

# BAPTIST BIBLE TRIBUNE

APRIL 2010 | VOL. 60 NO. 8 | \$1.95

FEBRUARY  
NATIONAL  
MEETING  
REPORT

## CHURCH PLANTING

A GROWING OPPORTUNITY FOR BBFI CHURCHES

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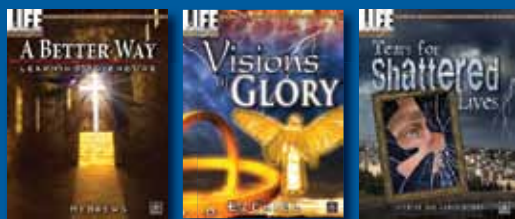
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## ON THE TABLE Catechism

by Keith Bassham | Editor

**W**hat was the most significant change in Christianity over the past decade? This question was asked by *Christianity Today* last year among people who research and report such things. In Ruth Moon's compilation of responses posted in December on the CT website, this one caught my attention:

*"A widespread abandonment of Christian doctrinal commitment — even doctrinal knowledge. Forget the rising number of people with no religious identity; the news to me is the vast number of self-identified Christians who have no real knowledge of, or deep commitment to, a specific Christian faith. You could say they were watering down Christianity's teachings, but I question if they even know those core teachings."*

The responder was Cathy Lynn Grossman, religion reporter for *USA Today*. I have no idea how many conservative Baptists reporter Grossman knows, but I know many, and her observations describe the condition for more than a few of them.

Amid the calls for humility and prayer in our quest for revival, I propose another item to add to the list: catechism. Now, if you've been busy trying to put as much fun into fundamentalism as you can as a church growth vehicle, you are not going to like that word at first. Frankly, it's an odd word, an old word, but it has solid value. At the center of the long, odd word is the simple, short word *echo*, and it means giving religious instruction by voice using a system of questions and answers.

Ordinarily, we modern Baptists associate catechism with Catholicism, or Lutheranism, formal liturgical systems, and such. However Baptists used to catechize as a matter course. You can see Charles Spurgeon's catechism online at [www.spurgeon.org/catechis.htm](http://www.spurgeon.org/catechis.htm), and other examples are around. I believe Mr. Spurgeon borrowed much of his from Thomas Watson's *Body of Divinity*.

The important point is that we cannot afford such a leakage, as A. W. Tozer put it. He wrote:

*"Each generation of Christians must look to its beliefs. While truth itself is unchanging, the minds of men are porous vessels out of which truth can leak and into which error may seep to dilute the truth they contain. The human heart is heretical by nature and runs to error as naturally as a garden to weeds. All a man, a church or a denomination needs to guarantee deterioration of doctrine is to take everything for granted and do nothing. The unattended garden will soon be overrun with weeds; the heart that fails to cultivate truth and root out error will shortly be a theological wilderness; the church or denomination that grows careless on the highway of truth will before long find itself astray, bogged down in some mud flat from which there is no escape."*

*Keith Bassham*

# BAPTIST BIBLE TRIBUNE

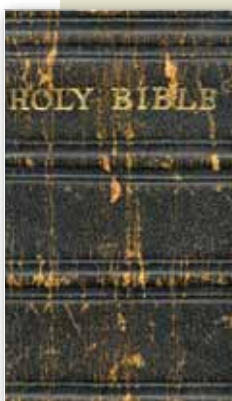
APRIL 2010

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Savannah meeting promises "new" day  
*Revival and church planting main themes of BBFI meeting*

SPECIAL FEATURE: BBC Alumni Assoc.  
*Change is necessary, but seldom easy*



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PRESIDENTIAL PERSPECTIVE

A new day for the BBFI



by Mark Hodges | President | BBFI

Pastor Herb Hubbard and Bible Baptist Church did a wonderful job of hosting the BBFI though they had to do it on relatively short notice. They opened their doors, greeted us with southern hospitality, and did their part to give us a great success.

Paul said, “I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase” (1 Corinthians 3:6). Last summer we planted this meeting, others came along and watered it. Herb Hubbard caught the vision, Wayne Guinn lined up our church planters, the speakers allowed God to use them, and God gave the increase! What was the increase?

- Revivalist Tom Wagoner challenged our leadership to revival
- The sermons were Spirit-led and focused on revival and church planting
- NCPO Director Wayne Guinn lined up new church planters from all over America to report how God is using them
- Church planter Ira Walton gave a promise from the Brothers of Cyrene to start and build black BBFI churches in America — challenging us to share their burden
- Mission Director Jon Konnerup reported 924 churches were started last year by our missionaries
- Tribune Editor Keith Bassham reported a generous February Tribune Offering, and commitments continue to come in

This meeting has been in the hearts of several of our leaders long before it was announced. We now look back upon it as a great success! Here are a few comments I received:

*“The spirit in this week’s Fellowship meeting was great. Everybody I have talked to said the same thing. There is a renewed sense of hope for the Fellowship. We HAVE a future.” (BA)*

*“I believe that there was a spark as the Holy Spirit rested over Bible Baptist Church and your call for revival wasn’t only heard but felt in the hearts and souls of many that were in attendance.” (IW)*

*“What a meeting it was! I know that my family and I left spiritually charged up!” (CM)*

*“I was ‘blessed out’ at the national meeting. I believe our Fellowship...is a greater threat to the enemy than we were 15 years ago. We have more unity on the only things that really make a difference than we have had in a long time.” (DH)*

*“Our Fellowship meeting in February felt like what they used to feel like. God give us revival!” (TW)*

Tuesday night, speaker Phil Hopper reminded us that we need to be holy, humble, and hungry as men of God. Keith Gillming said, “This is a new day for the BBFI.” I believe that he is right. Let’s pray that this is the beginning of great things to come for our Fellowship.

WORLDWIDE MISSIONS

Time to help, reflect, and rejoice



by Jon Konnerup | Mission Director

Our missionaries in Haiti and the Dominican Republic have gone beyond the call of duty to help fellow believers and others to overcome such great devastation from the earthquake. With missionary Wes Lane leading our efforts, we have developed a plan to assist the churches in Haiti both immediately and long-term.

Our plan is three-phased: stabilize, assess, and rebuild. The stabilization phase will continue to meet the personal needs for relief. The assessment phase has already begun, determining rebuilding needs and where to start. The rebuilding will start with pastors’ homes and church buildings. This will enable pastors to minister to their people in a more effective way. This last phase could take two years or longer. The possibility of building a daycare/orphanage with an established ministry in Port au Prince is also under consideration.

By the end of February, the Mission Office has received \$350,525.73 for Haitian Relief, of which \$78,300 has been given toward the stabilization phase as requested. Churches continue to receive funds to send in that will be included. A large portion of funds received will be designated toward the rebuilding phase. There are two things we can do from this point. First, we can continue raising funds for rebuilding. Second, we can send and/or join building teams, medical teams, and clean-up teams. Please visit the Haiti Relief page on our website, [www.bbfimissions.com](http://www.bbfimissions.com), and sign up for these trips which will begin June 2010.

As a reminder, plan now to attend our first International Global Meeting, which will be hosted by Pastor Armie Jesalva and Bible Baptist Church in Cebu City, Philippines, February 21-24, 2011. The theme will be “Let the Nations Rejoice” as leaders and believers from all over the globe assemble to remember what God has done through the BBFI, rejoice in the opportunities we have today and how God is working, and renew our passion for the world by looking to the future with the intent of partnering with other nations to reach all the people of the world with the gospel.

To give you an idea of what God is doing through our efforts internationally, we have calculated the information from the work reports of our missionaries from September 2008 to September 2009. These should encourage all of us to do more, knowing we are a part of something great and eternal. I am glad to be a part of the BBFI!

Professions of faith	115,044
Baptisms	21,967
Leaders in training	10,323
New Bible studies/missions	2,638
New churches	924
Average attendance in new missions and churches	284,760

To God be the glory!

## A note of thanks



by Wayne Guinn | Director | NCPO

Gratitude overwhelms me. I must say thank you to the *Tribune* and Keith Bassham for sharing the emphasis of the Savannah meeting with the NCPO. Keith has been one of our strongest supporters and I greatly appreciate his friendship. I also want to say thank you to Herb Hubbard for hosting the meeting and allowing us to have such a large block of time to expose so many new church plants to our Fellowship. I would be totally remiss if I didn't say thank you to all the church planters who came and shared their hearts and testimonies with us. As they shared their hearts, passion, excitement, and enthusiasm, these church planters were like a fresh breath of God on our meeting. I must say thank you to all the state chairmen who worked with me to help get our church planters to the meeting. Some of the states helped these young men in a financial way to make it possible for them to come to Savannah.

I also wish to say thank you to all the pastors who have agreed to become "Church Bank Churches." This is a campaign to infuse new capital into the NCPO to help us continue to be able to make low-interest loans to new churches. For more information about this program contact us at (417) 889-1017 or e-mail us at [office@bbfincpo.com](mailto:office@bbfincpo.com).

February has been a good month here at the NCPO. Along with making plans and arrangements for the Savannah meeting, we have been preparing for the April 19-23 NCPO Church Planting School in Texas. We are also preparing for the RPM Conference concurrent with the church planting school. Loan requests have been very active this month and that's always exciting seeing new churches step out to buy their first pieces of property and move into their own buildings. It is an indication to us that church planting is moving in the right direction. Thanks for helping us make a difference.

### UPCOMING NCPO EVENTS

#### Church Planting School

April 19-23 at Canyon Creek Baptist Church, Richardson, Texas, with Pastor Rick Carter hosting. Come and glean from men like Tom Wagoner, Charles Lyons, Duke Hergatt, John Arnold, Dave Shaffer, Mark Milioni, Monty Maple, Keith Bassham, Jim Smith, Jason Todd, Rick Carter, and Wayne Guinn. For more information, call (417) 889-1017 or email [office@bbfincpo.com](mailto:office@bbfincpo.com).

#### R.P.M. Conference

Plan to join us at Canyon Creek Baptist Church April 19 and 20 to "rev up" your heart and ministry. Tom Wagoner will challenge us about Revival. John Arnold will lead us to Pray. Charles Lyons will help us generate and maintain Momentum in our ministry. This will be held in conjunction with the Texas State BBFI meeting. Contact Canyon Creek Baptist for information about lodging. Hope to see you there.

## Waiting for God



by Tom Wagoner | Pastor | Central Baptist Church | Dunn, NC

It is hard, when we are not all alike, to be one in our pursuit of anything, especially revival. Our Fellowship is very diverse as is the body of Christ. I believe God is uniquely preparing us to reach our generation, but there is no greater way to approach it than through genuine revival.

On the phone the other day, Pastor Bruce Humbert from Sauk Trail Baptist Temple in Richton Park, Illinois, had a thrill in his voice. He reported extended invitations of 20 to 25 minutes in length, hundreds praying and repenting at the altars during these invitations, and 10 or more people coming to Jesus Christ in a single service. All of this was on the heels of a time of pursuing God's face in a Men's Advance held in the fall of 2009. When men begin to pray, and we get right with God, and when we seek His face as never before, "God prepares us for a great outpouring!"

I do not believe that we have seen the full manifestation of God's glory in revival. I certainly sense that the winds are beginning to blow all across our country and across our Fellowship. Time and space will not permit me to tell each story of individuals and congregations who are sensing God's moving. Please understand as I write that I feel that this is a sovereign work of God and that neither I nor any other friend or pastor in our movement take any responsibility.

I am reminded of the story of the two ladies in the Hebrides Islands off of Scotland. Their names were Peggy and Christine Smith. One was 81 years of age and the other 84, the latter blind. These were the two women God used who began to wait before God and pray and hear Him speak regarding the great revival that occurred between 1949 and 1953 in that region. One writer recalled that for years these precious ladies had sought the face of God. Oh, give us prayer warriors among our preachers and in our churches like this!

One day the Lord spoke to them very clearly through Isaiah 44:3, "For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground." What a precious promise for God to quicken to their hearts. They immediately called their minister who phoned Duncan Campbell, and he came to that region for a two-week meeting and stayed for two years. I wonder what church, what pastor, what brother, what sister will hear God speak regarding a supernatural move from Heaven in our Fellowship this year.

I hope that we will remain humble before God as we continue to seek His face. Don't give up and don't stop. God is at work and we trust Him for genuine revival.

