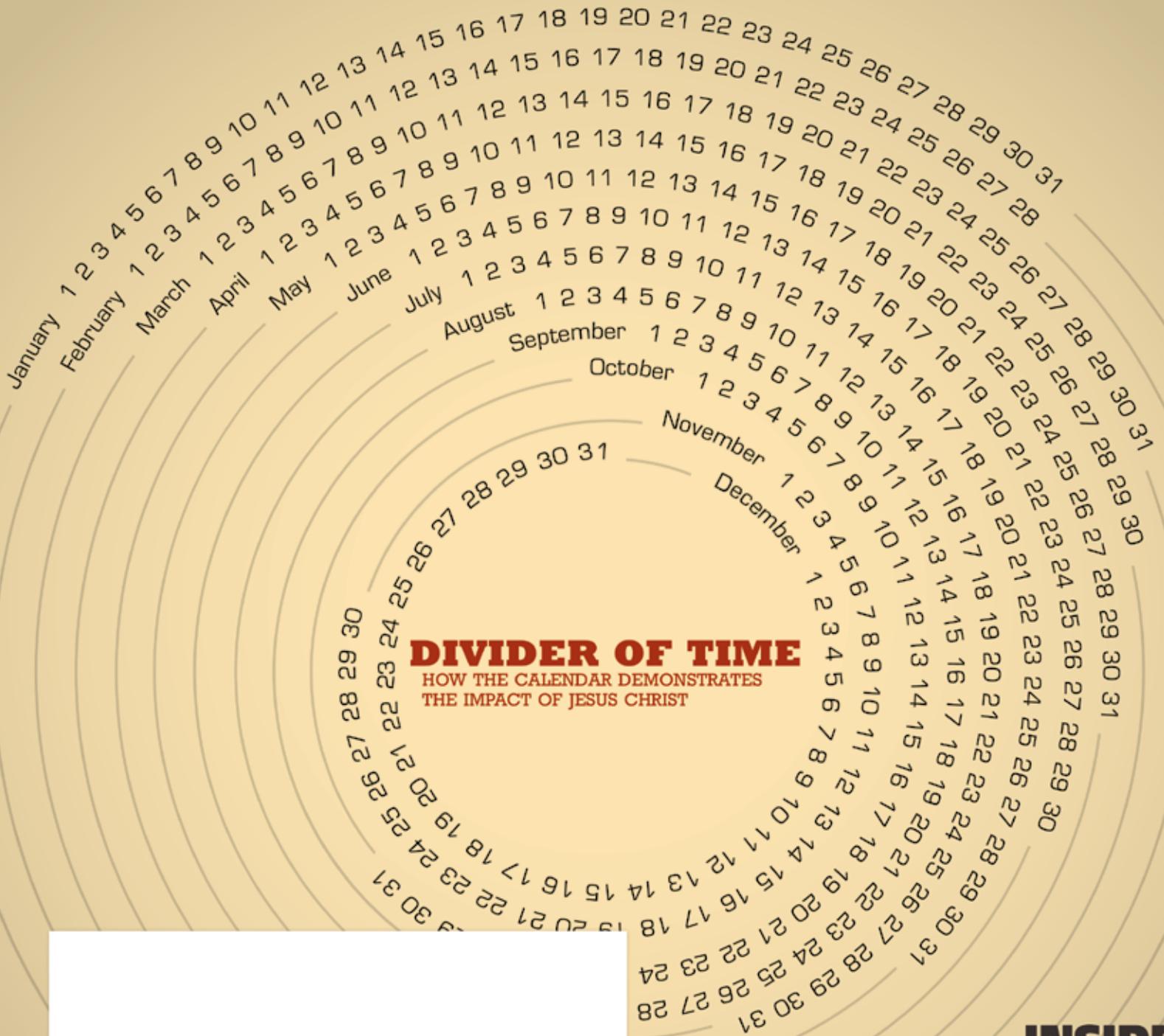


BAPTIST BIBLE TRIBUNE

JANUARY 2014 | VOL. 64 NO. 5



DIVIDER OF TIME HOW THE CALENDAR DEMONSTRATES THE IMPACT OF JESUS CHRIST



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FEBRUARY TRIBUNE OFFERING



YOUR GIFT KEEPS THE FELLOWSHIP MAGAZINE COMING



ON THE TABLE

Let's do 2014 well

by Keith Bassham | Editor

The start of 2014 got here quickly. That is inelegant syntax, but it carries my thought well enough. And to mark the event on the calendar, I have a couple of things to say about calendars.

First, I have asked BBC President Mark Milioni to contribute something beyond his regular column to this issue. He has obliged by providing an edited version of a sermon preached when he was a pastor in Ohio. Here you will enjoy both the warmth of a pastor's thinking as well as the results of research on an interesting subject. For instance, have you wondered why October and November, whose names imply the numerals 8 and 9, refer to the 10th and 11th months of the year? President Milioni explains that and much more in his article about the development of the calendar and how it relates to our view of Christ.

Second, the *Tribune* is introducing a new monthly feature in this issue — a prayer calendar featuring the missionaries and ministries of the Baptist Bible Fellowship. You will find the first appearance of the new feature inside the back cover, across from the "Afterwords" column. You can easily remove (or copy) the monthly calendar and place it somewhere as a reminder to pray for your representatives in the field.

And finally, this is the time of year for the annual February Tribune Offering. Pastors and other friends of the *Tribune*, that annual offering has become more important than ever before for the ongoing work of the magazine. We used to say it helped with the extras — these days it pays for the necessities. When you receive your appeal, please do not let it get lost in the shuffle. I believe I can assent, with the exception of the date in the following paragraph, to everything our founding editor Noel Smith wrote at such a time as this 60 years ago:

Never before has the earth seen 1954; once it is gone, it will never return. We hope to live and work in every day of it as we shall wish on the last day of next December that we had done. And above everything else, we hope to honor and exalt our Lord Jesus Christ and advance His cause. Above everything else in this world, we want to be accepted by Him. When it pleases Him, we are ready, without murmur or complaint, to release our light grip on The Tribune and everything else in this world. Despite the plowing up of our spirit, we do believe that He is going to make everything come out right before He is through. We believe that God's blessed providences are sustaining the continuity of all that is good and pure and just and right in the world, even to the smile on an infant's face; and we believe that there is going to be a great climax. Through days of toil and pain, we believe we are able to say, "He doeth all things well."

Keith Bassham

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JANUARY 2014

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The influential city needs the influence of the gospel



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PRESIDENTIAL PERSPECTIVE

Working together on purpose



by Linzy Slayden | President | BBF

The Baptist Bible Fellowship is a fellowship of pastors. The churches that they pastor have as their purpose the propagation of the Gospel throughout the world. We have no ecclesiastical hierarchy dictating to our churches their mode of operation or program. Our doctrine is simply stated in and based on the Articles of Faith as presented by our Constitution and By-Laws. In carrying out our purpose of propagating the Gospel we agreed to work together in a common effort as churches in missions and education.”

These are the words of then BBF President Verle Ackerman in a 1983 "President's Perspective" article. He goes on to say there is a great need to keep the conviction of strong pastoral leadership to maintain pure doctrine and an aggressive evangelistic thrust: *"The authority of our Fellowship does not lie in Springfield, but in the local churches and their pastors. We are thankful for the Mission office, our colleges and the Tribune but our power base is in the grass roots where pastors gather in state meetings for preaching and those business matters necessary to maintain pure doctrine and consistent philosophy."*

This article reminds us that much of our Fellowship's success in the early and middle years was due to the strong participation of pastors in our state organizations. It is on this grass-roots level that churches are started, missionaries are supported, and young people surrender to full-time ministry. It is back to those same roots that these same young people must return pure in doctrine with a vision to help win a lost world to Christ.

2014 can be a great year for the BBF. I encourage all pastors to have a part in this great work of God. We can build our Fellowship together. Our present operation provides for a flow of leadership, input, and openness from pastors at the grass-roots level of the states to the leadership of our Fellowship, and we are constantly trying to improve this communication.

When all is said and done, it is on our pastors that both the responsibility and accountability lie. I believe this local church and pastoral emphasis is a strength of the BBF.

So it begins with the pastors! I encourage all pastors to accept this responsibility. It is a simple thing to invite another pastor to join them for a state or national meeting, but it means a lot. If there is no state fellowship, start one. If it has been inactive, jumpstart it back to life. Each church, under the pastor's leadership, can pray for the Lord to call folks into the ministry and send more young people to our colleges; each church can be a sending church for a missionary, and each church can set a goal of starting a church as soon as possible.

Life is a journey and every journey has a destination. Everybody ends up somewhere. A few people end up somewhere on purpose. The great work of the Fellowship depends on pastors working together on purpose.

WORLDWIDE MISSIONS

Pray ye therefore



by Jon Konnerup | Mission Director | BBF

On one trip I made to East Asia, I had the opportunity to spend time with a group of young people. Their passion to reach the unreached was exciting and challenging. As they shared with me what God was doing in their lives, I wondered how they had become so sensitive to God's direction and the need to reach people who had never had a chance to hear the gospel.

They said it all began with prayer. They understood the importance of prayer and the great weapon it is against the devil. They expressed how when they were praying, they were right where God wanted them to be so He could work in their lives. Asking God for His will and pleading for lost souls became their prayer, which allowed them to be more sensitive to God's leading as they now serve in East Asia.

Through their testimonies, something was solidified in my mind. While praying for the unreached, two things will happen. First, God answers and sends someone else to reach them. Second, God answers and sends the one who is praying.

These young people's testimonies revealed to me that they had been mobilized to pray. Someone taught them to pray, which, in turn, prompted them to pray for the unreached, for their missionaries, and for more laborers. All of this was happening in their church. These young people were excited and felt like they had an important role in the Great Commission. They joined in prayer with those around them and watched as exciting things happened. Sunday school classes prayed for and researched the profiles of specific unreached people groups. The vision of reaching the unreached was given and they understood the urgency of the task.

Where did this come from? Someone had to start all this and give the vision. Someone had to see and know the need and realize the battle. Someone was leading the charge, giving the plans and maps, setting the strategies, and giving the orders. Someone was praying for the unreached.

Who were they? According to these young people, the leaders of their church were the ones — their pastor, student pastor, and college pastor.

If people are going to become involved in following the Great Commission, they must first begin to pray. Second, they must be taught the vision. Third, they need to be mobilized to participate. For this to happen, church leaders must lead the way. The saying is, "As the pastor goes, so goes the church."

As we prepare to begin the new year of 2014, would you commit to praying for more missionaries? Prayer is the key that unlocks the doors that have been shut for centuries with billions of lost souls in the balance. Jesus said in Matthew 9:38, "PRAY YE THEREFORE the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth laborers into the harvest."

Help a church in Jackson, MS



by Dan Lamb | Interim NCPO Director

Church planting is at the heart of everything we do here at the NCPO. Partnering with BBFI churches to birth new churches in cities, small towns, and neighborhoods across our nation is vital to reaching individuals with the life-changing gospel of Jesus Christ! We are excited this month to share an opportunity for you to partner with one of these new churches as they seek to reach a very un-churched area of Jackson, MS.

Pastor Bill Fluker, the moderator of Brothers of Cyrene and part of the Gateway Project that seeks out black men who want to plant churches in predominantly black communities, planted Grace & Mercy Baptist Church in Jackson eight years ago, meeting in a storefront location during this time. Recently, as they have outgrown their space, they have received an opportunity to purchase an 8,000-square-foot building in a heavily populated neighborhood near Jackson State University and adjacent to two interstate highways. The building has been purchased and work has already begun to convert what used to be a nightclub into a sanctuary for our Lord. What once was a home for sin will now be a place of reconciliation with the Lord!

