

BAPTIST BIBLE TRIBUNE

APRIL 2016

WHAT IS THE

NEXT STEP?

In your personal relationship with Christ p.9

From guest to disciplined member p. 12

As a church leader p. 13

When you feel called to ministry p. 14

In personal finances p.16

Building community within the church p. 16

Involvement in the BBFI p.18

For community outreach p.19



FELLOWSHIP WEEK

MAY 2-5

Join us on the campus of Baptist Bible College in Springfield, MO from May 2nd to May 5th, 2016. Our guest speakers include Tom Messer, Mark Hoover, and Jonathan Falwell. There has never been a more important time to be "All In."

Monday

6:30p Session 1: Tom Messer
8:45p Party in the Parking Lot



Tom Messer

Trinity Baptist College
Jacksonville, Florida

Tuesday

9:00a Breakouts
9:00a Ladies Meeting
10:00a Session 2
11:30a Business Meeting
12:30p Alumni Lunch
6:30p Session 3: Mark Hoover
& Mark Milioni



Mark Hoover

NewSpring Church
Wichita, Kansas

Wednesday

9:00a Breakouts
10:00a Missions Morning
6:30p Session 4: Jonathan Falwell



Jonathan Falwell

Thomas Road Baptist Church
Lynchburg, Virginia

ALL IN FOR THE GOSPEL. FOR THE WORD. FOR THE CHURCH. FOR EACH OTHER.



ON THE TABLE The next step

by Randy Harp | Editor

As parents, we love experiencing milestones with our children. We get excited the first time they roll over, sit up, crawl, and take those first steps. We begin to have mixed emotions when we drop them off for their first day of kindergarten and are even more emotional as they graduate high school and move on to college. Then we see them begin their new lives as they get married and have their own children. Each of these milestones are steps in our journey called life. Although they may not be quite so sequential, they each require a next step.

The Christian life is very similar. At salvation you are made new, but you are not intended to stay the same. There is a lifetime of growth taken one step at a time. There is an old Chinese Proverb that says, "The journey of a thousand miles must begin with a single step." This issue of the *Tribune* is focused on how to help you take that next step, wherever you currently find yourself. Psalm 37:23 says, "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and He delights in his way." My prayer is we would each surrender our steps to the Lord.

One of my goals as the new editor is to allow multiple contributors to share their knowledge and wisdom. I don't know if there are any official records, but this issue has to be close to the most contributors in a single issue. Including our regular columnists, there are over 20 different individuals who provide content from basically every aspect of ministry. It is also great to have the daughter of a former *Tribune* editor as well as the co-founder of Liberty University as contributors this month.

Pastors, I encourage you to share this issue with your congregation. There are many practical features and columns to help those in your church. I also encourage you to read through this issue asking yourself, "How can I take my next step and how can I lead our church to take the next step." Use the "Afterwords" on page 30 as a tool to apply these principles.

I know I probably sound like a broken record but I want to remind you that the *Baptist Bible Tribune* is a ministry of the BBFI primarily funded by the support of local churches. Yes, we receive funds through advertisements and there are those who have individual subscriptions, but the vast majority of our budget is based on voluntary support. Would you consider partnering with us by contributing to our February *Tribune* Offering (it is never too late) or becoming a monthly financial contributor? You can make an immediate donation by logging onto www.tribune.org and clicking on the "Partner" button or contact our office at (417) 831-3996.

As always, thank you for allowing me to serve Christ as I serve you. If I can ever be of service to you, please let me know.

THE NEXT STEP



Taking the next step

Whether your relationship with God can be measured in days or years, there is ongoing work if you truly desire to grow closer to Him.

6



What is the next step?

So, what now? Churches, pastors, and individuals have to keep growing to avoid becoming stagnant. Here are seven areas of life or ministry to consider.

12



Your next step

All the information in this issue will be for nothing without application. Ponder these application exercises to kickstart your journey to the next step.

30



Don't miss any of the *Tribune's* digital offerings on our website www.tribune.org. You can find old articles, a digital page-turn version of this month's magazine, and a link to sign up for the *Tribune* Update email.

COLUMNS AND DEPARTMENTS

- 4 BBFI Leadership Perspectives
- 9 In the Trenches
- 21 The Right Angle
- 22 Baptist History
- 23 Urban Current
- 25 Fellowship News
- 31 Missionary Prayer Calendar

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FROM THE PRESIDENT WHAT'S NEXT?

At our church we talk about how everyone has a next step. New people are invited to our Starting Point Class where we discuss what it means to accept Christ. They are then encouraged to take the next step and follow the Lord in baptism. Others are encouraged to take that next step to membership. People are encouraged to take the next step by being involved in one of our discipleship classes. The next step for many is to join a volunteer team or get into a small group.

Churches need a next step. Jesus laid out the next steps in Acts 1:8. He said the Holy Spirit would come and they would be witnesses. They would begin in Jerusalem. Then they were to go to Judea, then Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. The churches of the BBFI take a step toward this objective when they come alongside church planters (Judea and Samaria). A church can take the next step to take the Gospel to the end of the earth by supporting a missionary. As God calls out leaders, our colleges help these emerging leaders by providing a place for them to take the next step and be trained and equipped for ministry.

We must constantly be looking for our next step. The entities of our Fellowship serve churches as they take their next steps. By supporting the Mission Office, APEX church planting, our colleges, and the *Tribune*, churches take the next steps and expand their ministries beyond their local communities.



Eddie Lyons
BBFI PRESIDENT

WORLD MISSIONS DISCIPLESHIP AND MISSIONS

The Great Commission includes three essential components — evangelism, baptism, and discipleship. The cross-cultural mindset of our missionaries enables them to bring people to Jesus Christ; grounding them in the basics of the Christian life, equipping those who exhibit a faithful desire to serve, and then extending their reach with the Gospel to their own people and the regions beyond. This process of discipleship is demonstrated repeatedly throughout the New Testament.

This is why the BBFI insists on sending men and women who exhibit these qualities and demonstrate an ability to share their faith with others while

actively serving in a local church. Missionaries, those who have been disciplined, must have the ability to make disciples. If they have not learned how to share their faith, study their Bible, serve others, teach others, and pray in faith, they will have no experience from which to draw while on the foreign field. They would essentially be unable to reproduce a growing Christian who can in turn disciple others. Their church planting efforts would be hindered because their members would lack the ability to make disciples, grow their own ministries, and equip others — they would remain utterly dependent upon the missionary.

In 2 Timothy 2:2, Timothy is

challenged to pass on the things he has learned from Paul to “faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.” Here we see four generations of discipleship in one verse: Paul, Timothy, faithful men, and others they would train. This is missions — cross-cultural discipleship.

We remain committed to sending missionaries fully prepared, mobilized to make disciples in hopes they too will one day reach their own.



Jon Konnerup
BBFI MISSION DIRECTOR

BBFI LEADERSHIP

CHURCH PLANTING YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE LARGE TO PLANT

Just as we think we have to be fully grown before we can produce fruit, sometimes we think we have to be a large church before we can plant another church. Let us remember the command for making disciples and sending people out is to all churches large and small. The book of Acts teaches us that the early church grew and multiplied extensively. How did they grow so rapidly?

Most of these churches were not much more than a few families gathered in a home or marketplace for the purpose of practicing and teaching the apostle's doctrines. I'm afraid our small churches often feel inadequate to start other

churches because of their small numbers. However, we must be honest with ourselves and admit sometimes we just don't want to give up members to another group starting a church in our city. Sometimes our small size allows us an excuse not to plant another church.

Someone said a newly planted church will win more people to Christ than any other tool we have today. I believe this to be true, not only because it is the Lord's plan but because of the enthusiasm and pioneering spirit derived from a newly formed congregation.

We're completely thankful for large churches and the support they give to starting

churches, but let it not be our excuse that we are too small to plant another church. Acts 12:42 teaches that these early churches increased and multiplied because they were reaching, discipling, and sending people out to start new churches. We can do this!



John Gross
BBFI CHURCH PLANTING (APEX)

BAPTIST BIBLE COLLEGE IS COLLEGE THE NEXT STEP?

The season of pomp and circumstance is upon us. Soon high school seniors will be wearing caps and gowns, clutching diplomas, and wondering about their next steps. I often talk to these young people about the five most important decisions they face.

What will you do with Jesus Christ? Their answer will impact them for eternity.

Who will you marry? This choice will affect everything else they do.

Who will your friends be? Show me your friends and I will show you your future. Choose wisely.

What will you choose as a career? What are your

talents, skills, and passions? Will you choose to give your life to ministry?

Where will you go to college? I think this may be the most important of these decisions. Their college choice will influence who their friends will be, prepare them for a career, most likely introduce them to their spouse, and determine what they do with Christ.

Why do I feel every graduate should consider Christian college as their next step? Statistics show 85 percent of Christian teens will attend a secular university. By the end of their freshmen year, 70 percent of those “Christians” will walk away from Christ forever. By the end of their sophomore

year, that statistic climbs to 90 percent. These are troubling signs.

At BBC, every class is taught from a Christian worldview. Students learn to study the Bible and discern truth. Instead of walking away, their faith grows deeper and they are enabled to share that faith with the world.