*A website has been established to communicate our prayers for and our reports of genuine revival. It is [www.revivaljourney.com](http://www.revivaljourney.com). Please send any comments, thoughts, or information you would like to communicate with the author to [cbcdunn@cbcdunn.com](mailto:cbcdunn@cbcdunn.com).*





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

## Pew Research Center reports on Millennials

Millennials, according to the Pew study released in February, are the American teens and twenty-somethings making the passage into adulthood at the start of a new millennium. This report profiles the roughly 50 million Millennials who currently span the ages of 18 to 29.

Some highlights of the report:

- **They are the least overtly religious American generation in modern times.** One-in-four are unaffiliated with any religion, far more than the share of older adults when they were ages 18 to 29.

- **Only about six-in-ten were raised by both parents** — a smaller share than was the case with older generations.

- At the moment, **fully 37% of 18- to 29-year-olds are unemployed** or out of the workforce, the highest share among this age group in more than three decades.

- Millennials are **on course to become the most educated generation in American history**

- Hard times have kept a significant share of adult Millennials and their parents under the same roof. **About one-in-eight older Millennials (ages 22 and older) say they've "boomeranged" back to a parent's home** because of the recession

- Millennials **were among Barack Obama's strongest supporters in 2008**, backing him for president by more than a two-to-one ratio (66% to 32%) while older adults were giving just 50% of their votes to the Democratic nominee.

- Millennials **remain the most likely of any generation to self-identify as liberals**; they are less supportive than their elders of an assertive national security policy and more supportive of a progressive domestic social agenda.

Source: View the full report and executive summary at <http://pewsocialtrends.org>

## Most Americans believe God is involved in their everyday lives

Scott Schieman, a sociology professor at the University of Toronto, examined data from two recent national surveys of Americans and their beliefs about God's involvement in their everyday lives. He found:

**82%** of participants reported that they depend on God for help and guidance in making decisions.



**71%** said they believe that when good or bad things happen, these occurrences are simply part of God's plan for them.

**61%** indicated they believe God has determined the direction and course of their lives.

**32%** agreed with the statement: "There is no sense in planning a lot because ultimately my fate is in God's hands."

Overall, participants with more education and higher income were less likely to report beliefs in divine intervention.

Source: [www.livescience.com](http://www.livescience.com)

## AFA suspends Pepsi boycott

American Family Association (AFA) has suspended its boycott of PepsiCo. After monitoring the company for several months, AFA is satisfied the company has withdrawn its major financial contributions to gay activist groups.

AFA launched a boycott of PepsiCo after the company made \$500,000 donations to Human Rights Campaign (HRC) and Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) in 2008. Records from PepsiCo, HRC, and PFLAG indicate repeat donations did not occur in 2009.

AFA President Tim Wildmon said more than 500,000 people signed the Boycott PepsiCo Pledge.

Wildmon said a few minor issues remain, and AFA will continue to bring these to the attention of PepsiCo. "We feel we have made our point," he said. "Boycotts have been a last resort for us at AFA, and the PepsiCo boycott was started to address issues of concern to us — especially the promotion of the homosexual agenda in the culture. AFA will continue to challenge major U.S. companies to remain neutral in the culture wars rather than to use their resources to promote controversial issues."



Source: [www.afa.net](http://www.afa.net)

## In the NEWS of the WEEK



### NEW TESTAMENT BAPTIST CHURCH Raymond Bugg, Pastor Pine Bluff, Arkansas

To The Tribune:

The first Sunday of last January we started services in a rented store building, with 11 persons present for the morning service. Our attendance has grown until we have 47 in Sunday school.

The last Friday night of January, we organized ourselves into the New Testament Baptist church, with 30 charter members. We now have 38 members, with several waiting to be baptized.

Our church has voted to co-

New Testament Baptist church, Colonial Heights, Va., was organized on March 15 with 11 charter members. Following the organization, two young men presented themselves for baptism. **Homer Patterson**, Sweetwater, Tex., a graduate of Baptist Bible College, was called as pastor.

The new congregation voted unanimously to cooperate with the work of the Baptist Bible Fellowship and to give a minimum of 10 per cent of the gross receipts to mission work.

Among the ministers attending the organizational meeting were, besides Patterson, **G. Thornton Hall**, Central Baptist church Newport News; **Gene Lowry**, Bible Baptist, Richmond; **U. G. Robertson**, Central Baptist, Portsmouth; **Robert Coffee**, Broadway Baptist, Hopewell; **Jimmy Bond**, Tri-City Baptist Tabernacle, Newport News; and **Zack Finch**, field missionary of Central Baptist church, Newport News.

**FIRST BIBLE BAPTIST CHURCH**  
R. D. Hodges, Pastor  
Winter Haven, Florida

To The Tribune:

Our church had two special missionary nights, with Baptist Bible Fellowship missionaries **Clarence Green**, **Jim Powders**, and **Elmer Gullion** as special speakers.

The services were inspiring and powerful and resulted in professions of faith in Christ. At the close, we had a good offering for missions.

operate with the work of the Baptist Bible Fellowship. Our address is Hazel at 31st Street, one of the fastest growing sections of the city.

The following ministers participated in our organizational meeting: **Euel Wright**, Jacksonville Bible Baptist church, Jacksonville; **Bill Whitfield**, Clarksville Bible Baptist church, Clarksville; **John Cozart**, Harmony Bible Baptist church, Little Rock; **Camp Ross** and **Jake Wingard**, Pine Grove Bible Baptist church, Pine Grove.

**RAYMOND BUGG.**

Among the ministers attending were **Boyd Lyons**, **Jewell Smith**, **Gerald Cheney**, and **Malcolm Tompkins**. The special services were held in conjunction with the March meeting of the Central Florida Youth Fellowship, which was organized two years ago. In addition to eight conversions to Christ, two of our young people surrendered their lives for full-time work on the foreign mission field.

In the last month, our church has had 32 additions and a total offering of \$1,500. Last Sunday we had 305 in Sunday school; we are expecting to go over the 400 mark on Easter.

**R. D. HODGES.**

Memphis Baptist Temple, Memphis, Tenn., **Gary Roper**, pastor, had 188 in Sunday school on April 3 and a total offering for the day of \$402.79.

Westside Baptist church, Tampa, Fla., **W. D. Janney**, pastor, had 106 in Sunday school on March 27 and four professions of faith in Christ. The church, which was organized nine months ago, has bought 3 acres on which it will construct a building.

Story appeared in the April 22, 1960 edition of the *Tribune*.

## Biblical city's true location discovered, researchers claim

Scientists think they've finally found the real location of a city called Neta'im mentioned in the Bible.

Based on its proximity to another biblical town, and archaeological ruins dating from the time of the biblical King David's rule, researchers think Neta'im might have been located at the modern site called Khirbet Qeiyafa, in Israel.

Khirbet Qeiyafa contains the ruins of an ancient fortress city on top of a hill overlooking the Elah Valley. Pottery shards and burned olive pits

at the site date to about 1,000 B.C. Most scholars think King David ruled during this time.

Archaeologists have previously associated Khirbet Qeiyafa with the biblical city Sha'arayim, which means "two gates," because of the discovery of two gates in the fortress ruins, and because Sha'arayim was also associated with King David in the Bible. But now researchers claim this site is really Neta'im, a town mentioned in the book 1 Chronicles in the

Hebrew Bible, or Old Testament.

"The inhabitants of Neta'im were potters who worked in the king's service and inhabited an important administrative center near the border with the Philistines" said Gershon Galil, a professor of biblical studies at

the University of Haifa in Israel.

Galil thinks Neta'im was located at Khirbet Qeiyafa in part because it is near the modern site Khirbet Gudraya, also near

the Elah Valley, which has been identified as the biblical town of Gederah. Both Gederah and Neta'im were mentioned in the same verse of the Bible, 1 Chronicles 4:23: "These were the potters, the inhabitants of Neta'im and Gederah, they dwelt there in the King's service."

Neta'im is only mentioned once in the Bible, and has so far remained unidentified.



Source: [www.livescience.com](http://www.livescience.com), by Clara Moskowitz, LiveScience Senior Writer, March 9, 2010

## Tennessee approves Bible course

The Tennessee Board of Education in late January approved guidelines on how to teach the Bible in public high schools, enabling students to "acquire an understanding and appreciation of the Bible's major ideas, historical/geographical contexts and literary forms."

The move in late January came in response to legislation passed in 2008 supporting the adoption of state curriculum standards for teaching about the Bible at the high school level.

Students who choose the elective class will be allowed to use the biblical translation of their choice as a text, and they will study the Bible in its historical, sociological, and cultural contexts as well as its impact on later cultures, societies, and religions.

Source: *Baptist Press*, [www.bpnews.net](http://www.bpnews.net)



# REAL.

integrity | unity | holiness | mission

## Baptist Bible College Fellowship Week | May 10-13

**KEEP IT REAL!** It's a phrase that is often heard in our culture. Jesus said, "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me." (John 15:4) Our challenge at BBC is to produce fruit through our students that will remain for generations. Lasting fruit will only come as we are rooted in the True Vine, Jesus Christ.

Our BBFI President, Mark Hodges, has issued a call for revival throughout our Fellowship. As we gather this May on the campus of BBC we will examine the fruit that often results when God revives his people — the fruit of Integrity, Unity, and Holiness.

I hope you will join us on the campus this May as we meet together for our annual Graduation Fellowship Meeting. I can't wait to tell you of all the great things God is doing in the lives of our students, and the plans that He has given us for the future.

Jim Edge  
President, Baptist Bible College

### Monday | Real Integrity

Executive Committee Meeting—8 AM  
National Director's Meeting—1 PM  
Evening Service—6:30 PM  
Mark Hodges, Speaker

### Tuesday | Real Unity

Class Reunions 7—9 AM  
Ladies' Meeting—9 AM  
BBFI Business Meeting—9 AM  
Speakers—Randy Harp, Tom Wagoner, Mark Milioni  
National Director's Luncheon—12:30 PM  
Missions Field Rep Meeting—1:30 PM  
Evening Service—6:30 PM  
Fred Young, Speaker  
Presidential Reception—8:30 PM

### Wednesday | Real Holiness

Class Reunions—7-9 AM  
Missionary Approvals, Jon Konnerup—9-11 AM  
Mike Frazier, Speaker  
State of the College Address—11 AM  
Alumni Luncheon—12:30 PM  
Missionary Luncheon—12:30 PM  
Evening Service—6:30 PM  
Jim Baize, Speaker

### Thursday | Graduation

Graduation Ceremony—9 AM  
Dave Melton, Commencement Speaker

Music | led by Nate Harmon  
**BBC Choir and Orchestra**

Ladies Meeting | Sharon Hoffman  
**"Purse-everance"**  
*Designer strength for what's ahead*

Golf | Thursday  
**Curtis Goldman Memorial  
Golf Tournament**

WWW.GOBBC.EDU

*"I am the vine, ye are the branches:  
He that abideth in me, and I in him,  
the same bringeth forth much fruit:  
for without me ye can do nothing."  
John 15:5*

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# CAN WE TRUST THE BIBLE?

## PART 1

Fourth article in the series

# With Good Reason

by Keith Bassham

Working through this apologetics series, it is helpful to keep a few things in mind. The first is an assumption I have stated in several different ways, and that is, apologetics and evangelism go hand in hand. Remember in the first installment I called attention to 1 Peter 3:15: “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear,” and I wrote, “There is the starting point for apologetics.... My goal is not to prove I am a skilled debater, or that I have many facts at my fingertips, but to demonstrate that Christ is Lord.” I wanted to place a tool for personal witness into the hands of the ordinary reader of this magazine, with the additional hope that the tool would also bolster personal faith. In this Easter season, hope associated with the resurrection of Christ should be bold and on display.

The second thing to remember, and something else I said in the first article, is that

apologetics does not replace faith with proof. I wrote, “Rather it is more about removing roadblocks to faith so that the unbeliever may respond to the gospel. One who comes to God must believe that He is (Hebrews 11:6).” But it could be that the unbeliever may choose not to believe despite all our efforts. If that is the case then perhaps the best we can do is to bring a person to admit that if he or she continues to reject Christianity, it is on grounds other than reason and intellectual objections. Continued rejection of the truth after that point indicates something else is the problem.

