission Director | BBFI

Do you believe in spiritual warfare? The Evil One is working overtime in the battle for the souls of mankind around the world. Ephesians 6 exposes the key players in Satan’s battle plan. These verses talk about “principalities,” which seem to indicate demons of highest rank — Satan’s inner circle, if you will. The passage also speaks of “powers,” which may refer to spiritual authorities operating behind the scenes around the world to keep people in darkness — without the light of Christ. God then mentions “rulers of the darkness of this world.” Many believe this refers to demons involved in the political, entertainment, educational, and religious aspects of our world. “Spiritual wickedness” refers to demons that work directly with humans, possessing the unsaved and attempting to oppress believers.

Acknowledging this spiritual warfare, we must realize we also have a part in fighting the principalities, powers, and rulers of the darkness of this world.

Knowing the Almighty Savior is on our side, I urge you to join me this New Year in standing behind our missionaries as they face the enemy on the front lines. In many places, they are the only light shining. The Enemy is not happy; our missionaries are on his territory and he will do all he can to cause discouragement and despair in order to send them home broken, defeated, and useless. Join me in praying daily for all the missionaries of the BBFI.

- 1. For more missionaries.** Are we praying to the Lord of the Harvest, pleading for more missionaries?
- 2. Government entry and work permits.** Foreign governments are increasingly hesitant to grant work permits to missionaries. Pray for God to touch the leaders’ hearts and soften their stances.
- 3. New churches and leadership training.** We must continue to provide training for national leaders and encourage them to pass along to others what they have been taught.
- 4. Financial support.** Since we expect missionaries to go by faith, let’s support them by faith. This may mean we have to make sacrifices. Are you ready to do your part?
- 5. Pray persistently for missionaries every day.**
 - Sunday:** Their ministries (*evangelism, discipleship, and church planting*)
 - Monday:** Their relationship to God and family
 - Tuesday:** Victory over and protection from Satan
 - Wednesday:** Their emotional life away from home and family
 - Thursday:** Physical needs (*health, safety, and financial support*)
 - Friday:** Their country’s stability
 - Saturday:** Their ability to learn the language and a new culture

Yes, there truly is power in prayer!

New year changes and opportunities



by Dan Lamb | Interim NCPO Director

For so many of us, this time of year marks a new beginning, a time of refreshment and renewal. In the last six months, the NCPO has experienced a change in leadership, increased accountability, and even a change in the focus and thrust of our responsibilities.

The NCPO has also expanded its reach with BBFI Builders and the resources it can provide. These missionary builders have saved hundreds of thousands of dollars for churches, and especially church planters, who need help with their facilities. Also, the NCPO has put together the Gateway Project, specifically targeting church planting in the Hispanic and African American communities.

In our eight years, we've had nearly 100 men trained in our NCPO Church Planting Schools, 35 of whom have been approved as church planters by the Fellowship. Many of these young men are pastoring new churches and ministering in communities that wouldn't have a church if they hadn't gone. The NCPO is excited to continue this legacy!

We will have several new families to approve as BBFI church planters at the February meeting in Round Rock, TX. William Fluker, with the help of the BBFI Builders, is about to begin a renovation on a new property in Jackson, MS. He started Grace & Mercy Baptist Church eight years ago and is moving into a larger facility that will be their own. Chris Highfill and his family just moved to St. Louis from Springfield, MO, where he had been on staff at Seminole Baptist Temple. They are starting a new church in that metro area. These are just two examples of church planters taking advantage of an NCPO partnership.

In this time of renewal, refocus, and redevelopment, the NCPO is not just trying to survive for its own sake. As a part of the restructure, the NCPO will make changes and additions in three major areas. The first will be in our assessments of church planters. It is imperative that we make sure the prospective church planter is not only prepared for his ministry, but that he has all the necessary information about his target area. The second will be in coaching or mentoring. We want to make sure the church planter is partnered with another experienced church planter who can coach, mentor, and encourage him through the process. The third area is funding. In addition to raising funds for the administrative costs of the office, we are setting up a revolving fund that will go straight to church planters. You can designate your gifts to be given to either of these funds, or to a specific church planter.

As we dive into 2014 at the NCPO, we begin a fresh year with many possibilities and much work to be done. This office has gone through transition over the last year, and positive changes are being put in place to continue the work of helping churches plant churches in the BBFI. To do this work, we need your continued support.



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ADDITIONAL HOTELS

- Courtyard – (512) 255-5551
- Days Inn – (512) 246-0055
- Best Western Executive Inn – (800) 447-4136
- Staybridge Suites – (512) 733-0942
- Red Roof Inn – (512) 310-1111
- Hampton Inn – (888) 370-1940

SPEAKERS

MONDAY



Linzy Slayden

TUESDAY



Fred Young

WEDNESDAY



William Fluker



Rick Blackwood



Keith Bassham



Tim Hawks



Randy Hogue



Cal Thomas

MINISTRY SESSIONS

Tuesday and Wednesday mornings will start with breakout classes at the Wingate Conference Center designed to benefit just about anyone in ministry.

HISPANIC FELLOWSHIP

Due to a great initial response, evening sessions have been added for Hispanic pastors and ministry leaders! Sessions will have preaching, worship, testimonies, and special music.





Dona Eggar



Carol Kent

GOLF TOURNAMENT

Four-man scramble on Thursday
Contact Steve Ledbetter at (512) 508-0810
or register at texasbbf.org

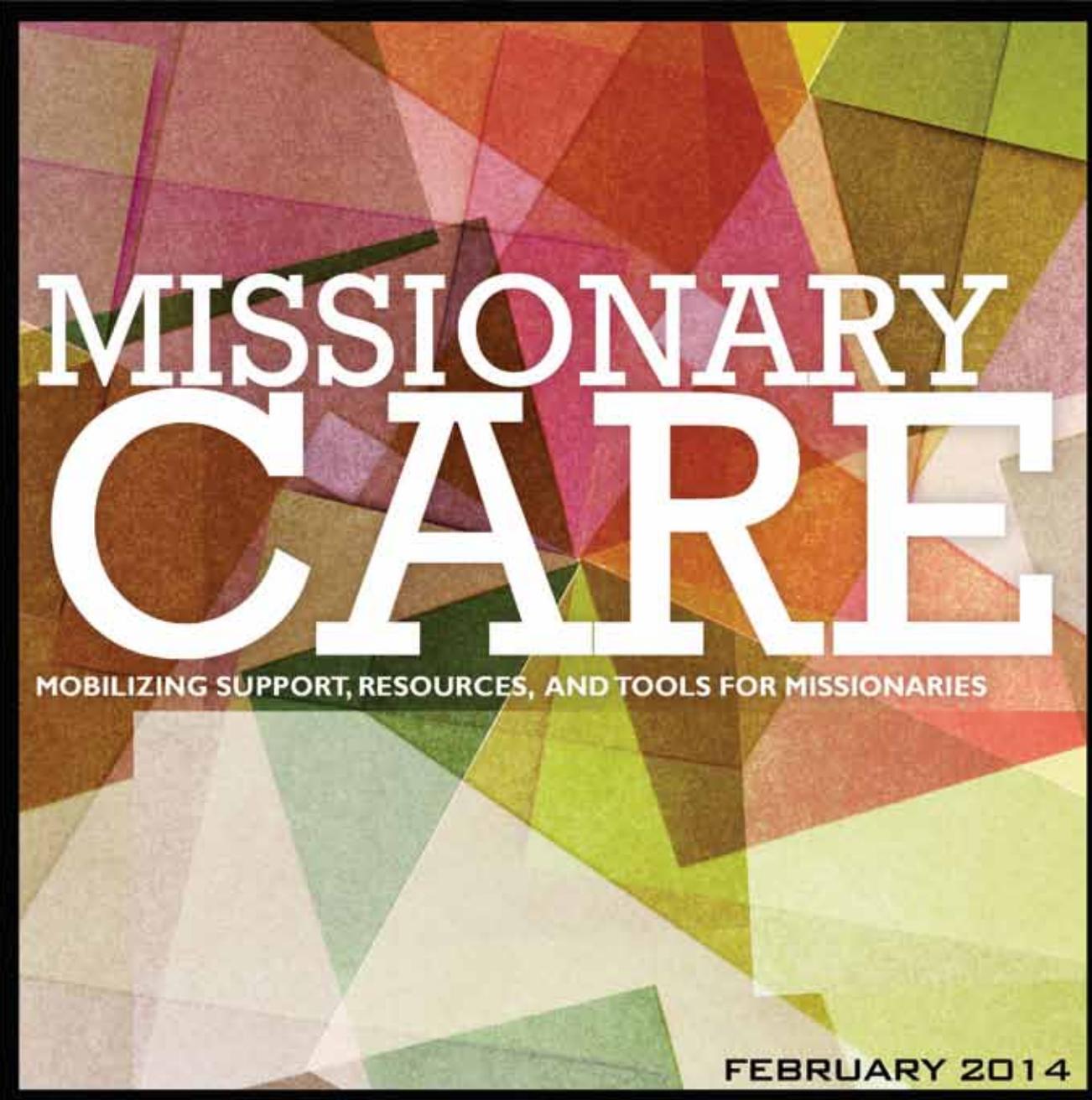
Turning Consumers Into Contributors *Monty Maples/John Gross*
 Transitions *Randy Harp*
 Prayer Ministry *John Arnold*
 MANNA Worldwide *Bruce O'Neal*
 Conflict Resolution *Kim Beckham*
 Sr. Adult Ministry *Larry Lilly*
 Water for Life *Mark Reynolds*
 Veteran Ministry *Dennis Isbell*
 Gateway Project *Steve Johnson*
 Student Pastors Panel *Jon Slayden/Jeremy McCarter*



Hugo Campos Sr. *San Diego, CA*
 Manuel Tec *San Diego, CA*
 Elias Salazar *Houston, TX*
 Charlie Bell *Springfield, MO*
 Dr. Ezekiel Serrato *Houston, TX*
 James Smith *Springfield, MO*
 Miguel Carreon *Austin, TX*
 Ricardo Murrillo *Indianapolis, IN*
 Ed Hoagland *Mexico City, Mexico*
 Russell Johnson *Miami, FL*



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"The unexpected
gunfire erupting

into our lives on December 15, 2013

changed everything for so many people."

We have lived through this type of event in another country, in another century, and in another world, so to speak. In 1992, we found ourselves in the middle of an uprising with gunfire, looting, artillery fire, and drunken soldiers on the rampage. We had five children with us. I say it was a different world because we did not have a phone nor a shortwave radio, and of course, no Internet of any kind. Our news came from the British Broadcasting Company and Voice Of America, and our warning to evacuate came in writing via many hands. And, although in 1992 we also evacuated by road, this time the experience was quite different.

Throughout this volatile experience we were blessed to be in contact, via internet, with our sending church, with Pastor Dennis Jennings, with our family, and with the crisis support help of our Mission Office. One of the directors gave us his home phone number and urged us to call at any time. They sent us security information from their crisis sources, with current and pertinent information. So, as the bullets and artillery shells were flying, the emails and Skype calls were also flying, and it was good to know we were being supported in prayer and with valuable information.

When we made the decision to evacuate, via road, with the last of the Wycliffe Summer Institute of Linguistics essential staff, we were able to do so knowing there would be people praying for us and ready to support us in any way necessary. Thanks to our mobile phones, we were able to maintain contact throughout our evacuation from South Sudan and on the long road trip through Uganda and Kenya.