The congregation of about 40 people is now occupying a portion of this 8,000-square-foot facility and they need some financial help in renovating the rest of the building. They have drawn up plans, and permit is in hand to begin the work. Upon completion of the renovation, the church will be able to adequately minister to all age groups as space will be provided for several classrooms, a nursery, a 200-seat auditorium, and fellowship hall. The BBF Builders are ready to provide much of the labor and are excited to partner with this congregation.

Grace & Mercy Baptist Church's building fund is being used for the renovations, as well as some other funds that have been received from churches, but they need approximately \$50,000 to complete the project.

Pastor Bill Fluker will be presenting the need at the National Fellowship meeting in Austin, TX. Would you prayerfully consider investing in this inner-city ministry to help renovate this building? If you will be attending the National Meeting in February, please come prepared to help us raise the remainder of the funds. Or you can send your donation to: National Church Planting Office, 334 E. Kearney St. #184, Springfield, MO 65803. Email us at office@bbfincpo.com with any questions.

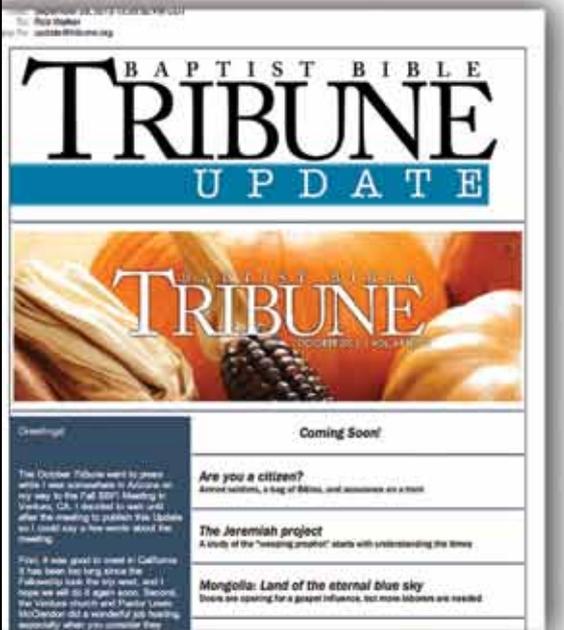
Jackson's population is 70 percent African-American and many souls are lost and unchurched. Nineteen souls accepted Christ this year — 2013. The people of Grace & Mercy Baptist Church have caught the vision, "Each One Reach One," and are excited about what God is doing in Jackson. We hope you might catch the vision too! Join us!



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DIGRESSIONS

Digressions incontestably are the sunshine; they are the life, the soul of reading. *-Laurence Sterne*

American teacher killed in Libya

An American high school teacher, Ronnie Smith, was gunned down in Benghazi, Libya in the morning hours December 9. Smith had been teaching chemistry at the International School Benghazi for 18 months. He was a committed Christian and a member of a Southern Baptist affiliated church in Austin, TX. Smith's death comes 15 months after an attack in Benghazi killed four Americans, including an ambassador. His students thought highly of him, and he described himself on Twitter as "Libya's best friend."

Source: Based on a report by Jamie Dean of WORLD News Service

Experts mull over what happens to digital life when you die

Though not many consider the issue, concerned people in government and business are trying to sort out who owns what to the typical 25 online accounts a person might have at the time of death. A Virginia couple could not access their son's Facebook account after his suicide, and laws are taking shape to address that and other types of digital assets.

Experts are advising people to treat their digital accounts as they would real world assets, recommending that users appoint "executors" or controllers with lists of accounts and passwords and instructions on how to handle accounts in case of death.

Source: Pew Research. Complete report at www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2013/12/02/what-happens-to-your-digital-life-after-death/

Thom Rainer says church facilities to become smaller

After four decades of churches building massive worship centers, Lifeway President Thom Rainer predicts future congregations will decide to go smaller for seven reasons:

1. Decreasing frequency of attendance among church members.
2. The growth of the "nones." Rainer says, "I have written or spoken about this issue on a number of occasions. Pew Research found that the number of Americans who say they have no religious affiliation increased from 15 percent of the population to 20 percent from 2007 to 2012. This shift is huge. One out of five persons will likely never be in your church services, and they no longer feel a cultural compulsion to do so."
3. The growth of the multi-site and multi-venue church. Rainer sees churches meeting in different places on multiple days.
4. The Millennials' aversion to larger worship centers.
5. Governmental agencies are increasingly unfriendly to church building plans. Zoning laws and plans for tax revenues are making it more difficult to construct new large facilities.
6. The shift in emphasis from the big worship event to an emphasis on groups. While Rainer says worship services will remain, and preaching will be at the center of those services, churches will emphasize more leadership development which takes place better in smaller groups.
7. The desire to spend more on ministry and less on facilities. Less money for building costs equals more money for ministry, outreach, and missions.

Source: Full report at www.christianpost.com/news/7-reasons-why-church-worship-centers-will-get-smaller-110684/

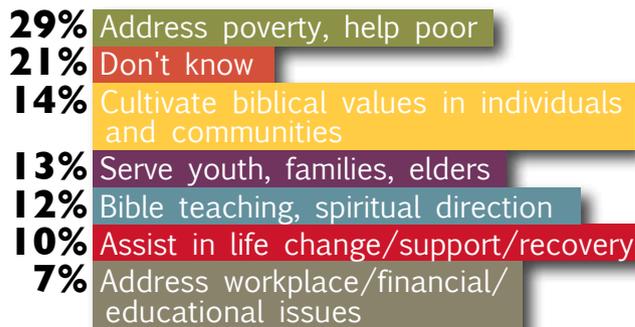
Barna Group survey: What is role of church in community?

A nationwide survey of adults (both churched and unchurched) offers some insight into the perception Americans have of local congregations.

How would you describe the presence of churches in your community?



What does your community need, if anything, that you feel churches could provide?



“Even among many churchgoers, contributing positively to the community is perceived to be the result of offering the right mix of public service programs. Yet, this seems to miss an important biblical pattern: you change communities by transforming lives.”

Source: Barna Group; www.barna.org

Dr. Bob and Mrs. Jones Gone on a Honeymoon



GREENVILLE, S. C. About 150 faculty, staff, and students of Bob Jones University who remained in Greenville for the Christmas holidays were on hand to bid farewell to Dr. and Mrs. Bob Jones Sr., as they left on a 'round-the-world trip. His family are shown with him. Left to right are Dr. and Mrs. Bob Jones, III; Jon Jones; Mrs. Jones, Sr.; Dr. Jones Sr.; and Mrs. Jones Jr.

GREENVILLE, S. C. — Dr. Bob Jones Sr., founder and chairman of the board of trustees of Bob Jones University, left the Greenville-Spartanburg Airport Jan. 2 on a trip that will take him around the world. The faculty and staff of the university presented tickets for the trip to Dr. Jones at a special Founder's Day program on Oct. 30 honoring his 80th birthday.

Dr. Jones will visit many of the more than 800 Bob Jones Univers-

who were members of the university faculty for many years.

The 14-country tour will include Japan, Hongkong, Thailand, India, Iran, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Israel, Cyprus, Italy, Austria, Denmark, and France. Dr. Jones will preach in many of these countries.

Mrs. Jones will accompany her husband on the trip. They departed from San Francisco on Jan. 4 aboard the "President Roosevelt" and were scheduled to arrive in Yokohama on Jan. 18. Visits to other points will be made by air. Their return voyage will depart from Le Havre on Feb. 19 aboard the "France," and they will arrive in New York Feb. 24.

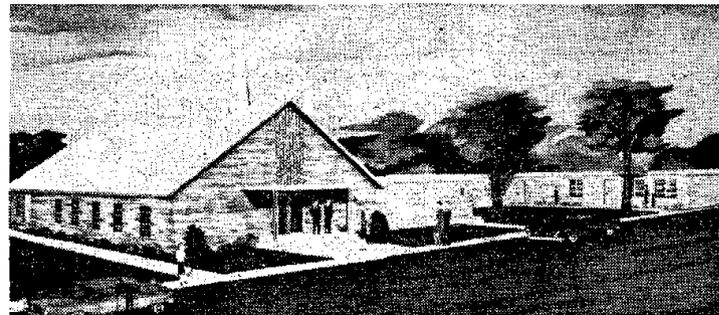
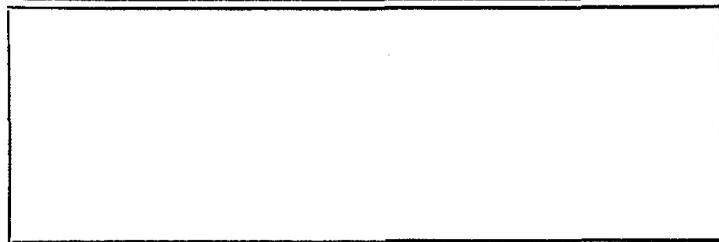
WANT TO BE SAVED?

But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;

That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

—Romans 10:8-9.

ity alumni who serve as missionaries on nearly 90 mission fields. Alumni banquets have been planned for Honolulu and Tokyo, and Dr. Jones will hold conferences with alumni in numerous places during the two-month tour. Among those meeting Dr. Jones in France will be Rev. and Mrs. Maroel Ariege



WICHITA, KAN. Glenville Bible Baptist church has dedicated its property at 4604 South Seneca, which consists of 6 acres of ground, an educational building, and a church auditorium, with a total value of \$112,680. The debt is \$72,000.

The congregation was organized by its present and only pastor, J. J. Adrian, in June, 1956, with 10 charter members, six of them being the pastor and his family. Today, the church membership is 218 and the Sunday school enrollment is above 250. The educational building has 6,000 sq. ft. of floor space, and there are nine departments and 27 classes. The church auditorium seats 300. Since its inception, the congregation has given 10 per cent of its offerings for missions. The congregation contributes to the support of 10 Baptist Bible Fellowship missionary families, to the Kansas State Baptist Bible Fellowship missionary work, and to Baptist Bible College, Springfield, Mo.

COLLEGE DEBATE TEAM IN TEXAS

By GARY WILSON

FORT WORTH, Tex. — The debate team of Baptist Bible College, Springfield, Mo., appeared at the Fellowship youth meeting at Bethel Baptist church, Arlington. More than 500 young people were present.

The team also appeared at the Sunday school service at Bethel church, and the Castleberry Baptist church here. The subject of the debate was "Should A Christian Young Person Live A Separated Life?" There were many responses

to the invitations following the debates. Members of the team are Harold Anderson, Bob Adrian, Ron Bates, Jay Self.

Next Week

THE WORSHIP OF POWER: The first of a series on the climax of the nations at the end of the age.



PENSACOLA, FLA. The Tri-State Baptist Bible Fellowship held its December meeting with Berean Baptist church. The chief speaker was W. E. Dowell, pastor of Beaver Street Baptist church, Jacksonville. In the picture are part of the more than 30 preachers present. B. H. McWaters, pastor of the host church, is standing at the left of the vase of flowers and Dr. Dowell is at the right of the vase. Olen Gregg, pastor of the Pleasant Ridge Baptist church, Ellisville, Miss., chairman of the organization, is standing back of Dr. Dowell, to the right.