I encourage parents and pastors to challenge students to consider Baptist Bible College. I encourage you as a student to consider BBC. It will change your life.



Mark Milioni
BAPTIST BIBLE COLLEGE PRESIDENT

PERSPECTIVES: THE NEXT STEP

BOSTON BAPTIST COLLEGE ONE NIGHT AT THE WALL

I'm still trying to reclaim a North American sleep pattern after our return from the Boston Study Trip 2016. Eleven days in Israel with forty students and another forty friends of our college made for weeks full of memories. But there was that one night at the Kotel, the Western Wall of the Temple Mount, that says so much about what a Boston Baptist College study trip is.

The Kotel offers a limited number of private tours to excavations deep below the retaining wall of Herod the Great's Temple Mount. Our experience at the Kotel was truly Israeli ... and Boston! In Israel, almost nothing quite works like you expect it to. I showed up

to “check in” our group, only to learn that a digital confirmation on an iPad wasn't good enough. They wanted a hard copy ... or a fax! Eventually, I ended up in the ticket booth, typing on a Hebrew keypad, opening a Boston Baptist email account! But we did what Boston does — we kept at it, polite but persistent, doing what we needed to do.

“A tour of the remains of the retaining wall of Herod's Temple” might sound like old rocks and typical tourist spiels, but you would be wrong. Visualize reservation times changed on us at the last minute, leaving Keith McAllister running across the Old City of Jerusalem “faster than I've run since high school.” You

have to see my son, David, filling in for me (while I negotiated) “leading” a line of students on a sprint though who-knows-what-part of that ancient city! You have to see a bunch of Baptist guys trying to keep yarmulkes on in the wind. Then, see students just 90 feet from the Holy of Holies, and walking on the very streets that knew the feet of the Lord Jesus! Just one night on one study trip in the course of a Boston degree. But it was a Boston night — in Israel — and no biblical text about the Temple will ever look the same to us again.



David Melton
BOSTON BAPTIST COLLEGE PRESIDENT

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TAKING THE NEXT



IN YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

BY RANDY HARP

Several years ago, I read Max Lucado's book *Just Like Jesus*. Lucado repeats a statement throughout the book that has stuck with me ever since — "God loves you just the way you are, but He refuses to leave you that way. He wants you to be just like Jesus." It is a simple, easy-to-understand statement.

No doubt God loves each of us. Scripture is full of such expressions. It is easy to talk about God's love. It is comforting and reassuring. God's love is easy to embrace. Unfortunately, far too often we neglect the second half of Lucado's statement. We are not nearly as comfortable with change. It can be difficult to conform our lives, not to the world, but rather to the leadership of the Holy Spirit and obedience to the Word of God. But God loves us far too much to leave us where He found us at salvation. Salvation is simply the first step, albeit the most important step, in a journey that will last a lifetime. God wants you to continue to take the next step in your relationship with Him.

OBSTACLES TO GROWTH

The challenge is that spiritual growth does not happen automatically. Simply because

we grow older does not mean we grow more spiritually mature. Several obstacles can slow a person's spiritual growth. One area many continue to struggle with is guilt over past failures. Even though God forgives us at salvation and scripture teaches our sins are removed as far as the east is from the west, we oftentimes still beat ourselves up over our past. So, if Jesus has forgiven you, who do you think keeps bringing up your past and causing you to feel guilty? I love Paul's wisdom in response to this very issue. In

1 Corinthians 6:9-10, he lists several types of individuals from those who are sexually immoral to thieves and idolaters. In verse ten he states, "And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of God." A person will never realize the great plans God has for him or her if he or she continues to carry guilt over past failures.

Another obstacle to growth is that some people do not fully understand what spiritual growth is. They may connect spiritual maturity with personal appearance. While I do believe it is important to maintain a certain level of appropriate appearance, that alone is

not a definitive indicator of spiritual maturity. Still others connect spiritual maturity with achievement or academia. Again, while these have value, they alone do not identify a mature Christ-follower. Unfortunately, many in our world lack a true desire for spiritual growth. They compartmentalize their faith and fulfill their religious obligations, but lack passion for the Lord. I heard a term "Christian athiest" recently, which sums up this type of person — someone who believes in God but lives life as if He doesn't exist. In other words, they lack a desire to take the next step in their relationship with Jesus Christ.

Others may not be growing in their relationship with Christ because they lack the tools needed for growth. They may want to grow but just don't know how. They have never been taught. My wife's testimony is an example of this. She did not place her trust in Christ as her Savior until after high school. After her conversion, she was clearly told how she should dress, what type of music she should listen to, places and people she should not be around, but she was never taught how to have a personal devotion. It wasn't until she attended Bible college that she was encouraged to read the Bible on her own and

STEP



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was given tools to help her grow in her own spiritual walk. In our world today, there are a variety of helpful resources in this area.

DEFINING SPIRITUAL MATURITY

So what do I mean by spiritual maturity? I would define it as both knowing more about God and acting more like Jesus. It is two-fold. You have to know it in order to act it, but knowing it is not enough on its own. I base this definition on two primary passages of scripture. Hebrews 6:1 states, “Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God.” In other words, let’s stop going over the basic teachings about Christ and let’s become mature in our understanding, not needing to start again with repentance and faith. Paul illustrates this idea as moving from milk to meat. As much as I love a good, cold glass of milk, I much prefer a New York strip steak from a prime steakhouse. As you continue to take your next steps toward spiritual maturity you should understand the deeper meanings of the Word of God.

The second part of my definition is based

on James 1:22, “But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.” Many Christians today only fool themselves because they do not do what they know the Scriptures teach. When I was pastoring, I would hear, “Great message today, preacher,” or “I needed that today, pastor,” or “I felt like you were talking directly to me today.” I appreciated the support, but oftentimes wondered what people would do with what they heard?

CATALYSTS FOR CHANGE

So, if God loves us just as we are, but He desires for us to change, what is it that causes us to change? I believe it was Charlie “Tremendous” Jones who first said, “We will be the same person in five years that we are today except for two things: the people we meet and the books we read.” I would add a third category — the experiences we encounter. Let’s take a closer look at these to see how they help us change.

Let’s first look at the books we read. I will be honest, I used to hate reading. (Yes, that is somewhat comical with the profession I have today.) When I was in high school, I loved math and science. Upon graduation, I pursued an engineering degree, which included

reading but consisted of much more math and science. When I enrolled at Baptist Bible College I literally prayed and asked God to give me a passion for reading. It worked. Today I have a goal of reading one book per week. There is an old saying, “Today’s readers are tomorrow’s leaders.” I believe that. I want my kids to be readers. I spend a lot of money on books for my kids. I consider it an investment.

Obviously the most important book we should read is the Bible. We should set aside time every day to read God’s Word. God told Joshua as he was preparing to become the new leader of the children of Israel, “This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.” In order for Joshua to be the leader he needed to be, he had to spend time reading and meditating on God’s Word. Reading God’s Word changed his life.

Don’t misunderstand this next statement, but it is also important to read other books as well as the Bible. Obviously the Bible is the most important, but you can oftentimes glean new insights by reading what other authors have learned about the Bible. They may have a better grasp of the original languages or culture. They may have spent years pouring into a certain passage of scripture. The Apostle Paul was an avid reader. In his valedictory in 2 Timothy 4 he requests Timothy bring him “the books, especially the parchments.” One of my most prized possessions is my library. (I might not have said that a few months ago while moving boxes of books across the country, but I do today.) If you are serious about becoming more like Jesus, there must be a commitment to spend time reading.

People you meet are a second catalyst to change. The vast number of people God has allowed me to interact with over the past 20 years has been one of my greatest blessings. From fellow students I attended college with that have become life-long friends, to the staff and members at each church I have served, to all the friends and acquaintances I have made along the way, each has impacted my life to become who I am today. The reality is, you never know when

SOMETIMES GOD SHOWS UP IN EXTRAORDINARY WAYS AND SOMETIMES HE SHOWS UP IN THE NORMAL ROUTINE OF LIFE.

you are going to meet someone who could end up radically changing your life, but you do have to be paying attention and you have to be prepared. An example of this is found in Acts chapter eight. This was a time of great persecution for the church, but God was using the persecution to expand His kingdom. An angel of the Lord spoke to Philip and told him to leave Jerusalem and head toward Gaza. As Philip began this journey he met someone unexpectedly. He noticed a carriage on the same route and the man inside the carriage happened to be reading from the prophet Isaiah. The Holy Spirit prompted Philip to go toward the carriage and Philip asked the man if he knew what he was reading. The man replied he could not unless someone explained it to him and invited Philip into the carriage. To make a long story short, Philip introduced this Ethiopian eunuch to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and even baptized him that same day. Both men experienced life-change this day. The people you meet and the people you spend the most time with will help you grow spiritually.

The third area that helps a person toward spiritual maturity is the experiences he or she encounters. This goes back to the James passage of not just hearing, but doing. Everyone has the opportunity to experience

the power of God firsthand in his or her life. Sometimes God shows up in extraordinary ways and sometimes He shows up in the normal routine of life. Shortly after graduating from BBC, I went on my first international mission trip to Costa Rica. Until then, I could probably count the number of states I had visited on one hand. Our trip theme was, “Look beyond what you see.” Those words could not have been more impactful as I saw beyond the challenges of a developing country to see the dire spiritual need of a people I did not even know. God used that experience to change me forever.