Because of the thousands of people at the border between South Sudan and Uganda, it took us over five hours to clear both sides, delaying us so much that we knew we would be arriving in Gulu well after dark. With the mass exodus from South Sudan, and all traffic heading to Gulu, we were concerned we may not be able to even find

a room for the night. We decided to make the call to the associate director who had given us his home phone number. We were both amazed when we were able to make the connection from the dusty dirt road heading away from the border and ask him if he could try to Google hotels in Gulu and find one where he could book our entire party into four double rooms. We were requesting secure parking and hopefully Internet access! Thinking he may not be able to call us back, we requested him to text message us if he was successful, hoping there would be stretches along the road where we would have a mobile signal.

About an hour from Gulu, when we were all feeling hot, dusty, and exhausted, we received the incredible text message that he had been successful and had booked us all into the Churchill Court Hotel. The text message included a contact person, directions, and phone numbers! We were praising God the rest of the way to Gulu! What a blessing it was, after 13 hours on the road, to be welcomed by a hotel staff who were expecting us, and further, to find clean rooms, to have good Internet, to have secure parking, and to get a safe night's rest. What a blessing to have a support team all of the way from the U.S.A.! This is just one example of the many ways in which we felt the firm support of the Mission Office throughout the ten-day experience, from the onset of gunfire near our home in Juba to our Christmas afternoon arrival at our friend's home in Nairobi, Kenya.

We praise the Lord for His goodness, His answers to prayer, and His guardian angels throughout those ten days of crisis. And let us beseech you to join us in prayer for all of the South Sudanese whose lives have been irrevocably changed by violence and death. Our heart's desire is to return at the earliest possible time, to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, the healer of the broken hearted and the forgiver of all of our sins. Thank you for praying with and for us. May Jesus Christ be praised!

Ron and Christine Enoch

FUNDAMENTALS OF CARING By James G. Smith | jsmith@bbffimissions.com

The above story is just one example of the kind of support the BBFI World Mission Service Center can provide for missionaries sent out from BBFI churches. In this issue of *Global Partners*, we'll take a closer look at what it means to care for missionaries and how the World Mission Service Center (WMSC) partners with sending churches to mobilize support, resources, and tools for missionaries.

We, the pastors and missionaries of the Baptist Bible Fellowship International, since our inception, have always placed importance on the relationship between the missionaries and their sending churches. We understand the importance of clear authority when it comes to administrating the ordinances of the local church. We understand the importance of clear responsibility and accountability in issues of doctrine, finance, integrity, and

morality. We also understand that, in most cases, our missionaries need more than one church to stand behind them in prayer and financial support. The BBFI exists so that we can labor together in getting the missionaries from all of our churches to the countries and people groups to whom they have been sent.

The World Mission Service Center, as a matter of principle, seeks to always submit to the leadership of the sending pastor. Whether it is a matter of security, health, morality, integrity, or doctrine, we never want to usurp the authority of the sending church. So when we consider caring for the missionaries sent by BBFI churches, we must also be clear on the accompanying responsibility and accountability.

It is clear to us that while every sending church has the same authority and

responsibility, not every church has the same access to resources. So we come alongside to help. We are known as "the bridge between those who send and those who go."

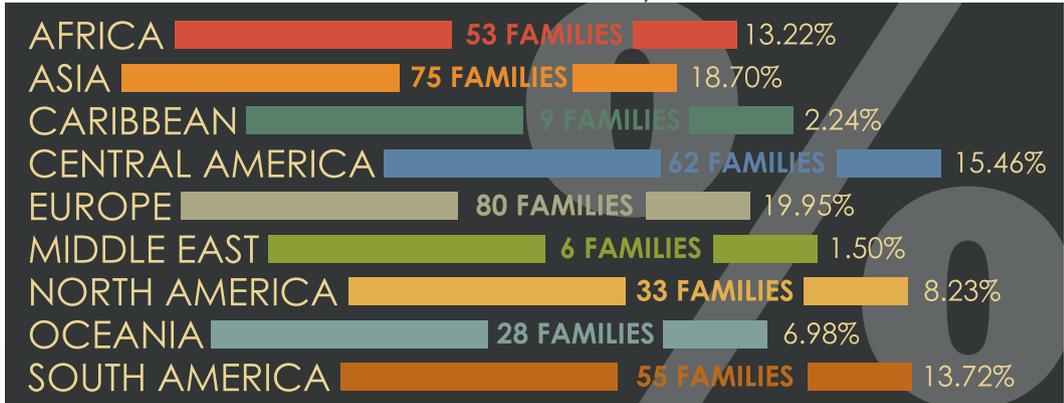
In Philippians 4:10-14, while in prison, the apostle Paul expresses his joy and appreciation for the care and concern shown him by the church in Philippi.

But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity. Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: everywhere and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all

things through Christ which strengtheneth me. Notwithstanding ye have well done, that ye did communicate with my affliction.

We believe that expressing concern and providing resources can be a great source of encouragement to those who are being faithful and diligent in taking the gospel across the cultural and linguistic obstacles in the regions that are beyond us. Thank you for your participation in this great enterprise.

BY THE NUMBERS: BBFI missionaries by location



HEALTH CARE What it looks like for a BBFI Missionary *By Steve Bender | sbender@bbfmissions.com*

Top quality healthcare with worldwide coverage for missionaries has been discussed for many years among those of us in the BBFI World Mission Service Center, sending pastors, supporting pastors, and missionaries themselves. Because of the extremely high cost involved, many American families are now either very poorly covered or have opted to carry no insurance at all, leaving them in a very dangerous situation should they encounter any major health concern. With the implementation of the U.S. government-mandated Affordable Care Act, no one seems to be able to answer the thousands of questions that have arisen concerning healthcare and the future.

Realizing the need to ensure medical coverage for the missionaries of the Baptist Bible Fellowship International, the World Mission Service Center has always done its best to seek and provide a medical plan that would fill the need of all our missionaries. To do this on a global basis has not been an easy task. In our almost 64-year history, there have been several vehicles used to provide proper healthcare coverage. In 1984, the decision was made that the BBFI World Mission Service Center should begin a self-funded medical plan.

In 1985, the WMSC hired a third party administrator (TPA) to administrate its private medical plan. The missionaries of the BBFI, in essence, own their own medical plan. While the WMSC manages the funds and establishes the policies for the plan, the TPA performs the task of administrating the plan. Realizing the financial risk involved in undertaking a self-funded plan, a reinsurance company was hired to provide coverage against catastrophic claims. The BBFI missionary medical plan not only provides our missionaries with top quality medical coverage worldwide, but it also provides a basic life insurance policy on each member of the missionary's family as well as medical emergency evacuation service should it become necessary. In the unfortunate event that a missionary dies in a foreign country, coverage also includes repatriation of the body. These last three items would not be found in any other insurance plan, but was deemed to be necessary to ensure that BBFI missionaries had the very best coverage for all health related emergencies.

In spite of being a self-funded plan, high medical costs make

the premiums a financial burden to some of our missionaries. Many options have been and will continue to be evaluated to provide the finest coverage at the least expensive cost to our missionaries. For example, we have looked at the possibility of missionaries obtaining medical coverage in their specific countries. However, we cannot confirm that should these missionaries be diagnosed with a life-threatening disease and return to the U.S. for treatment they would receive benefits with their foreign policies. At that point, the only option would be to go to the missionaries' supporting churches asking for help with what could be a catastrophic cost. Therefore, for now, we think the wisest decision is to continue with the BBFI medical plan which we are still legally able to operate and is not subject to the regulations of the Affordable Care Act, which would financially devastate our plan.

Due to the ever-rising cost of healthcare worldwide and the uncertainty of the future because of the Affordable Care Act, the BBFI medical plan will proceed with caution. The WMSC maintains a vigilant watch to financially manage the BBFI medical plan without having to continually pass on premium increases to the missionary; it is our prayer for God to once again supply the funds through His people to keep the plan financially healthy allowing for minimal increases in monthly deductions for the missionaries of the BBFI.

Recently, a husband and wife asked me, "How can we be a blessing to our missionaries after the Lord calls us home?" I replied, "First of all, while you are alive, pray daily for the health and protection of your missionaries. Secondly, should God place it on your hearts to include in your estate the BBFI medical plan, this would certainly be an ongoing blessing to the physical needs of the missionaries. It would also be an investment that would continue to benefit God's servants long after your life on earth is over." This is just one instance of God's provision for His work.

The BBFI medical plan could use an immediate infusion of funds to continue to provide first-class healthcare coverage for our missionaries. If God should burden you to invest in this vital need for the nearly 850 missionaries of the BBFI, either through estate planning or a one-time gift, please contact our office for details on how you can be used of God.



MISSIONARY FAMILY REUNION By Jon Konnerup | jkonnerup@bbfimissions.com

Webster's Dictionary defines care as: "suffering of mind; painstaking or watchful attention." Caring for the missionaries and their families sent out by churches who utilize the services of the BBFI World Mission Service Center is not something that is taken lightly.

The annual Missionary Family Reunion is just one way the Mission Office is proactively providing help to our missionaries. The main thrust of the Reunion's preaching, teaching, fellowship, counseling, and activities is to encourage missionaries. Many missionary ministries have been salvaged as a result.

Those on deputation as well as veterans of 50-plus years on the field spend time renewing life-long friendships, laughing, crying, sharing, and uplifting each other. It is a time of refreshment for our missionaries as they look into God's Word for encouragement, guidance, and strength for the task to which they have been called. Burdens are shared and answers are sought for challenges ranging from the weakening dollar, various ministry issues, family situations, and foreign government regulations and work permits.

It is a time of strong encouragement for the whole family. The younger children

enjoy participating in VBS provided by a local church, while the teenage MKs enjoy spending time bonding with other "third-culture kids."

It seems without fail that at every Reunion there is at least one missionary family who is ready to throw in the towel. Learning a foreign language (or two), dealing daily with hostile religions, security issues, education of their children, unbelievable traffic jams, rising costs of living, ministry situations, and all the fiery darts from the Devil begin to weigh heavily and bring discouragement, burnout, and despair. Through the years, the ministries of many missionaries have been rescued because we were able to love on them, minister to them, and get them back on track during this time together. One of our missionaries shared the following testimony:

"Bro. and Mrs. Konnerup, as well as the entire staff of the Mission Office, did a wonderful job planning and facilitating the Reunion. Spending time with the missionary families and the Mission Office staff was an edifying experience. It was wonderful to get to know the staff better and see their hearts' desire to care for all of us. We have been to several of these events and this one was better than ever!"

This is a vital event that has helped numerous missionaries remain on the mission field. Yet, the cost is a contributing factor that prevents some from attending. For the past several years the BBFI World Mission Service Center has subsidized a portion of missionaries' Reunion expenses, but we would like to help even more, enabling all of our missionaries to attend. We were already able to reduce the cost to our missionaries this year because of those who have started giving to the Missionary Care Offering.

It is reported that five percent of the worldwide missionary force leaves their field of service every year for various reasons. However, 70 percent of these cases are preventable. We believe, through the combined efforts of the Missionary Care Offering and the annual Missionary Family Reunion, we will help prevent missionaries from resigning and instead be able to help them renew their vision, commitment, and enthusiasm so they can joyfully return to the field and continue developing an effective ministry as church planters. Every year, missionaries express how blessed and thankful they are for the opportunity to attend the Missionary Family Reunion.



COMMUNICATION WORKSHOP By Steve Bender | sbender@bbfimissions.com

BBFI Missionaries are among the best there are in the cross cultural ministry of evangelism and church planting. There is no doubt God has greatly blessed and used the committed efforts of these men and women that have answered the call to missions. However, it would be unwise for any person to settle for less than his or her very best, especially when it comes to serving our Savior. It is understood that in order to continue to fulfill the Great Commission we must be good communicators. Our desire is to see the missionaries of the BBFI stand head and shoulders above the crowd in communicating both their passion for the people to whom God has called them and especially the gospel of Christ.