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By staying at the Wingate you will receive a rate of \$100 per night on any room, complimentary full hot breakfast, and be able to walk out the door to the daily sessions and return to your room in seconds. You will also be only five minutes from the United Heritage Convention Center, the location for our main services. When calling, let them know you are with the BBFI.

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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Divider of time

How the modern calendar proclaims the uniqueness of Jesus Christ

by Mark Milioni, President, Baptist Bible College
(Adapted from a Christmas sermon)

Our calendar is not something that is divinely inspired or scriptural. It was developed, and by the way, redeveloped and redeveloped and redeveloped, by man. So, how in the world did we get our calendars? First of all, let's talk about how we arrived at the months that we use to measure time. You see, ancient man knew that there were two heavenly bodies that regulated or at least were used to measure time.

One was the moon, so they developed lunar calendars, and the other was the sun, so the other calendar was a solar calendar.

For instance, the Jewish people developed and still use a lunar calendar. But you do know a lunar calendar determined by the cycles or the phases of the moon, from a new moon to a full moon, does not coincide with a solar calendar. For instance, the moon completes its phases every 29½ days. And so if you follow a lunar year exclusively, you have only 354 days, and that is 11 days short of a solar year of 365 days.

To further complicate the measurement of time, we're spinning around the sun in orbit at a tremendous velocity. And in addition to spinning around the sun, this planet is also rotating one complete revolution every 24 hours. Are you dizzy yet? In addition to that, our planet's axis is not perpendicular, and by leaning some that creates the seasons of the year.

Even ancient man, as far back as the ancient Egyptians, could determine, by counting the amount of daylight and the amount of dark, that there were these four points during the year when you could establish time. The two equinoxes, one in the fall, one in the spring, when the time of light and darkness were the same. Then there was the winter solstice, when the dark is longer and the daylight is short, and the summer solstice, just the opposite — long daylight, short night. They could determine those were things that happened regularly every year.

Now the problem was getting the lunar or moon cycles that developed months to coincide with this solar year. There were several attempts through the years.

For instance, the Romans were the first ones to establish a monthly calendar. They had ten months.

The first month was the month March. The second month was April, then May and June. The fifth month was called Quintilis, the sixth month was called Sextilis, then Septembris, Octoberus, the eighth month — that's where we get our September and October — November, the ninth month, and Decimbris (December for decimal) the tenth month. The problem was this year did not coincide with the months.

Julius Caesar attempted to establish a worldwide calendar. He didn't invent the idea; he just made it a proclamation. The idea was based on the teaching of the Roman astronomer Sosigenes who influenced Julius Caesar. And in the year 46 B.C., Julius Caesar said, "We need to add two more months." And so he added Januarius and Februarius. Twelve months. But then he said, "We need to reckon this idea of how a year is 365 days and approximately six hours." And to make up for that extra six hours per year, the Romans added a leap year.

And then Romans honored Julius Caesar by renaming the month Quintilis after him, and that's why we have the month July, named after Julius Caesar.

But the Romans made a mistake. Instead of counting a leap year every fourth year, they started counting it every third year, and so the calendar got out of sync again. And so when Caesar Augustus came along — remember him from the Christmas story — he said, "We need to go back to what Julius did," and so for 16 years they didn't have any leap years and they got back on track.

And to honor Augustus, they re-named the month "Sextilis" after Caesar Augustus, and that's why you and I have the months of July and August in the summer. Everything went along pretty good for a while; except that a solar year is not exactly 365 days and six hours? It is exactly 365 days, five hours, 48 minutes, and 42 seconds. And though 11 minutes does not seem to be a large number, the problem comes when you stretch it out over about 15 centuries, and then it does make a difference. The calendar was out of sync again.

Every year, the date of the vernal equinox in the spring became earlier and earlier on the calendar.

Strangely enough, because the date of Easter is set based on the first full moon after the vernal equinox, as the date of the vernal equinox kept getting pushed back earlier it came in March, and then in February, and so on. Soon someone realized that Easter was going to be celebrated at Christmastime, and even before that.

The fix came in 1582 when Pope Gregory XIII established the new style calendar with that 11-minute difference. And he instituted the calendar we use today, which is called the Gregorian calendar, named after Pope Gregory. It was quite a feat of analysis. The first thing he did was to take 10 days off the year 1582. They just dropped them. And then he instituted what's called the "Century Law" for leap years: in the century years that end in "00" only those century years divisible by 400 are a leap year. That's the law he instituted. So 1600 was a leap year, but not 1700, 1800, or 1900, but 2000 was a leap year. And that's how Gregory got the calendar back in sync with the vernal equinox, setting the date of Easter.

But, because the pope was Catholic, only those predominately Catholic countries, like Spain, Italy, and France, adopted that new style calendar. All the others stuck with the old style calendar. That made determining dates in the 16th and 17th centuries sometimes very difficult. England and the American colonies did not accept the new calendar until 1752, just a few years before the American Revolution.

And when they did, 11 days were just dropped out of the calendar. In 1752, September 3 was followed by September 14. Someone wanting to do an interesting term paper could write "All the Historical Events that Occurred in the U.S. Colonies from September 4, 1752, to September 13, 1752," then turn in a blank sheet of paper. Those dates do not exist, seriously, in American history, because we adopted this new calendar.

So that is a little explanation about how we got our calendar and the month system. Now let's talk about years.

In the year 532, a monk named Dionysius calculated what became known as *Anno Domini*, or "the year of our Lord," abbreviated A.D. He calculated what he believed to be the birth year of Jesus. Dionysius worked hard, but he made two mistakes. First, he did not account for a "zero year." There was no zero in the Roman numeral system. So what he said was, the day Jesus was born was year 1 A.D., and so when Jesus was one year old, that was 2 A.D. The second mistake had to do with the death of Herod the Great. Using Dionysius's calculations, Herod would have been dead for four or five years before Jesus was born, and we know that is not so both from the Bible and secular history. Jesus was probably born 4 or 5 B.C., but no one had calculated the B.C. part. That would come in about 731 when the Venerable Bede introduced the concept.

So, there you go, that's how we got

our calendar. It is just the process of man attempting to match months and years, the moon and the sun. But there is much more to the story. Man developed the calendar, and in the center of that calendar, dividing history, is Jesus Christ. When mankind looked for an event to determine our historical dating, the one event that stands is this: the coming of Jesus Christ to planet Earth.

There have been other attempts at setting a different starting date. The Greeks, when they had the first Olympiad, said, "We're always going to measure time according to the Greek Olympiad." That didn't last very long. The Romans said, "We're always going to measure time from the date of the founding of the city of Rome." That didn't last very long. Even in the French Revolution in the late 1700s, the French said, "We're going to have a new world dating system based from the beginning of the French Revolution." That didn't even last two or three years in France.

But still to this day, 2,000 some odd years later, every time you write a check and put a date down, and every time you look at a calendar, and every time you register any date, you are acknowledging that something happened more than 2,000 years ago that was the most significant event in history.

Some historians prefer to use the terms Common Era (CE) and Before the Common Era (BCE) rather than A.D. and B.C., but whatever letters you put at the end of the date,

...when Jesus Christ came to planet Earth,



the numbers of our system of dating in the modern world is still based upon the coming of Jesus Christ, and you can't escape from it. And I do believe that when Jesus Christ came to planet Earth, it was the only event worthy to divide the history of mankind. Let me tell you why, three reasons:

1. Jesus Christ — the most significant individual of history

He's the most significant man, the most significant individual of history. Matthew 1:21, "And she shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call His name JESUS: for He shall save his people from their sins."

When Jesus Christ came into the world, he was the most significant individual to ever walk on the face of this planet. He was given a special name. I'm so glad the angel gave Jesus such a beautiful, simple name. You know, there are some hard names in the Bible. One of the sons of Isaiah was named Maher-shalal-hash-baz. The grandson of Saul in the Old Testament was named Mephibosheth. Aren't you glad the angel didn't say, "Call his name Mephibosheth." He said, "Call his name Jesus." You know why? The name Jesus is so simple; it's so beautiful. It sounds beautiful when it's coming from the lips of a three-year-old child singing, "Yes, Jesus loves me." And it sounds beautiful coming from the lips of dying saints on their deathbed, just before they enter into His arms as they call out his name, "Jesus."

What a beautiful name it is.

Jesus! What a beautiful name. The angel said to call his name Jesus because his coming into the world is the most significant event in all of history.

And look what the Bible says about the unique character of Jesus in 1 Timothy 2:5. It says, "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."

This verse tells us that there is a God who is holy, sinless. And then there are the rest of us. We're all fallen, sinful human beings. And we cannot relate to God. You know why? Because he is holy and we are sinful. And so the solution was God sent into this world the God-man — Jesus Christ who was all God and He was all man.

When we say we believe in the virgin birth of Jesus Christ, that is not some incidental doctrine. It is an essential doctrine to what we believe about the character of Christ, because the father of Jesus was not Joseph or someone else. The father of Jesus was God and God alone. And because of that, he could reach up and take the hand of His Holy Father, and because he was man, he could reach down and take the hand of all of us who are sinful creatures, and He could bring us together, and he could reconcile us to God.

And he's the only one who could do that, because there had never been another God-man. The Bible says "... one God and one

mediator between God and man. The man Jesus Christ." And that's what Jesus came to do, and that's what makes him different. The second thing I want you to notice is

2. Jesus Christ — the most significant mission of history

In other words, what he came to do was the most significant mission of anyone else. And throughout the years, people have done significant things, but none more important than what Jesus did.

Would you look and see why Jesus said, in his own words, he came to this planet? Matthew 20:28, "Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." Jesus said, "I came to give my life, a ransom for many."

You know what a ransom is, don't you? Sometimes someone may be kidnapped and because that person who is kidnapped is important to certain people, the kidnappers will send a ransom note saying, "If you will pay a certain price, this individual who is important to you will be returned to you." You can buy them back if you have enough money to pay the ransom. And isn't it interesting that Jesus, in his own words, said, "That's why I came, to pay a ransom for your soul."

Jesus didn't come just to teach. Although he taught, that wasn't the purpose of his coming. If he had come to teach, he would have established a university and lived to

it was the only event worthy to divide the history of mankind.



a ripe old age. He didn't come just to heal, although he healed many people. Had Jesus come primarily to heal, he would have established a hospital and lived to be a ripe old age. Jesus didn't come to set up some new ethical moral system. If he had, he would have put on the robes of a judge and established a supreme court and lived to be a ripe old age. But He came to die.

A.W. Tozer wrote this about Jesus:

"Jesus is the only man who lived his life backwards. Your life runs from birth to death. But Jesus' lifeline runs from his death to his birth. The only reason there was a Bethlehem is that there might be a Calvary. At Bethlehem, he was surrounded by beasts so at Calvary he might be surrounded by beastly men. At Bethlehem, he was wrapped in swaddling clothes, at Calvary, he was wrapped in his own blood. He was laid in a wooden manger so that one day he would be laid on a wooden cross. He is the Lamb of God, slain from the foundation of the world."

Jesus came down, the Bible says, and he put on human flesh, and He humbled himself, and the Bible says He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. And by his death, he was paying our ransom

3. Jesus Christ — the most significant message of history

Jesus Christ delivered a unique message that was revolutionary in the world, and you can find it there in John 3:14-16. We are all familiar with the last verse, but maybe you've never tied these first two verses with it. "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness," now that's a good story in itself, "even so must the Son of Man be lifted up." That means on a cross, "that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have eternal life." And here's the next verse, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

I believe there's never been a more important message than this one. Jesus was saying, "There is a God. And this God loves you and you can have a personal relationship with this God. And the only way you can come to know this God is through his Son Jesus Christ. And the only way you can come

through his Son Jesus Christ is through his death on the cross." And that's the great message that Jesus shares.