I often wonder what was going through Peter’s mind as he crawled over the side of that boat and walked on water toward Jesus. There is no doubt that experience changed him. Another example, which happened the day before, has always fascinated me. We know it as the feeding of the 5,000. Jesus asked His disciples how they were going to feed the large multitude that followed them. Philip went as far as to say it would take more than a half a year’s wages to buy enough bread for each person to have just a bite. I am not sure how he was discovered or if he spoke up on his own, but a small child happened to have five small loaves of bread and two small fish with him. This was not out of the ordinary until Jesus got involved. Jesus took this small boy’s offering and fed 5,000 men plus all the women and children who were there. Scripture does not record it, but in my mind I can see how this boy’s life would be changed forever.

Maybe your experience with God is volunteering to serve in a new ministry. Maybe your experience with God is walking down the street to introduce yourself to that new neighbor. Maybe your experience with God is volunteering to serve at a local homeless shelter. Maybe your experience is stepping out in faith and attempting to do something so big that if God doesn’t show up you will fail miserably. The experience is not the end; it is simply a means to the end, which is taking that next step toward spiritual maturity.

God loves you — with all your warts and scars and baggage, God loves you. But He loves you too much to leave you where He found you. He wants you to change, to become just like Jesus. Don’t remain where you are.

IN THE TRENCHES

THE NEXT STEP

Pastor

Tim Adrian

Pastor | Westside Baptist Church | Hutchinson, KS

At our church, we have strategy with specific and measurable steps of assimilation. Our staff identifies and works with individuals at every step of this process. Our first goal is to turn our neighbors into guests. And then the process begins with a goal of turning a guest into a prospect; a prospect into an attender; an attender into a member; a member into a serving member; and a serving member into a ministry leader. Of course evangelism, discipleship, and leadership training are woven through these various levels.

Special days are vital to us since we see an upturn in the number of guests. For instance, when it comes to Easter, we plan and calculate a certain amount of funds, energy, and time to that one day. Our leadership encourages our attenders to invest a minute to invite others to our special days. If we have worked our plans correctly, we will see a rise in attendance of several hundred. However, all of these efforts are wasted if we are not equally intentional on and after Easter.

On Easter Sunday, we recruit an expanded greeting and hospitality team for each service. They hand out worship folders, help with nursery

check-in, and answer questions. During the service, we ask every guest to fill out our connection card with contact information. If they are willing, we will extend to them a free coffee card worth \$5.00. We know if we can't gather the right information, we have lost an opportunity and thus we justify this expense.

We also dedicate bulletin space and announcement time to promote upcoming events of interest to a new family, such as summer camp and VBS. Typically a new series of messages or a special class is publicized. Usually, we have scheduled a special music group on one of the two Sundays after Easter so that we have something to invite all guests back to. It is our intention to show all guests that our church is filled with possibilities for their family.

Immediately after Easter, we send out cards, letters, and e-mails to all guests and of course, invite them to return to our church. Our real goal is for as many people as possible to return for a second or third visit. Those who do are our real prospects and the ones we focus most of our attention on. We will alert children and

youth workers if we determine a particular family has children who could be part of their class. After a second visit or so, our staff makes phone calls to prospects in an attempt to connect them to a small group or class.

Our staff hosts a meal every quarter for those who want to know more about our church. We bring in catered BBQ for lunch after the Sunday morning service. We take this time to get to know the people better and explain our Sunday school, Bible study, and small group options. We introduce the staff and other leaders, we explain our statement of faith, and we rehearse the requirements for baptism and membership.

We have found that having a process is crucial in bringing people down the path from first-time guest to serving member in our church. Our staff manages the systems we utilize to bring people along in their relationship to our church. It is with great joy we look over the guest list from last year and see those who are now helping us with the work of the Gospel.

Worship Ministry

Jason Cross

Worship Faculty | Baptist Bible College | Springfield, MO

Big weekends can be a great catalyst for increasing the capacity of your volunteer pipeline. You already have everyone you need in your church to go to the next level (1 Corinthians 12:18), and sometimes all it takes is a little forethought to help your people reach the next level of engagement.

1. MAKE THE "ASK"

Many people in your church just don't know what the next step is. Take time to figure that part out

in each area of your ministry, set the processes for training in place, pray, invite your people to join you in what God is doing, and watch God do an amazing work! One way to do this effectively in worship ministry is to host an open house. This can work really well in getting your ministry exposure at high impact times (like, just after Easter). A great resource for this idea can be found at www.churchleaderinsights.com ("How to Double Your Worship Team in a Day"). Enter the code "Tribune" for a discount.

2. PLACE THE VOLUNTEERS UNDER HEALTHY LEADERSHIP

The leaders you put in place will be the primary shapers of the culture of your ministry. If you want your ministry to be distinguished by character, competence, and service (nothing wrong with throwing "fun" in there as well), then make sure your leaders embody those attributes. This comes from spending both team time and one-on-one time with the leaders you serve. Also, don't feel

(CONTINUED)

IN THE TRENCHES (CONTINUED)

that you have to be the only mentor to each of your leaders. You may be better off helping them make a connection with another staff or volunteer leader or even someone from another local church. Don't be so prideful or territorial you fail to help your people take the "next step" even if you're not the one to lead them there.

3. KEEP YOUR EYE ON THE BIG PICTURE

Find a way to connect your volunteer roles to the Gospel message. We don't serve to earn God's love, but we serve because Christ served us first. Much like in Tabernacle worship in the Old Testament, someone had to facilitate Israel's corporate worship by preparing the Tabernacle furniture. Each act of service was an opportunity for awe, expectation and for personal worship that prepared their hearts, served their congregation and glorified the Lord.

In Simon Sinek's book *Start with Why*, he tells an old story of two medieval brick layers who were asked about their jobs. The first was simply "paying the bills" while the other was "building a cathedral!" Perspective matters and so does constantly connecting your team to the bigger picture. How you and your team serves each week has the potential to impact eternity. What could possibly be bigger than that?

Pray for the Spirit's power to guide you in the process and just watch what happens. Next Easter could look radically different. Just watch.

Missionary

Dwayne Wright
BBFI Missionary | Ethiopia

Everything we do in our daily lives is completed one step at a time. The same is true in our Christian walk. Many times we look at it as one big leap. When God called us in 2008 to Ethiopia, we looked at it as one huge leap resulting in us saying, "God there is no way we can go to Ethiopia. The cost is too high and the economy is tanking. This isn't going to work." But that is not what God wanted. He didn't want us to get on a plane that day and leave for Ethiopia, we weren't ready. We had to walk with Him over a course of time for Him to prepare our family to live in a post-communist third world.

Oftentimes we look so far ahead of what God is wanting to do that we miss the next step in front of us which results in us falling. Though the task of moving our family of six to Ethiopia was beyond what we could comprehend, we knew God had called us. However, we were to take it one step at a time. Each step we took moved us closer to fulfilling our call to minister in Ethiopia. Our steps were resigning at our church, being approved, selling everything, loading what was left into a van, driving to a church to present, repeat, repeat, repeat for two years, saying goodbyes, driving to the airport, walking on to the plane,

sitting down in the plane, and taking a deep breath, here we go, walking off the plane in Ethiopia.

Now, looking back, we see God was working in us each step of the way to prepare us for what He had in store for us living and serving here in Ethiopia. Even now in Ethiopia we have to slow down and remind ourselves we can't do or go where God wants us to go unless we put one foot in front of the other. Don't look at the long-term goal as a huge leap. God's not asking us to leap; He is asking us to take a step.

Peter learned this lesson thoroughly. We don't see Peter leaping out of the boat, but we see him stepping out of the boat, one foot at a time and placing one foot in front of the other as he walks towards Jesus. Shouldn't that be the same in our daily lives? One foot in front of the other, one step at a time, always walking toward Jesus. Don't get caught up on where you think you need to be and miss sight of where God may guide your next step. Your next step may not be toward a \$1 million campaign or a huge crowd at church this Sunday. He may just be asking you to step across the street, step across your cubical, your living room, step into a mud hut, and be the hands and feet He has called you to be.

Children's Ministry

Stephanie Loderhose
Kids Ministry Director | Friendship Baptist Church | Owasso, OK

We have found that many parents feel inadequate to properly disciple their kids. As we looked over the biblical principle of discipleship, we found the greatest influence in a child's life will always be their parent or guardian. True discipleship, first, begins with the parents living out their spiritual walk every day with their children.

Here was our problem, parents/guardians did not know where or how to implement true discipleship in the home. We found a curriculum called D6 that seemed to be tailored to the home discipleship needs we faced. Following are some of

the ways we implemented the curriculum:

The same Biblical lesson is taught for every age in our church. This allows families to discuss what they learned. Basically giving families something to spiritually talk about.

We implemented a devotional book for every person in our church. These devotional books are a daily devotional for each member of the family. This allowed families to have accountability for their daily spiritual walk.