The third thing to keep in mind is that in these brief pages, we cannot possibly cover all the problems and solutions, all the objections and answers, all the questions and proofs — it is simply not possible. However, there are more exhaustive resources, and I have named some, and others will be pointed out. More important, though, is the knowledge that apologetics did not begin in the last couple of centuries as a response to modern scientific skepticism. Some

of the earliest Christian literature was apologetics and scholarly defense of the faith against both secular and religious enemies of Christianity. In other words, apologetics is ongoing, and not everyone will cover every possible issue, but there are no intellectually insurmountable problems.

This may surprise your friend at work who is certain the Bible is full of errors and contradictions, or the neighbor down the street who cannot possibly believe what he has heard about the God of the Old Testament, or the person who wrote the letter to the editor about those Christians who can bend the Bible’s teaching to say whatever they want. All these attitudes reflect a suspicion that the Bible cannot be trusted to convey truth in any objective sense.

Because Christianity rests its case so completely in the truthfulness of the Bible, we have to take note of a couple of things. One, the truthfulness of the Bible is a flash point, a highly visible target, for Christianity’s detractors.

tors, and two, it is crucial that we answer those detractors. If the Bible is not true, and if the information we find in it is not trustworthy, we are in serious trouble.

Let's begin thinking about how to defend the Bible's trustworthiness by laying a few foundation stones first. Let's say someone asks you, "How do you know the Bible is true?" I think we need to ask a broader question first: "How do we know anything?" Now, there is no way we can engage in a long and technical discussion on the subject of epistemology, but we can establish a few points. There are commonly agreed upon objective standards based on observation, examination, experimentation, establishing witnesses, and so on. If the Easter story never really happened; if it was only a legend or a hopeful allegory, then we have no right to believe any of it. Either Jesus lived or he did not. Either he was executed or he was not. Either he rose from the grave or he did not.

However, a fairly common assumption, even among those who should know better, is that the Bible is not intended to convey the kinds of truth that can be tested in this way. It is a very subtle way to dismiss the Bible's claims and at the same time appear to embrace a certain spirituality.

Consider this letter to the editor published a few years ago in response to a controversial position taken by a local pastor:

*Several letters have been published regarding [the pastor's] views and arguments for and against the...doctrine. Those opposed to [the pastor's] beliefs usually try to defend their positions by quoting passages from the Christian Bible.*

*Matters of religious faith are just that, faith. They will never be proven to human beings, so I just say believe what you want and live your life accordingly. Do not criticize or try to prove a different faith wrong, because it cannot be done.*

*Any religion can make claims based on their bibles and texts. It solves or proves nothing to argue matters of faith because we will never know the answer. I think this was God's plan all along.*

*Tulsa World, January 18, 2006*

Apparently, this letter writer believes there is no objective truth in the Bible at all, and he or she goes on to make the amazing claim that

in matters of faith you cannot know anything for certain, and that somehow God is pleased with this condition.

I use this example rather than a classical "the Bible is full of contradictions and errors" approach first because I am convinced the letter writer's is the most common type of attitude you will confront today unless you are debating the truthfulness of the Bible for money in front of audiences.

Why is that? It has to do with the word post-modernism, the attitude that says objective truth is a slippery thing, if you will permit me to do some oversimplification. Post-modernism does have some twists and turns, and it can take some complications on board, but at the end we are left with the notion that as you move from person to person, and from region to region, and from category to category, virtually any position can be called truth. Likewise, upon hearing a declaration that God created the heavens and the earth, or that the Red Sea parted, or that Jesus was virgin born, a postmodern person can say, "That's simply a matter of faith. No one can know such a thing."

But who would submit to surgery under such terms? Would you buy a house knowing the contractor had used postmodern theory to build the foundation? No, we know the human heart has four valves and not three. I would want to know that my surgeon knew and understood that. And we know that building foundations must withstand geologic pressures and motion. I would want my builder to be familiar with those facts, facts that can be known.

So we are back again to the question, "How do you know the Bible is true?" After all, to your questioning friend, it may just look like you took a leap of faith.

Christian philosopher and apologist Francis Schaeffer used a story about Alpine mountain climbing in his lecture on different types of faith. In the story, a group climbing in the Alps is trapped on an icy rock surface



when a dense fog immobilizes them. The guide keeps the climbers moving for warmth's sake until they reach an edge of the ice. The sun has gone down, and they can move no further. One of the climbers asks, "What would happen if I dropped over the edge and landed on a ledge below?" Their guide says, "I suppose you might make it until morning when someone could come to you." So, without knowing what may or may not be below, and with no good indication of his immediate future, the climber drops off the edge into the fog.

That, Schaeffer says, would be what we call a leap of faith.

But suppose, he goes on, when the group stops at the edge, instead of considering a leap into the dark, they hear a voice calling to them from the fog. The speaker says he is a native of these mountains, standing on a ridge near their location, and he knows every foot of the rocky hillside. He tells them there is a ledge just a few feet directly under them, and that if they hang over the edge where they are standing and drop down to that ledge, they will survive until morning, and he would then come to their rescue when it is safe to do so.

The lost climbers probably would not go over the edge at once, but they should rather ask questions. Who is the speaker? Does his name match the names of local families?





Archeologists and historians, while not always unanimous in their details and conclusions, have shown again and again that the people and place names mentioned in the Bible were there when and where they were supposed to be.

Does the sound of his voice communicate age and knowledge? Can he verify details already known by the climbers? Though the situation is desperate, survival will depend on the adequacy and sufficiency of the unseen speaker's answers. Finally, having done due diligence and being convinced by the speaker in the fog, they hang over the edge and drop to the ledge below, where they are safe until morning.

Schaeffer says the action of dropping over the edge based on information and reasonable answers to reasonable questions represents faith as well, but faith of a different kind. It is this second type of faith you have to be thinking about when you are considering the trustworthiness of the Bible.

Now, here is where it gets interesting. Do you remember the bumper sticker we spoke of back in the first article: God said it; I believe it; that settles it? The truth is, God and the Bible invite a certain amount of questioning. We often speak of the faith of Abraham, especially concerning the command God gave Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac (Genesis 22). We picture the old patriarch with his son ascending the mountain where, according to the command, the father is to kill the son. God, of course, steps in at the last moment and saves Isaac, but we misunderstand Abraham's obedient faith if we think of it as a leap into

the dark. Abraham's actions on this day come after a long relationship, and many promises and commands, and missteps and corrections. Abraham's faith is informed by what he already knows about God, and for him, God had already answered the hard questions.

The story itself is locked in time and space. You and I can visit the sites where the episode occurred. Archeologists and historians, while not always unanimous in their details and conclusions, have shown again and again that the people and place names mentioned in the Bible were there when and where they were supposed to be. These are the voices calling out to us from the fog, reassuring us that our faith is well placed.

Suppose Paul the Apostle had a squishy take on religion when the subject of the resurrection of Jesus Christ came up. Can you imagine him saying something like, "Well, you know, I just think that Jesus lives in my heart, and that's my truth. You, of course, may have a different view, and I can respect that."

No. According to Paul, Jesus died and was buried and rose again in real history: "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: And that he was

seen..." (1 Corinthians 15:3-5).

Don't miss that last phrase. It does not read, "And his presence was felt," or "And the disciples were moved by his life and death," or "And he continually abides with us in spirit."

It says, "And he was seen..."

Francis Schaeffer notes the gravity of that phrase. He wrote, "On the basis of biblical Christianity a rational discussion and consideration can take place, because it is fixed in the stuff of history. When Paul was asked whether Jesus was raised from the dead, he gave a completely nonreligious answer, in the twentieth-century sense. He said: 'There are almost 500 living witnesses; go and ask them!' This is the faith that involves the whole man, including his reason; it does not ask for a belief into the void." (Schaeffer, *The God Who is There*.)

As for more specific answers to objections you may encounter, I will take them up in the next article, but let me deal just a bit more on this knowing question.

C. S. Lewis participated in some debates at Oxford, in the 1940s, about Christianity, and of those debates he wrote "we...discovered that the weight of the skeptical attack did not always come where we expected it; our opponents had to correct what seemed to us their almost bottomless ignorance of the Faith they supposed themselves to be rejecting."

Some people challenging your faith think they have some fairly solid objections, when in fact they often have a more crumbly basis, or an outright misunderstanding planted by a past experience, and these objections quickly fall when examined.

The average Bible-rejecting person does not know, for instance, that the Bible has more manuscript evidence by far than any ancient book, or that the so-called "banned books of the Bible" were well-known and rejected by Christian churches long before any official councils decided which books really were the Bible. Not knowing this, a person may have false views of the Bible, and often, when pressed, an objection will more probably turn out to be a belief rather than a fact.

In any case, Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life," (John 14:6) and in His prayer in Gethsemane, "thy word is truth" (John 17:17). As He is the truth, and God's Word is truth, He (and we) have nothing to fear from honest inquiry. You can trust that Word, with good reason.

# Savannah meeting promises a “new” day

By the Tribune

There was snow to the north of us. Snow to the south of us. Snow to the west of us. And two nights before the Fall BBFI Fellowship meeting began, there was snow falling on us in Savannah, Georgia. But hosts at the church working on short notice and weather much cooler than average seemed to feed rather than to hinder the Spirit’s movement among those who were fortunate enough to attend the first meeting of our 60th year, February 15-18.

BBFI President Mark Hodges called for a Year of Revival last fall, and it was appropriate that the first meeting in the series should be devoted to a revival of church planting in our Fellowship. Each service featured church planters’ testimonies, and round table discussions provided opportunity to explore ideas and strategies.

Notable features of the meeting included hearing some less than familiar voices such as Jim Combs who is pastor of four churches in Michigan with about 10,000 members, Phil Hopper from the Kansas City area who pastors Abundant Life Baptist Church with an average attendance of 1,600, Bill Fluker who is one of the leaders of the Brothers of Cyrene and a church planter from Jackson, Mississippi, and Charles Pettitt who is president of Piedmont Baptist College in Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

Several people commented on the number of younger preachers present for this meeting. This was due to the emphasis on church planting and the testimonies from the church planters themselves (about 25 testimonies in all) who tend to be younger than the average Baptist Bible Fellowship pastor. Their presence upped the excitement level, and many of the younger preachers left the meeting with a sense of acceptance and welcome not experienced before.

Finally, though the Brothers of Cyrene were introduced in the BBF through the *Tribune* last year, this Savannah meeting was the first session in which the group was officially represented on the national platform. This group of black pastors and church planters was well represented by their moderator, Ira Walton, and secretary, Bill Fluker. It was especially appropriate that the official introduction took place in Savannah, home of the first African American Baptist church planted in the United States.

Ira Walton, who spoke briefly and introduced Bill Fluker at Savannah, said, “As the moderator of the Brothers of Cyrene and having attended several national meetings in the past, the Savannah meeting was different. There is no denying that a fresh gentle breeze is beginning to stir across our Fellowship. The passion, spirit, testimonies, music, and preaching were genuine and compelling. I have never seen or been close to what I would consider an authentic revival; nevertheless, what my soul ex-

perienced was refreshing and powerful. Was it the dawning of a new day, a spark, or a sign from God that revival is near? Truthfully, I don’t know. However, something happened and I thank God that I was in attendance.”

Ira’s observation was shared as others spoke of a “new day,” “turning a corner,” “a spark,” and one pastor wrote, “My commitment to our Fellowship goals is stronger than ever. I heard a lot of good comments, which made me proud to be teamed with the BBF. Color and youth being spotlighted at a National BBF meeting — maybe our future is looking brighter.”

Mark Hodges gives a bullet list of the highlights of the meeting in his “Presidential Perspective” column this month, and the photos in this section will tell a large part of the story. There is generally no plenary business session unless one is called, so the business of the various committees was limited mostly to reporting. The February Tribune Offering was reported Wednesday morning, and at the time of the report the offering total was about \$113,000. Since that amount was reported, additional commitments and funds have been received raising the total to about \$118,000.

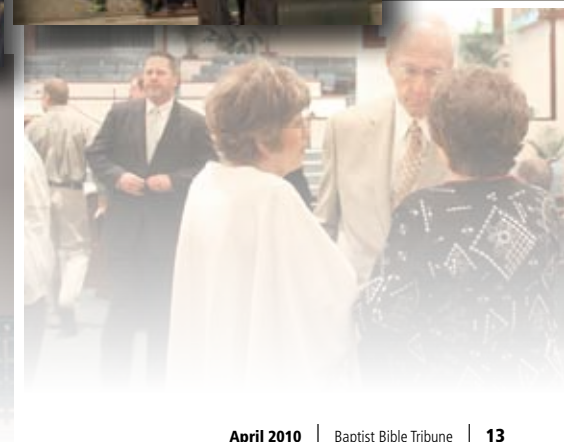
Pastor Herb Hubbard and Bible Baptist Church have been exemplary hosts for three national meetings in less than 10 years. Their servant spirit, quality hospitality, and attention to details makes the church an ideal place for spiritual work to flourish. On behalf of the BBFI, thank you, Pastor Hubbard and Bible Baptist Church. Our future is brighter because of you.