The late teacher and preacher Gene Getz, in one of his books, tells the story of Max Walsh. Years ago, Max Walsh was staying in a lodge in the Austrian Alps. And on a beautiful winter day with the sky blue, he told the owner of the lodge he was going out for a walk by himself. And the owner told him to be careful. Max Walsh walked out, and he was about a mile and a half from the lodge, when suddenly, the weather changed, as it often does in mountainous areas. A tremendous snowstorm descended on that area. He was blinded by the snow and was getting colder by the moment. He stumbled and fell and was lost. He couldn't get his bearings, and he was stranded in the snow.

The owner of the lodge saw the blizzard descend, and he sent one of his rescue dogs out into the snow. These dogs had been trained to find people who were lost in the snow. And so the owner of the lodge took one of the garments from Max Walsh's room and let the dog smell it, and then the dog took off into that blinding snowstorm. And using its keen senses of smell and hearing, he found

Max Walsh's body in the snow.

And as the dog had been trained, the dog latched on to Max Walsh's jacket with his teeth and began to shake him and pull him through the snow. Max Walsh, who was semi-conscious, awakened, and he saw that big dog pulling on him and he panicked, and out of fear he thought it was a wolf. And Max Walsh quickly pulled out his knife and thrust that knife at the dog, giving him a terrible wound. The dog let go and went back to the lodge, where he fell dead at his master's feet. The owner of the lodge, realizing what probably had happened, followed that trail of blood through the snow until he found Max Walsh, and they took him back to safety.

And years later when Max Walsh became a Christian, he always told that story when he shared his testimony, because he said, "When I realized that I was lost and headed for hell, I realized the only way that I could find life was to follow the trail of blood back to the cross of Jesus, where I found the One who died for me."

The reason we have B.C. and A.D. is because there has never been another individual who was worthy to divide history. Jesus Christ is the One and Only.

One Solitary Life

"HERE IS A MAN who was born in an obscure village, the Child of a peasant woman. He worked in a carpenter shop until He was thirty, and then for three years He was an itinerant preacher. He never wrote a book. He never held an office. He never owned a home. He never had a family. He never went to college. He never put his foot inside a big city. He never traveled two hundred miles from the place where He was born. He never did one of the things that usually accompany greatness. He had no credentials but Himself. He had nothing to do with this world except the naked power of His Divine manhood. While still a young man, the tide of popular opinion turned against Him. He was turned over to His enemies. He went through the mockery of a trial. He was nailed to a Cross between two thieves. His executioners gambled for the only piece of property He had on earth while he was dying — and that His Coat. When He was dead He was taken down and laid in a borrowed grave through the pity of a friend. Such was His human life — He rises from the dead. Nineteen wide centuries have come and gone and today He is the Centerpiece of the human race and the Leader of the column of progress. I am within the mark when I say that all the armies that ever marched, and all the navies that ever were built, and all the parliaments that ever sat, and all the kings that ever reigned, put together, have not affected the life of man upon this earth as powerfully as that One Solitary Life."

JAMES ALLAN FRANCIS

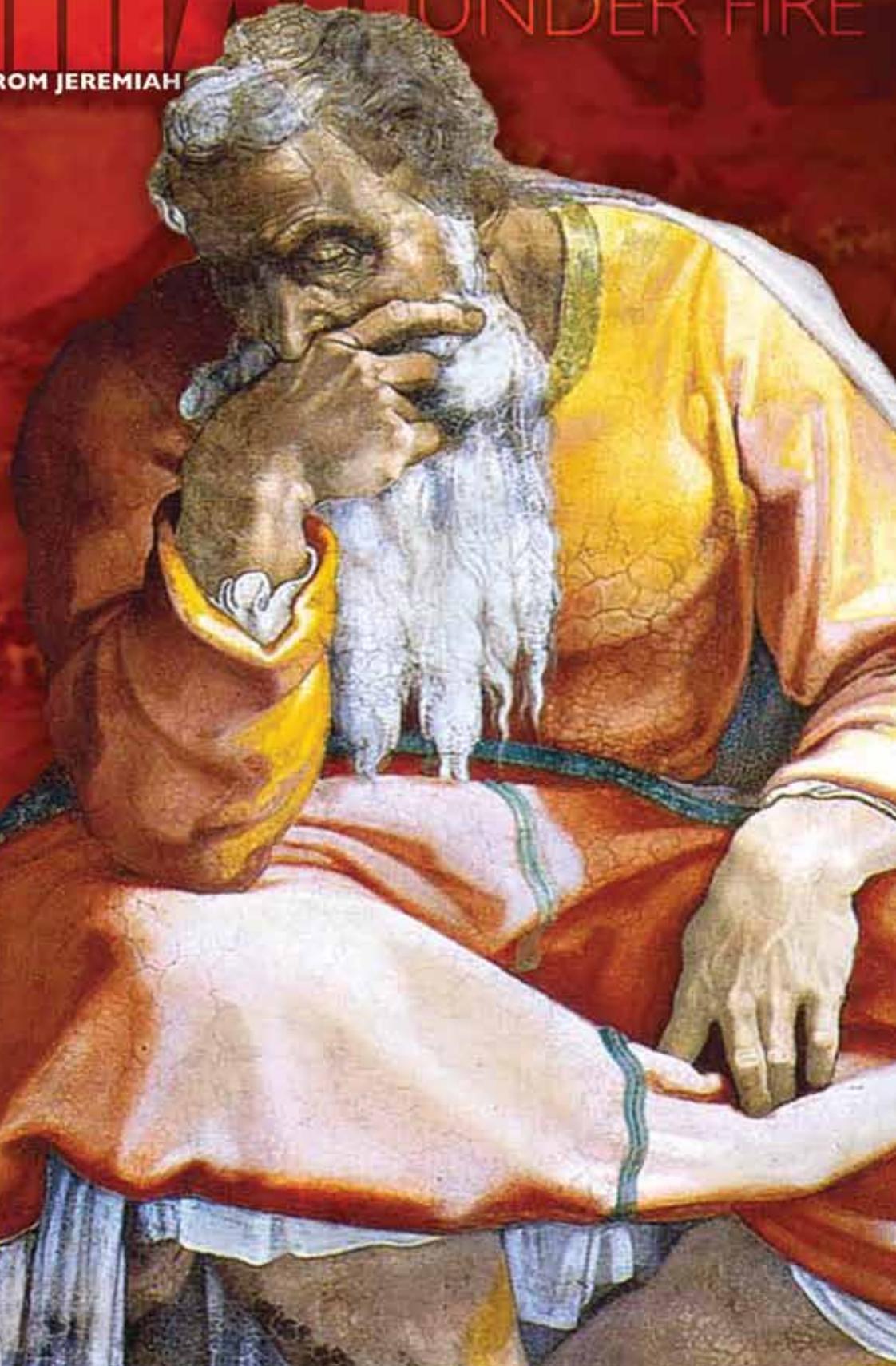
ANTICIPATING “AN EXPECTED END”

JEREMIAH A PROPHET UNDER FIRE

THIRD IN A SERIES OF STUDIES FROM JEREMIAH

By Keith Bassham

Probably one of the darkest and most evil times in the history of Judah (which was all there was left of Israel, if you recall the material regarding the history of Israel in last month's article) was the reign of King Manasseh. For a half century, the people of God were instructed to worship false and foreign deities, to give themselves to the black arts, to human sacrifice, and to activities, by Manasseh, who, 2 Kings 21:16 says, “shed innocent blood very much, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another; beside his sin wherewith he made Judah to sin, in doing that which was evil in the sight of the Lord.”



This is a remarkable record, given what we know of Manasseh's father. After the split of Israel into the northern and southern kingdoms, the north was afflicted by one wicked ruler after another. In the south, in Judah, things were not as bad in that department. And, in fact, Hezekiah, who was Manasseh's father, was considered a good king over all.

Hezekiah was a reformer, zealous to move his nation back to the God so many of his countrymen had forsaken or forgotten. He abolished idolatry, even destroying the highly valued "brass serpent," used in the time of Moses and thus revered as a holy artifact, even to the point of worship. He instead pointed people to the Temple and services, and he

reinstated Passover. For this, he extended an invitation to the scattered tribes and interceded on their behalf when their journey made it impossible for them to fully purify themselves for the feast and celebration. The record he left behind was, "And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that David his father did. ... He trusted in the Lord God of Israel; so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor any that were before him" (2 Kings 18:3, 5).

These were indeed Judah's golden days.

And then Manasseh succeeded his father after a ten-year co-regency that ended with Hezekiah's death. All the reform was undone; the nation reverted to its Canaanite roots.

Manasseh, the Bible says, "did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, like unto the abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel" (2 Chronicles 33:2).

The people worshipped Baal, children were sacrificed to Moloch, and idolatrous altars were restored. Manasseh's reign was as dark as Hezekiah's was bright. Though he eventually repented of his evil, "Manasseh made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to err, and to do worse than the heathen, whom the LORD had destroyed before the children of Israel" (2 Chronicles 33:11).

Unable to completely undo his wrongs, he was followed by his son Amon who saw no value in a pure faith in God. However, in the last decade of Manasseh's reign, two boys were born as a gift to that demoralized people. One was Josiah, Manasseh's grandson, who would come to Judah's throne at the age of eight, and the other was Jeremiah.

Josiah became a reforming king, and Jeremiah was an outspoken prophet, and between the two of them, the kingdom of David had at least a fighting chance to renew itself and survive intact.

Josiah, the Bible says, began to seek the Lord in his teens. Shortly after that, Jeremiah comes on the scene to begin his long career. These words open the first chapter of Jeremiah's prophecy:

- 1 The words of Jeremiah the son of Hilkiah, of the priests that were in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin: 2 to whom the word of the Lord came in the days of Josiah the son of Amon king of Judah, in the thirteenth year of his reign. 3 It came also in the days of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, unto the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah the son of Josiah king of Judah, unto the carrying away of Jerusalem captive in the fifth month.
- 4 Then the word of the Lord came unto me, saying,
- 5 Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.
- 6 Then said I, Ah, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child.
- 7 But the Lord said unto me, Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall

King Hezekiah Destroys the Idols by Matthaeus Merian the Elder, 1625-30



THEN I SAID, I WILL NOT MAKE MENTION OF HIM, NOR SPEAK ANY MORE IN HIS NAME,
 BUT HIS WORD WAS IN MINE HEART AS A BURNING FIRE
 SHUT UP IN MY BONES, AND I WAS WEARY WITH FORBEARING, AND I COULD NOT STAY.

send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak.

8 *Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord.*

9 *Then the Lord put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth.*

10 *See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant.*

So much is revealed in these phrases. We learn about the historical context, something about Jeremiah's family, and his reluctance to accept the call, not to mention some fairly heavy theological truth concerning God, His foreknowledge, His Word, and His purposes.

Several kings are mentioned, and from that chronology you get an idea of the length of Jeremiah's influence. He was God's spokesman during the reign of five kings in Judah:

Josiah (639-608 B.C.) - 31 years
 Jehoahaz (608 B.C.) - 3 months
 Jehoiakim (608-597 B.C.) - 11 years
 Johoiachin (597 B.C.) - 3 months
 Zedekiah (597-586 B.C.) - 11 years

The Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed in 586 B.C., and Jeremiah's ministry extended even beyond that time, perhaps as many as 65-66 years, quite a long time considering how difficult others made it for him.