Pastor Lewis McClendon of Ventura Baptist Church, after recognizing the need of missionaries to enhance their communication skills, has made it a personal goal to furnish the tools to BBFI missionaries to help make them the best communicators possible. After prayer, research, and hard work, he presented his passion and plan to the members of Ventura Baptist Church. The church has committed several thousand dollars a year to this effort.

While in close communication with the BBFI World Mission Service Center, Pastor Lewis assembled a highly professional weeklong Missionary Communication Workshop. After viewing this workshop in action, I became completely convinced of its value to our missionaries and recommended it as a resource to our missionaries. Pastor Lewis has arranged for this workshop to be totally funded, making it FREE to all BBFI mission interns during their training and to all deputation and furlough missionaries. The

training, critique, and instruction missionaries receive during the week may not make them tremendous speakers, but it will definitely make them better speakers. Some of the past graduates of the MCW have made these statements:



“Helpful information, this should be required for all new missionaries as well as older ones.”

“I am leaving this workshop more confident, more focused, and ready to share with churches the burden God has placed on my life. I highly recommend this workshop to all missionaries. It will change your ministry.”

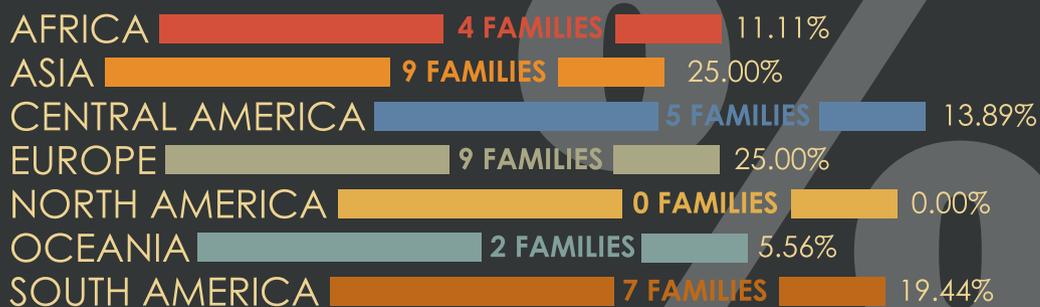
“This workshop forced me to recognize, accept, and determine to improve on my weaknesses.”

“I am not a good speaker, I will never be a great speaker, but now I have the tools to become a more effective speaker.”

Every internship pastor and sending pastor should encourage their missionaries to attend this free workshop, and even invest in their travel expenses, to ensure they make use of this resource because of the incredible value it will be to their ministries. I personally urge all BBFI missionaries, those currently serving an internship in preparation for approval, those on deputation, and all veterans, to attend the Missionary Communication Workshop. The next appointment a missionary should place on their calendar should be the MCW for November 2-7, 2014. Check it out and register today at www.aboundmissionaryservices.com.

BY THE NUMBERS

Number of BBFI Missionaries currently on deputation



WHAT IS THE AVERAGE LENGTH OF SERVICE FOR CURRENT BBFI MISSIONARIES?

- A. 11.64 years
- B. 18.39 years
- C. 25.16 years

Answer at bottom of page 14

FINANCES *By Paul Hylton | phylton@bbfmissions.com*

For more than 60 years, the World Mission Service Center of the Baptist Bible Fellowship International has been assisting Baptist churches and their missionaries in the area of finance. Through the decades, many things have changed in our world and in our country, making the processing of missionary funds much more complicated and much more efficient. It is more complicated because today we have so many laws, regulations, requirements, and international taxing agreements. At the same time, our work is more efficient because we can process more quickly with computers, electronic communication, and international wire transfers. The WMSC has been able to keep up with the changing times and provide important and crucial financial

integrity and accountability to missionaries and their supporting churches. Following are some of the things our office does to care for missionaries in keeping their finances at the highest level of integrity and efficiency.

1. Through our in-house computer accounting system and our special relationship with Commerce Bank, we are able to provide missionaries with almost instant online access to financial information and the transfer of funds, both locally and internationally, while staying compliant with U.S. and international laws and regulations.
2. U.S. financial and tax laws are constantly changing. Through special seminars and

with the help of a specialized consultant, the WMSC strives to stay up with these changes and pass on important information and reminders to missionaries. Some of these important issues and forms are:

- the Social Security Totalization Agreement with 24 countries
 - new tax form 8938 for funds in a foreign country
 - the change to the Treasury Department's new reporting form FinCEN #114 for reporting of bank accounts in foreign countries
3. Five years ago the WMSC updated and changed the financial report policies and procedures to stay current with IRS regulations. Though it was a long and difficult process, we now have a quarterly report system that has the necessary requirements and details with the safeguards needed to protect our missionaries and our office from problems with the IRS.
 4. Each year in our Candidate School we have classes for new missionaries dealing with personal and ministry finances. We review and teach proper attitude and habits in handling money. We teach the need for proper accounting and reporting practices, the need and means to set up a proper budget, and the need to think about and plan for retirement.

SECURITY *By Steve Bender | sbender@bbfmissions.com*

The BBFI World Mission Service Center does not take lightly the responsibility to care for those men and women of God sent out under our name. Recognizing it is the local church that sends missionaries, it is our desire to never usurp the authority of the sending church but rather to come alongside, pooling our resources in caring for missionaries.

In recent years, we have witnessed a tremendous increase in the number of assaults, robberies, physical violence, and kidnappings of Americans living abroad. There have been instances in which BBFI missionaries have been the victims. Seeing this rising trend, the WMSC has taken steps, and will continue to do so, in order to be as best prepared as possible to respond to an emergency worldwide.

One of those steps involves contracting with an outside professional company, Fort Sherman Academy — to train our office staff in how to respond in a time of crisis and to be available to assist us should the need arise. This involves extensive training for directors and other key personnel in forming a Crisis Action Team that will be activated in times of need, capable of operating around the clock. Realizing most sending churches would not be specifically trained or equipped to respond most effectively in these times, we endeavor to work in close harmony and unity with the sending church to ensure the safety of their missionaries.

Another step being taken is to provide a minimum level of personal security training for all BBFI missionaries. This will increase their awareness and help them know how to respond in emergencies. The goal of the WMSC is to help the missionaries you send into all the world get there, be fully equipped and resourced, enabling them to stay longer to fulfill the Great Commission.

This could not be accomplished without the consistent prayer and monthly financial support invested in the WMSC by the churches of the BBFI.



The World Mission Service Center is able to provide bank deposits and transfers as well as international wire transfers of funds. Loans and advances are provided to missionaries and emergency funds are expedited. Letters of financial guarantee are written for missionaries who need them as they apply for visas.

Our missionaries have immediate access to current and archived statements and reports. The supporting churches are receipted immediately and the contributions are posted daily. Our missionaries and churches are generally grateful that they have a service center behind them that is taking care to do all things “decently and in order!”

MISSIONARY KIDS By Lee Tomlin | ltomlin@bbfmissions.com

In his book, *Creating Magic*, the former Executive Vice President of Disney World, Lee Cockrell, explains that one of the greatest ways to serve and encourage someone is to serve and encourage their children. As a parent, I have experienced this kind of encouragement numerous times — by people who have gone out of their way to invest in, care for, and listen to my children. If you want to show love for someone, then love on his or her kids.

As I have met with different missionary families on deputation, furlough, and in their countries, I have witnessed the importance of caring for missionary kids. Those churches and individuals that serve and care for missionary kids are such a blessing to missionary families. Whether it is a friendly youth group that invites a visiting missionary kid to come and sit with them in church, or a mission team that brings gifts to the missionary kids on the field during a mission trip, it is obvious that one small act of kindness can make a life-long impact in the life of a missionary kid.

The BBFI World Mission Service Center understands that a very important element of our Missionary Care Program must include a plan to minister to and encourage our missionary kids.

We want to establish new ways to connect with and encourage missionary kids by communicating with them, connecting them to each other, and assisting the students and their families through many different transitions.

Here are two ways we are seeking to minister to missionary kids.

ANNUAL FAMILY REUNION

Each year our fellowship encourages our missionaries to come together for a week of fun and spiritual refreshment. In 2013, the

missionary families who attended said that it was a very encouraging reunion. We are already excited about plans to make this year's Reunion even better. During our Reunion, we are very intentional about making sure our missionary kids have a blast. We have a number of different activities for the missionary kids to participate in. It is a wonderful time for missionary kids to come together, build new friendships, and have a great time together.

BBFI STUDENTS WEBSITE

We are currently working on a BBFI Students website which will provide a number of different resources to students all around the world. A significant section of this website will be designated to ministering to missionary kids. This website will offer creative ways to connect with other missionary kids, videos and blogs posted by missionary kids about what it is like to be a missionary kid, and information for missionary families to assist them through cultural transitions with their children, teenagers, and college students, both on and off the field.

We in the World Mission Service Center are excited about this new emphasis on Missionary Care, and we are equally excited about the attention this brings to our missionary kids. We want to serve and encourage our missionaries by reaching out to the entire family. We have many other ideas

about the future of this portion of the Missionary Care Program, and we are open to any ideas you may have in regards to how we can effectively serve and encourage missionary kids and the families who are spreading the gospel around the world.



BY THE NUMBERS:

Number of BBFI missionaries by age group

20s	45
30s	117
40s	127
50s	198
60s	167
70s	85
80s	23

WHAT IS THE AVERAGE AGE OF BBFI MISSIONARIES ON DEPUTATION?

- A. 22
- B. 26
- C. 33

Answer at bottom of page 16

WHAT IS THE AVERAGE AGE OF BBFI MISSIONARIES?

(NOT INCLUDING RETIRED MISSIONARIES)

- A. 46
- B. 53
- C. 59

Answer at bottom of page 16



World Mission Forum

BBFI World Mission Service Center

March 27th - 28th 2014

The World Mission Forum is a two day seminar focused on missions. There will be a variety of different classes and breakout sessions for pastors, prospective missionaries, and mission minded students, to help them determine their next steps in missions.

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Pastors

Sending Missionaries
Missions Momentum
Mission Internships
Mission Trips
And More...

Prospective Missionaries

Call of God
Deputation
Living Overseas
WMSC Services
And More...

Students

Modern Missions
Mission Opportunities
College Decisions
TEAM Missions
And More...

REGISTER AT BBFIMISSEIONS.COM BY MARCH 17th

Cost \$25 Per Person / For more information please call (417) 862-5001



BBFI

WORLD MISSION SERVICE CENTER

MISSIONARY CARE By Jon Konnerup | jkonnerup@bbfmissions.com

Throughout scripture, we can clearly see God loves and watches over His children. He has blessed the Baptist Bible Fellowship with a service center in Springfield that is ready and waiting to assist missionaries who face all kinds of obstacles and dangers. The questions facing us are: Are we able to provide adequate care for our people serving the Lord in the cross-cultural ministry world?

Is our Fellowship's World Mission Service Center able to back our overseas missionaries the way it should? Another question often posed is, "Why is there an increased attrition rate of our missionaries?"

In 2013, the pastors of the Baptist Bible Fellowship International and the World Mission Service Center began promoting an offering to raise funds for the Missionary Care aspect of our Fellowship. This will enable us to serve our missionaries and their churches even more effectively while at the same time strengthening our efforts to keep them on the mission field during times of great difficulty. The work of Satan and changing times are causing a variety of

difficulties around the world.

It is not unusual for the BBFI World Mission Service Center to receive a call that begins with: "We were just involved in a bad accident and they are saying my spouse may not make it. I need help." "We were just beaten and robbed at gunpoint. They took all our money, credit cards, and passports. Can you help us?" "My husband was just taken

to the ER; he's having a heart attack. Please help!" "Our country just had a coup attempt and many foreigners are being evacuated. What should we do?"