## Election Notice

Last fall, the BBFI amended the bylaws to change the rules for voting for national officers. The National Directors will receive nominations and create a ballot on Monday of the May Graduation Fellowship Meeting in Springfield, Missouri. This procedure has not been changed. President Hodges plans to hold the business meeting the next day, Tuesday. The voting will proceed according to the bylaws:

*“The ballot shall be approved in the May business meeting and made available to any pastor in attendance and qualified according to Article III (“Affiliation”) of these bylaws. Voting pastors will identify themselves on the ballot and voting will begin immediately upon distribution of the ballots. Qualified pastors not in attendance may obtain a ballot from the BBFI Mission Office. Those ballots must be submitted to the BBFI Mission Office before July 1st of the year of the election. The Executive Committee shall oversee the counting of the ballots and release the results within one week after the votes are tallied.”*









**"Vision attracts criticism."**  
*Morris Brown*



**"Maybe God doesn't show up because He doesn't appreciate the way He's invited!"**  
*Mark Hodges*



**"Concerned servants worked together to bring the crippled sinner to Jesus."**  
*William Fluker*







"Where there is no hunger, the presence of God departs."  
*Phil Hopper*



"There were no problems with the sea, the ships, or the nets — there was a problem with the crew."  
*Rick Johnson*



World Missions and the BBFI	
September '08 to September '09	
Professions of Faith	115,044
Baptisms	21,967
Leaders in Training	10,323
New Bible Studies	2,638
New Churches	924
Average attendance	284,760

"Heaven doesn't look down on the Oval Office, God looks after these young guys who are following after His plan."  
*Duke Hergatt*

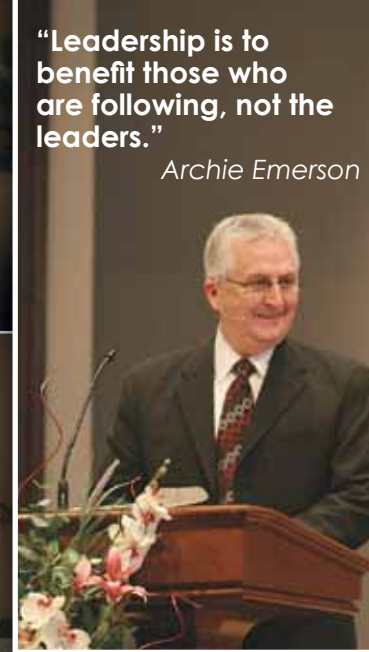






"Leadership is to benefit those who are following, not the leaders."

*Archie Emerson*



"Everything we do in our ministry must be based around 'Jesus saves.'"

*Jayson Workman*



"We have so championed independence, we have lost touch with interdependence."

*Monte Maple*







"We get so busy doing the work of the Lord, we forget the Lord of the work."

*Charles Pettit*

"I believe God still hears the whispers of His people."

*Jim Combs*

"The true proclamation of the gospel is to put Christ in the center of everything."

*Bill Monroe*



# The process of change

By Marty Hughes

*"All changes, even the most longed for, have their melancholy; for what we leave behind us is a part of ourselves; we must die to one life before we can enter another."*

The above quote by Anatole France, Nobel Prize-winning author explains the reason so many of us have difficulties accepting and embracing change. But change is a necessary part of life, both for individuals and for institutions.

In 1950, when Baptist Bible College was founded, the population of America was just over 151 million. Our society was quickly changing from a predominantly agrarian economy, made up of large and strong families, raised mainly on the farm, to a more industrial economy where both parents found themselves in the workforce.

BBC was born into the world of Ward and June Cleaver, with a

worldview that more closely resembled Mayberry than *Survivor*.

The battle lines were clearly drawn, everyone knew the issues in question, and all understood the rules of engagement. It was Fundamentalism against Modernism, it was aggressive evangelism against social club ritualism, it was us against them, spirituality against worldliness.

A lot has changed in 60 years. Today, America's population exceeds 300 million and it is more urban and suburban than rural. We live in the information age with technology increasing at a staggering rate. It is said that the amount of information generated worldwide is now doubling every two years. Postmodern America, for the most part, looks with disdain and condescension at the world of 1950. The battle lines are blurred and the fundamental question has changed from "What is true?" to "Is there such a thing as truth?"

The fundamental issues really haven't changed. God is still alive and well and He has revealed Himself through His Word. Man is still lost in sin and in need of a Savior. The life-changing power of the gospel and the convicting and drawing influence of the Holy Spirit have not waned. The local, New Testament Church is still God's instrument of grace for this age, and the only hope for a lost and dying world.

People say, "Wow, things have really changed at BBC." Some say it appreciatively; others say it with a touch of concern in their voices. In truth, if BBC had not changed over its 60-year his-

tory, it would have become totally irrelevant and incapable of preparing this generation of soldiers of the cross to enter the battle of the ages.

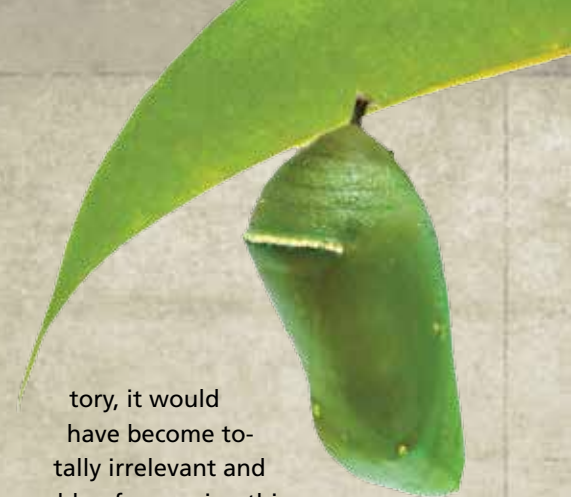
Change is inevitable and necessary. Not all change is good, but as the world changes, God's people have to adapt their methods so that their message can be heard. The things that are happening on the campus of Baptist Bible College right now bode well for the future efforts of the Baptist Bible Fellowship to continue its legacy of evangelism, church planting, and mission outreach around the globe.

Benjamin Franklin said, "When you are finished changing, you are finished." It is exciting to see evidence that BBC is not finished yet.

The Alumni Association of Baptist Bible College is committed to supporting BBC and its students, faculty, and administration through

the difficult waters of necessary change. It is time for the graduates, supporting pastors, and those who have been blessed by the school to embrace the vision for **Tomorrow's BBC** that Jim Edge and his leadership team are putting into place.

If the Lord tarries, the world of 2020 will be a very different place than the world we live in today. The BBC Alumni Association is working to see that BBC is still preparing God's choicest servants to meet the needs of the world around them through the life-changing power of the gospel.





# Class of 1960

## *Where in the world are they now?*

### **Larry D. Lilley**

Following graduation, on July 1, Larry married Pat Smith (class of '61) from Connersville, Indiana. Larry and Pat immediately moved to Amarillo, Texas, where he became a youth and music minister. After three years, Larry became pastor of Central Baptist, Amelia, Ohio.

Next, the Lord moved them to El Paso, Texas, where Larry pastored for five years followed by nearly 20 years pastoring Southwest Baptist Church of Wichita Falls, Texas. Larry has now been



on the ministry staff of Houston's First Baptist Church for 20 years, serving as the assistant to the pastor, Dr. John Bisagno, minister of evangelism, and recently became the senior adults minister. Larry says he is "having the time of my life!" Presently, he teaches numerous Bible classes each week and evangelism workshops, both locally and around the country, as a national teacher/trainer with Evangelism Explosion out of Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

The Lilleys have been blessed with four children (three sons and a daughter) and three grandchildren. Their oldest son is a lay music minister in Atlanta, Georgia, and their daughter is the program director, praise team director and soloist at the Clear Creek Community Church in Clear Creek, Texas. Pat is a piano teacher, Houston's First Baptist Church orchestra pianist, and a freelance performer for various business and social events.

### **Jerry Burton**

Graduating from Baptist Bible College in 1960, Jerry has faithfully served

four churches. Over these 50 years, he has served at Arlington Baptist Temple in music and youth; Lima Baptist Temple in music and youth; Cherry St. Baptist Church as associate pastor; and for the past 30 years he has served at Calvary Baptist Church, Pittman, Ohio, as senior pastor. Jerry and his faithful wife, Jean, have a daughter, Kristi, and son, Paul. Both children are now grown and married. In July 2005, Jean passed away after a brief battle with cancer.



In July of 2007, Burton married the former Carol Feistel. Carol and her husband, Malcom Feistel, were missionaries in Taiwan for 28 years. They have five children, Amy, Sue, Nancy, Andrew, and Richard. Malcom passed away in June 2006 after a brief battle with cancer. Carol teaches a single ladies class and orchestrates the music ministry at Calvary.

While staying busy serving the Lord, Jerry has served the school as Alumni Association president and currently as vice president.

### **Branson Howard**

Branson Howard accepted Christ as His Lord at an early age under the ministry of his parents and Victor Sears in Goshen, Indiana.

As a young man, after moving to Winter Haven, Florida, where his uncle, Millard Branson, pastored, his dad, Blaine Howard, taught him to lead singing and to be used in the church.

In 1956, as a senior in high school, all of his family moved to Springfield,

Missouri, to attend Baptist Bible College. In 1957, Branson entered BBC and while there he met Jorene Mullins. The night of her 1959 graduation, W. E. Dowell performed their midnight wedding ceremony at High Street Baptist Church. Branson graduated in 1960 with a degree in music and these past 50 years they have served the Lord together.

The Howards have two married sons, Kevin and his wife, Wendy, and Eric and his wife, Stacy, and one precious granddaughter, Kylie Howard, age 6.

A highlight in ministry for the Howards would be when W. E. Dowell, their pastor and professor from their college days, asked them to work at Baptist Temple in Springfield where they served 12 years.

They have worked with good men and churches in Texas, Ohio, Michigan, Mississippi, and Missouri as music and youth ministers directing great choirs and youth departments.

After going through some health issues, God continues to use Branson, now as pastor and choir director of Bible Baptist Church in Republic, Missouri. Having recently celebrated their 50th anniversary, they are proud to say they are still of the old school and never dipped their colors or quit.

They have served as Alumni vice presidents several years and lead their class reunions of '59 and '60 every 5 years with Branson's 50th coming up in May.





# BBC Alumni Days

Alumni Days 2010 was held on campus March 11-13. This incredible three-day event featured 21 Alumni speakers, six of them serving in *Outreach* magazine's 100 Largest and/or Fastest Growing Churches in America. Among the others, a family featured on ABC's *Extreme Home Makeover* with their local food and clothing distribution ministry, church planters, camp speakers, lay volunteers, educators, and next-generation servants that are leading with excellence today. The BBC Alumni Association planned the event with the purpose of exposing current BBC students to alumni that are having a powerful impact on their world and challenging them to find their place in the work.