Jeremiah would become probably the most persecuted prophet in the Bible. He was led as a lamb to the slaughter (11:18ff); his brethren dealt treacherously with him (12:6); he was confronted by false prophets (14:13); his brethren cursed him (15:10); he was smitten, put in stocks, and denounced (20:1ff); his heart was broken (23:9); he was seized and threatened with death (26:8, 24); his

teaching was opposed (28:1ff; 29:1ff); he was imprisoned (32:2, 3); he was pursued (36:26); he was beaten and imprisoned (37:15); he was thrown into a dungeon (38:6); he was bound in chains (40:1); he was falsely accused (43:2); he was taken to Egypt (43:6, 7). Tradition says he was stoned in Egypt. (Wayne Jackson in *The Marvelous Book of Jeremiah*)

Lest you think Jeremiah was some superman and took all this in stride and good humor, here is a sample of his protests to God, from chapter 15:

15 *O Lord, thou knowest: remember me, and visit me, and revenge me of my persecutors; take me not away in thy longsuffering: know that for thy sake I have suffered rebuke.*

16 *Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O Lord God of hosts.*

17 *I sat not in the assembly of the mockers, nor rejoiced; I sat alone because of thy hand: for thou hast filled me with indignation.*

18 *Why is my pain perpetual, and my wound incurable, which refuseth to be healed? wilt thou be altogether unto me as a liar, and as waters that fail?*

And see Jeremiah's transparency before God, even to the point of accusing God of deceit and attempting to withdraw his services, in this section from chapter 20:

7 *O Lord, thou hast deceived me, and I was deceived: thou art stronger than I, and hast prevailed: I am in derision daily, every one mocketh me.*

8 *For since I spake, I cried out, I cried violence and spoil; because the word of the Lord was made a reproach unto me, and a derision, daily.*

9 *Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his*

word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay.

But Jeremiah has a sense of solidarity with his people, even though his people are sometimes against him, and he speaks up for them, much as Moses did as we see in chapter 14.

8 *O the hope of Israel, the saviour thereof in time of trouble, why shouldest thou be as a stranger in the land, and as a wayfaring man that turneth aside to tarry for a night?*

9 *Why shouldest thou be as a man astonished, as a mighty man that cannot save? yet thou, O Lord, art in the midst of us, and we are called by thy name; leave us not.*

And in the middle of all this, God's call and commission to Jeremiah to stand faithfully for Him and His Word never changes. He says to Jeremiah, concerning those people (chapter 15):

19 *Let them return unto thee; but return not thou unto them.*

20 *And I will make thee unto this people a fenced brasen wall: and they shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee: for I am with thee to save thee and to deliver thee, saith the Lord.*

21 *And I will deliver thee out of the hand of the wicked, and I will redeem thee out of the hand of the terrible.*

Now I will remind you that all these speeches appear to take place in the earlier days of Jeremiah when some of the reforms were actually having a bit of an effect. But we also have a record of Judah's fecklessness, and their tendency to walk away from God no matter who the king is or what laws he wants to enforce. Those laws in and of themselves,

however well-intentioned, have no lasting power to change a society or a culture. The same is true of a religion built on ritual that does not effect behavior. That is a matter of the heart, and Jeremiah seems to have a handle on this truth in chapter 7:

*1 The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying,
2 Stand in the gate of the Lord's house, and proclaim there this word, and say, Hear the word of the Lord, all ye of Judah, that enter in at these gates to worship the Lord.
3 Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place.
4 Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, are these.
5 For if ye throughly amend your ways and your doings; if ye throughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbour;
6 if ye oppress not the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place, neither walk after other gods to your hurt:
7 then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, for ever and ever.
8 Behold, ye trust in lying words, that cannot profit.
9 Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other gods whom ye know not;
10 and come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, We are delivered to do all these abominations?
11 Is this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, even I have seen it, saith the Lord.*

So, what are the results Jeremiah is able to show after more than 20 years of preaching summed up in chapter 25?

*1 The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, that was the first year of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon;
2 the which Jeremiah the prophet spake unto*

*all the people of Judah, and to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying,
3 From the thirteenth year of Josiah the son of Amon king of Judah, even unto this day, that is the three and twentieth year, the word of the Lord hath come unto me, and I have spoken unto you, rising early and speaking; but ye have not hearkened.
4 And the Lord hath sent unto you all his servants the prophets, rising early and sending them; but ye have not hearkened, nor inclined your ear to hear.
5 They said, Turn ye again now every one from his evil way, and from the evil of your doings, and dwell in the land that the Lord hath given unto you and to your fathers for ever and ever:
6 and go not after other gods to serve them, and to worship them, and provoke me not to anger with the works of your hands; and I will do you no hurt.
7 Yet ye have not hearkened unto me, saith the Lord; that ye might provoke me to anger with the works of your hands to your own hurt.
8 Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts; Because ye have not heard my words,
9 behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, saith the Lord, and Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof, and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, and an hissing, and perpetual desolations.
10 Moreover I will take from them the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones, and the light of the candle.
11 And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.*

This is at the same time both a horrible and a thrilling prophecy; a horrible prospect for those who first heard this prophetic voice. Their world was coming to an end. And yet, this prophecy of a 70-year limit indicates a control and a purpose of God over the situation, and that knowledge was a spur to

Daniel to call himself and his captive nation to repentance a couple of generations hence.

The promise is more explicit in Jeremiah 29:10-14:

*10 For thus saith the Lord, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place.
11 For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.
12 Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you.
13 And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.
14 And I will be found of you, saith the Lord: and I will turn away your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith the Lord; and I will bring you again into the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive.*

God speaks here of “an expected end.” One of the most difficult things in the world is keeping in your mind two opposing thoughts. One of those thoughts is, “This is an unbearable situation, and I can’t believe it’s happening to me.” And the other is, “God is good, and He is in control of ‘the expected end.’” David’s psalms are full of this. Why are the wicked doing so well? Why am I doing so poorly? How come my enemies are able to get away with mistreating me? When will my devotion to God pay off? And then, near the close of those psalms, David settles down and realizes there is “an expected end,” and that event is to determine how we process the present situation. Or to paraphrase my friend Gary Grey, “Present circumstances do not indicate future prospects.”

What God is saying in this passage (“For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil”) is an explicit (and not a general) promise to the people of Judah who are to be carried off that He will someday cause them and their descendants to return. That promise is the one embraced by Daniel, and fulfilled by Ezra, Nehemiah, and others. In some ways, it is a

message Jeremiah should take to heart.

“Jeremiah is an intensely human personality, a man whom we can understand and love, and yet a person endowed with such mysterious power from on high that we at times are overawed by his grandeur. Jeremiah, so humanly weak, and yet so divinely firm; his love so humanly tender, and at the same time so divinely holy; his eyes streaming with tears at beholding the affliction about to come upon his people, yet sparkling with fiery indignation against their sins and abominations; his lips overflowing with sympathy for the daughter of Zion, only to pronounce upon her almost in the same breath the judgment and

condemnation she so fully deserved. Truly so remarkable and powerful a personality, at the same time so lovable, that we cannot fail to recognize in him an instrument especially chosen and prepared by the God of grace and strength and wisdom” (Theodore Laetsch).

What we learn from the life of Jeremiah is the comfort of knowing that, just like every believer, even great prophets of God can experience rejection, depression, and discouragement in their walk with the Lord. You can become despised in the eyes of others, and no doubt misunderstood.

This experience is not only possible, but very likely, especially in the days we are living

through. When down becomes up, and up becomes down, when you point out that those things that are highly valued by men are an abomination to God, and when you attempt to get others to trade those worthless items for the truly valuable things of God, you will experience what Jeremiah experienced.

The Bible says the time will come when people will not tolerate the truth, and in so many ways we are at that point already. Even though few will listen, we have to continue to proclaim truth to rescue people from the terrible judgment that is to come. There is, after all, “an expected end.”

The Flight of the Prisoners, c. 1896-1902, by James Tissot



ONE OF THE MOST DIFFICULT THINGS IN THE WORLD IS KEEPING IN YOUR MIND TWO OPPOSING THOUGHTS — “THIS IS AN UNBEARABLE SITUATION, AND I CAN'T BELIEVE IT'S HAPPENING TO ME, **YET** GOD IS GOOD, AND HE IS IN CONTROL OF 'THE EXPECTED END.'”

HISTORY

BAPTIST

DAVID THOMAS – *Missionary to Virginia and Kentucky*

David Thomas was unique among early 18th-century Baptist preachers, especially in Virginia, in that he received a classical education under the eminent Baptist pastor and educator, Issac Eaton, at Hopewell Academy, New Jersey. Thomas's educational achievements were recognized by Rhode Island College (Brown University), which awarded him a Master of Arts Degree in 1755.

David Thomas was born August 16, 1732, at London Tract, PA. Thomas possessed a missionary evangelistic heart, and in an attempt to determine God's will for his life, he made several preaching tours into what was known as the Virginia Frontier. In 1760, in his 28th year, he moved to Berkeley County, VA. During the next

18 months, he preached extensively to the scattered settlers. At the same time, Peter Cornwell of Fauquier County, a dedicated Baptist layman, had been speaking to his friends and neighbors about how to find peace with God. However, superstition and ignorance blinded their minds to the truth of the gospel. Cornwell, in an attempt to gain the services of a Baptist minister, traveled

60 miles over the mountains to Berkeley County. Upon his arrival, he met David Thomas and after hearing him preach and speaking with him personally, Cornwell invited Thomas to settle in Fauquier County. Thomas believed this was the will of God, and acting upon that belief, he moved to his new field of labor.

His preaching and message astounded the people, and his fame began to spread not only throughout Fauquier County but the surrounding areas. People would travel 50 to 60 miles to hear him preach. However, especially in the early days of his ministry, he was exposed to the worst kind of bigotry — being assaulted by individuals and mobs. Once, while conducting a service, he was dragged from the house and was brutally attacked. On another occasion, while Thomas was preaching, a man pointed a gun at him, and just as this man

was prepared to fire, another man grabbed the gun and overpowered the assailant. If not for the quick thinking of this unknown hero, David Thomas would have been assassinated.

December 3, 1762, Thomas organized Broad Run Church with ten members. This church would become the mother of five or six additional churches. Thomas remained as pastor of Broad Run for 26 fruitful years. In 1788, he returned to Berkeley County and became the pastor of Mill Creek Church. The church prospered and the people rejoiced in his ministry. But, as Thomas approached his 65th year, some of his members "became wiser than their pastor" and accused him of preaching false doctrine. Thomas was disgusted with this

turn of events and in 1796 he, as did many of his fellow Baptist ministers, moved to Kentucky.

His fame preceded him, and even though he was 65 years old, he was called as pastor of Washington Church. As David Thomas approached his 70th year, his missionary evangelist heart still burned brightly. He travelled extensively proclaiming repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. In about 1800, what is known as the Great Revival struck the frontier of Kentucky, and David Thomas was one of

its major participants and supporters. Growth among Baptists was truly amazing — in 1800 Kentucky had 106 churches with 5,119 members and by 1803 they had 219 churches with 15,495 members.

By that time David Thomas was beyond his 70th year and he had lost his eyesight. During his final days, young Baptist preachers would often make their way to Thomas's little log cabin to have the saintly old warrior pray for them. Jeremiah Vardeman related the experience of kneeling beside Thomas's chair while the patriarch prayed, recalling, "Such a prayer I never heard from mortal lips."