The BBFI World Mission Service Center aspires to serve and facilitate churches by processing funds for their missionaries and assisting with various aspects of missionary care. It is not our intention to usurp the

authority of the sending church; however, when called upon, we want to be equipped and available to assist them in the best way possible. We stand by the biblical pattern of the local church being the sending agency of a missionary. Therefore, we come alongside and assist churches as they strive to fulfill the Great Commission through world missions.



Remember, the BBFI World Mission Service Center does not charge for its services. Other organizations, sensing the need for member care, deduct up to 17 percent from their missionaries' monthly support in order to fund a strong care program for their missionaries.

Following is a summary of ways the BBFI World Mission Service Center could better serve and equip its missionaries, if the funds were available:

- 1. COMMUNICATION** Help missionaries establish and stay in contact with their sending pastor, the Mission Office, and their field representative.
- 2. MISSIONARY FAMILY REUNION** Provide the setting for missionaries to connect with and establish lifelong friendships with fellow missionaries while being encouraged by the Reunion's preaching, teaching, fellowship, counseling, and activities. The goal is to host the Reunion at a reduced (subsidized) cost, or hopefully one day at no cost, to the missionary. We have already received funds that will enable us to begin reducing the cost for this year's Reunion.
- 3. MISSIONARY KID RE-ENTRY** Assist missionary kids to successfully transition to life in the United States by equipping them and their parents.

BY THE NUMBERS

BBFI missionary approval/attrition numbers

	2010	2011	2012	2013
APPROVALS	24	36	35	31
RETIREMENTS	4	13	10	6
RESIGNATIONS	22	23	35	28
DEATHS	5	5	5	9
NET CHANGE	-7	-5	-15	-12

4. COUNSELING Provide personal counseling through neutral professional counselors, crisis counseling, and conflict resolution.

5. RAN MISSIONARIES Provide the extra care and protection needed for our Restricted Access Nation missionaries.

6. SENDING CHURCH/ INTERNSHIP CHURCH/FIELD REPRESENTATIVE Assist the sending pastor, internship pastor, and field representative to establish a relationship with the missionary and to be effective in their support and care. Plans are already being made to make this happen.

7. CRISIS TRAINING Specialized training for our missionaries to be best prepared to face the unforeseen in our chaotic world. We want to provide a minimum level of personal security training for all missionaries. The annual Missionary Family Reunion and the annual Candidate School will provide the venues for this to be accomplished. This training will increase their awareness and help them know how to respond in an emergency situation.

None of this could be accomplished without the prayer and financial support of

the churches of the BBFI. Our goal this year of \$500,000 will go a long way in the completion of building projects listed through the former Missionary Projects Offering and the implementation of these important aspects of Missionary Care. We hope to receive \$250,000 that will go toward the missionary building projects and \$250,000 that will go toward the Missionary Care Offering. As of December 2013, we have received \$103,472.50 through the Missionary Care Offering (MCO). With your help, we will be able to attain our goal by August 2014.

You can either give an annual gift or commit to giving a set amount each month. Would you consider what part you will have in this newly established Missionary Care Offering? If we could build this network of care, we would find our missionaries more equipped to endure all the difficult situations they encounter. When our missionaries are strong, they can build strong national leaders, churches will be planted, and people will get saved.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Your participation in this offering is one of the ways we can work together to help all BBFI missionaries. There are several ways in which we can immediately help in caring for them:

1. Pray and seek God's direction about your participation in this offering.
2. Fill out the Missionary Care Offering commitment card and mail it to the World Mission Service Center or give it personally to one of the men from the World Mission Service Center.
3. Call the World Mission Service Center at (417) 862-5001 and share the commitment your church is making.
4. You can also give online at www.BBFImissions.com.

BY THE NUMBERS

Current BBFI missionaries grouped by length of service



A MAN SENT FROM GOD TO MEXICO

J. HAROLD DEVILBISS (1926 - 2013)

John Harold DeVilbiss, a senior missionary of the Baptist Bible Fellowship International, passed from this life to Glory December 14, 2013. He served as a missionary to Mexico from June 1946, when he arrived as a 19-year-old preacher of the gospel, until his death.

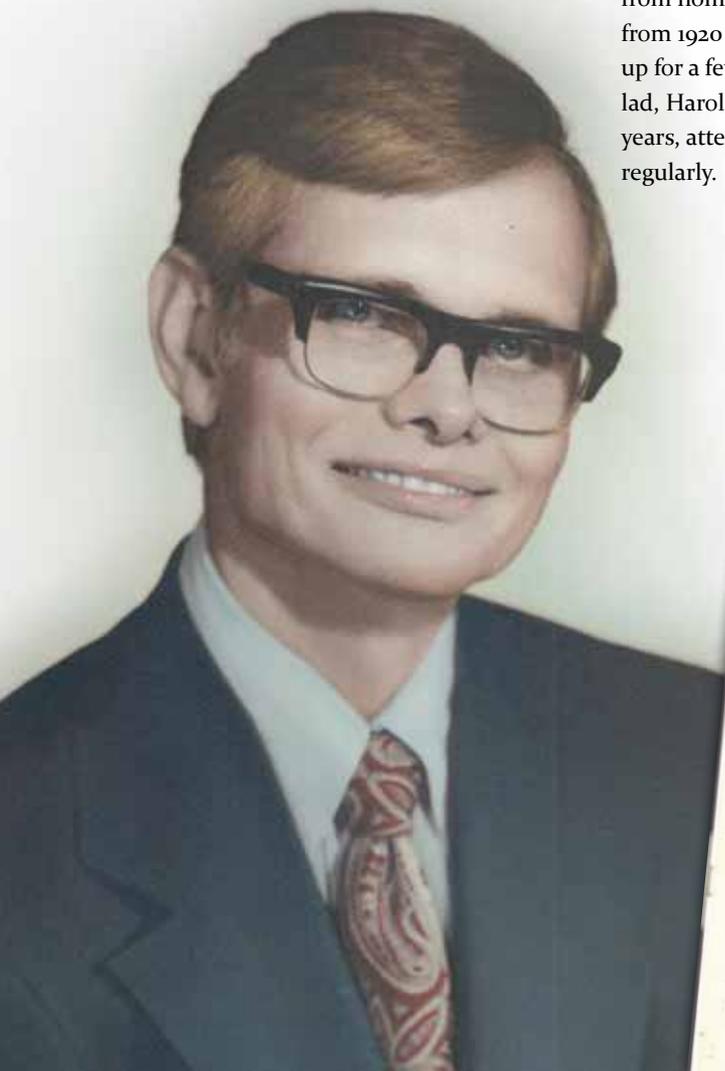
Adapted from an article written by James O. Combs, former editor of the *Baptist Bible Tribune* with updates and additions by Keith Bassham

Texas-born on December 22, 1926, in San Antonio, TX, Harold was originally given the name Curtis Lee because his mother didn't think he would live very long. A few months later she changed his name to John Harold. His mother was a godly woman who nurtured her youngest son with the Word of God. At the age of 12, Harold accepted the Lord as Savior. His father, Thomas, was away from home working in the oil fields of Mexico from 1920 until 1924, only seldom showing up for a few days with his family. Saved as a lad, Harold was a Southern Baptist for several years, attending Sunday school and church regularly.

In early 1943, a defining event occurred that would change his life immediately and set him on the road to a glorious life as an ambassador of our heavenly King in Mexico.

His mother took Harold with her from San Antonio, TX, where they lived, to visit relatives in Tyler. While there, they were in the Fundamental Baptist Church (later named Central Baptist Church), pastored by a fiery, evangelistic 30-year-old courageous and crusading preacher, John W. Rawlings.

They liked what they heard. Asking Pastor Rawlings where they could get Bible preaching like that, he suggested they attend the Huisache Baptist Church, a congregation



Harold knew this was God's will for his life. Though he was only 19 years old and single, he was enthusiastically supported by the congregation.

founded by Louis Entzminger, a coworker with the redoubtable J. Frank Norris, and pastored by Luther B. Osborne at the time. One service in the San Antonio church was enough. They joined and became "Fundamental Baptists."

During the summer of 1943, Harold, who had worked after school at a Winn's 5 and 10-cent store near Hawthorne Junior High School, dropped by to see his fellow employees. He met another teenager who was also serving the Lord. Through Harold's invitation to a revival at Huisache, and later hearing G. Beauchamp Vick of the mammoth Temple Baptist Church of Detroit on a July Sunday morning, Harold's friend, Jimmy Combs, moved his letter from the prestigious First Baptist Church and cast his lot with the fundamental Baptist movement. Both went through Brackenridge High School in San Antonio together and remained lifelong friends.



Harold was licensed to preach at the Huisache church in 1943, and he was ordained in July the following year. He was only 17 years old. After graduating from high school in May of 1945, through a series of unusual circumstances, Harold received a catalog from Kansas City Bible College and followed the Lord's leadership to enroll in the fall of 1945. He studied there a full year, and Combs followed him in January.

They attended and taught Sunday school at the three-year-old Kansas City Baptist Temple, founded by Wendell Zimmerman, and worked on the church staff for a time at the rapidly growing church, which was running around 300 in attendance.

In the summer of 1946, Zimmerman called Harold aside and asked if he was, indeed, called to the mission field of Mexico. Zimmerman said the church had accumulated several thousand dollars in a missions fund since they started, with the prayer that God would send an independent Baptist missionary they could commission and support on a foreign field.

Harold knew this was God's will for his life. Though he was only 19 years old and single, he was enthusiastically supported by the congregation. He left Kansas City, pausing to visit his parents, where his father had begun farming in Pearsall, TX, and crossed the Rio Grande.

On June 13, 1946, Harold began his ministry. Learning the language and working with some other Baptist Mexican nationals, he found a wonderful response to his ministry and message among the Mexicans. By 1958 he had established 12 churches on the eastern coast of the country, beginning in Tampico.

Well received by the Mexican people, Harold was known by the Mexicans as "Geraldo" or Gerald, since the American/English name is not used in Spanish. He met

and married Connie Muñoz (Ramirez), a very talented Christian girl from a prominent family in the Madero church.

In 1950, DeVilbiss was taking his first furlough traveling over America. He was present in Fort Worth for the founding meeting of the Baptist Bible Fellowship in the Texas hotel, casting his vote and aligning himself not only with his sending church in Kansas City, but with Fred Donnelson and the new movement.

DeVilbiss's work as a young pioneer of independent Baptist missionary work in Mexico has been recognized in the Southern Baptist publication, *A Century of Baptist Work in Mexico*. The author, Frank Patterson, writes,

"Since the 1880s, numerous Baptists have gone to Mexico as missionaries without support from a mission board ... But early in the early 1940s a group (later known as) the Baptist Bible Fellowship, sent Rev. J. Harold DeVilbiss to work in the State of Taumilipas with headquarters in Ciudad Madero, Taumilipas. Rev. Jose Bueno, an aggressive young pastor in Ciudad Mante and Limon, visited the Kansas City Baptist Temple of Missouri, whose pastor, Rev. Wendell Zimmermann, offered economic support. Later the two churches led by Bueno separated from the SBC ... J. Harold DeVilbiss, representative of the Baptist Bible Fellowship had held conferences in Ciudad Madero ..."

As a result of these contacts (and an earlier contemporary movement, formed in 1944 and called Fundamental Baptist Mission, launched by Luther B. Osborne from San Antonio) there were churches in Saltillo, Raices, and other places. DeVilbiss founded his first major church in Tampico, where he served for many years.