Speakers included **Aaron Cavin** *Life Community* - church planter in the Boston metro area and popular camp speaker; **Blaine Anderson**

*Hale Baptist Church* - pastor in rural northern Michigan with focused outreach to the underprivileged; **Brian Moore** *Crosspoint Church* - pastor in the greater Los Angeles area with a growing vibrant church, also served as campus chaplain at Baptist Bible College; **Carrie Bettinger** *Northridge Church* - worship leader and MOPS (Mothers of Preschoolers) Coordinator at the 43rd largest church in America; **Chris Zarbaugh** *Kennington Church* - Campus pastor at the 25th largest and 34th fastest-growing church in America; **Dallas Arnold** *Temple Baptist Church* - successful businessman and volunteer serving the local church in areas such as deacon, Sunday School teacher, and small group leader; **Daniel Garcia** *Heritage Baptist Temple* - pastor in typical small-town USA with focused involvement in community; **Darryl Jones** *Crossroads Church* - church planter in Kansas City metro;

**Don Claphon** *Eastside Baptist Church* children's pastor and one of the craziest guys you will ever meet; **Jeremy McCarter** *Lifechurch.tv* - director of student ministries at 2nd largest and 13th fastest-growing church in America; **Jim Zarbaugh** *Prestonwood Baptist Church* - media minister at 13th largest and 78th fastest-growing church in America as well as co-founder of iShare Ministries; **Joey Candillo** *Bales Baptist Church* - pastor of inner-city church in Kansas City who was saved while in prison; **Kaydi Harp** *Grace Classical Academy* - 3rd grade teacher in her second year of teaching; **Keith Buttram** *Temple Baptist Church* - volunteer youth leader after serving several years on staff in three different churches; **Nathan Montgomery** *Salt and Light Ministries* - executive director and co-founder of ministry with a purpose of sharing the love of God with those in need. This family was

(continued)

## 2009 Alumni Project

The Baptist Bible College Alumni Association's stated goal is to enhance student life at BBC and the 2009 Alumni Project has certainly accomplished this goal. This year's \$20,000 project re-modeled and refurnished three commons areas in the guys and girls dorms. The Alumni Association purchased new carpet and paint, new durable and comfortable couches, tables and chairs, and 50-inch TVs for each of these areas. The commons areas are now up to par with the best colleges in Springfield. We want to thank everyone that helped to bring a little comfort and a touch of home to the dorms.

### List of individuals who gave to the project: (Listed alphabetically)

Robert A. Baier  
William Bales  
Keith Bassham  
Ken Board  
Richard Boone  
Melvin K. Brown  
Vivian Brown  
Bob Burkholder  
Bill Carter  
Steve Dalton  
Derryl W. Deshields  
William Dowell  
James A. Eberhard  
Robert Etheridge  
Don Fishgrab  
LaVoid R. Ford  
Herman C. Frankland

Jack W. Hackworth  
Randy A. Harp  
Marty Hughes  
David Klass  
Herb Koonce  
Gaylen P. Leverett  
Ken Liles  
Donald Manuel  
Mark Milioni  
K. B. Murray  
Stephen Rains  
Kenneth G. Rhoades  
Patricia A. Robinson  
Sarah Robison  
Donald J. Sidebottom  
Bill Sparks  
Charlie C. Springer

Timothy Wertz  
Terry W. Wiese  
Christopher Wilbanks  
John W. Williams  
Loretta Wilson  
Barbara A. Wisner

### Churches that donated to the project:

Thomas Road Baptist Church  
Phoenix, AZ  
Berryville Baptist Church  
Berryville, AR  
Talley Road Baptist Church  
San Antonio, TX  
Winter Haven Baptist Church  
Winter Haven, FL

THANK YOU

A special thanks goes to the pastors and churches of the Iowa BBF who fully furnished the ladies commons area! It is now being called the Iowa Room.



# May Fellowship Week Reunion Information

(continued)

also featured on ABC's *Extreme Home Makeover* in the fall of 2009; **Paul Ebert** - served as BBFI missionary to the Philippines; **Randy Harp** *Solid Rock Baptist Church* - founding pastor of growing church in dying community in mid-Michigan; **Scott Bettinger** *Echo Media* - president of company that helps organizations create and implement engaging brands; **Sean Sears** *Grace Church* - church planter in the Boston metro area committed to planting other churches in the Boston metro area; **Sharon Hoffman** *Baptist Bible College* - popular women's conference speaker and wife of Rob Hoffman, vice president of BBC; **Tim Chambers** *Shore Fellowship* - pastor of 63rd fastest-growing church in America.

Each of these men and women are alumni of Baptist Bible College and God is using them in amazing ways to reach their generation with the gospel.

## Alumni Luncheon (For all Alumni and Friends)

Wednesday May 12 at 12:30 - BBC Cafeteria - Tickets are \$15

**Classes of 1950-1955 Reunion** - Tuesday, May 11 - 1:00 PM, Ryan's on East Kearney - Contact Bill Hathaway at 417-833-8584

**Class of 1957 Reunion** - Tuesday, May 11, 1:00 PM, University Plaza Hotel

**Class of 1959 Reunion** - Tuesday, May 11, 7:30 AM, BBC Cafeteria - Contact Jorene Howard at 417-865-1559

**Class of 1960 Reunion** - Tuesday May 11, 12:30 PM, BBC Cafeteria - Contact Branson Howard at 417-865-1559

**Class of 1962 Reunion** - Wednesday May 12, 7:30 AM, Shoney's at 2731 N. Glenstone - Contact John Page 417-862-6478 or jcp6560@aol.com

**Class of 1970 Reunion** - Contact Sue Garard at suegarard@aol.com

**Class of 1972 Reunion** - Contact Driscoll Cruthfield at 417-753-4491 or hbma@usa.com

**Class of 1980 Reunion** - Wednesday May 12, 7:30 AM, IHOP on North Kansas Expressway - Contact Debbie Christopher at 417-833-2310

**Class of 1990 Reunion** - Tuesday May 11, 12:30 PM, BBC Cafeteria - Contact Tim Wertz at 417-881-4200

Enter promo code BBC when you order *Apparent Danger* by David Stokes and the Alumni Assoc. will receive a \$5 donation per copy ordered! For more information about the book, see ad on page 27, or go to [www.apparentdanger.com](http://www.apparentdanger.com)

## 2010 Alumni Project

The Alumni Project for 2010 will be to refurbish and refurnish the Student Center on campus. The Student Center is beginning to show considerable wear and is in need of some tender loving care. The Alumni Association will work to upgrade the flooring, furniture, lighting, décor, and technology in order to return the Student Center to the high standard of quality that it originally enjoyed. Your contribution to this worthy project will help provide an attractive place for students to meet, relax, and study together.

## Join the Alumni Association and get your 2010 membership card today!

By becoming a member of the BBC Alumni Association, you partner with other alumni to enhance student life at BBC. The cost to become an Alumni member is \$25 annually. This money is used to enhance student life by providing scholarships, supporting student government, funding student and alumni events, and paying for alumni campus projects.

\$ _____	2010 Alumni Membership (Alumni Card)
\$ _____	2010 Alumni Project
\$ _____	Christmas Bonuses
\$ _____	Alumni Operations
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# HISTORY

# BAPTIST

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## JOHN MASON PECK (1789-1858) — The apostle to the West

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John Mason Peck has been described as the Apostle to the West (the Mississippi Valley). Peck was converted when he was 18 and united with a Congregational Church. On May 8, 1809, he married Sally Paine. Both were Congregationalists, but upon the birth of their first child, they began to question infant baptism. After much prayer and study of the scriptures, they both were convinced that infant baptism had no scriptural foundation. Acting upon their belief, they adopted Baptist principles and united with the Baptist church at New Durham, New York.

Shortly after becoming a Baptist, Peck publicly declared he was ready to preach the gospel wherever the Lord sent him. In 1811, Peck became the pastor at Catskill, New York. From Catskill he moved to Amenia, New York. It was during these pastorates that Peck began his itinerant ministry. Initially he walked countless miles sharing the gospel, and later he obtained a horse, which greatly expanded his outreach.

While he was pastoring at Amenia, Peck began to dream of becoming a missionary to the West. That dream became a reality on May 18, 1817, when the Missionary Board appointed him as a missionary to the New Missouri Territory. The Pecks and their three children started west on July 18, 1817. Their journey of over 1,000 miles would take an unbelievable 129 days. Upon finally arriving in St. Louis, they found the city to be a spiritual wasteland inhabited by a people who were hostile to missionaries, especially Baptist missionaries. Undaunted, Peck rented the back of a store and began conducting services.

In April 1818, he baptized his first two converts in the Mississippi River. From this small beginning he would organize the First Baptist Church in St. Louis, but his primary and most extensive ministry was that of an itinerant. His itinerary included Missouri, Kansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, as well as venturing into Kentucky and Tennessee.

Few men have experienced the hardship and difficulties that Peck faced, especially in the early days of his min-

istry. He endured inadequate finances, hunger, cold, and many times the hard ground was his bed. But his greatest difficulties and opposition came from bigoted anti-mission Baptists. These Baptists were opposed to missionaries, Sunday schools, tracts, Bible societies, and an educated ministry. In 1820, their vehement complaints to the American Baptists influenced the mission board to discontinue Peck's support.

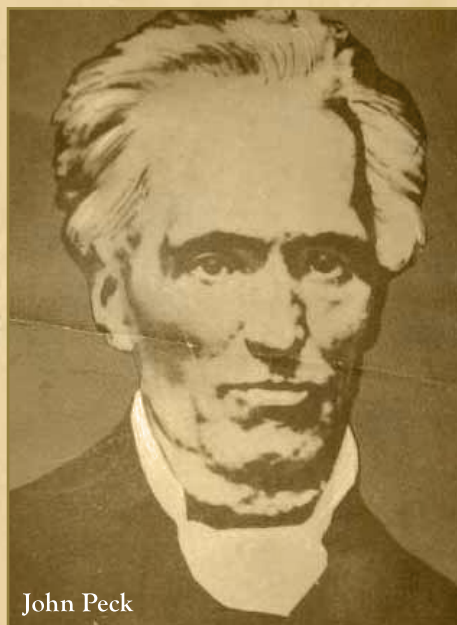
If his adversaries thought this would force him to give up his ministry, they were mistaken. Depending upon the Lord, he continued his work. Fortunately, the Massachusetts Missionary Society began supporting him at \$5 a week, which was approximately half his previous salary.

These obstacles make Peck's achievements even more remarkable. It is estimated that during his 40 years of ministry, he established or assisted in founding 900 Baptist churches, ordained 600 Baptist ministers, and saw 32,000 new additions to the churches. He was the founder of Shurtleff College, a co-founder of the American Home Baptist Mission Society, he authored several books, and founded and edited two Baptist newspapers.

The question naturally arises, "How could one man produce these astonishing results?" The answer lies in his burning desire to make Christ known to all men and his willingness to pay any price

to accomplish that goal. One of his most effective strategies was the establishment of circuit riders. He carefully selected these men and then assigned them their territory. This method enabled Peck to multiply his ministry.

Finally, after years of indescribable toil, Peck's body broke down. He was no longer able to travel and preach, but he continued to minister through his writings. His philosophy of ministry is summarized by these words he recorded in his journal, "My mind is often deeply impressed with the thought that I am laboring for future generations; and that the principle inculcated and habits introduced in the Baptist Society in this country will last for ages under what high and weighty responsibility should every professor, and particularly every preacher, act, who lays the foundation in a new country!"



John Peck

by Thomas Ray







## Lighthouse in St. Louis

I would want Keith Gillming as my shepherd if I was a sheep without a flock. Don't think his friendly, easy-going manner is all there is. He's a man of passionate love for God, deep commitment to biblical authority, and dogged, determined persistence. He has pastored Lighthouse Baptist Church in St. Louis, Missouri, for 28 years. Keith and Becky Gillming's children, Kit and Keri, are both active at Lighthouse.

### Question: How did you begin in St. Louis?

**Answer:** We arrived in 1982. I knew without a doubt God was calling me to plant a church. I just didn't know how I was going to pull it off. I wish I had come with more experience. About 10 years into the plant we were still running 51 people. We just couldn't get off the ground...it was an endless circle of finances and too small a congregation to offer anything with limited facilities. So, I finally got done with it. I told the Lord, if this was what He wanted, I was good with it. I refused to feel bad that we were still at 51. I would work just as hard, but the numbers were His problem! Looking back, I believe it freed me up to be who God wanted me to be. I just let God sort it out. We began to grow and finally relocated four years later with the help of a miracle piece of property.

### Q: What are a couple challenges you've faced in the urban context?

**A:** My family has paid a very high price emotionally, spiritually, and financially. The first generation of every church sacrifices the most. God has richly blessed me with a great wife. If your wife is not on board, you will never make it. Urban family life is difficult because of the

huge expense to just stay alive financially. When you plant a church, your kids don't have a good kids ministry. At the same time, you are living in a dangerous or difficult environment.

### Q: How has your community changed over three decades?

**A:** Our area has become much more ethnically diverse. We don't want to give mere lip service to welcoming people; we want to incorporate them into the body. They must be a part of the family. We have a number of bi-racial marriages. It's good for someone to come into a service and see diversity not just in the congregation but on the platform. This doesn't happen by accident. We make a conscious effort to not be a white church, but to be a church that reflects the community.