David Thomas's death came peacefully and quietly. He lay on his pallet and went to sleep and awoke in the presence of his Savior.



Broad Run Church

by Thomas Ray



Mighty Moscow

Moscow captured my heart. Last year I passed through on my way to visit and work with friends several hours away. While my destination was itself a bustling mid-sized city, nothing compares to Moscow. My mid-winter visit caught the broad avenues, buildings of every description, cars, buses, trains, and pedestrians in those February gray-brown tones I am familiar with in Chicago.

To the fiercely nationalistic Russian people, Moscow “lies downhill from the rest of Russia.” All money and resources flow to Moscow. Proud of its history, its power, its culture, its wealth, many are also saddened by the corruption that Moscow represents.

Russia is an enigma. Strong and rich. Ruled for centuries with an iron hand. Abundant natural resources. Systematically plundered by those in power. Weak and poor. Russia’s population is dropping by half a million a year. Its birthrate is among the lowest in the world. Its abortion rate remains one of the world’s highest. There are more than 800,000 orphans in Russia, and over one million street children. The country claims one of the world’s highest rates of imprisonment with 825,000 incarcerated. Russian alcoholism rips and tears at the social fabric. They have Europe’s highest and fastest rising rate of HIV/AIDS.

In this context sits bulging, wealthy, mighty Moscow. By all accounts, 15 million people make Moscow home. There may be up to two to three million undocumented residents. The city has the highest concentration of billionaires in the world. It is one of the most ethnically diverse cities in Europe.

Massive demographic shifts marked the last 20 years. Jews were the largest non-Slavic ethnic group in Moscow. Now, from a high of a quarter million, their numbers have dwindled to just above 50,000. Meanwhile, there are 50,000 Chinese making the city their home. Major immigration from Central Asia, including many illegals, has been noted. Large num-

bers of believers have emigrated out of Russia, many to Germany.

Moscow dominated international headlines in the last half of 2013. President Obama’s “red line strategy” on Syria created global tension. When President Putin stepped in at the last minute, you could hear a collective sigh of relief. Eric Snowden was stuck in the Moscow airport for weeks. Russian laws on homosexuality were in the news and perhaps more so because Russia will host the winter Olympics this year.

All this speaks again to the disproportionate impact of cities. They are centers of power, culture, education, business, and corruption of all sorts. This “clout of the metropolis” is precisely what the Holy Spirit led Paul to leverage in evangelizing the world in the first century.

While this city fills volumes with dramatic bloody history, a more modern Moscow has been the stage for scene after scene of intrigue. International agents and other shadowy characters fill out a cast both real and imagined, engaged in activities, nefarious or patriotic, depending on your point of view. Navigating Kurskyska Train Station at midnight had me suspecting clandestine operations all around me!

Whether it’s renowned Red Square bounded by the hulking Kremlin and St. Basil’s famous profile, bustling Kutuzov Avenue, Russia Hall, or storied Gorky Park, we all know that Moscow is people, people, people. The student, backpack slung over his shoulder. The Kyrgyz peasant. The smartly adorned businesswoman. And, yes, the babushka.

One vineyard laborer described the evangelical mindset in Moscow as inwardly focused — many churches spending most of their money, effort, time, and gifts on maintaining that machinery of local programs — with very little effort toward engaging lost people. There seems to be a lack of vision and very few examples of how to move outside the walls of church houses.

Barriers to ministry include suspicion directed at any non-orthodox religion, absolute

ignorance of God’s Word, and difficulties in establishing friendships with unbelievers.

An American church planter in Moscow for 15 years says the opportunities are massive, however, because younger generations tend to be questioning truth, religion in general, and Orthodoxy in particular. Modern life offers them little real hope.

The government is bolstering and using the Russian-Orthodox Church under the guise of national and cultural loyalty, to pressure if not persecute evangelicals. The evangelical ingress of the 90s, much of it from America, was often insensitive to history and culture, creating tension between Western believers and those who had suffered decades of brutal oppression under Soviet communism.

Life and ministry in Moscow is incredibly expensive, and this directly impacts existing work as well as ministry prospects. Americans, used to instant everything, struggle to understand the levels of support needed for missionaries who are chipping each soul out of granite.

How can we pray and lead our churches to pray? Pray for Russian Christian leaders, pastors, evangelists, missionaries, and academicians. Ask God to give them wisdom when facing obstacles, creativity in connecting with the lost, imagination in meeting needs in the name of Jesus, building bridges for the gospel. Pray for the older leaders who have paid dearly for their faith to patiently mentor young leaders. Ask God to raise up a new generation of innovative, faithful leaders who can build and lead churches with multiplication in view.

Jesus loves Moscow. Moscow can be a mighty mountain from which gospel streams flow out across this great land and beyond.

by Charles Lyons, Pastor
Armitage Baptist Church,
Chicago, Illinois
charles.lyons@armitagechurch.org



Great opportunity for BBC



by Mark Milioni | President | Baptist Bible College

Would you consider giving a gift to help us continue to equip people to share the message of Christ both here and around the world? What if your gift could be used to train twice as many men and women? Here is some great news — one of our loving donors has made an incredible offer to BBC! This donor has offered BBC a matching gift of \$600,000!

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The details are pretty simple. This donor will match \$600,000 in donations between now and January 31, 2014. This means that your gift of any size will be worth twice as much and allow us to double our efforts to make a difference in this world for Christ.

Can I ask you, our alumni, friends, and churches, to consider giving a gift during this special time? Your gift of any size will be greatly appreciated and very carefully used. BBC is dependent on the contributions of generous churches and donors. Your gifts allow us to remain affordable for students preparing for a life of ministry. Won't you help us as we prepare them to take the message of Christ to the world?

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I cannot stress how important your gift is to Baptist Bible College at this time! Your gift of any size will be doubled and will tremendously help us continue fulfilling our purpose of preparing Christian leaders.

May 2014 be a great year for Baptist Bible College and the Baptist Bible Fellowship. Thank you for the privilege of serving your students!

The book, the job, the news



by David Melton | President | Boston Baptist College

For a guy who likes books as much as I do, it was a dangerous place — where books were being given away for free! Most of what I browsed was the kind of stuff I can resist. But I did grab a coffee table book — a very nice, incredibly illustrated (computer-generated) hard copy entitled, *Universe*. Amazing “pictures” of space, galaxies, all kinds of celestial pay dirt. And there is some text, which begins this way:

“In the beginning, there was no time. There was no space. There was no matter. Space and time did not exist. *For a reason that we do not understand, the Universe suddenly was* (italics mine). Time began to flow. Space was created, and it swelled in size. Matter came into being, and was carried away in the expansion of space. The result was the Big Bang.”

People began to peek toward me as I grunted, huffed, and muttered reading those words. And then, before I could behave better, I barked, “Are you kidding me?” I took my book, hopped in my car, and drove to campus.

I had this urge to throw *Universe* into the Boston Baptist College dumpster. I even thought about digging through the dumpster and smearing the last remnant of a roll-on deodorant on that introductory narrative! I'm not proud of that, and, thankfully, it dawned on me how dumb I would look if students saw me dumpster diving, but I'm just saying ...

I kept the book. I'm looking at it right now. The pictures of what God created are pretty good. The accompanying explanation is terrible, but valuable. It is a regular reminder of what our job is. The God who made our world has been written out of the script. Not that somebody has thought up a brilliant alternative, mind you (the best they have is “for a reason we do not understand”), but our society denies the reality of the God of the Bible. That means that quality, engaging, Christian education is not a luxury. It is a core necessity!

People, even many in our churches, just don't see as much value in Christian education — and embrace the challenge to support it — as we saw a generation ago. We live in a *Universe* world and if our children are going to be disciples in this world, we better do whatever is needed to equip the minds of young Christians. My free book irritates every time I look at it. But it also energizes me, reminding me why Boston Baptist College, and places like it, must exist.

The street-wise atheism represented in *Universe* took a shot to the gut recently. I read Kirsten Powers, Democratic political operative and former “happy atheist,” recount her journey to the Savior. The mainstream media that has sought her opinion on all kinds of issues are remarkably not curious about this new element in Kirsten's thinking. Google her story. Read it nice and slow. It is the evidence of the Book, the Truth from the Creator. Books like *Universe* ironically end up being “free for the taking.” Kirsten reminds us that our job leads to results that are priceless.

OWASSO, OK

Friendship Baptist in Owasso, OK, holds ribbon-cutting December 8

Friendship Baptist Church and Pastor Linzy Slayden decided their new sanctuary addition deserved more than one dedication day, and so they took four Sundays, November 17-December 8, to perform the deed. The ribbon-cutting service was held Sunday, December 8.

Though the area had experienced a major snow and ice event a day or so before, the service was well attended, and the congregation included several guests and friends of the church, including BBFI Missionary Elmer Deal and Baptist Bible *Tribune* Editor Keith Bassham. Representatives of the church's construction company and other principals were also recognized.

Pastor Slayden wanted four Sundays for the celebration so that different aspects of the church's ministry could be highlighted. He says, "Our first Sunday was Transition Sunday as we met in the old sanctuary and began the service by paying tribute to the past. We had a lighted candle on the platform that represented that phase and had a founding member (Ray Johnson, in whose house the church started) blow out that candle and we all walked over into the new building. We gathered the children on the platform and we lit a new candle representing the focus on the future. There we dedicated the buildings to God."

On the second Sunday, the service dedicated the buildings to the church's families. The third Sunday was devoted to personal spiritual growth. Slayden says, "We passed out a small hand-carved white stone from Jerusalem which represented the Overcomers in Christ from Revelation 2:17." The fourth Sunday, the ribbon-cutting day, was the day the church dedicated their buildings to communities, "across the street and around the world," as Slayden puts it.

The new construction, which was planned when the church first began building at its present location on the east side of Owasso in 1999, combined phases two and three of the church's master plan. The new building (56,000 square feet) features a 1,200-seat

sanctuary and a much-enlarged children's ministry area, including a play area and assembly area. A large and open floor-to-ceiling foyer and several new classrooms were also constructed. The sanctuary has a seven-projector array for utilizing the entire wall adjoining the platform, and 800 of the 1,200 seats are in a stadium-style fan-shaped arrangement. Construction time was about 20 months from the groundbreaking in April 2012.

Friendship Baptist was organized with 39 people in April 1992. The church met in a home at first, and then in a rented office center. Slayden was called as pastor in July 1992, and the

church acquired an unoccupied church building where they met seven years. In April 1999, construction began on the current location.

Friendship's average attendance in 2013 is over 600, and the church gives nearly \$400,000 per year in Faith Promise missions. The property and buildings, 15 acres with 106,000 square feet of building, are valued at \$15 million.

Working alongside Linzy and Carla Slayden on ministry staff are Loran and Jeannine McAlister, Mike and Lisa Gleason, Jeff and Kina Smith, Reuben and Jordan Herrin, and Stephanie Wheeler.



Photos courtesy of Matthew Davis Visuals

MANILA, PHILIPPINES

BBCA Asia graduation to feature Towns

BBCA Graduation Week 2014 will be held March 10-13, 2014, in Metro Manila, Philippines. The keynote speaker for the week will be Elmer Towns, co-founder of Liberty University.

The theme for the week is "Unstoppable," and Towns will challenge attendees around this topic. Several other events including pastors' training seminars, alumni events, and faculty appreciation celebrations will take place also centering on the "Unstoppable" theme.