The D6 curriculum also provided a weekly email called the "Splink" for families to

have a game or object lesson with a spiritual truth. For example, families are taking ordinary pizza night and adding a spiritual truth in a fun way. This is one more way for parents to live out the Word of God in their home.

As a church, we have a responsibility to disciple members of our church, but we have seen a great shift in our families to take the next step of home discipleship in order to have the biggest spiritual impact on their kids.

Women's Ministry

Sharon Hoffman

Women's Ministry Director | West Division Street Baptist Church | Springfield, MO

Today my house happens to be cluttered, visibly dusty, laundry piles higher than I want to admit, and yes, both kitchen sinks are full of last night's shenanigans. My heart could stand a little spring cleaning, as well. Below are some principles I actively apply when I know it's time to "step up." These aren't seven quick-and-easy steps to instant solutions for coping with ministry messes and stresses. They are, however, some ways we can come closer to God and become a greater source of encouragement to the women we lead.

1. Let's stop trying to be all things to all people. Say to your women "I will be here for you," but remind yourself that does not mean 24/7. Know your own capacity in whatever season of life you are in; know when it is time to call in for reinforcements. One of the biggest drawbacks to stepping up higher is our not being a good steward of time and of guarding our own hearts. If we become more devoted to people than to God, we become disasters.

2. Know when to take a stand, make decisions, and put your foot down. Some women simply do not want to be helped, they just want a place to dump their pain. If God orders our steps, he also orders our stops! Stop trying to help everyone. Shake off the clingy women who honestly don't want help; guard that valuable time to pour into those who do; who sincerely will listen and change.

3. We cannot serve by feelings, we must learn to serve through commitment and surrender. Leading in ministry robs your joy and brings on a depressive fatigue if you serve only when you feel like it or from a have-to mentality. You may minister in a huge church with Bible studies, banquets, monthly Ladies' Night Out, and service projects galore. Instead of lamenting these seasons of exciting doors, growth, and equipping others ... embrace the exciting times when you see God mightily at work. Let the joy of seeing God's hand be your strength! It won't always be this way; there will be seasons of famine and rest ahead. That's the ebb and flow of ministry.

4. Identify with women who have been through your similar past pain. Let them know you've been there. Show them how God victoriously brought you through some tough times that you might better reflect His image (2 Corinthians 4:10). Let them know that their past does not have to determine their future! You be the real-life living proof.

5. Get your combat boots on. Know you will be under attack if you serve God in any leadership capacity. If you are in ministry, you are in battle. Ephesians 6 tells us what to do to keep in the fight. Be confident in your calling — do not let the enemy steal that from your heart. You are safe in the arms of God at all times, all moments, in all situations, all circumstances. He wants to use your story for His glory.

6. Rest when it is time to rest. You know when you need it. After every draining Sunday, right? I foolishly thought I could go like the Energizer Bunny forever and never wear down. After all, I'm doing the Lord's work, right? You know what? I was wrong. Rest for the body, mind, and soul is God's gift to us if we will just take it. Draw aside, as Jesus did, for sweet times with your Father.

7. Enjoy and embrace where God has you. There are ways God has humbled you and devastating events threatened to topple you in ministry. There will also be times when God opens some exciting doors for you to walk through that you never even dreamed to imagine. Through it all, may I lastly encourage you, to stay true to the real you. Through the mundane and the glamorous ministry times in this life, it does no good to spend wishing you were someone else or somewhere else. Blessed is she who is content with her own capacity!

Whatever your next step looks like, keep stepping upward to the top of your present mountaintop. You can, with God's help.

Youth Ministry

Blake Housely

Youth Pastor | Park Crest Baptist Church | Springfield, MO

What's the next step? No really, what's the next step? When a student visits your youth ministry, how do you best connect with them following their visit? Give them a phone call? Personal visit? Connect on social media?

If I am going to be honest, I can't give you a sure-fire method to connect with them. However, I do think it is important to evaluate the method you currently use. Is it the most beneficial? Are you seeing results from the process? These are questions I asked myself when evaluating how we previously followed up with first-time guests.

We would start by getting information from them (address and phone number), then we would make a personal visit. Using this approach resulted in a high percentage of negative feedback. From my experience, this did not seem effective. I know this is a staple method in many churches, and if you are seeing results, keep it up. But, due to the negative feedback in our situation, I decided to get creative with new ways to connect with our guests.

When someone visits our student ministry small group, we connect them with a group of students to which we think they can relate. This enables four to five students to build a stronger connection with a guest. We then have them fill out a connection card. We ask for their address and social media handles along with other information as we previously had done, only now we utilize the information differently. We start by following them on social media from our student ministry outlets. If they follow back, then they receive a reminder about our youth ministry with every post. We have the small group personally sign a postcard which we mail to them the next day. This card gives them important information such as service times, how to locate us on social media, and our website. It also has a message that says, "Bring this card back for a free Andy's (popular frozen custard joint in Springfield) gift card." Not only does this encourage them to return, but it most likely will get into the hands of a parent in a non-confrontational way.

Is this the end-all method? Not at all. But, it's what we have tried in an effort to make a connection with students who visit our youth ministry. While I may not have the exact answer for your youth ministry, I encourage you to evaluate your method. Is it the most beneficial? Are you seeing results? If not, don't keep doing the same thing expecting different results. I do know getting a student to sit under the presentation of the Gospel a second time is worth every effort.

WHAT IS THE NEXT STEP?

1 CONNECTING PEOPLE TO YOUR CHURCH

By Shellie Dameron, Connections Director, Orchard Church, Denver, CO

Easter at Orchard Church in Denver, CO, is an exciting time! Last year over 2,700 attended our five services and this year we are praying for more than 3,000. We expect over 200 new families will join us to celebrate Christ's resurrection. Many of our families who attend regularly had their first experiences at Orchard on an Easter Sunday and we strive to make these new guests feel the love of Christ from the moment they step out of their cars until they return home. We are intentional to greet, host, and follow up not just on Easter, but every Sunday.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Outside are signs pointing to a tent in our courtyard with a banner that says, "New Here? Start Here." At this tent are trained, outgoing volunteers who greet guests and give them bags containing a logo cup and information about our church. One team member shows each guest around (locations of restrooms, free coffee and donuts, etc), helps them get their children checked into class, and takes them into the auditorium to find a seat. The goal is for our team members to connect with these guests, not to just feed them information. We ask guests to return to the tent afterwards and give us feedback on their experience. We want everyone to have a great experience from street to seat.

Connection cards are included in each newsletter in every service and we ask guests

to fill one out with their information with a promise they will receive a coupon in the mail for a free Chick-fil-A sandwich. It is amazing how enticing a chicken sandwich can be.

In our experience, most guests, especially Millennials, do not like to be singled out, so we do not recognize them publicly during the service. On Easter, we do ask everyone who attends (both members and guests) to fill out a connection card. This helps guests not feel singled out and allows us to get updated contact information for everyone. It also provides an opportunity to ask everyone to answer a question about his or her salvation.

FOLLOW UP

Follow-up begins Monday morning when we send all guests a handwritten thank you note from the pastor with the coupon. We make follow-up phone calls within the first 48 hours and answer any questions, and send an email encouraging them to take the next step by coming to our Starting Point Class. This email also contains a link to a guest survey. Anyone who accepted Christ is mailed a follow-up booklet. Pastor personally calls the guests on Thursday morning inviting them to come back. Church management software helps make our follow-up process easier and more efficient (we use Church Community Builder).

Here are some comments from our recent guests:

"It was great! I like the time frames and the message. Folks at the doors and entries are very friendly."

"I was greeted right when I walked in, given a tour, told about the different small groups, and directed to where the service was being held. Very welcoming!"

"I loved it! Definitely coming again! The environment was wonderful! Everybody was so happy to be at church, so friendly."

FOLLOW THROUGH

At Orchard we want to move a person from first-time guest to a passionate, reproducing follower of Christ. This is done by making the steps very close together. Someone who has never set foot in a church may find signing up for small groups or discipleship intimidating. That is why we developed a Starting Point Class, to give returning visitors information about the history, values, and vision of our church, and follow up with information on salvation and baptism. We encourage them to get in a small group and start serving.

As a growing church, we have a simple process to making disciples: reach, relate, reproduce. Our purpose is to make disciples who glorify God by reaching people for Jesus, relating them to other believers, and teaching them to reproduce followers of Christ.

REACH

Most first-time guests come Sunday morning. Therefore, at the end of every message the Gospel is presented with an opportunity to respond.

RELATE

We encourage everyone to join a small group. We have two semesters allowing us to push for sign-ups twice a year and foster easy multiplication of groups. We do not want people in the same group long term. In a large church it can be hard to feel connected, so our small groups are more than just Bible studies. There is intentional time for talking and getting to know each other. If someone in a group has a need, we ask the small group

meet it. That may mean taking a meal to someone, a hospital visit, or just giving a hug and prayer. We also encourage our groups to do at least one outreach/service project a semester. Nothing builds community like serving together.