### Q: Are there things you wish you could do over or do differently?

**A:** I wish I had taken greater risks sooner. There is this challenge to be willing to go all in, to put it all on the line, to risk what you have in order to achieve or obtain at a higher level.

### Q: Give us a snapshot of fruitfulness over the long haul.

**A:** I took two boys, David and Gabe Jr., to a Cardinals game. David and Gabe got saved. Then their mother Rhonda came to Christ. In seeking to talk to Rhonda about baptism, I had opportunity to win her husband. David is now at BBC and his brother Gabe was a deacon at Lighthouse before taking his wife and twin sons to BBC. Recently the family was remarking how different their lives would be had not Christ

# URBAN CURRENT

come into their home. This is the fruit of God's work in one family over almost 15 years.

### Q: What do you see in the future?

**A:** By the middle of 2011, we should be debt free, paying off over a million dollars in just four years. I also have an overwhelming burden to plant another lighthouse in St. Louis.

### Q: Closing thoughts?

**A:** Planting a church and taking a lifetime to do it is one of the greatest challenges in Christian ministry! It is exciting and devastating at the same time. Exciting to see lives, families, and generations changed, and devastating to put all your eggs in someone's basket and it not pan out. Becky and I were driving away from the church last week and Becky said, "I think it's been a good life's investment, and we're not done yet!" I feel the same way.

### Q: Prayer requests?

**A:** Transiency has a great impact on us. Over a period of time, we lost seven of ten key leaders. We need to be producing mature believers who can function as leaders and teachers at a rate that keeps up with our losses. Secondly, we would like to see the Lord provide the right man to plant a new church.

by Charles Lyons, Pastor  
Armitage Baptist Church,  
Chicago, Illinois  
[charles.lyons@armitagechurch.org](mailto:charles.lyons@armitagechurch.org)



BAPTIST BIBLE COLLEGE

# Alumni tell the story all over the world



by Jim Edge | President | Baptist Bible College

The story of Baptist Bible College is a story of people. In God's providence, He chooses to use people to take the gospel to those who have never heard. Today, practically anywhere the gospel is being preached you will find a BBC graduate involved in the process.

Recently, two special alumni returned to BBC to give their testimonies and visual presentation in chapel. The nature and place of their ministry makes it necessary for details of this report to be very general and guarded, but the story is another illustration of how the churches of the BBFI and Baptist Bible College have cooperated to accomplish the Great Commission.

In 1968, a young BBFI missionary in Asia started a church. Because families in the U.S. sacrificially supported this missionary family and because of the sacrifice and relentless effort of the missionary family, by God's grace a thriving church was established in a difficult place. Sometime later, a family who had a young son began to attend the church. The young man learned about sin and salvation in Christ from his Sunday school teachers. At the age of five, he came to know Christ at summer camp.

He was baptized and grew in Christ, and, during his high school years, surrendered his life to serve Christ. He began by serving in his local church — as a Sunday school teacher, as a coach in the church soccer ministry, and as a prayer leader. He led singing, served on committees, and helped with the evangelistic team. After completing his Bible training in his home country, he decided to further his education in the Baptist Bible Graduate School of Theology.

He and his wife came to our campus, worked hard in their studies, and graduated several years ago. They then completed their internship in a new church plant in the country where they were born. After successfully stabilizing the new church, they went on deputation and raised monthly support. Now serving in Asia, their work includes language study, preaching the gospel, teaching young people, encouraging young house-church leaders, and providing Bible training for them.

Our students were excited and inspired to see a real example of God working through our churches and college to reach a group of people who had never heard of the love of Christ. It is an incredible story that illustrates the importance of cooperation between churches, the BBFI, Baptist Bible College, and our missionaries. I walked away from that service with the renewed understanding that every person at BBC has a story. The chapters of every personal story will be written in the lives of others worldwide. The decisions that students make while on our campus, and the decisions made by our administration and faculty write the pages of each story. And every pastor who chooses to support the colleges of the BBFI is a major character in each story.

BOSTON BAPTIST COLLEGE

# Hard questions



by David Melton | President | Boston Baptist College

I teach. I give exams. Gave one today as a matter of fact. Our students in Boston are a pretty respectful lot. But I was a student for a long time — I have sat where they sit — I know the look a student gets when he sees hard questions on an exam. I saw that look today.

Students love easy questions. In my course on the historical evidence for Jesus, I have all students memorize the 12 key biblical principles about Jesus' identity. I call them the Twelve Towers and students have to memorize those along with a scripture reference for each. That's pretty easy stuff. But then I ask them some other questions. Constantly. Over and over again. Challenging questions that require research, thought, struggle. That is the road to learning.

Students aren't the only ones who prefer easy questions! Anybody can enjoy a nice, big softball lobbed to you, but hard questions mean hard work, wrestling with understanding things we don't yet grasp, and figuring out what to do with what we know.

I spoke a few weeks ago to a group of Texas pastors in a discussion akin to what I have with students here in Boston. We talked about how the canon of scripture was gathered and how liberal scholarship is waging war like never before on that front. I asked those pastors that day, "Do any of you feel comfortable asking your church publicly to explain how the books that are in the Bible got chosen to be in the Bible? When did that happen? Who made the decision?"

I asked it as a rhetorical question, but one pastor blurted out, "Shoot, I don't even want to ask myself that question!"

Hard questions. No way to avoid them.

As a college president, I spend a lot of time asking myself hard questions. I make myself think much about the consequences of my actions and decisions right now and how they will impact young people and their lives and ministries for the future. I think about how students studying with me now will very likely be the church leaders who lead my own children in not too many years.

Will my kids have church leaders who know biblical doctrine and won't sell it for any price? Will my kids have leaders who are Baptists (yes, Baptists) who know what that really means and who can thoughtfully teach others why that has mattered for so long and still matters today? Will our next generation of leaders — submerged by an information tsunami that celebrates every ecclesiological hula-hoop imaginable and then some — will our future leaders know how to be culturally connected without being guilty of cultural capitulation? Will we have the wherewithal to say "yes" and "no" appropriately in a pluralistic world that shudders at anyone who holds to absolute truths?

Hard questions? Sure. Easy answers? Nope. Necessary to answer? Absolutely. That's why we stay in school!



# BBC Patriots finish season with 18-11 record

Springfield, MO

By Marty Hughes

The 2009-2010 BBC men's basketball team finished the regular season ranked eighth in the NCCAA DIV II and was seeded number one entering the Central Regional Tournament at Grace University in Omaha, Nebraska. The Patriots finished the regular season with a record of 18-11 and swept the season series with their crosstown rivals, Central Bible College.

The team is extremely quick and athletic and has gotten outstanding play from 6'9" junior post, Bobby Hughes, who has averaged over 28 points and 13 rebounds a game during the last ten games of the season. The front court is handled by freshmen Jerome Small and Johnny Gray, both local products from Springfield Central. Small is in the top five in the country in steals and Gray's quickness makes him very difficult to guard. The exceptional play of sophomores Dionne Greer and A.J. Watson have allowed BBC to match up athletically with several larger schools and get victories

down the stretch in tough situations. Sixth man, senior guard Will Hamlet, has served as a three-point specialist and has provided a much-needed spark in several games this year. A late-season injury to defensive specialist Chase Howerton hampered the Patriots' efforts down the stretch.

The Patriots have a strong bench made up mostly of freshmen recruited from the area by

Coach Joe Lamanske, who was the head coach at Walnut Grove High School before coming to BBC three years ago. Lamanske played on a national championship team for BBC in the mid 80s.

A close loss to CBC in the regional championship game dashed the Patriots' hopes of winning their first regional banner since 1988, but their outstanding play earned them an at-large bid into their first national tournament in well over a decade, and the fact that the nationals will be held in Springfield this year provides even more incentive to play well.

These young men see this as an opportunity to lead BBC back into the national prominence that she enjoyed during the 70s and 80s. At the regional tournament, Bobby Hughes was named Regional MVP, Jerome Small was named First Team All-Region, Chase Howerton and A.J. Watson were named Honorable Mention All-Region, and Coach Joe Lamanske was named Central Region Coach of the Year.



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# Boonstra among speakers at Bible college in India

Springfield, MO

During the first week of February, Carl Boonstra, former BBFI mission director, Jeff Ables, pastor of Berean Baptist Church of Springfield, along with a BBFI Restricted Access missionary couple were guest speakers at the 24th annual pastors conference and 34th graduation of the Bible college established by the Thomas families in South India. The commencement services featured 37 graduates. The Wednesday through Sunday meetings

were well attended with a daily attendance of 500-600, including 70-75 pastors. On Sunday, there were 1,200 people in attendance, and 15 professions of faith in Christ were made.

K.C. Thomas, a native of India, graduated from Baptist Bible College in Springfield, Missouri, in 1968. After graduating, he was sent by Seminole Baptist Church and Pastor Raymond Tracy to Chathannoor, Kerala State, India, where

he planted churches and trained men for ministry. When K.C. Thomas passed away in 1996, there were nearly 100 Baptist churches established. His sons, Paul and Sam, graduated from Baptist Bible College in 1989 and continue their father's ministry. Boonstra reports that today there are 120 churches, 97 students in the college and seminary, and a second Bible institute in North India. He says, "Pray for India. It's a nation

with over one billion people with less than one percent considered evangelical. The Thomas Independent Baptist Ministries is the only Baptist ministry to our knowledge in all of the state of Kerala, South India."



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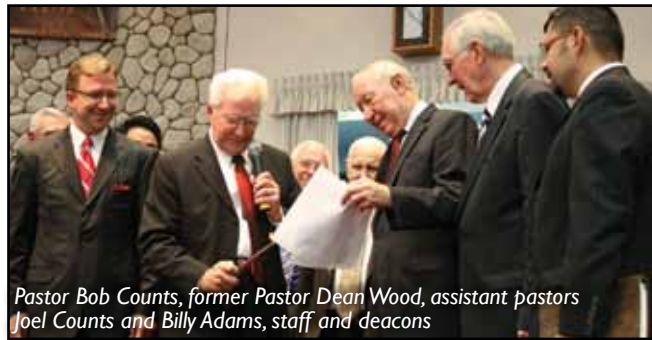




# Bible Baptist homecoming has more than 1,000 attend

Victorville, CA

More than 1,000 people attended the service when Bible Baptist Church of Victorville, California, and Pastor Bob Counts burned the church's mortgage during Homecoming Sunday late last year. Counts, who has been pastor of the church since 2003, looks forward to expanding the congregation's outreach in the High Desert area of the state.



Pastor Bob Counts, former Pastor Dean Wood, assistant pastors Joel Counts and Billy Adams, staff and deacons



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## Canyon Creek to host RPM conference

Richardson, TX

Canyon Creek Baptist Church and Pastor Rick Carter will hold an RPM (revival, prayer, momentum) conference April 19-20 in conjunction with the NCPO church planter's candidate school and the Texas Baptist Bible Fellowship meeting. Guest speakers for the two-day conference include Tom Waggoner, pastor of Central Baptist Church in Dunn, North Carolina, Charles Lyons, pastor of Armitage Baptist Church in Chicago, Illinois, and John Arnold, pastor of Library Baptist Church in Finleyville, Pennsylvania. "Our guests are wonderful, Spirit-filled men of God and it is obvious that God has His hand upon them and their ministries," states Carter. "My prayer is that we will grow deeper in our relationship with God in the area of revival, prayer, and momentum."



Visit [canyoncreekbc.org/rpm](http://canyoncreekbc.org/rpm) or contact the church at (972) 231-4753 for more information.

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# Evangelism during the Olympics

Richmond, British Columbia, CAN

By Will Rogers, BBFI missionary

In February, the world came to our city for the 2010 Olympics, and we sought to take advantage of the opportunity. Needless to say, we have never been part of anything quite like it before. It was fun. It was challenging.

The evangelism method we used to accomplish this was unique. Last summer, we sent an appeal to churches to help us accumulate simple, hand-made scarves to distribute during the games. We also asked for help in copying free Bible software CDs. The response we received from churches far exceeded our expectations, and soon our home looked like a UPS storage depot!



Loaded down and ready to distribute scarf bundles!

Our evangelistic 'arsenal' was made complete with John/Romans scripture portions and souvenir pins with a gospel theme graciously provided by the Olympic Bible Project. This local-church ministry, led by David Hardin, came with a team of more than 150 volunteers from across the United States. They came to assist the independent Baptist churches in this area. Approximately 80,000 scripture portions were distributed as a result and thousands received a personal gospel witness.