The Baptist Bible Fellowship of Mexico was founded by 24-year-old Harold, in



Mante, January 9-11, 1951. The Fellowship was composed of the pastors and churches of Mante and Limon, DeVilbiss's churches at Ciudad Madero and Tampico, and a church at Gonzales, together with six other missions. By 1953, the Saltillo and Raices churches were added to the Fellowship and by 1956 there were 18 churches, five of them started by DeVilbiss. By that year DeVilbiss and his colleagues had founded a Bible institute, organized a women's society, conducted encampments, and formed a youth association.

This indigenous work done by and through nationals caused Frank Patterson to write, "The Convention's losses were small and temporary, but confrontation with the independent movement made a profound impression on the leadership. Immediate emphasis was given to dependence upon the Holy Spirit, respect for the local church was manifest, and it was realized that if the Convention wanted its own institutions they must be supported nationally ..."

In the 1950s, Harold and Connie settled down to build a church in Tampico. Following a disastrous hurricane that demolished their meeting place, they built a new auditorium to accommodate several hundred.

Fine music became a trademark of the DeVilbiss family. During the 1950s four children were born to the dedicated Christian

couple. They formed a musical team, enlisting a dozen other Mexican musicians to become a singing and playing orchestra, touring both Mexico and the United States to promote missions. The family itself became a very talented musical combo. All four children — John, Thomas, Annita and Danny — are skilled musicians.

Today, all four are active in Christian work. The eldest son, John DeVilbiss (Ph.D. Stanford University) became a geologist, promoting biblical creationism in seminars and lectures. Tom and his wife Robin work in Edo De Mexico; Ed Hoagland and Annita DeVilbiss Hoagland are in Mexico City; and Danny is a teacher in an exclusive school in the capital. The Hoaglands and the Tom DeVilbisses have served the Lord at the great Mexico City church.

As mentioned, DeVilbiss received his education at Calvary Bible College (formerly KCBC) back in the 1940s, and then continued to study through Moody Bible Institute's external studies program. In the late 1980s, he completed a B.A. degree from Louisiana Baptist University. In 1981, he was honored for his 35 years in the ministry with a Doctor of Divinity degree from Baptist Bible College of Springfield, MO.

DeVilbiss served as president (the first)

of the BBF in Mexico, founder and leader of the Latin American Bible College, a church planter, pastor, and evangelist. Thousands of people have come to Christ through his far-reaching ministry. Scores have gone from the States to Mexico, resulting in multitudes coming to Christ, hundreds of young Mexicans being trained for Christian ministries, and about 70 men and women out of the DeVilbiss ministry are serving in full-time ministry. Today the BBFI has mission points all over Mexico, largely due to the ministry of Harold DeVilbiss.

Most of his years in Mexico were spent in Mexico City, one of the largest metropolitan areas in the world where he led Fundamental Baptist Church. In his latter years, Harold assumed the deserved role of a distinguished elder statesman, still temporarily pastoring churches needing special attention, conducting mission conferences and seminars, speaking in the college, and occasionally visiting churches in the U.S.A.

For more than six decades, DeVilbiss served on the mission field with dedication and distinction. He faced persecution, survived a nearly fatal automobile accident, wrestled with the powers of darkness, and emerged a dynamic overcomer and a revered leader. For length of missionary tenure, for consistent consecrated ministry, for such abundant spiritual fruit and long-lasting results, he and Connie set an inspiring example, not often seen, for the present and next generation.

The first memorial service for the missionary was held Sunday evening, December 15, in the last church he planted in Mexico City. More than 300 people attended, and many shared their hearts and stories about his ministry to them personally. A second memorial took place the morning of Monday, December 16, at Capital Baptist Church in Mexico City (one of the many churches he founded). That afternoon, the body of Harold DeVilbiss was buried at a cemetery in Mexico, among those he served for more than 67 years.

For more information on the DeVilbiss family history, see the Afterwords on page 30.



URBAN CURRENT

Voice of a veteran

"There are practitioners who are not veterans. There are veterans who are no longer practitioners. There is nothing like hearing from a veteran who is still a practitioner."

So read my liner notes on John Thompson's excellent volume titled *Urban Impact*. I continue, "John Thompson writes from the field. This work helps meet the urgent need for urban ministry perspective in material that is rooted in scripture, tested in practice, and based in the local church. This volume is the voice of a man who lives the life and knows what he is talking about."

Frankly, nothing gets my goat quicker than the academician, sociologist, wanna-be expert of any stripe, Christian or not, pontificating from some ivory tower on "life and work in the city." Then there are those who spent a summer working with a para-church organization while a student or the person who pastored for two or three years in an urban community. Add to this list those who have lived and/or worked in the "inner city" of a small city. These guys may have done some research, gained some insight, had some experiences, but in my opinion, not enough to be writing books or working the lecture circuit.

When I landed here 40 years ago, I didn't know what I was doing and I didn't know anyone else who did either. The voices I heard or the resources I ran across tended to be from observers or visitors. It didn't take me long to see the value of their perspective would be quite limited. So when John told me he was working on a book on urban ministry, I was thrilled. I knew his contribution would be significant.

I have known John for 32 years. For 18 of those, John and his wife Debbie were here at Armitage. For 13 years we worked shoulder to shoulder on staff. I know his family. I know his history. We've spent hours on our knees together. We faced urban challenge after urban challenge together. We've seen God work miracles.

I've watched John literally trust God for basic necessities standing on Matthew 6:33. When he writes on the all-important subject of family life in an urban environment, I know he knows what he's talking about. I've watched him father his kids. I've seen him and his wife shepherd their children to become warriors for Christ.

There are more urban ministry resources than ever before. As in any other field, you want to tap the best. John's effort, published in 2011, provides a well-rounded primer for any believer living or working in a metropolitan area. He addresses the theological lenses through which to see and understand the city from God's perspective. He discusses how the city leverages its influence. He speaks to the role of the city in world evangelism. He deals with the personal requirements of those seeking to be effective in urban ministry. He talks about the necessary elements for successful urban impact. He describes biblical discipleship as it plays out on the streets of great cities. He spends two chapters discussing effective compassion, connection, and service to those who are disenfranchised. He attacks one of the city's greatest issues and society's greatest challenges — the fatherless family. He gives attention to church planting in an urban environment.

This is not a glorified pamphlet and its 192 pages include an extensive bibliography.

Dr. Paige Patterson, president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, says, "I can tell you that the one chapter on the absent father, the greatest problem on our society, would be worth the purchase price of the book and every second of the valuable time it takes to read it. If I could only read one book this year on evangelism and especially how to reach the teeming masses of people in the inner cities in our world, it would be this book by John Thompson."

This volume is replete with personal experiences and insights resulting from John living out his life's passion — making disciples. I've

witnessed John pouring his life into man after man after man after man, patiently nurturing, teaching, and modeling.

Cities, large and mid-size, have changed dramatically in the last 20 years with city centers revitalizing, rebuilding, repopulating. The influx of yuppies and hipsters to center cities across America has brought major changes to the look, feel, and yes, needs of urban ministry.

While the bulk of the book is helpful in understanding and serving the city, it might lead one who does not know better to believe that urban ministry continues to be primarily "ministry in the hood." Since most of John's life and ministry have been in broken communities, his work is weighted in that direction. And take note, increasingly urban poor have been displaced to suburban areas where believers must now learn how to serve people they only know through news reports.

So, two cautions:

- Don't read the message of the book as saying the city is monolithic in its social brokenness.
- Don't expect material targeting urban newcomers, the up and out.

Because you live in an urbanized world, you should read this book. Because what happens in cities impacts everybody on the planet, you should read this book. Because you are a believer who cares about living a life that has the greatest possible impact in a needy world, you would do well to read *Urban Impact*.



by Charles Lyons, Pastor
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Chicago, Illinois
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HISTORY

BAPTIST

JOHN BIRCH – *Missionary and soldier*

September 12, 1918, Presbyterian missionaries to India, George and Ethel Birch, rejoiced in the birth of their firstborn. They named him John. In 1920, George's declining health forced the family to return to America, settling in New Jersey near Ethel's family. The Birches soon realized their denomination had become infested with theological liberalism. They withdrew their membership and were immersed, uniting with a fundamentalist Baptist church.

John Birch was converted and baptized when he was seven. Everyone who came in contact with John soon realized he possessed unique mental abilities. At the age of seven he could read like an adult, and his ability to memorize never ceased to amaze. When John was 11 he attended a missionary conference where he heard a missionary describe the death wail of native tribesmen. A few days later John's parents found a note he left on the kitchen table, "The Lord is calling me to the mission field. I have the answer to the death wail of the lost."

As the Great Depression continued to worsen, George and Ethel found it increasingly difficult to put food on the table for their growing family. George decided the best course of action would be to move to Georgia where he owned some land left to him by his mother. This also meant that John would attend nearby Mercer University. In 1935, John enrolled in Mercer with a ministerial scholarship. He excelled as a student. He was a champion debater, never losing a debate. John's English professor believed he could have had a great career as a writer.

During John's senior year, a friend persuaded him to go hear J. Frank Norris, who was preaching at a church near Mercer. The first night, John was astonished at Norris's preaching, and when the invitation was given the altar was filled with people accepting Christ and rededicating their lives. John was so impressed he decided to stay for another night.

In Norris's second sermon, he told about 75-year-old Mother Sweet laboring in China and desperately needing young men to come help reap the harvest. At the conclusion of the message, John introduced himself and told Norris he

was a senior at Mercer, and when he graduated he would go to China.

John graduated in 1939 at the top of his class. He moved to Fort Worth and enrolled in Norris's Bible institute. A year later, John and fellow missionary Oscar Wells sailed for China. John immediately began learning the language, and within a year he was speaking like a native. After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, the Japanese issued an arrest warrant for John. Warned by Christian friends, he fled to the interior. He was avoiding the Japanese when he was told about several Americans hiding in a boat. John found their hiding place and learned this was Col. Jimmy Doolittle and four of his crew who

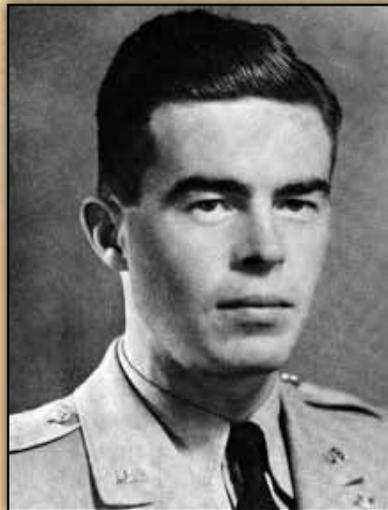
had ditched their plane after their heroic raid on Tokyo. John's language skills and the assistance of sympathetic Chinese enabled him to lead Col. Doolittle and his crew to safety.

John enlisted in the military and offered his services as a chaplain, but his talent as a translator and his ability to gather information about the Japanese made him indispensable in the war against Japan. John's achievements earned him the Legion of Merit, "For exceptionally meritorious conduct in performance of outstanding service."

John's bravery was legendary, but he never compromised his commitment to Christ. He was first and foremost a

missionary. One of John's fellow officers said, "He was the most brilliant, finest, most able, bravest officer I ever met." The Japanese surrendered on August 15, 1945. John was elated. He planned to return home and visit his family and then return to China to resume his missionary work. Tragically, only ten days later, on August 25, John was murdered and his body mutilated by Chinese Communist soldiers who were supposed to be our allies. To our government's shame, John's murder was covered up.

The seed John Birch sowed is still reaping a harvest. You can read more about John Birch in *The Secret File on John Birch* by James and Marti Hefley.



by Thomas Ray



Do we really need Bible colleges?



by Mark Milioni | President | Baptist Bible College

People often give me advice, good or bad. I was recently told, “Bible colleges are not needed. Send your students to a secular college and then train them for ministry in the local church.” I should add this came from someone who neither attended nor supports BBC.