REPRODUCE

Through our small groups we encourage individuals to be involved in discipleship, pairing a grounded believer who has been through our training class with a new believer. They meet weekly and go through a workbook. Discipleship isn't about the material as much as it is about the relationship. Our threefold purpose in discipleship: to establish the believer in the Word of God, to create

fellowship with other believers, and to do the work of the ministry. The work of the ministry is what Jesus did when He was on this earth. He made disciples. We do not feel we have made a disciple until he or she has disciplined someone else. It is spiritual multiplication.

Orchard Church does not believe it is the pastor's or our ministry team's job to do the work of the ministry. It is our job to equip people to do the work of the ministry (Ephesians 4:11-13). A healthy, growing, reproducing body of believers will be a light in the community. In reality, some of our future disciplined believers may be our guests this Easter. We want to help them as individuals to take the next step toward that end.

2 DEVELOPING LEADERS

By Keith Gillming, Pastor, Lighthouse Baptist Church, St. Louis, MO

It seems like every vocation has requirements for professional development except ministry. Many pastors have some kind of formal training, which is absolutely priceless for the foundation of their ministry, yet most would agree our culture has changed significantly since we departed the halls of our Bible colleges and seminaries.

Changing national values have left many of us feeling detached and out of step in our society. Frustration develops over how to relate in a post-Christian world, yet, so many do nothing to adapt their outreach and their churches eventually become ingrown and marginalize their effectiveness.

It was for that reason Lighthouse Baptist Church in St. Louis created an opportunity for pastors and their staff and lay-staff to gain

some professional development. Next Step Up is a practical Bible conference that has been going for ten years seeking to fulfill a niche for Bible-believing pastors around the region.

In football, players huddle up to get on the same page and to take steps to win the game. We all know fans don't pay to watch the huddle, but they sure appreciate the preparation when the play strategically accomplishes its goal. If the quarterback keeps everyone out of the loop, the play will fail every time. He must know the play and disseminate it to the whole team.

We are leaders under construction by the Lord, for the purpose of leading people from here to eternity. We will always be learning through life experiences, and through our mistakes. Second Timothy 2:15 says, "Be

diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

Diligence in ministry is an all-consuming task. Modern-day ministry is overwhelming. Today's pastor must be an authority on cultural trends in order to relate to a variety of ages, yet still stand firm. He must accept people where they are with the idea of helping them grow and mature, yet do it on a shoestring budget.

Bringing our folks to maturity is a never-ending undertaking. Statistics say only 25 percent of church members read their Bibles, and 23 percent admit they never pray. Couple that with the fact that only five percent of Christians have ever led someone to Christ, and we see the challenge for pastors.

“Leadership is not something you are born with; leaders are built a step at a time.”

God has always used leaders to accomplish His work. He used Moses to take His people out of Egypt and used Nehemiah when He needed the wall around Jerusalem built. We are the ones who will coordinate ministries, establish small-group structures, lift high the importance of worship, and inspire the church to reach lost people.

Jesus Christ modeled the foundation of leadership. It is one of character, servanthood, love, sacrifice, submission, evangelism, prayer, and spiritual growth as we yield to God's Holy Spirit. This is a lifetime process for the leader, not to mention he must have the ability and tools to lead others on the same path.

It has been rightly said, “To build a great person, keep the Great Commandment, and to build a great church, keep the Great Commission.” There is a personal side for the leader in his quest to be all God wants him to be and there is also a corporate side to leading others to do the same.

Ezra had “the good hand of His God upon him. For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the Law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach statutes and ordinances in Israel” (Ezra 7:9a-10). He was devout and studied

wholeheartedly. Then he taught others what he learned. This was key in seeing people's lives changed. This was key to motivating the people to return to God and put Him at the center of their lives.

Preaching Today says, “Leadership is an art, something to be learned over time not simply by reading books. Leadership is more tribal than scientific, more weaving of relationships than amassing of information.”

Leadership is not something you are born with; leaders are built a step at a time. It's like any construction project. You build a brick wall one brick at a time. The more brick you lay the more experienced you become. So it is with leadership. A leader is built one lesson and one experience at a time. Each experience and lesson teaches us something more about being a quality leader. Leaders need to understand they are developed by humbling adversity, humbling mistakes, and life experiences.

In our Next Step Up conference, we have sought to bring in several specialists to help pastors develop and grow in this present-day culture. Men like Eric Geiger, of Lifeway Inc., who wrote, *Simple Church*, and

Jeff Iorg, author and president of Golden Gate Theological Seminary, have been valuable to troubleshoot stalled ministries and help pastors cultivate a plan to win the day. The Lighthouse family has bought into this project by allocating \$10,000 every year to invest in these ministers and their churches. Many return to their churches with renewed passion and excitement about a new method to adapt to their church.

It is so important to continue education for your ministry. The beauty of this particular conference is its focus is not centered on helping just mega churches. Lighthouse is not a small church, but it is not a large church either. Averaging around 350 in two services, we share common methods for smaller and larger churches, so pastors can implement principles that relate directly to their size of ministry.

Let's be godly and growing men seeking to invest our lives with results that will last for all eternity for God's glory.

For more information about the Next Step Conference, contact Lighthouse Baptist Church at (314)291-6919.



3 SOUNDING THE CALL FOR FULL-TIME MINISTRY

By John Decker, Director of Admissions, Baptist Bible College, Springfield, MO

It happened at a youth camp in East Texas in 1994. I remember feeling God calling me to serve Him. I thought the feeling would pass, but I could not shake it. I knew no other career would satisfy my heart like serving God. My boyhood dreams of becoming a firefighter, a veterinarian, a Navy fighter pilot, or a bull

rider (I am from Texas!) paled in comparison to what God was calling me to do. No matter how hard I tried to rationalize, minimize, or deny the call of God on my life, I could no longer imagine doing anything with my life other than serving God in full-time ministry.

I was fortunate to have grown up in

an era when young men and women were encouraged to choose full-time ministry as a career. The call to surrender it all and live for Christ was constantly placed before the young people in my church. My pastor invested in me and challenged me to follow God with all my heart. Families encouraged their children

to accept and follow the challenge God placed before them. Bible colleges were full of young people excited about the call of God on their lives. When I started at BBC, I was overwhelmed by the number of people from all over the country who were being equipped to go out and change the world for Christ.

This is not the case today. Why is it there are not as many individuals surrendering their lives in service to Christ? Has God scaled back His calling? Is serving Christ no longer important?

When we consider how many churches are without pastors and mission fields are without missionaries, we see the need for Christian workers is greater than ever before. Is God still at work to raise up the next generation of leaders? What is keeping young people today from giving their lives to ministry? Some would say it is the Millennial generation's fault, lacking interest in and commitment to the church. I strongly believe it is more the fault of our churches — we are missing opportunities to reach out to this generation of young Christians and to challenge them with the possibility God may be calling them into ministry. We fail to set the challenge before them that was set before us.

In order to reach Millennials and inspire them to be in ministry, we must understand them better. Millennials and Generation Z are more “cause-driven” than previous generations — motivated to live for a cause greater than themselves. They want to sacrifice, live out that cause, and see real change in society. Compassion International, along with the Barna Research Group, conducted research into Americans' attitudes towards global poverty. They found 86 percent of people under the age of 40 believe Christians should be playing a strong or major role in alleviating poverty. It is not hard to find Millennials today gravitating towards causes such as combating human trafficking, social

injustice, and perceived or real corporate greed/criminal behavior.

We as pastors, youth pastors, and church leaders have a chance to engage this culture with the greatest cause of all time — sharing the only truth that will make a lasting change, the Gospel of Christ!

Barna research tells us our churches are full of Christian Millennials who believe church is the place to find answers to live a meaningful life. Barna also tells us 65 percent of Christians under the age of 32 are in our



A 2011 Barna study revealed that only 38% of youth pastors and 36% of senior pastors say they frequently discuss college plans with their students. The research among youth workers showed that conversations with students about college occur most frequently in churches with an ample number of adult assistants in the youth ministry, where there is a clear strategy for student ministry in the church, and in those churches that work effectively with teen leaders.

"What Teens Aspire to Do in Life, How Churches Can Help" June 14, 2011

small groups, youth groups, and worship services. They want church leaders to help them in this journey of finding God's will for their lives! Only one-third of Christian young adults feel called to their professions and 48 percent think God is calling them to different work but have not made that career change yet. It is entirely possible we have a very large group of young adults who feel the call of ministry but have not been told of or confronted with that possibility.

We have an opportunity to speak into the lives of these young people and show them feeding the hungry is great and fighting inequality is admirable, but there is nothing more important than impacting someone's

eternity. As church leaders, we must challenge them to take that next step, to surrender it all in pursuit of the “mark of the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus.”

It is time for us to challenge today's generation to consider full-time ministry and make it a viable option for them. Ask them: Who will step up and be the next pastor of our church? Who will be our next youth pastor? Worship leader? Executive pastor? Who will pastor our children and grandchildren? What if we started looking at our congregations

searching for the next church leader? What if we challenged and encouraged them to seek out what God might have in store for them? What if we were willing to invest in them and send them out? If this were to happen, we would see a great movement of God within our Fellowship. We could flood our country and the world with new, excited, and energized fellow soldiers and laborers.