Here in Richmond, we pursued our own effort using the materials previously mentioned packaged together with the scarves. We gave away between 6,000 and 7,000 scarf bundles! People were thrilled to receive these bundles and many took time to earnestly thank us. We had hundreds of opportunities to share a simple gospel presentation and a word of testimony. We shared God's Word in malls, in crowded pavilions, on streets, in coffee shops, and in fast-food restaurants.

The people were from everywhere — Malaysia, Indonesia, Brunei, Nepal, Singapore, Fiji, The Netherlands, Switzerland, Latvia, Slovakia, Peru, Chile, Angola, and Nigeria



Passing out scarf bundles

among others. We even witnessed to two Russian rap music stars! During the games, people were generally more approachable than what we have ever experienced before.

We were greatly assisted in this by a team of young people and adults who came from our sending church, Canyon Creek Baptist Church in Richardson, Texas, to help. The games are now over, and in 2012 the summer Olympics will be held in London, England. It will be an even greater opportunity for world evangelism. Just think of the possibilities!

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- Send State Chairman and/or National Director
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\* More updates to come as time approaches



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# Graceway Baptist breaks giving record

Springfield, MO

Graceway Baptist Church, pastored by Robert Stephenson, recently concluded a record-breaking global evangelism conference, "Call of Duty: Rated M for Missions." The church family was joined by the Tarl Reeves family, BBFI missionaries to England; the Kevin Worley family, BBFI missionaries to The Netherlands; the Arnold Belasko family, BBFI missionaries to Spain; Graceway's own Jonathan Saliba, BBFI missionary to Colombia; and the Jonahan Robertson family, BBFI missionaries to Costa Rica. BBFI Associate Mission Director Paul Hylton was the keynote speaker.

Highlights of the five-day conference included: a faith promise commitment expected to surpass last year's mission giving of \$165,000 by at least \$30,000; two church members surrendering their lives for missions; a conference project offering of nearly \$6,000 to assist the Robertsons with startup costs in Costa Rica; and the addition of all conference missionaries for monthly support. The final night of the



From left: Jonathan Saliba, the Reeves, the Worleys, the Stephensons, the Belaskos, and the Robertsons

conference included the formal commissioning of the Robertson family, sent out of Graceway Baptist Church and on their way to Costa Rica. Graceway currently supports over 100 mission-

aries and projects around the world and has an annual mission budget of nearly \$200,000. The conference was directed by the Graceway missions committee; Bill Bogart, mission director.

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# The year we almost didn't build a mission church

Sanford, FL

By Ron Williams

Palmetto Avenue Baptist Church

Last year at this time, our church was going through troubled economic waters as were many of our churches across America. We decided to use “the slash and burn” method to reduce our budget so that our ministry could survive the economic tsunami. Part of the budget cuts included our annual Christmas Offering, which we had used seven years in a row to build church buildings for poor congregations on the mission field. We had raised tens of thousands of dollars over the years to help build 30 churches in various remote villages around the world. It was a very discouraging time for us as we realized that 2009 would be known as the year that we didn't go on a mission trip and we didn't build a church building.

Last May, my son was graduating from Baptist Bible College so my wife and I went to Springfield for the event. On Monday, I learned our missionary to Tanzania, Tom Foltz, was not doing well in his battle against cancer; therefore, on Tuesday after the morning meeting, I went to visit him. Tom was not able to respond to me, but I visited with his wife, Joanne, and had a word of prayer with her. Tom went to heaven within just a few hours of my visit.

That afternoon, God began to work on my heart about building a church building in Tanzania in memory of Tom. I told God we didn't have any money! He said He had money and not to worry about it. Ron Enoch, missionary to Kenya, whom we had built a couple of

buildings for, was in Springfield at the time so I told him about my little conversation with God. The next day when I saw Ron, he slipped something into my pocket — a check for \$500 for my mission trip to build the church building in Tan-

as I told the church how God supplied \$8,000 for the building in just one week! On Wednesday, the same man gave me a check for \$2,000. Add to that a couple of thousand dollars from a pastor friend, Larry Franck, of Cornerstone Baptist Church in Venice, Florida, and we had enough to build the building! Hallelujah! God can do anything!

While this was all going on with the finances, people were coming to me telling me they were so glad we were taking a mission trip because they just knew they were supposed to go to Africa this year. By the time the dust had settled, we had a team of five people to go to Kwambe, Tanzania, to dedicate a church building in memory of missionary Tom Foltz.

Vern Smith, missionary to Tanzania, fills out the rest of the story. He writes:

“After Pastor Williams contacted us, and we presented him with three possible sites for building, God led us to build in the little village of Kwambe. Dennis Senyagwa is the leader there. Dennis, a faithful man of God and graduate of the Baptist Bible College of Tanzania, worked hard in overseeing the project and preparing for the opening day. The construction took place from July through October last fall, and we dedicated the building October 4. The crew from Palmetto Avenue Baptist in Sanford helped

with finishing touches, benches, a pulpit, offering boxes, and the dedication day program.

Over 700 people attended the dedication service. Twenty-one adults made professions of faith in Christ that day. As well, 25 others followed the Lord in believer's baptism. Therefore, in the name of Jesus Christ, and in memory of Tom Foltz, my partner in ministry for 10 years, the Bible Baptist Church of Kwambe, Tanzania, dedicated their new building. To God be the glory!”

Special thanks to Pastor Ron Williams of Palmetto Avenue Baptist Church for his visionary faith, and to pastor Larry Franck of Cornerstone Baptist Church in Venice, Florida, for their contributions of finances and their own labor and sweat in the building and dedicating of this building.”



**Top:** The existing facilities in Kwambe, Tanzania.  
**Bottom:** Dedication of the new building

zania. Usually, it is the pastor giving a check to the missionary, not the other way around. That was the confirmation I needed from God to proceed with the project.

I couldn't wait to get back home. That Sunday, I told the church we were going to build a church in Tanzania in memory of Tom Foltz. I told them about my conversation with God, and that He said He would take care of the money if we would just trust Him. I think most of my people thought I was crazy! However, that night a man in our church came to me and said he would give \$5,000 for the project in the next two weeks. Praise God! Maybe I'm not crazy after all. Tuesday, that same man came to my office with 50 \$100 bills. The next Saturday, he showed up at Upward Basketball with another 30 \$100 bills. On Sunday, I could hardly contain myself

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# Ed Chavis, Biggest Loser update

Augusta, GA

On November 2, 2009, Ed Chavis, associate pastor of Lumpkin Road Baptist Church in Augusta, Georgia, was chosen to participate in a weight-loss competition sponsored by the local NBC affiliate, a fitness club, and a professional weight-loss center. In the January edition of the *Tribune*, Chavis reported that he had lost 33 pounds; he has now lost over 100 pounds, well on the way to his goal of losing 140 pounds by the end of the competition in May.

"Augusta's Biggest Loser" is roughly modeled after the hit reality television show *The Biggest Loser*, with the notable exception of no eliminations. Although the fitness component is not as intense as the six-to-eight hours of daily training on the show, it is still a grueling schedule of daily workouts, twice-a-week nutrition counseling sessions, and weekly weigh-ins.

When asked about the difficulty of the food plan, Chavis says, "There are some things I miss from time to time — I'm a meat-and potatoes, burgers, fries, and pizza kind of guy. But I have come to understand that food is supposed to be fuel for the body. In our culture, we have assigned too much emotional meaning to pleasure foods." His current diet consists mainly of lean protein (chicken, tuna, and turkey breast) and dairy proteins (eggs and fat-free cheeses). Vegetables and fruits round out the food choices.

Chavis' journey has not been without some obstacles. At times, scar tissue from two previ-

ous back surgeries has caused both pain and numbness, making it difficult to exercise (or to even walk.) When difficulties arise, adjustments are made in his exercise routine in order to avoid further injury. He is also participating under the watchful eye of his physician, who makes suggestions and recommendations in getting through the tough times.



Ed Chavis has lost 100 lbs

In terms of the competition, which will culminate in one male and one female winning the top prizes, Chavis grabbed the lead in week three, and has not surrendered the top spot since then. His goal is to complete the competition in May without ever giving up the lead.

The impact of Chavis' experience has been far-reaching. Inspired by his success, over 20

members of Lumpkin Road are participating in a weight-loss challenge of their own called "Healthy Again in 2010." Thanks to the internet and the age of instant communication, Chavis is advising and encouraging people in places such as Texas, Wisconsin, and even Korea. He is eager to pass on the things that he has learned in an effort to help people, and, in that spirit, writes two blogs — one recounting his personal experiences and another containing nutrition, exercise advice, and motivational tips.

"Food abuse and addiction is quite possibly the most widespread form of addiction plaguing people today," Chavis said. "Even ministries such as Reformers Unanimous are realizing the absolute hold that food has over people's lives. And to make matters worse, it's the only sin or addiction that we preachers joke about from the pulpit on a regular basis. Now that I am getting these issues under control in my own life, I want to help others find the freedom that I have found."

Ed Chavis is the associate pastor at Lumpkin Road Baptist Church in Augusta, Georgia. He is blogging about his weight-loss journey at <http://echavis64.blogspot.com>. His "Healthy Again in 2010" blog is at <http://healthyagain2010.blogspot.com>.

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By Dixie Beard

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As a missionary, you have goals for the mission field, for your family, and for your ministry work. But have you thought about how you are going to finance those goals in the future?

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Consider three ways a retirement plan may help you reach your goals.

- It can empower ministry opportunities. Retirement doesn't mean you stop serving in ministry. The Bible makes it clear that you don't retire from following Christ, and a healthy retirement income can open up numerous ministry opportunities once you reach retirement age. When you build an appropriate retirement savings, you not only see the need, you can help finance the measures it will take to meet it.
- It provides for your loved ones. A retirement plan is not just for you. It's for the benefit of your family and loved ones as well. Providing for our families and nurturing future generations are biblical directives for us all. And our responsibility doesn't end at retirement age. In fact, you will likely live 20 or more years beyond retirement age and inflation may average three percent per year or more. You need a financial plan that will help keep you and your family financially secure during those years, and a well-prepared retirement can help provide that security.

- It promotes wise financial stewardship. When we turn to the Bible, nowhere do we receive advice to squander now and store none. In fact, we find quite the opposite. Proverbs 6:6-8 reminds us to be like the ant, gathering in one season so that we may provide in another. GuideStone President O.S. Hawkins provides helpful insight on these passages in his book *Antology*.

Storing financial resources in our productive income-producing years, that is, during the summer and fall seasons of life, is smart and logical. And, as Solomon reveals, it is also Biblical. If this is good advice for an ant...it is good advice for those who are active in serving in gospel ministry.<sup>1</sup>

It's simply essential for you to be prepared to financially support you, your family, and your ministry goals beyond retirement age. With a well-prepared retirement plan, you can use the resources you've stored to serve God well throughout your retirement years.

Make plans today to put an appropriate percentage of your income (or financial support) into a retirement savings plan automatically each month, increasing it as you can. The best time to start preparing is now.

1. Hawkins, O.S. *Antology*. Pgs 14-15. ©2007.

Dixie Beard is Director of Business Development with GuideStone Financial Resources. She can be reached by email at [Dixie.Bead@GuideStone.org](mailto:Dixie.Bead@GuideStone.org). She is also available by phone, toll-free at 1-888-98-GUIDE (1-888-984-8433) or directly at (214) 720-4661.



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# Interim pastor can provide valuable ministry

Taylorville, IL

When Gary Grey retired from Park Crest Baptist Church in Springfield, Missouri, last May, he knew that his ministry was far from over. Even though he had plans for visits with children and grandchildren, golf, and time with his wife, Carla, Grey's years and contacts in the ministry made him a valuable speaker for empty pulpits and special occasions. But there is always the unexpected.

For instance, Grey never thought he would be a church's pastor within six months of retirement from Park Crest. But when a church he had served formerly, Calvary Baptist Church of Taylorville, Illinois, was facing trouble and sought his counsel, he suggested they call an interim pastor. After first agreeing to help them find an interim, he eventually accepted the call himself last September.

Both Grey and the church are happy with the decision to call him as interim pastor. For his part, it is a bit like coming home since Calvary was his first pastorate. For the church,

leaders agree his knowledge and wisdom has been valuable as they manage the transition from one pastor to another.