I ponder all the advice that I am given, and this was no exception. Do we really need Bible colleges? Is there really a purpose for BBC and our friends in Boston and Shreveport? I determined that the answer was yes! I say this not for job security, but because of my experiences as a veteran pastor.

The local church is and should be a place where we receive instruction. We should be taught biblically regarding holiness, discipleship, Christian leadership, ministry, and service. But who will equip that pastor to teach these things? There is a great need for Bible colleges that teach and train leaders who are then able to teach and train the church.

The idea for setting aside a specific time to train for ministry is not new. Both the Old and New Testaments give examples of men being set apart for a time to train for what God had called them to do. The Apostle Paul spent three years in a time of intense education following his conversion. He was then able to teach and preach the gospel, win new converts, and start many churches. The time he spent learning how to “do ministry” was not wasted time, but time that gave him the ability to say boldly, “Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.”

There is no greater calling than the call to ministry. I am afraid we have downplayed the importance of what we do to the point that some have neglected the preparation necessary to do this task well. If being in ministry is such a high calling, then shouldn't preparing for it be of the greatest priority? Who wants to go to a dentist who wasn't properly trained or a meet with an oncologist who wasn't taught by the best? Ministry is serious business — eternity hangs in the balance for people all over the world. That is why we need BBC.

BBC is here to train the next generation:

- In leadership, doctrine, and ministry preparation.
- In the doctrines of Bibliology, Christology, Pneumatology, Anthropology, Hamartiology, Soteriology, Ecclesiology, Eschatology, etc.
- To write books to help people understand and study the Scriptures.
- To stand in the pulpit and share the *why* of what we believe
- To grow spiritually and develop a heart to reach others for Christ.

BBC is not a replacement for the local church. We are simply a partner, a tool God has used to help teach and train thousands for local church ministry.

As always, thank you for your continued prayer and support. It is an honor to serve you at Baptist Bible College.

Seal is the deal



by David Melton | President | Boston Baptist College

I love Boston. While I don't know everything — far from it — I am almost obsessed with learning about our city. There is so much amazing history, so many fun idiosyncrasies, so much that makes this world-class city interesting, compelling, and gripping. But this week I learned something really significant about Boston — it has a city motto.

It's right there on the almost ubiquitous yellow seal, in Latin, rolling across the top, *SICUT PATRIBUS, SIT DEUS NOBIS*. For us non-Latin readers, it can be translated ... “as with our fathers, may God be with us.” My city, the home of the World Champion (again) Red Sox, the city of Paul Revere and Samuel Adams (the man), where you can have a Molasses flood, a Tea Party in a harbor, where two lanterns can become legendary, and seafood is always in the city. Boston has an incredibly serious city motto, pulled from the pages of Scripture.

Maybe it is not an accident that this is a mecca of education. The motto adopted by the city's founders is a call for a well-informed mind. It requires us to know what God did in the past, and to yearn for that same God to do it again in our times. I'll never look at Boston's city seal the same way again. It is a call to task. It is a prayer for help.

Boston Baptist College is filled with students whose fathers have seen the work of God. Some of our students grew in ministry homes — they have lived the work of the church. They have seen what God does on spectacular days, on hard days, or normal days. But even more of our Boston students have a less overt spiritual legacy. So many of our students have seen God “with their fathers,” but without the two necessarily being on the same page. I am blessed to hear their stories. It stirs my soul to let some of the abundant grace run off of their hearts onto mine.

Our city motto is a tribute to our heritage, but it is also a forecast for the future. I am convinced it is educational. Our team here works hard to help students learn and understand what God has done in the past — that means biblical history as well as recent, personal history. But that precious reservoir is not just for curiosity or acquired knowledge — it is a compass. I am glad that students can study the remarkable lives of historic missionaries. But, I am equally, or even more excited that students can experience that which God has done for our fathers — He can do for us! Randall and Rachel Fernandez, BBFI Missionaries to Pakistan, will spend a few weeks this year on campus, here at their *alma mater*. They are “seal deals.” They, and so many others like them, are proof that God is not finished yet! God showed Himself mighty to our fathers. He is still doing mighty works. Now. For us. And that's even better than lobster, or baked beans, or even another World Series trophy.

Memories and dreams

Barton Carter, retired BBFI missionary to the Philippines

The senior citizens' class has become the largest adult class in many churches. Where are they coming from? Where have they been? What have they done with their lives? How do they think? What was it like when they were young? And what about the missionaries who often attend those classes? What was it like when we first started our deputation? What about our finances back then? How did we get to the field and what were the conditions there?

Last year my great-granddaughter did a telephone interview with me as a project for her high school class. She could hardly believe, when she found out during the interview, that I was in the second grade before I ever saw a flush toilet. I was in high school before I used a telephone. Harriett and I were already married before we lived in a house with running water and indoor plumbing. Our first two children were born before we got a telephone. Three children were born before television came to our area.

When Harriet and I started deputation, I wrote a letter to David Cavin, pastor of High Street Baptist Church in Springfield, MO. He answered and said High Street wanted to be our first supporter, and they put us on for \$50 per month. What a blessing that was, as the average church's support during that time was \$15 per month. Those first months were hard, as we had to try to live on our love offerings that averaged \$15 to \$25 for presenting our field, and if they took us on for support it was two or three months for it to come in. The church had to vote on it, they sent it in at the end of the month, and then the end of the next month we would get it.

We drove 50,000 miles on deputation. Thank the Lord, gas was only 29 cents a gallon. We stayed with relatives a lot, and I sought out churches near where my relatives lived. Before DVDs and video, we used a slide projector, and I would narrate them as I went along. We would vary the length according to the wishes of the pastor. God blessed with souls saved and people surrendering their lives for full-time service. In just about one year we had raised almost \$1,000 a month in support and we left the States for the mission

field. Our journey to the Philippine Islands took about a month on a freight ship. It really brought home to us just how far we were from the States.

We pioneered our first church in San Carlos City, a town with no electricity — no problem for a couple that had grown up without electricity. We used kerosene lanterns to light the building for our evening services. The real problem was trying to walk on the streets with no light. I would put a lantern on the pulpit so I could read my Bible.

We had no baptistry so we would walk about a half mile to the ocean and baptize. When someone would get saved we urged them to be baptized right away. There got to be a saying in San Carlos, "If you go to the Baptist church, you are going to come home wet." No electricity also meant that we had no electric tools when we built our first church building. Each board had to be hand planed, and every sack of concrete had to be mixed by hand. Filipino carpenters and builders were the real thing. For transportation, we hired 100cc motorcycles with sidecars for church buses. And later I used my pickup truck with a shell camper. We could get about ten on the motorcycles and one time Harriett counted 55 get out and off of my pickup.

Progress came to the Philippines, and by our second term we had reliable electricity, an air conditioned bedroom, and even a telephone. On our first term, we had to Xerox our letters home to our supporting churches. Later, I had a flex-o-writer that operated on the teletype principle that used a paper tape to tell the writer what to write down. I even had a second reader that put in the addresses and the pastor's name. By the third term I had one of the first personal computers — a Radio

Shack as the personal IBM had not come out yet. Now my prayer letters were a cinch. I remember a visiting pastor from the States being shocked when he saw my computer. He said, "Oh, Brother Carter, you have a computer, but don't worry, I won't tell anyone."

Success on the mission field depends on obedience to God. When we transferred home from the Philippines, we had 35 churches and I planned none of them, although the Filipino pastors and I had a goal for 100 churches on the Island of Negros. Almost ten years ago, Pastor Eddie Gerodias of San Carlos City wrote me that they had reached the goal. Filipino missionaries have now gone out from Negros to other countries and are starting churches.

The years have gone by. Sometimes at night I still dream that I am building a church building. Those days have gone, except in my dreams. Would I change anything? Not a thing.

FELLOWSHIP NOTE

Don't forget that the 2014 May Fellowship Week will take place one week earlier than it has in the past!

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FINLEYVILLE, PA

Christmas Dinner Theater outreach sells out three evenings

By John Arnold, Pastor

Crossroads Ministries/Library Baptist Church

"Joy of Christmas" was the theme of this year's Christmas Dinner Theater. This is the biggest outreach event of our year, a time when our congregation invites their family, friends, and acquaintances. This year we presented



the program for three evenings the weekend of December 13-15. Each evening was sold out and 900 attended, capping off three months of preparation.

We were surprised at how our people cultivated their guest lists throughout the year. One couple ministers to our neighbors. They walk by my house and through the neighborhood year round. And as they walk they meet people. They have become known as prayers, and so the neighbors rely on them to pray for their requests. They invited a lady and she accepted Christ as her Savior. Then she invited them to come by for a visit after the program to show them an old nativity set

from Israel passed down through her family for generations. This was prompted by the storyline of the drama about an old nativity that had been passed down. This couple, Sunday school teachers, do their best to love their neighbors as themselves.

Sandy and Ron had 62 guests on Saturday, the evening with the worst weather. They work all year to prepare for this event. Sandy is an avid Pittsburgh Steeler fan and rarely misses a game when played here at home, but she did tell me, "I won't miss church for a game." She met a family at the stadium, befriended them, and invited them to the Dinner Theater. They said yes and traveled an hour and a half to attend.

After the program, 50 of Sandy and Ron's guests went to her house for more food and friendship. People stayed till midnight, and one man filled out a response card at her house so she could turn it in to the church.

The classic car community was well-represented one evening with some new faces and 50 members in attendance.

A gospel presentation was a part of the program and respondents were asked to fill out a card to receive a gospel of John from the church. On Friday evening, as people were leaving, one man came up to me and gave me his completed response card. He is a homosexual coworker of one of our members. He was back at church on Sunday morning as I spoke on John 3:16. "A love letter, written in blood, addressed to *everyone*".

ARLINGTON, TX

Arlington Baptist College to celebrate 75th anniversary

Arlington Baptist College and President Danny L. Moody has announced a Diamond Jubilee Celebration set for April 29 through May 1, 2014. The program will include a celebration banquet at the Will Rogers' Coliseum in Fort Worth, TX, and continue with morning and evening services on the college campus.

The school was chartered March 3, 1939, as Fundamental Baptist Bible Institute, and the first classes met in October of that same year. The name was changed to Bible Baptist Seminary in 1945 and later to Arlington Baptist College.

"The name, location, programs offered, and personnel have changed over the years, but the mission continues to be to prepare men and women for the effective, relevant, and eternal work of Jesus Christ," says President Moody.

Alumni, pastors, church staff, and friends of the college are encouraged to attend and celebrate. More information is available at www.abcjubilee.com.



Moody

SHREVEPORT, LA

LBU to host prophecy conference

Louisiana Baptist University will host a five-day prophecy conference February 24-28, 2014. The conference will have multiple tracks and will feature speakers Jimmy DeYoung, Jr. and David James. Enrolled students may take the courses for credit.

DeYoung is a prophecy teacher and journalist who travels the world educating the body of Christ of future events foretold in God's Word. DeYoung resided in Jerusalem for 12 years as a credentialed journalist. He gave reports nationwide on several networks during the 1991 Gulf Crisis. He has met and interviewed many of Israel's top leaders including Israel's current Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu. He continues to have his finger on the pulse of Jerusalem and the Middle East.

"This will be one of the best prophecy conferences of 2014," says LBU president Neal Weaver. More information can be found at www.lbu.edu.



DeYoung

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MANILA, PHILIPPINES

BBC Asia launches School of Missions

Baptist Bible College Asia recently launched the School of Missions as part of its global vision. The theme for the School of Missions is “Serve God Globally” and the aim is to prepare Filipino students (and others) for cross-cultural service, according to Marc Buxton, BBCA professor heading the new program.