So, how can the church engage this generation and help them find God's calling for their lives? Make the call to ministry a viable option for your people. One way to get young people excited about ministry is to get them involved. Set up internship programs within the church to help them seek and find their spiritual gifts. Many churches are moving towards

these internship programs or vocational discipleships and are seeing great success.

Have passion about full-time ministry when communicating to your church. Pastors and church leaders can greatly influence young people by sharing their stories of surrendering to the ministry and the ways in which God has worked in their lives.

Create a culture within your church that encourages and values those in full-time ministry. Build a team spirit between your congregation and those who are sent from your church. Put a vision before your church that helps them understand the need to train and send out this next generation of church leaders.

4

FOSTERING AN ATTITUDE OF GIVING

By Rick Blue, Assistant to the President, Baptist Bible College, Springfield, MO

By American law, I was required to feed, clothe, and educate my children, but that's not why I did it. I did it because I loved them. And because I loved them, I fed them much more than what was required by law. Because I loved them, I provided far more clothing than they needed. Because I loved them, I sacrificed and sent them to college when only high school was required by law. Because I loved them, I did far more than the law required. Love always does much more than law. Law says you have to, and often creates a begrudging heart. Love says you get to and creates a sacrificial heart.

Prior to Jesus, the Jews lived under a strict set of rules and commandments. The Old Testament law regulated their daily lives and their worship. They were told where to worship, when to rest, and how much to give. Their feast days were in Jerusalem; their rest was on the Sabbath; and their giving was designated as the tithe.

Under the New Covenant (Testament), the old law was replaced by a new law — the law of love. The ten commandments were

replaced by two commandments:

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets" (Matthew 22: 37-40).

Under the law of love, the feast days, the Sabbath, and the tithe became relics of the past. We are not required to keep the feasts. We are not required to rest on the Sabbath. We are not required to tithe. We have been given the privilege of doing far more. Love always does more. When the church was in its infancy, those Christians (often recently saved) thought nothing of selling houses, land, and possessions, and giving it joyfully.

In today's church, many Christians are more law-type givers than grace givers. The norm is giving a tithe or less. Giving sacrificially is not even on the radar. It is time for Christians to take the next step in

sacrificial giving. Tithing was a baby step required under the law. Sacrificial giving is a giant step of love under grace. It is no accident it was said of those early Christians, "Great grace was upon them" (Acts 4: 33).

The Apostle Paul saw it clearly when he wrote to the Corinthian Christians:

"But this I say, He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Corinthians 9: 6-7).

It is simply a matter of the heart. The majority of our churches do not have financial problems, they have heart problems. It was said of the Jerusalem church, "And with great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all." If we are ever going to have great power and great grace in our churches today, we have to have some Christians with great hearts.

12%

Among born again Christians, which includes both evangelicals and non-evangelicals, 12% tithe in 2012, which is on par with the average for the past decade.
www.barna.org

5

DEVELOPING COMMUNITY WITHIN THE CHURCH

By Scott Harrop

There is a cry from the human spirit that longs for friendship and community. But even in light of all the "social" connectivity and technology of this day and age, finding

true friends and community can be a challenge. The church should be a great resource for friendships, but how can we help people take the next step from being a guest

to being an involved member of the thriving church community?

One challenge to true friendship is the mobility of our culture. It is reported the

average American will move 14 times in his or her lifetime? Usually, about the time you get to know someone and establish a friendship (or they get plugged into the ministry), they move away. Think of it this way, in the next decade, almost half of your neighbors will move out and new people will move in.

TIME'S UP

Developing friendships and community takes time, energy, and effort. It requires an investment (i.e., allotting resources) in others. No doubt, life in the 21st century is lived at a frenetic pace. Most of us struggle to maintain our schedules as is, let alone if we give up some of our precious time for the sake of others. We often don't have the relational energy or make time to put forth the effort.

BURN UNIT

How many times have you given your heart to someone else only to have that trust and friendship betrayed? How many times has a friend made a promise but didn't come through? While Jesus walked on earth he experienced that pain. He gathered 12 men to be his disciples and he poured his life into them, but one by one they let him down. They abandoned him in his time of need and left him to face his accusers alone.

God made us relational beings, but we are hurt relational beings. We guard our hearts for fear we might get hurt again, so we settle for superficial relationships — and this includes relationships in the church. We are content to spend time talking about the weather, sports, current events, or what was on TV last night.

"But how do I get close to someone without the risk of getting hurt?" The answer is, you can't. You can keep walls up close and tight, and plenty of people choose to do just that. Whether we attend a church or work at a church, the struggle is real. Sure, you won't get hurt, but you also won't have the joy and the thrill of doing life with others. God created you and me to live in community!

God put us on this earth to love one another, care for one another, cry with one another, and rejoice with one another. In spite of the challenges, how do we do this within the church so everyone who walks in the doors has an opportunity to feel they are part of this community?

SEEK INTENTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Sustained life change occurs as we grow in a relationship with Christ. This happens best when we seek out relationships with others who are seeking this same goal. Surround yourself with people who are seeking God and His kingdom. Jesus chose 12 men; you and I would be wise to do the same.

GET INTO COMMUNITY

Jesus took a relational risk with 12 men, and because of it, their lives were changed and the world was changed. God intends for us to live on purpose and for His purpose, and that can be done with others, but the choice is up to us. Whether it's small groups, Bible classes, or whatever your church offers, make sure there is a community-building spirit that welcomes and encourages newcomers. After all, if those guests weren't seeking friendship and community, they wouldn't have walked through the doors in the first place.

FRIENDSHIP FEEDS THE FLOCK

Faith may unite congregations, but friendship, it appears, sustains them. A 2004 study commissioned by Group Publishing, Inc., and administered by The Gallup Organization, examined the role friendship plays in the relationships congregation members have with the rest of their congregation and with God. The study provides strong evidence that congregation members are able to live out their faith more fully in an atmosphere that fosters fellowship, rather than isolation. And friendship — best friendship in particular — is the tie that binds.

CHURCH ATTENDANCE

Thirty-nine percent of congregation members say their best friend attends the same church, while 59% say he or she does not. What does that mean for religious leaders? Maybe plenty, in terms of attendance. Congregation members whose best friends attend their church tend to behave differently from the rest. Seventy-two percent of members who say their best friend is in their congregation attend church at least once a week, compared with 51% of those who don't.

BELONGING AND BEST FRIENDSHIP

Eighty-four percent of those with best friends at church "strongly agree" their congregation makes them feel like they belong, compared with 71% of those who do not have a best friend at church. And 82% of those with a best friend "strongly agree" that the spiritual leaders of their congregations care for them as people, compared with 67% of those without a best friend.

SPIRITUAL COMMITMENT

Having a best friend in one's congregation appears to be linked to one's individual spiritual commitment as well. More than 8 in 10 (82%) of those with best friends "strongly agree" they are spiritually committed individuals; 74% "strongly agree" their faith is involved in every aspect of their lives; and 69% spend time in worship or prayer every day.

BOTTOM LINE

Sometimes the power of a personal relationship reaches beyond the bounds of the relationship itself. The relationship between best friends in a congregation seems to bind those friends more tightly to the spiritual community, strengthening their relationships with others. The "best friend" bond also seems to be related to members' connection with God, as congregation members with best friends in their churches express a deeper spirituality than those without best friends.

by Albert L. Winseman, D. Min.
Gallup Religion and Social Trends Editor
www.gallup.com

STRENGTHENING OUR FELLOWSHIP

By Eddie Lyons, BBFI President, Pastor, High Street Baptist Church, Springfield, MO

It is great to see a resurgence of activity and interest in the Baptist Bible Fellowship. I am encouraged when I hear reports of what is going on in some of our state fellowships. These leaders are passionate and are working together to advance the Gospel here and abroad.

Earlier this year, I attended the California BBF meeting hosted by chairman Brian Moore. We heard reports of revitalized churches, missionary outreaches across the border into Mexico, and planted churches. There were leaders in their 20s, 30s, 40s, 50s, and 60s. The camaraderie, encouragement, and inspiration filled the room. The meeting wrapped up with laying hands on the church planters and praying for them. It was a true picture of fellowship.

Recently I spoke to the new chairman of the Massachusetts BBF, John Kerns. John recently took over leadership from Kurt Rowe who served as the leader for 18 years. They honored Rowe for his faithful service. Their meeting included over 60 pastors and staff members. Former BBFI President Linzy Slayden challenged them to remain faithful to their calling. John described a great unity and cooperation between pastors who, in his words, were “old school and new school” in their philosophy.

This Fellowship is important. What we can do together is greater than any of us can accomplish alone. Together we have planted churches and sent missionaries around the world. When we come together we share stories of how the power of the Gospel is

displayed in the changed lives of people in our ministries.

For the Baptist Bible Fellowship to move forward we must do three things.

STRENGTHEN THE GRASSROOTS

The Baptist Bible Fellowship is a network of leaders who have chosen to work together for the advancement of the Gospel. What we need is strong leadership at the state level who will bring pastors and leaders together.

One of the first initiatives of our executive committee was to develop a website highlighting state fellowships. We now have in one location a picture of the grassroots of the Baptist Bible Fellowship. We are able to see the state officers, state bylaws and policies, meeting schedules, recent church plants, and sent missionaries. This website provides organization, communication, and interconnection among the states. We can see states that do not have any local fellowship, implying a goal for future development.