BBCA President Greg Lyons says, "BBCA would like to extend a special invitation to BBFI pastors to join us for Graduation Week 2014. You will be challenged, inspired, and refreshed as you witness over 1,200 BBCA students participate in graduation events."

For more information and to secure a complete BBCA Graduation Week 2014 travel package (airfare, hotel, transportation, etc.), contact Joni Webster at joniwebster@msn.com.



Elmer Towns

FORT WAYNE, IN

Indiana church takes mission team to central Mexico

A team of 12 from New Hope Baptist Church in Fort Wayne, IN, joined by a pastor from El Salvador, spent part of their summer assisting BBFI missionary Steve Reinhold in central Mexico with outreach and medical relief. Pastor Denny Feasby led the team.

“Home” for the team during their time in Mexico was Camp Tierra Alta, a Rawlings Foundation camp in Xoxocotla, Morelos. The team worked at the camp, participated in a medical mission, worshiped in local church services, and visited an orphanage.

Feasby says, “The purpose of the camp was to share Christ’s love with teens in the area.” Buses delivered teens to the camp for three days of games, fun, and hearing the need for a Savior. A new group of about 600 teens comes every three days, and about half make decisions for Christ. Most of the new Christians confirmed their commitments by following in believers’ baptism the next day.

The Indiana group was invited to Mexico by Steve Reinhold, who is instrumental in serving at the camp, translating and helping things run smoothly. Away from the camp, the team from New Hope participated in Bible studies and church services led by Reinhold — seeing his work up close. While at the church services, the teens in the mission group realized that language was not a barrier when it came to making

friends and spending time together. Feasby says, “A game of soccer knows no such boundaries.”

During the day, at a medical mission at Milpillas, the team met the president of the Morelos Cultural Development Agency. She was impressed with the work Reinhold was instituting. Feasby says, “In fact, while at the Cultural Center the next



Teens from New Hope Baptist in Fort Wayne, IN enjoy lunch and cross-culture communication during Mexico mission trip

day, God opened her heart and the door for Reinhold to use the Cultural Center facility for an evangelistic meeting in the capital city of Morelos.”

The medical mission took place in a tent erected on a concrete slab (put there by the missionary with the intention of planting a church). Inside this tent, residents could have physical needs — medical, dental, optical, clothing — met while also hearing about the love of Christ. The team was able to share face painting, puppets, and the

salvation story using wordless bracelets with the children. Several decisions for the Lord were made that day.

The final destination of the team was a visit to an orphanage. Songs, stories, toys, coloring, hand painting, and games filled that afternoon, and again the gospel was presented using the wordless bracelets. Hugs, smiles, and love were not dependent on any language or custom. Many children were dropped off there, never to see their families again. While heart-

wrenching, the team was glad for time to share God’s love with the little ones.

Pastor Feasby says, “The New Hope Missions Team learned from Steve Reinhold and his family to show God’s love and proclaim the good news whenever possible. Opportunities to serve and share in one’s own community are endless.”

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SPRINGFIELD, MO

Churches host Mark Conn prophecy conferences

Pastors may appear to have most of the answers for their church members, but complex issues and a rapidly changing world combine to challenge even a well-informed pastor. This was the situation Pastor Greg Burdine faced at Faith Baptist Church in Adrian, MI. He reported that a knowledgeable layman began asking questions concerning biblical prophecy, and the questions made him feel “stretched a lot further than I felt comfortable. I love studying prophecy, but I also have to pastor my church.”

Greg Burdine turned to a friend in Flint, Mark Conn, who was pastoring a Baptist church in the area. Mark had been a life-long student of prophecy, and Greg said he brought a good understanding of the issues brought up by the inquisitive church member.

Later, after Conn had resigned his church, Greg asked him to consider doing a one-day prophecy conference. He says, “We would be his first meeting. But I figured he has to start somewhere, and when he gets

famous maybe he will come back and hold another conference for the same price — a love offering. He agreed and we made quick plans.”

The meeting was set for the first Sunday in October. With very little promotion involved, the church experienced a record attendance for any Sunday in October — 258 people came, and more than 100 attended Sunday evening, a large increase. Greg began a “Prophecy 101” class and enrolled 30 new members in the Sunday school. Church attendance averaged 251 throughout the month, 50 more than the previous year.

Later, Mark Conn was hosted by John Westfall and the seven-year-old Connecting Point Church in East Greenbush, NY. John reports the meeting held October 25-27 was “powerful,” and he praised the speaker for his clarity. He says, “We had many families return for each session with the climax and conclusion on Sunday morning, followed by a Q & A session that evening.”

According to Westfall, the northeast part of the country is a difficult one for those who

proclaim the gospel, and he cites a Barna Group survey that said the Albany region is the “least Bible-minded” in the nation. He said, “That is so incredible when you consider the amount of people that were motivated and drawn to God during these services.”

Greg Burdine agrees with John Westfall on Mark Conn’s effectiveness as a communicator. He says, “Mark’s presentation of prophecy was clear and doctrinally sound. Since prophecy has so many nuances and opinions, it can be fearful to allow a ‘stranger’ to preach on the subject. However, Mark was able to lay a good solid foundation to present biblical and contemporary arguments for the soon return of Jesus Christ. Mark did not shy away from some of the more controversial issues about prophecy. And he did so in a respectful and scriptural manner.”

Mark Conn currently resides in the Springfield, MO, area, and is available for pulpit supply as well as conferences. His website is www.markconn.org, and he can be contacted at (417) 929-1676 or mark@markconn.org.

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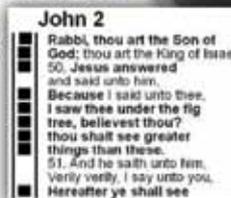
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DECATUR, IL

James Bosler celebrates 20 years at Temple Baptist in Decatur

Temple Baptist Church in Decatur observed Pastor James Bosler's 20th anniversary with the church during an open house and special services November 3. The pastor's brother-in-law, Bill Levergood, was the guest speaker. The church is also providing James and his wife, Patty, with a home makeover as a pastor's appreciation gift.

James recalls his early days in Decatur. He said, "The church was in disarray with just 25 people and heavy debt. I think they were ready to close the doors. I can hardly believe all that God has done here."

Today, all indebtedness has been paid, and the facilities are completely remodeled. James says, "Our most recent projects totaled over a quarter million dollars, and all the money was



raised in six months." The church continues to add missionaries, and 15 people have been called into ministry during the past 20 years.

Bosler declares, "We are basking in the blessings of God to have such a wonderful church family!"

WARRENTON, VA

Battlefield Baptist calls Greg Corcoran as pastor to succeed Karl Skinner

Two weeks after Founding Pastor Karl Skinner retired from the pulpit of Battlefield Baptist Church in Warrenton, the church called Greg Corcoran to succeed him. Greg has served the church as assistant pastor since July 2012.

The new pastor and his wife, Krista, first became members of Battlefield in July 1993. The couple surrendered their lives to ministry in 1997 and served the church in several capacities. In 2006, Greg ended his active duty military service career and enrolled at Baptist Bible College in Springfield, MO. Not long after starting classes, he and Krista began leading the College and Career Class at Park Crest Baptist Church in Springfield. Graduating in 2010, he joined the church staff full time, and served until he was called to return to Battlefield Baptist.



The Skinners

Pastor Skinner and his wife were honored by the church in early November for his 33 years of service to the congregation. They moved to the area in 1980 to begin a church, meeting in rented facilities. The church purchased and remodeled a motel in 1982. Today, the congregation occupies a 33-acre campus, a 1,000-seat auditorium, a 36,000-square-foot education/office building, and a large gymnasium. More than \$6.5 million have been given to the cause of worldwide missions in the church's existence.



The Corcorans

In retirement, Pastor Emeritus and Mrs. Skinner hope to relieve missionaries for short-term furloughs. While he is

open to possible speaking engagements, she is considering writing books on banquet and missions event planning.

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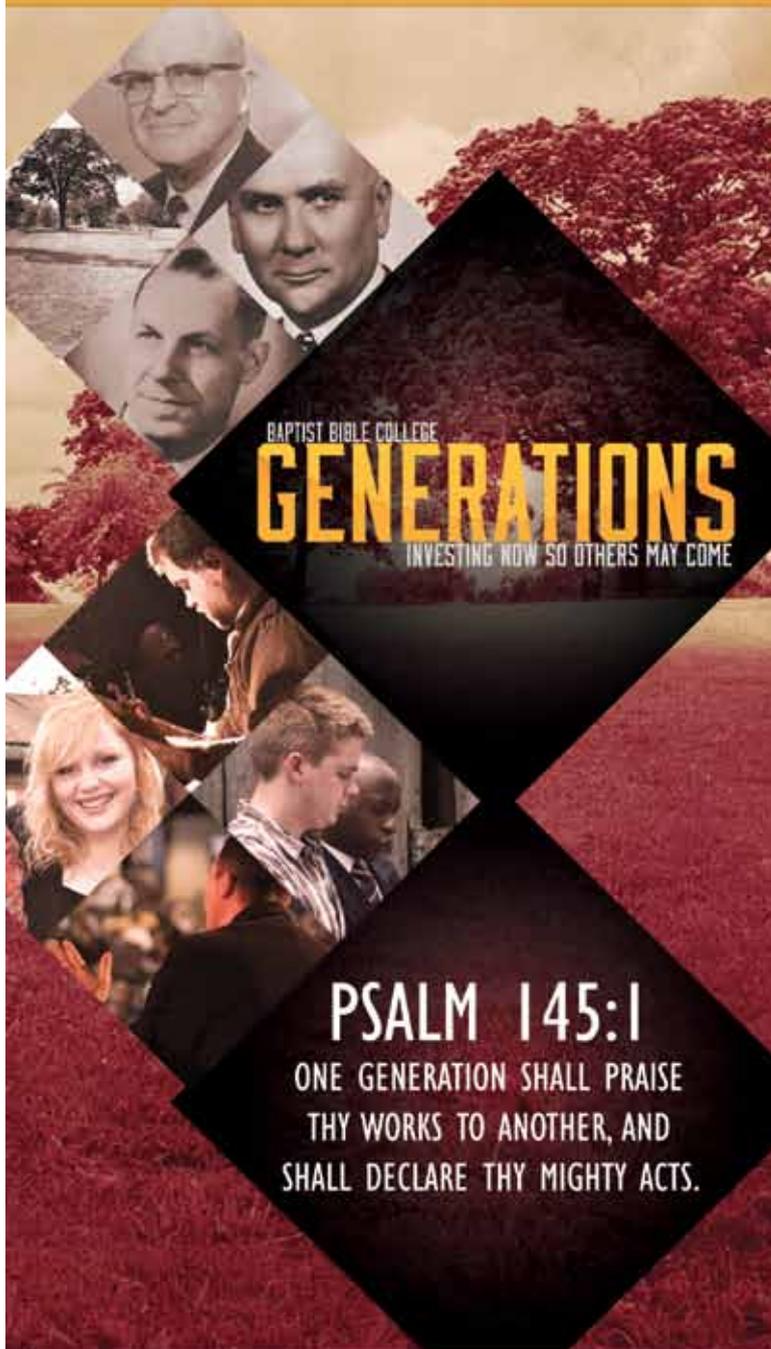
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SPRINGFIELD, MO

RON WALKER

Ronald Lee Walker passed from this life October 26, 2013. Born November 1, 1934, in St. Joseph, MO, Ron grew up in that town, after which he served in the U.S. Marine Corps. He received a BA from Biola University and a MLS at the University of Missouri. After a church-planting ministry in California, Ron continued his education and eventually became a professor at Baptist Bible College in Springfield, MO, where he served as teacher and librarian from 1976-1986. After a pastorate in Arkansas, he became the librarian at Tennessee Temple University in Chattanooga, TN. He later returned to Springfield where he spent the rest of his life.