The idea behind the school is to achieve balance between “training and going.” According to Buxton, “Sometimes missionaries receive too little training, but sometimes they receive too much. To spend years in school preparing for the mission field negates the sense of urgency we must have of getting out the gospel. I realized there is a healthy balance to find between training and going.”

The goal, he says, is to effectively, thoroughly train new missionaries, while at the same time maintaining the sense of urgency required. The courses offered are what the Board of Directors and Administration of BBCA feel

are requirements for any cross-cultural missionary. The course work has been streamlined so the degree can be completed in as little as 18 months.

The graduates of the School of Missions will be equipped with the knowledge and skills they need to be successful. At the same time, they will see the “light at the end of the tunnel” immediately upon beginning their course work, as they actively prepare to begin their ministries shortly thereafter.

One critical component of the School of Missions program is a cross-cultural internship. Before completing their degree, the students will be required to spend three to six months working alongside a missionary in a cross-cultural ministry. This will give each student hands-on experience before graduation, fully preparing him or her for the expectations

of missionary service.

BBCA administration believes the School of Missions will train hundreds of cross-cultural missionaries in the coming years. As these students go abroad to serve God globally, the impact of BBCA will be heard around the world.

Buxton says the school provides several opportunities for involvement. Missionaries could host an intern from the School of Missions. Students could attend the School of Missions for a semester and experience cross-cultural missionary training on the mission field. Others could consider becoming volunteer professors with the School of Missions to help train the future missionaries of the world.

For more information on BBCA and other ministries, visit www.bbcasia.org and www.marcbuxton.com.



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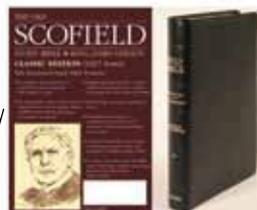
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MEXICO CITY, MEXICO

HARLOD DeVILBISS

John Harold DeVilbiss, BBFI founder and longtime missionary to Mexico, passed from this life to Glory December 14, 2013. Texas-born December 22, 1926, Harold was raised by a godly mother who nurtured her youngest son with the Word of God. In 1943, the family united with Huisache Baptist Church in San Antonio, TX, where Harold was ordained. In 1946, while attending Kansas City Bible College, he was encouraged by Wendell Zimmerman of Kansas City Baptist Temple to go to Mexico as a missionary. He went on to found the Mexico BBF, a Bible college, and a host of churches throughout Mexico.

Harold is survived by his wife of 64 years, Connie, four children, 13 grandchildren, and nine great-grandchildren. Two memorial services for the missionary were held December 15 and 16, 2013, in Mexico City.

SUN CITY, CA

ROSEMARY PIZANO

Rosemary Silva Pizano, 74, a BBFI missionary and wife of Antonio Pizano, passed from this life December 17, 2013. Born February 6, 1939, in Socorro, NM, she and her husband attended Pacific Coast BBC, graduating in 1978, after which the couple became missionaries to Mexico.

Rosemary is survived by her husband, Antonio, five children, 22 grandchildren, and 11 great-grandchildren. A memorial service was held at her sending church, Lighthouse Baptist Church, LaVerne, CA, January 10, 2014.

LYNCHBURG, VA

RUTH TOWNS

Ruth Jean Forbes Towns, 80, of Lynchburg, went to be with her Lord December 11, 2013. Born in Springfield, MO, December 26, 1932, she attended Columbia Bible College and Liberty University, receiving her MA degree. She also taught the class in Women's Ministry at the Liberty University School of Religion.

She is survived by her husband of 60 years, Elmer L. Towns, two children, ten grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren. Services were held December 14, 2013, at Thomas Road Baptist Church, with Pastor Jonathan Falwell officiating.

EL PASO, TX

JOHNNY MORGAN

Johnny R. Morgan, long-time BBF pastor, entered heaven January 7, 2014. Born January 14, 1927, in El Paso, Morgan lived in El Paso until he joined the U.S. Navy near the end of World War II. After the war, he attended Baptist Bible College in Springfield, MO, and he and his wife, Audrey, started Trowbridge Street Baptist Church, later renamed Cielo Vista Church. After pastoring the church 25 years, he moved to Colorado, returning to the El Paso church as pastor emeritus in 1994.

Morgan is survived by his wife and a son. Services were held January 14 at Cielo Vista Church.

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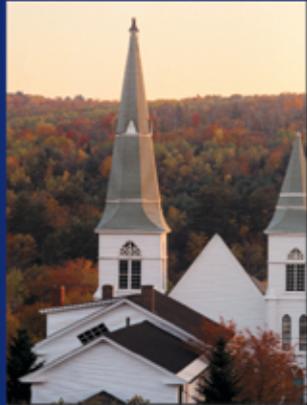
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• **Thomas Road Baptist Church**, 5735 W. Thomas Rd., Phoenix, AZ 85031, 623/247-5735. *Pastor Daniel Dennis*

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• **Berryville Baptist Church** 112 E. Fancher St., Berryville, AR 72616, Phone: (870) 423-2340, *Pastor Deryl DeShields*

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• **Calvary Baptist Church of Oakhurst**, At the corner of Highway 49 and Redbud (location only), 559/641-7984. *Pastor Bob Wilson*

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• **First Coast Baptist Church**, 7587 Blanding Blvd., Jacksonville, FL 32244. 904/777-3040 *Pastor Richard Edwards*

• **Harbor Baptist Church**, 428 Tomoka Ave., Ormond Beach, FL 32173, 386/677-3116 *Pastor Ronald L. Todd*

• **Colonial Baptist Church**, 2616 51st Street West, Bradenton, FL 34209, 941/795-3767 *Pastor James Landsberger*

• **First Baptist Coconut Creek**, formerly Calvary Baptist Church, Ft. Lauderdale, FL. 954/422-9611 *Pastor Jerry Williamson*

• **Calvary Baptist Church**, 123 Thunderbird Dr., Sebastian, FL 32958. 772/589-5047 www.calvary-baptistchurch.com *Pastor Clifton Cooley*

• **New Life Baptist Church**, 35000 Radio Rd (at Poe St.), Leesburg, FL 34788 352/728-0004 newlifebaptistchurch@earthlink.net

• **Suncoast Baptist Church**, 410 Warrington Blvd., Port Charlotte, FL 33954, 941/625-8550, *Pastor Chip Keller* www.suncoastbaptistchurch.com

• **Grace Bible Baptist Church**, 1703 Lewis Road, Leesburg, FL 34748. 352/326-5738, *Pastor George Mulford III* www.gbbonline.com

• **Orlando Baptist Church**, 500 S. Semoran Blvd., Orlando, FL 32807. 407/277-8671, *Pastor David Janney* www.worldchangingchurch.com

HAWAII

• **Lanakila Baptist Church**, 94-1250 Waipahu St., Waipahu, HI 96797. 808/677-0731 *Pastor Steven C. Wygle*

ILLINOIS

• **Sauk Trail Baptist Temple**, 4411 Sauk Trail, P.O. Box 347, Richton Park, IL 60471. 708/481-1490 *Pastor Bruce Humbert*

IOWA

• **Heartland Baptist Church** 3504 N. Grand Ave., Ames, IA 50010 515/268-1721, www.heartlandbaptistames.com *Pastor Randy Abell*

KANSAS

• **Millington Street Baptist Church**, 1304 Millington St., Winfield, KS 67156. 316/221-4700. *Pastor Jeff McCaskill*

• **Friendship Baptist Church** 2209 E. Pawnee, Wichita, KS 67211 316/263-0269, *Pastor Steve Day*

KENTUCKY

• **Florence Baptist Temple**, 1898 Florence Pk., Burlington, KY 41005. 859/586-6090 *Pastor Wayne G. Cox*

• **Oak Hill Baptist Church**, 2135 Oak Hill Rd., Somerset, KY 42501, 606/679-8496 *Pastor Gary Phelps*

LOUISIANA

• **Mid-City Baptist Church**, 5320 Airline Dr., 10 miles north of Barksdale Air Force Base, Bossier City, LA 71111. (318) 742-0772 www.midcitybaptist.com *Pastor Jason D. Filler, Sr.*

MARYLAND

• **Riverdale Baptist Church**, 1177 Largo Rd., Upper Marlboro, MD 20774, 301/249-7000 *Pastor Brian C. Mentzer*

MASSACHUSETTS

• **Temple Baptist Church** 540 Manley St., West Bridgewater, MA 02379, 508/583-5190 www.templebaptist.info *Pastor Bill Smith*

NEBRASKA

• **Plains Baptist Church**, 2902 Randolph St., Lincoln, NE 68510, 402/435-4760. *Pastor Raymond Smith*

NEW JERSEY

• **Open Bible Baptist Church**, 2625 E. Main St (RT. 49), Millville, NJ 08332. 856/863-0226, Email: gardner07@comcast.net *Pastor Danny Gardner*

NORTH CAROLINA

• **Northside Baptist Church**, 333 Jeremiah Blvd., Charlotte, NC 28262, 704/596-4856 *Pastor Brian Boyles*

• **Mid-Way Baptist Church**, 6910 Fayetteville Rd., Raleigh, NC 27603. 919/772-5864 *Pastor James L. Upchurch*

• **Trinity Baptist Church**, 216 Shelburne Rd., Asheville, NC 28806, 704/254-2187 www.tbcasheville.org *Pastor Ralph Sexton, Jr.*

• **Central Baptist Church**, 6050 Plain View Hwy., Dunn, NC 28334, 910/892-7914, www.cbcdunn.com *Pastor Tom Wagoner*

• **Berean Baptist Church & Academy** 517 Glensford Dr., Fayetteville, NC 28314, 910/868-5156, www.bbcfnc.org *Pastor Sean Harris*

OHIO

• **Bible Baptist Church**, 990 W. Main, Mt. Orab, OH 45154. 937/444-2493 *Pastor Charles Smith*

• **Ashland Ave. Baptist Church**, P.O. Box 86, 4255 Ashland Ave., Norwood, OH 45212. 513/531-3626 *Pastor Jerry E. Jones*

• **First Baptist Church**, 1233 US Rt. 42, Ashland, OH 44805. 419/289-3636 *Pastor F. R. "Butch" White*

• **Calvary Baptist Church**, 516 W. Sunset Dr., Rittman, OH 44270, 330/925-5506 *Pastor Tim LaBouf*

OREGON

• **Tri-City Baptist Temple**, 18025 S. E. Webster Rd., Gladstone, OR 97027. 503/655-9326 *Pastor Ken McCormick*

RHODE ISLAND

• **Ocean State Baptist Church**, 600 Douglas Pike, Smithfield, RI 02917, 401/231-1980 *Pastor Archie Emerson*

SOUTH CAROLINA

• **Lighthouse Baptist Church**, 104 Berkeley Sq. Lane, PMB 250, Goose Creek, SC 29445. 843/824-6002 www.lbcgc.org *Pastor Bobby Garvin*

TEXAS

• **Central Baptist Church**, 2855 Greenhouse Rd., Houston, TX 77084. 281/492-2689 *Pastor Larry Maddox*

• **First Baptist Church of Meadowview**, 4346 N Galloway Ave., Mesquite, TX 75150. 214/391-7176 *Pastor R.D. Wade*

• **First Baptist Church**, Hwy. 64, Wright City, TX 75750, 903/839-2700 www.firstbaptistwrightcity.com *Pastor Rohn M. Boone*

• **North Park Baptist Church**, 4401 Theiss Rd., Humble, TX 77338. 281/821-2258 *Pastor Randy Harp*

• **Berean Baptist Church**, 302 N. Town East Blvd., Mesquite, TX 75182. 972/226-7803 *Pastor David Mills*

• **Cypress Creek Baptist Church**, 21870 Northwest Freeway, Houston, TX 77429. 281/469-6089 *Pastor Carl Hughes*

• **Talley Rd. Baptist Church** 3120 Talley Rd., San Antonio, TX 78253, 210/862-3108, www.talleyroadbaptistchurch.org trbc@satx.rr.com, *Pastor Larry Bruce*

VIRGINIA

• **Faith Baptist Church**, 3768 S. Amherst Hwy., Madison Heights, VA 24572, 434/929-1430 *Pastor Brian Hudson*

• **Central Baptist Church**, 13910 Minnieville Rd., Woodbridge, VA 22193, 703/583-1717, office@cbcwoodbridge.org, *Pastor Brad Weniger*

WEST VIRGINIA

• **Fellowship Baptist Church, U.S.** Rt. 60 E. at Huntington Mall, Barboursville, WV 25504, 304/736-8006 *Pastor Jerry Warren*

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(Sources: Constitution and Bylaws of the BBFI and The BBFI Contact Directory)

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The DeVilbiss heritage

By Keith Bassham Editor of the *Baptist Bible Tribune*

DeVilbiss looks like a somewhat French name, but it comes from two words: *devil* and *biss*, or in the German (and spelled in various ways), “devil biter” which seems appropriate.