Deacon Ed Saulter says, "When Pastor Grey was contracted to speak a few times, it was a breath of fresh air to a board trying to put out fires, managing divided church members, and controlling the chaos. When he decided to be the interim pastor and manage the daily duties within the office and the church, issues were handled professionally and he kept the board informed weekly. He has greatly helped the process of searching for a lead pastor."

Member Melissa Davidson describes the attitude change in the church and says, "We are focused on God's will. We are still healing in different areas, but the pain is gone. We are ready to go forward as a body of believers... As individuals we are stronger and closer to God. Last summer we were fighting each other; now we are fighting Satan together."

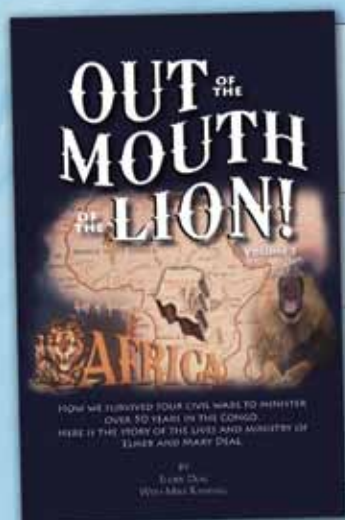
For Deacon Kevin Brown, it was a relief

merely to know the pulpit was being filled each week. He said that in previous pastoral searches, "a great deal of time and energy was consumed with just finding someone to preach each Sunday." Kevin's wife, Dollie, who serves as church secretary, knows the value of someone in charge of administration. She and the members take care of the basics, but having an interim pastor coordinating all the activities and ministries helps tremendously. "Now," she says, "We have the time to take the next step and make sure that we are listening to God instead of rushing through the process."

Grey has enjoyed the ministry at Calvary the second time around, but is anxious to install a permanent pastor. He stresses that the church has gone through some tough times but is now in good condition with nice facilities and no debt. Interested preachers should contact the church at 217.824.2324 or email [calvary@cbctaylorville.com](mailto:calvary@cbctaylorville.com).

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## U.G. Robertson

Portsmouth, VA

Ulysses George Robertson, 84, went to be with the Lord on Saturday, February 20, 2010. A native of Charleston, West Virginia, he was a Marine Corp veteran of World War II, serving in the Philippines and China.



In 1952 Robertson accepted Christ as his personal savior. After being a Christian for six months, Robertson felt the call to preach. In 1952, he moved to Springfield, Missouri, to enroll in Baptist Bible College. A few months before he graduated from BBC in 1955, he accepted the call to pastor Temple Baptist Church of Springdale, Arkansas. In 1957, he resigned his pastorate and took his family to Virginia. In August, he began holding tent meetings and within a year the church was organized. He worked at another job in the early years. By February 1959, attendance had grown, and Robertson began pastoring full time. That same year, the church purchased property and held their first mission conference.

He served and ministered to his congregation faithfully for 40 years, but at the same time he was an international leader among Baptist pastors in the Virginia BBF, the Mid-Atlantic BBF, Baptist Bible College, and the BBFI. In 1978, he became president of Atlantic Baptist Bible College in Chester, Virginia, where he served 18 years. In 1997, he became pastor emeritus of Central Baptist Church. He was a church planter and builder, a Christian educator, an author, a missionary ambassador, and a leader in the gospel outreach to the black community along with other pastors establishing Conference on Evangelizing Black America (COEBA) in 1993.

He leaves behind his devoted wife of 60 years, Betty Jo Robertson; three daughters; his son, Tim, who succeeded him as pastor of Central; ten grandchildren; four great-grandchildren; and a host of church family and friends. Memorial services were held February 23, 2010, at Central Baptist Church in Portsmouth.

## Francis York

Springfield, MO

Francis Olen York entered into his eternal rest on Thursday, February 25, 2010, at the age of 85. He was born November 24, 1924, in Davis County, Iowa. He received Jesus Christ as his personal Savior when he was 12 years old while attending a revival meeting in Seymour, Iowa.



After graduating from high school in Bloomfield, Iowa, he joined the U.S. Army in October of 1944. He served with the 327th Glider Infantry Regiment and the 101st Airborne Division. He served his country well and received two Bronze Service Stars, a WWII Victory Medal, as well as a Good Conduct Medal.

He married Opal Madeline Stogdill on January 10, 1947, in Bloomfield, Iowa. To this union was born four children, Gary York, Ronald York, Marla York Fields (missionary to Paraguay), and Deborah York Brown.

In September 1952, he entered Baptist Bible College, Springfield, Missouri. He graduated in May of 1955. Following his graduation, he was ordained to the gospel ministry the same year. For the next 17 years, York pastored churches in Iowa and founded Calvary Baptist Church in Oskaloosa, Iowa.

He and his family continued to minister when they moved back to Springfield in 1972 and joined Seminole Baptist Temple where he served as a deacon and Sunday school teacher.

He is survived by his wife of 63 years, Opal, two sons, two daughters, eight grandchildren, and 15 great-grandchildren.

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• **Grace Bible Baptist Church**, 1703 Lewis Road, Leesburg, FL 34748. 352-326-5738, *Pastor George Mulford III* [www.gbbconline.com](http://www.gbbconline.com)

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

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• **Cornerstone Baptist Church**, 1400 Grayson Hwy., Lawrenceville, GA 30245. 770/338-2677 *Pastor Tim Neal*

• **Central Fellowship Baptist Church and Academy**, 8460 Hawkinsville Rd. Hwy 247, 3 miles north of Robins Air Force Base, Macon GA 31216. 478/781-2981 [www.centralfellowship.org](http://www.centralfellowship.org) *Pastor Rodney Queen*

• **Camp Creek Baptist Church**, 1761 Camp Creek Rd, Cornelia, GA 30531, 706/778-0622, [www.campcreek.org](http://www.campcreek.org)

## HAWAII

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## ILLINOIS

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

## IOWA

• **Lighthouse Baptist Church**, 1690 Elm St., Suite 175, Dubuque, IA 52001, 563/584-9040, [www.lighthouseofdbq.org](http://www.lighthouseofdbq.org)

• **Heartland Baptist Church**, 3504 N. Grand Ave., Ames, IA 50010 515/268-1721, [www.heartlandbaptistames.com](http://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 67213 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 Harold Brown*

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

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

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• **Temple Baptist Church**, 4301 Thomason Dr., Midland, TX 79703. 432/694.3634 [www.tbcmidland.com](http://www.tbcmidland.com) *Pastor Stephen Willis*

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

## VIRGINIA

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# I stand amazed

By Steve Alexander

Pastor, Smith River Baptist Church, Crescent City, California

**O**n January 18, my wife Karen and I started on a vacation that included a pastors' conference in Florida. The last night of the conference, January 2, Jim Cymbala (pastor of Brooklyn Tabernacle) preached on the power of prayer, and his invitation was to come and pray if you wanted God to do something special in your life and ministry. Little did Karen and I realize what would happen as we went to the altar. While Karen was praying she was struck with a horrible headache.

For the next several days the headaches continued, but we noted nothing seriously wrong. But on Saturday night, February 6, after watching our nephew play baseball in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, things worsened. My wife's sister was going to take Karen back to her home in Mobile, Alabama, (two hours away) but first she wanted to return to the restaurant where we were to say good-bye to her son's fiancée. That decision saved Karen's life.

When they arrived at the eatery we quickly noticed Karen was suddenly much worse. Just moments before, she was walking on her own, and now she was nauseous and could not move her legs. We immediately took her to Forrest General Hospital in Hattiesburg (one of the top neurological hospitals in the country). By the time Karen was on the gurney, she could not respond to the doctor's commands and her eyes were rolling back into her head. I was losing her.

They rushed her into ER and directly to a CT scan. Then came the devastating news.

"Mr. Alexander, I am so sorry. She has had two hemorrhages, her pupil has already blown out, people usually do not live to talk about it, and she is not going to make it."

Then neurosurgeon Dr. Lon Alexander (no relation) who was on call from Jackson that night entered the picture. He told me we had a very narrow window to save her life and "what we do we must do quickly." He said he was a Christian and had heard that I was a pastor. He asked me to pray to the Lord that He would help him save my wife's life. They rushed her off to surgery. I called my church secretary and she informed our church prayer chain. Other prayer chains were started. Some preacher friends on the BBF Summit discussion list joined in. People were praying literally around the world storming God's throne on behalf of Karen.

While sitting in the CCU waiting room with family and friends from Alabama, we waited and cried out to the

Lord for His healing hand. Three hours later the surgeon came out with the news.

He said, "The first miracle is that her pupil has returned. However, along with the two hemorrhages she had a blood clot and a tumor the size of an egg." He went on to say the tumor was malignant, and they removed all that they could see. Sunday night, Karen had a second surgery to remove some swelling on the brain. Dr. Alexander told me he felt she would survive this to fight the bigger fight of cancer.

He also informed me there could be some brain damage and vision damage as well.

However, on Monday, the pathologist report came back: "No cancer found." The sample was sent to the Mayo Clinic, with the same result returned: no cancer, another miracle of God.

The next several days with Karen lying unresponsive in CCU, my family surrounded her bed holding hands, singing, praying, crying out to the Lord for her life and recovery. Thursday came and still there was no response. The doctor told us at

6:00 a.m. to just keep talking about family to her. At 2:00 p.m., I got up close and said, "I love you," and despite the tube down her throat and with her eyes still closed, I saw her lower lip form the words, "I love you."

I told her if she was trying to say, "I love you," to blink hard. After a pause she did. I was so amazed and excited. Gradually she opened her eyes, began to make hand movements, and whisper. Today, as I write this two weeks later, she is alert, talking, and in rehab learning to stand, walk again, and to feed herself. The prognosis is very good. They expect her to fully recover but with about 80 percent peripheral vision loss in her left eye. She is still often confused as the brain continues to heal, and physically she is growing stronger each day. We simply praise *Jehovah Rapha*, The Lord our Healer.

I agree with what Jerry Thorpe said to me, "I stand amazed." To God be the glory, great things He has done! Please join us in prayer for Karen's total healing.

*Editor's note: At presstime, Karen Alexander continues to recover. She was discharged from the hospital in early March, one month after being within a few minutes of death.*



Photo by Ryan Alexander



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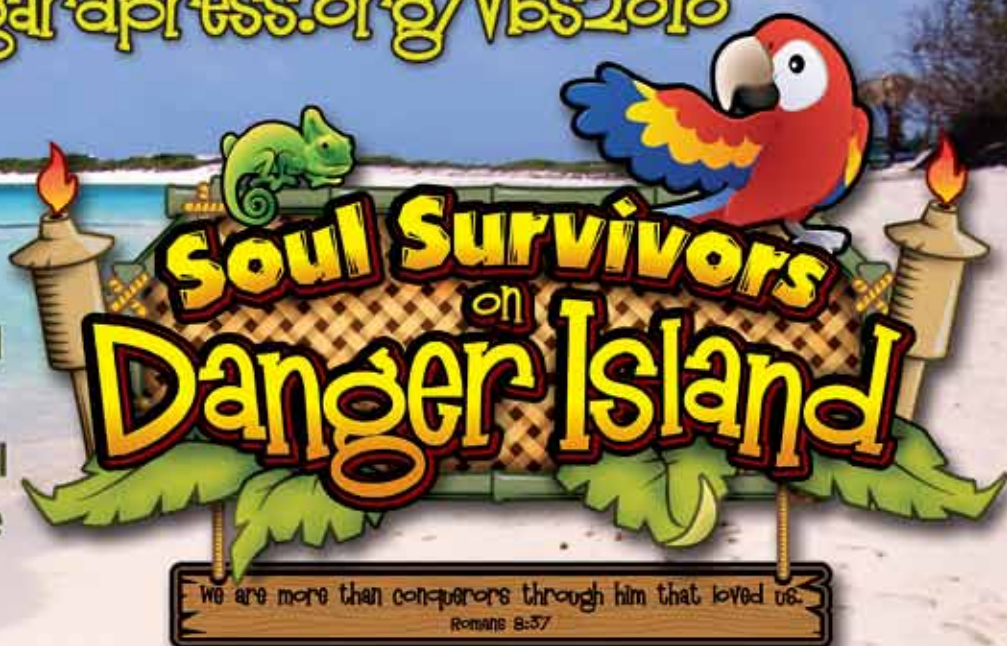


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