Our virtual presence signals to leaders we are open to their participation if they agree with our 20 Articles of Faith. When we welcome new leaders and churches into our Fellowship, we strengthen the grassroots.

I am grateful for our state officers who serve within this Fellowship. They are making a difference.

PROTECT THE UNITY

The local church is Jesus’ plan to reach this world. The genius of the local church is it allows the Gospel to find full expression

within local cultures and contexts. Even within a single city there should be diversity. Our founders identified the critical doctrines in the 20 Articles of Faith — providing purity of doctrine and diversity of practice. We must acknowledge the great diversity within our Fellowship. Protecting the unity means we must be free to include the many different churches that share our doctrine. When we do not protect the unity and freedom, we invite splintering that weakens our collective efforts. When unity is not protected, pastors are not welcomed and are in fact pushed away. Every pastor matters and every church is important in this Fellowship.

CREATE A CULTURE OF ENCOURAGEMENT AND INSPIRATION

Every pastor and leader needs encouragement and inspiration. Because of the Baptist Bible Fellowship, no pastor or leader leads alone. No church planter plants alone. No missionary goes alone.

There is something encouraging about sharing hurts, hardships, and challenges with other leaders who, unlike most people in your life, do understand. The shared wisdom that comes in casual conversations can be life-giving.

In my time as BBFI president, I have been privileged to hear the success stories within our Fellowship. I sat with a pastor working to revitalize a church whose numbers had been shrinking. Since the time he took over, the church has doubled in attendance. I spoke with a church planter who now watches former drug addicts who have come to Christ

**“When unity is not protected, pastors are not welcomed and are in fact pushed away.
Every pastor matters and every church is important ...”**

stand before groups and teach the Bible. I love to hear the boldness and the courage of new church planters. Regardless of the odds, these men are stepping out in faith. It is inspiring to hear how growing churches built new and larger buildings and now have seen the church grow even more. One church I visited started in a school and then built a building. The church grew to the point they are back at

a school to accommodate the crowds, while they work to build an even bigger facility. Men and women are still surrendering to be career missionaries and, because of this Fellowship, they have raised the support they need to go.

All these stories encourage and inspire, and there are many of them. The Baptist Bible Fellowship continues to make a difference. Bound together by our love for the Gospel, we

do so much more together than we could ever do alone.

Our Fellowship has a bright future if we will continue to strengthen the grassroots, protect the unity, and create a culture of encouragement and inspiration. What we need are pastors, missionaries, and church staff to take the next step in their commitment to this great Fellowship.

7 REACHING YOUR COMMUNITY

By Elmer Towns, co-founder of Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA

Our churches are to evangelize their neighborhoods for Christ. Many churches have utilized one-week evangelistic crusades, or an evangelist for a giant rally on Sunday. Some churches use Friend Day, a program for reaching unsaved family and friends. All these are strong endeavors because the Great Commission commanded churches to evangelize the world in their lifetime.

What is the next step to reaching non-Christian families in your neighborhood, bringing them to Christ and then disciplining them in your church? Perhaps the next step is a Bless the Children day.

A Bless the Children campaign is designed to attract non-Christian families in your neighborhood to your church to win them to Christ. Most parents love their children and want the best for them. When your church shows genuine love to their children and takes interest in their lives, barriers can be broken and people can be won to Christ.

Begin by getting the word out. You can do a direct mail campaign or place a door hanger

on every home in your neighborhood inviting your neighbors to bring their entire families to church so their children can be blessed by God. Catholics have sponsored Bless the Animal or Bless the Fleet services, but Jesus blessed the children (Mark 10:13-16).

In our day of public school shootings, drug abuse, sexual crimes, anti-God teaching of evolution, and extreme violence, seemingly protected by the courts, families seek hope for their children. Jesus blessed the children, giving them spiritual covering from his heavenly Father. It's not child baptism, nor is it church membership, or even getting their names on a roll. Blessing means "adding value" and your church can pray for God to add spiritual protection and value to children. After the blessing your church can supply a certificate to each child with a prayer and scripture to remind them of the event.

Part of that day's sermon should be a challenge to parents to add value to their children by daily Bible reading, prayer, and discussion of God's plan for their lives.

As I began to understand the great need for a resource in this area, I was burdened to

put together *The Family Prayer Bible* three years ago. *The Family Prayer Bible* has a Bible story for each day of the year and includes talking points, an application to life, a memory verse, and a prayer for the day. This Bible is a tool for parents to daily bless their children. When the families or child complete the year, they can email for a certificate of completion.

A church in Ventura, CA, hosted a Bless the Children day and hung an invitation on every doorknob in their section of the city. They prayed and asked God to use their outreach efforts. The church was overwhelmed with families bringing all their children to the Sunday worship service. The auditorium was packed with families; extra chairs were brought in. The children were not dressed in Sunday church clothing. There was a lot of movement during the services and of course babies crying. It's no surprise, when children are not raised in church, they don't know how to behave in the house of God! But God understands children, and smiles.

Pastors and elders, each with their spouse, were placed around the sanctuary

and outside in the yard and patio. The prayer teams of husbands and wives laid hands on the head of each child, praying for every child by name and according to a particular need. Each prayer team had a helper to register names for the prayer team, including a particular prayer need for each child. The helper also filled out the certificate for each child to take home.

FOLLOW-UP

Research tells us people make a decision for

Christ after they visit a church three times and they have seven touches with the church. This is called the “law of three hearings and seven touches.” So build into your Bless the Children outreach program a follow-up visit to the home of each family that attends. Get them to return the next Sunday to continue what was started with their first visit on Bless the Children day.

Then put together an email campaign to remind them of daily Bible reading with their children. Also include a phone call campaign

that is another encouragement. The greater the follow-up the greater the potential to see lives changed.

There are many great ways of doing outreach in your community, but perhaps a Bless the Children campaign could be a great next step for your church’s outreach to families to extend God’s blessing to them.

The Family Prayer Bible and Praying for Your Children are available at Amazon.com



WHAT IS THE NEXT STEP?

THE RIGHT ANGLE

BIBLICAL WISDOM FOR A CONTEMPORARY WORLD

By Kevin Carson

A ● The recent death of Judge Antonin Scalia provides the context for greater political upheaval throughout this election year. Many Christians voiced their views on social media, often according to political party lines, as to whether President Obama should be able to select a replacement for Judge Scalia. Both in print and on air, the majority of conversations stems primarily from personal opinion.

WHAT DOES THE CONSTITUTION REQUIRE?

In reality, it says very little. Under Article II, which concerns the position and power of the President, Section 2, it reads:

[The President] He shall have Power, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, to make Treaties, provided two thirds of the Senators present concur; and he shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls, Judges of the supreme Court, and all other Officers of the United States, whose Appointments are not herein otherwise provided for, and which shall be established by Law: but the Congress may by Law vest the Appointment of such inferior Officers, as they think proper, in the President alone, in the Courts of Law, or in the Heads of Departments.

The President shall have Power to fill up all Vacancies that may happen during the Recess of the Senate, by granting Commissions which shall expire at the End of their next Session. (Underlined for emphasis)

Basically, the President has two options according to the Constitution.

First option: the President can appoint a nominee to fill the vacancy during the Senate's Session. If this is President Obama's choice, the Senate then has the responsibility to give advice and consent. In other words, the Senate must confirm the nominee before that person becomes a Supreme Court Justice.

Second option: the President can appoint an individual to fill the vacancy during any Senate recess this year. This person would immediately become a Supreme Court Justice and would remain so until the end of this Supreme Court Session.

WHAT DOES THE CONSTITUTION NOT SAY?

The Constitution is silent regarding a number of talking points online and in the media. Many individuals prefer the President to wait to nominate based on ethical reasons. Some say the Senate must immediately act upon any nomination by the President. Others insist there must not be a vacancy as there are nine seats, so there must be nine Justices. However, as interesting as these questions may be, these issues are political issues only, where each person's personal opinion reigns. None of these issues are addressed in the Constitution. The Constitution is silent on how soon the President must make an appointment, how soon the Senate must hold confirmation hearings, and on how many Justices (ie., seats available) must sit on the Supreme Court. Initially, there were six Justices determined by the first Judicial Act in 1789; since this time, by vote of Congress the number of Justices have been as few as five and as many as ten. Only a quorum of Justices is required to do business.

Q.

Should President Obama be able to select a replacement for Antonin Scalia in the Supreme Court?

SO SHOULD PRESIDENT OBAMA APPOINT A REPLACEMENT?

Constitutionally, yes — and some presidents have in their final year. Politically, it most likely depends on your political party as to your answer. Likewise, nothing forces the Senate to hold confirmation hearings in this session regardless of the President's choice — which has happened in the past as well. No doubt, many of us who enjoy U.S. citizenship and who also are Christians desire one outcome or another, as we recognize the stewardship of God's grace in our lives.

SO HOW DO WE RESPOND TO THIS PRESENT POLITICAL CLIMATE?

Whether we agree or not with the actions of the President or the Senate, our responsibility stays the same. We can pray for the President and the Senate. We can trust our God Who is in control. We can participate in the American political process first as Christians, then as U.S. citizens. We can look forward to Jesus' return.