The great grandfather of Harold DeVilbiss on his father’s side, came to Texas from Ohio as a Methodist circuit rider missionary. His name, believe it or not, was John Wesley DeVilbiss. Sent in 1842 to the frontiers of the newly formed Republic of Texas, he arrived in San Antonio in 1844 where he preached the first Protestant sermon in south Texas. Two years later he founded what is now called Travis Park Methodist Church, building the original structure using stones removed from the crumbling walls of the old nearby Spanish fort known as The Alamo.

Preacher DeVilbiss ministered and rode the circuits in Texas, winning people to Christ and establishing churches, retiring in 1881. He passed away in 1885, and one year later his grandson, Tom DeVilbiss, was born.

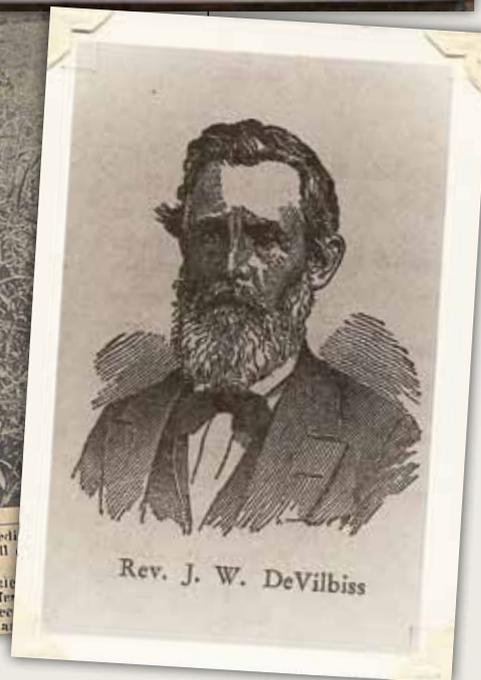
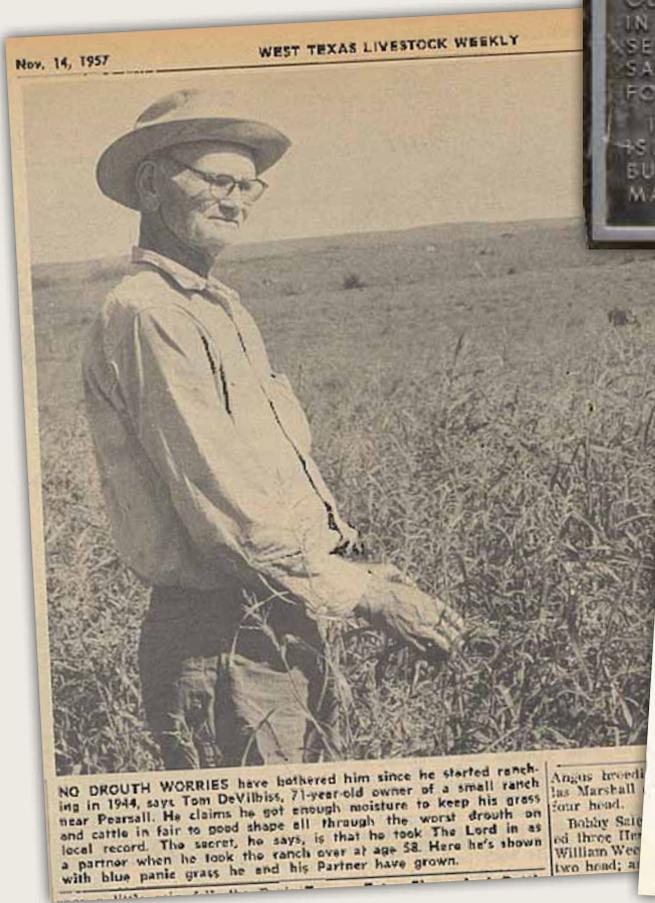
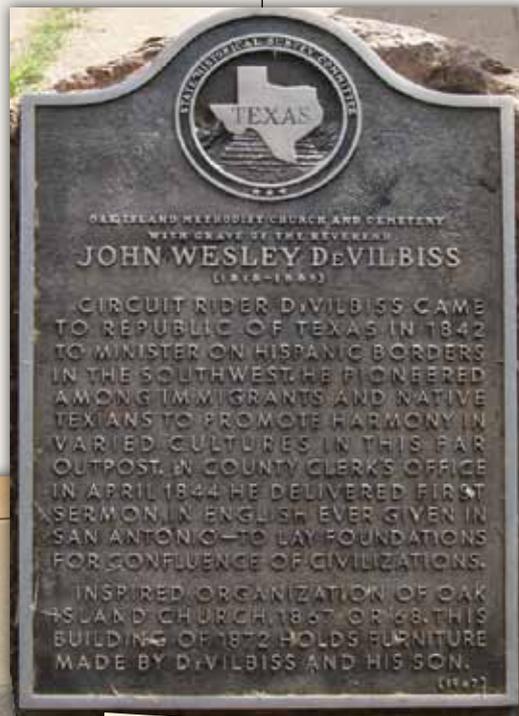
Tom grew up, married, and accepted the Lord himself in a Methodist revival meeting. Times were not bad during the oil boom, but the depression years were more difficult for a couple and six children, one of whom was Harold DeVilbiss.

About the time Harold was ordained and off to college, Tom DeVilbiss and his wife, Mabel, moved to a 613-acre farm near Pearsall. A flood nearly wiped them out in 1946, but Tom persevered, and he learned new farming methods so he could cooperate with nature rather than fight against it. He experimented with conservation techniques that earned him some minor fame in the farming and ranching community. And he rededicated his life to the Lord and joined Grace Baptist Church in San Antonio where Bernie Rodgers was pastoring at the time. His missionary son, Harold, made a trip home to baptize his father.

If anyone doubted the reason for Tom’s newfound success as a farmer and rancher, he was quick to give credit to God. *West Texas Livestock Weekly* carried a story about Tom and his ranch in November 1957, and in the article Tom was quoted, “The secret of success in ranching is to take the Good Lord in as a fulltime partner, work hard, and be sure to deposit a just amount of income in your partner’s name.”

When Tom died at the age of 84, the family gathered at Oak Island Methodist Church, a church John Wesley DeVilbiss had established in 1868, and not far from a historical marker that bears his name and a bit of his story. Harold DeVilbiss preached the funeral. Devil biters indeed.

Reminiscences of a Superannuated Preacher by John Wesley DeVilbiss, available digitally at <https://archive.org/details/reminiscencesveoograv>



PRAYER CALENDAR

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content;"> February 17-19 BBFI National Fellowship Meeting Round Rock, TX </div>						1  MISSIONARY Ron & Nancy Minton <i>Ukraine</i>
2  CHAPLAIN Capt. Jeremiah & Shari Caitlin <i>U.S. Army</i>	3  MISSIONARY Bob & Cala Williams <i>Choctaw Indians</i>	4  T.E.A.M. MISSIONARY Jamie Newell <i>Nicaragua</i>	5  MISSIONARY Sever & Cathy Gonciulea <i>Romania</i>	6  MISSIONARY Joanne Foltz <i>Tanzania</i>	7  MISSIONARY Ed & Joyce Butler <i>Philippines</i>	8  MISSIONARY Glenn & Sherri McGhee <i>Ecuador</i>
9  MISSIONARY Frank & Finettie Howell <i>Retired</i>	10  MISSIONARY Scott & Dominique Pethel <i>Italy</i>	11  MISSIONARY Louise Warner <i>Philippines</i>	12  MISSIONARY Dan & Cricket Young <i>Panama</i>	13  WORKERS IN Restricted Access Nations	14  MISSIONARY Keith & Lisa Sampson <i>Estonia</i>	15  BBFI MISSION OFFICE - SPRINGFIELD, MO Steve Bender <i>Associate Mission Director</i>
16  MISSIONARY Lance & Amy Auterson <i>France</i>	17  T.E.A.M. MISSIONARY Ian & Amanda Richards <i>Australia</i>	18  MISSIONARY Tim & Barbara Downs <i>Ivory Coast</i>	19  MISSIONARY Carroll Jelley <i>India</i>	20  MISSIONARY Dan & Sharon Moore <i>Singapore</i>	21  MISSIONARY Dwayne & Tammy Wright <i>Ethiopia</i>	22  MISSIONARY Mike & Sandie Reap <i>Philippines</i>
23  PRESIDENT - BOSTON BAPTIST COLLEGE David Melton <i>Boston, MA</i>	24  MISSIONARY Bill & Debbie Crawford <i>Germany</i>	25  MISSIONARY Jim & Becky Carter <i>Alaska</i>	26  MISSIONARY Ginny Switzer <i>Ethiopia</i>	27  MISSIONARY Dan & Jackie McCaskill <i>Scotland</i>	28  MISSIONARY Baptist Bible Tribune <i>Springfield, MO</i>	

As is the business of tailors to make clothes and cobblers to make shoes, so it is the business of Christians to pray.
Martin Luther

CROSS CANYON TRAIL

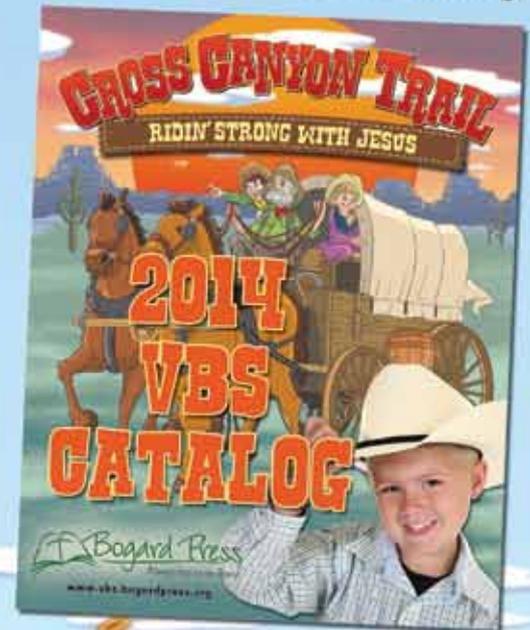
RIDIN' STRONG WITH JESUS

**"IF ANY MAN WILL COME AFTER ME, LET HIM DENY HIMSELF,
AND TAKE UP HIS CROSS DAILY, AND FOLLOW ME."**

LUKE 9:23



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