Ron is survived by three sons (his wife of 53 years, Patricia, preceded him in death), two grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren. A memorial service was held November 30 at Hillside Baptist Church in Springfield, MO.

MOREHEAD, KY

ELIJAH TACKETT

Longtime Kentucky pastor Elijah Tackett, age 90, entered glory November 27, 2013. Born September 11, 1923, he planted and pastored churches in Morehead, Olive Hill, and Owingsville, KY, retiring only because of ill health. He served a number of years as a mission field representative for the BBFI.

His wife of 65 years, Nellie Lucrezia Debord Tackett, preceded him in death on May 8, 2007.

He is survived by three sons and a daughter, ten grandchildren, and 18 great-grandchildren. Services for Elijah Tackett were held December 3, 2013, with the Tackett family officiating.

NEW PORT RICHEY, FL

CHARLES "CHUCK" SMITH

BBFI pastor and 1961 graduate of Baptist Bible College Chuck Smith was taken by the Lord November 22, 2013. Born April 24, 1937, he had been serving in Florida, but he spent most of his ministry in Ohio and Indiana, pastoring Fort Wayne Baptist Temple in Fort Wayne 38 years. He was an active participant in the BBFI, serving as a leader in the Indiana BBF, and he served as a BBC alumni vice president in the 1980s. In 2003, Chuck retired from the pastorate and moved to Florida. Once there, however, he accepted an interim pastoral position with Fellowship Baptist Church in New Port Richey, and he was called as the church's pastor in 2011.

Chuck is survived by his wife, Betty, four children, eight grandchildren, and one great-grandchild. Memorial services were held in both New Port Richey and Fort Wayne.

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ALABAMA

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• **Living Water Baptist Church** 7752 Ave. F, Mobile AL 36608 251-631-3008 *Pastor James Richardson*

ALASKA

• **Anchorage Baptist Temple**, 6401 E. Northern Lights, Anchorage, AK 99504, 907/333-6535, www.ancbt.org. *Pastor Jerry Prevo*

ARIZONA

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

ARKANSAS

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

CALIFORNIA

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

• **The Fundamental Baptist Tabernacle**, 1329 South Hope St., Los Angeles, CA 90015, 213/744-9999. *Pastor Dr. R. L. Hymers, Jr.* sermon manuscripts at www.realconversion.com

• **Ocean View Church**, 2460 Palm Ave., San Diego, CA 92154, 619/424-7870 www.oceanviewchurch.com *Pastor Jim W. Baize*

• **Calvary Road Baptist Church**, 319 West Olive Ave., Monrovia, CA 91016, 626/357-2711, www.calvary-roadbaptist.org *Dr. John S. Waldrup*

CONNECTICUT

• **New Testament Baptist Church and School**, 111 Ash St., East Hartford, CT 06108. 860/290-6696 *Pastor Michael Stoddard*

DELAWARE

• **Southside Baptist Church**, 4904 S. DuPont Hwy. (US 13 So.), Dover, DE 19901, 302/697-2411 *Pastor Chris Kondracki*

• **First Baptist Church**, 6062 Old Shawnee Rd., Milford, DE 19963, 302/422-9795 *Pastor David Perdue*

FLORIDA

• **Palm Springs Drive Baptist Church**, 601 Palm Springs Dr., Altamonte Springs, FL 32701, 407/831-0950 *Pastor Scott Carlson*

• **Tabernacle Baptist Church**, 6000 West Colonial Dr., Orlando, FL 32808, 407/295-3086 *Pastor Steve Ware*

• **New Testament Baptist Church**, 2050 South Belcher Rd., Largo, FL 33771, 727/536-0481 *Pastor Matt Trill*

• **Trinity Baptist Church**, 800 Hammond Blvd., Jacksonville, FL 32221, 904/786-5320 *Pastor Tom Messer*

• **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*

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• **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*

Participation in the Baptist Bible Fellowship International is open to any Baptist pastor of a supporting Baptist church believing in and adhering to the Word of God, on the basis of the BBFI Articles of Faith. For listing on this page, a Baptist church is one that declares in legal and/or faith documents it is Baptist in doctrine and practice. A supporting church is one that financially supports BBFI missions or colleges.

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

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The *Tribune* extends your ministry reach

By Keith Bassham

Editor of the *Baptist Bible Tribune*

You never know where your ministry goes. A pastor and *Tribune* contributor sent me a reminder a few days ago demonstrating the truth of what founding editor Noel Smith said so long ago: “They read the *Tribune*.”

What this pastor showed me was a church visitor’s card. With his permission, and with the personal information excluded, here is the card:

The *Tribune* really does belong to the Baptist Bible Fellowship, and, though not every pastor or missionary will write a feature article for the magazine, a little news about a big day, or a new building, or a new ministry, or a ministry transition can catch the eye of a reader. And when you consider that about 10,000 churches receive at least one copy of the *Tribune*, and *Tribunes* have been known to show up in doctor’s offices and truck stops, you never can tell what might happen.

When you help support the *Tribune* you are extending your ministry reach as well. You see, the *Tribune* is not like most magazines you may receive in your church or home. It tells the unique story of the Baptist Bible Fellowship — the story that takes place among our pastors, our missionaries, our churches. No other magazine in the world does that. Our mission has long been to tell the good news of what God is doing among the preachers and churches of the Baptist Bible Fellowship. We are friendly to other groups, but we have an explicit agenda to promote the ministries associated with the Fellowship.

But that agenda means our funding is different as well. I learn about publications closing their doors or leaving the print media all the time. It even happens among the large publications like *Newsweek*, which ceased their print editions altogether last year. What keeps us in the business of doing Fellowship work is the Fellowship itself. We do have individual subscriptions and advertising, of course, but this represents a relatively small part of our budget. The bulk of our budget comes from

monthly support and bundle subscriptions (churches send us money in exchange for a bundle of magazines monthly), and the annual February Tribune Offering. That explains our focus on the Fellowship, for those are the entities who pay the bills.

The annual February Tribune Offering is given above the regular monthly support, much like the May college offerings. In the past, the offering was a great help to us for doing the extras, but the past few years it has become a vital part of our finances. Frankly, I need your help more than ever.

These are challenging times for all of us financially. Let’s face it; because we depend so much on the churches of our Fellowship, the *Tribune*’s financial condition is always going to be a reflection of how well our churches do. Admittedly, we have carefully managed our budgets in the past, so we do have some funds that help us to operate even in lean times. That means we can manage a short-term downturn without incurring any debt, but we cannot do that for very long.

As long as we are able, we will continue to provide news and information for and about our Fellowship. We will continue to provide *Tribunes* to new churches, retired ministers and widows of ministers, our Bible college students, our missionaries, and a large number of churches outside our Fellowship to keep everyone informed. We will continue to provide news and other content to help churches and believers grow and prosper. We will continue to produce a quality publication that reflects well on all of us. We will carefully manage our finances and bring good value to the Baptist Bible Fellowship. That is my commitment.

Pastors may contact us personally with an offering commitment, or the information can be passed on to your state fellowship’s chairman or director. He wants to know about your commitment anyway.

How much should you give? For some of our supporters, this is a major investment running into the thousands. Most gifts are much smaller. 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 the subscription your church already receives, 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 in early February so I can include them in the total announced at the fellowship meeting in Austin, TX. If you have questions or need more information, please email me at editors@tribune.org or call (417) 831-3996.

JANUARY 2014

PRAYER CALENDAR

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1  MISSIONARY Keni & Vanessa Epp <i>Honduras</i>	2  CHAPLAIN Col. Steven & Kathy Keith <i>U.S. Air Force</i>	3  MISSIONARY Dan & Meshelle Bowles <i>Zambia</i>	4  T.E.A.M. MISSIONARY Karen Marvin <i>Papua, New Guinea</i>
5  MISSIONARY David & Crystal Houghton <i>Mexico</i>	6  MISSIONARY Christine Pelletier <i>Kenya</i>	7  MISSIONARY Chris & Lois Tignor <i>Ecuador</i>	8  MISSIONARY Steve & Pam Workman <i>Botswana</i>	9  MISSIONARY Don & Phyllis Sidebottom <i>Retired</i>	10  MISSIONARY Keith & Debra Gandy <i>Germany</i>	11  MISSIONARY Ken Board <i>Japan</i>
12  MISSIONARY Winston & Ruth Kumar <i>India</i>	13  WORKERS IN Restricted Access Nations	14  MISSIONARY David & Cherie Green <i>Taiwan</i>	15  BBFI MISSION OFFICE - SPRINGFIELD, MO Jon Konnerup <i>Mission Director</i>	16  MISSIONARY Tim & Allison Stephens <i>Cambodia</i>	17  T.E.A.M. MISSIONARY Michael & Cristy Wyatt <i>Japan</i>	18  MISSIONARY Don & Debbie MacFarlane <i>Canada</i>
19  MISSIONARY Pam Rafter <i>Honduras</i>	20  MISSIONARY Allen & Stephanie Copeland <i>Puerto Rico</i>	21  MISSIONARY Larry & Tammy Allred <i>Mexico</i>	22  MISSIONARY Craig & Fran Lingo <i>Colombia</i>	23  BAPTIST BIBLE COLLEGE - SPRINGFIELD, MO Mark Milioni <i>President</i>	24  MISSIONARY Gordon & Brenda Pulley <i>S.M.O.R.S.</i>	25  MISSIONARY Tony & Julie Sullivan <i>Australia</i>
26  MISSIONARY Faye Woods <i>S.T.E.P.</i>	27  MISSIONARY Leighton & Regina Spinney <i>Belize</i>	28  WORK TEAMS WITH The BBFI Builders	29  MISSIONARY John & Karry Barnes <i>Costa Rica</i>	30  MISSIONARY James & Carolyn Leatherwood <i>Paraguay</i>	31  MISSIONARY Matt & Ericka Moeller <i>Scotland</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

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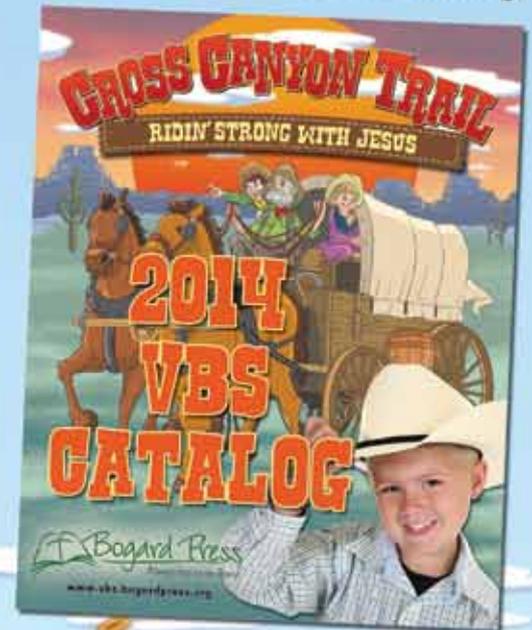
RIDIN' STRONG WITH JESUS

**"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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