FOR CHRISTIANS TO PONDER

- **The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD.** Proverbs 21:1
- **All Christians are to respect the office of President.** 1 Peter 2:17
- **God is in control, even in politics.** Daniel 2:21
- **Social media use must be governed by wisdom and righteousness.** Ephesians 4:29; Colossians 4:5-6
- **Christians enjoy citizenship in Heaven.** Philippians 3:20; Colossians 3:1-4
- **The hope of Heaven continues to build in every believer through the ministry of the Spirit.** 2 Corinthians 5:1-10

Have a question?

Submit your question to TheRightAngle@Tribune.org. Due to space limitations, not all questions may be answered in print. Questions that do appear in this section will have all personal identification removed. For questions requiring answers beyond the scope of a simple Q&A forum such as this, the Tribune recommends you contact a local biblical counselor. The advice given here is not a substitute for a personal conversation with your local biblical counselor.

Kevin Carson serves as department chair of Biblical Counseling at Baptist Bible College and Theological Seminary in Springfield, MO. He is the pastor of Sunrise Baptist Church in Ozark, MO.

BAPTISTS IN POLAND

Modern Poland is a country of 40 million souls, including, at present, something over a million resident Ukrainians, many being refugees from the war in Eastern Ukraine. During a recent teaching trip for International Baptist Bible College (led by BBFI missionary Ron Minton), I spent two weeks in Gdansk (formerly Danzig) on the shores of the Baltic Sea, where the famous Solidarity labor strike against the communist government occurred in 1980 (it is easy to tell how that turned out — the Gdansk airport is named in honor of the strike leader Lech Walesa). A visit to the gates of the shipyards and the memorial there was a rather emotional experience for me.

Someone well said that the Poles made the strategic geographical mistake of settling between the Russians and the Germans, both commonly bellicose. As a consequence, over the past several centuries the borders of Poland have been in a nearly constant state of change — sometimes expanding, sometimes contracting (and even for a time completely disappearing), and at times shifting notably to the east or to the west (this latter the present condition). As recently as World War I, much of today's western and northeastern Poland was part of Germany, Gdansk being then known as Danzig (and actually a German city until after World War II). With post-war relocation of populations, the vast majority of Poland's residents today are ethnically and linguistically Polish.

After the collapse of the Iron Curtain in 1989-1990, Poland re-oriented itself toward the West, joining NATO and later the European Economic Community (they still have their own currency, the *zloty*). While still much behind the more prosperous nations of Europe in per capita income, Poland is decidedly far ahead of Ukraine and several other nations formerly part of the Soviet bloc.

A common perception of Poland is it is among the most Catholic of Catholic-dominated nations. A Baptist pastor informed me that while the great majority of Poles are Catholic by virtue of involuntary infant baptism, most are very largely secularized with the Catholic Church having little practical importance or influence in their lives. With such a large percentage of the population being Catholic, evangelism in Poland might be compared, as it was by that pastor, to evangelism in Utah, where anyone who is not part of the dominant religion is looked upon as on the fringe, almost a non-entity.

First Baptist Church of Gdansk was formed in 1946 (celebrating 70 years of existence in February this year). Their property formerly belonged to a German congregation. Under communism (1948-1989), the church, as with other Baptist congregations, endured periodic persecution from the dominant Roman Catholic Church and the atheistic communist government, though frequently these two entities were more commonly at each other's throats, leaving Baptists alone. Or, as one man said to me, "When the dog and the cat are fighting, the mice may dance." Over its seven decades, the church has grown, and has served as the mother church for about half a dozen church plants. With more than 200 members, it is one of Poland's largest Baptist congregations.

During the communist era, Bibles were not commonplace, but they were available to some degree, though the version used of necessity up until 1975 was an archaic, Reformation-era translation. A more recent translation into current Polish is used today.

There are about 7,000 members among 90 Baptist churches in Poland today (by contrast, Jehovah's Witnesses claim over 100,000 adherents). Most of the churches are quite small — less than 50 members; the work of church planting is ongoing. I was privileged to visit a family in a village near Gdansk that is working toward beginning a new church there. Some 40 of the churches are without pastors, in part due to the difficulty of simultaneously working a secular job and leading a congregation, most of the churches being too small to financially support a full-time pastor. There is a seminary in Warsaw with 50 to 60 students, so something is being done to cover the pastor shortage, though it will be years before the present need is met, to say nothing about providing leaders for new churches.

What is needed for Baptists of Poland? Of course more called and trained men to lead the existing churches, and also a continuing and expanding process of church planting in the cities and towns that have no churches yet. The pastor in Gdansk told me what is needed is persecution, a seemingly odd statement, though his meaning was that such opposition compels believers to examine and strengthen their level of commitment to Christ and the spread of the Gospel. Like water, Biblical Christianity, when put under pressure, expands. We, too, have a great need to be more serious about our service to God.



URBAN CURRENT

No justice, no peace

I was shocked! Not by the video, but the scripture staring at me days after the video had been released. The mayor had warned the city, it would be difficult to watch. The video would show 17-year-old Laquan McDonald being shot by a white Chicago police officer 16 times. All the police reports filed after the incident said the black youth had been facing and moving toward the police officer with a sharp object, possibly a knife. The video would show the black youth walking away from the officer. Also, it was revealed Laquan was killed by the second bullet, though he was shot 14 more times while he lay on the pavement.

The heart-wrenching clip was played over and over on every media outlet for several days. I watched Laquan stumble after the first two shots, falling in the street.

The city was outraged. No one believed the mayor regarding his timing of the video release. What people assumed was he delayed release because it would have impacted his faltering campaign for re-election. Nobody believed the State's Attorney's claim that it took 400 days to prepare and file charges.

During this same week, I was preparing to preach "The Global Glory of God" from Isaiah 60 for World AIDS Day. In preparation, I was reading the preceding chapter. I have read Isaiah 59 many times, but with the video playing in my head, I was jolted!

"The way of peace they do not know and there is no justice in their paths. They have made their roads crooked. No one who treads on them knows peace (verse 8).

"Therefore justice is far from us and righteousness does not overtake us ... (verse 9).

"Justice is turned back and righteousness stands far away. For truth has stumbled in the public squares and uprightness cannot enter" (verse 14).

I stopped. Re-read. I read again. "Truth has stumbled in the street." Laquan in the street. The political maneuvering. The deception. Familiar with the street chant "No justice, no

peace," I began to see the scriptural link between truth, justice, and peace. The missing element is truth. No truth, no justice.

We've rejected God. We've thrown truth overboard. We want political correctness, never mind the hard, cold, restrictive, fun-hating, life-quenching, freedom-stomping reality of truth.

I made the following statement that Sunday:

"Every now and again, the ugliness and corruption Chicago is known for around the world, erupts in a way that leaves the most calloused among us shaking our heads and holding our hearts.

Laquan McDonald's death is a tragedy as surely as his life was and both are equal cause to cry out to God in desperation and agony.

The power structure in this city has no credibility in this matter. The actions of all involved play to our deepest suspicions and greatest fears. To remove a figure head or two is nothing more than political expediency and does nothing to bring transparency and integrity.

As citizens we must face up to the reality that this is the power structure we support every time we go to the polls. We keep this system in place and functioning.

Our hearts break over Laquan's tragic life and its terrible end.

We pray for the mayor and other public officials to "change their minds" about how they do their jobs. The Bible word for changing your mind is "repent."

We pray that the citizenry will change their minds about who they allow in office.

We are thankful we live in a land where we still have choices."

I'm sorry, (when people use this phrase they're not sorry for what they're saying, they're sorry for saying something upsetting to someone), but when I hear "No justice, no peace," I ask myself "Who runs these cities?"

Chicago, New York, Baltimore, New

Orleans, Cleveland, Detroit, anyone?

The party of the people. The party claiming to champion civil rights. The party that creates jobs. The party that creates wonderful school systems. The party of compassion.

Last April, Baltimore was in an uproar over Freddy Grays' death in police custody. Everybody in power was under fire. All in power were Democrats. Democrats who received \$1.8 billion from President Obama's stimulus just a few years ago. Did Sandtown become a paradise? Did the schools improve? Was poverty diminished? Money does not bring truth, buy justice, or purchase peace.

The Democratic machine has promoted and preserved housing segregation in Chicago for two generations through the federally funded Chicago Housing Authority.

What party runs these cities? What's that? I can't hear you. Who votes for these people election after election?

Republicans, while sniffing at Democratic urban disaster, like Lot, got up and took their herds to the "well-watered lands." Their realtors block-busted, their bankers red-lined, their landlords leeches, and their preachers preached the American Dream instead of "the kingdom of God." Just saying. There's enough guilt to go around.

Without truth, there is no chance of justice. Peace will be elusive. I'm so glad our hope is not political. There is a Redeemer! (verse 20).

Jesus is truth. He is justice. He is peace. He is coming. Meanwhile, we will be salt, and light, and hope by living out truth in a desperate world.

*No Justice No Peace, Isaiah 59 exposition,
C. Lyons, 2.28.16, armitagechurch.org/resources/media*

*by Charles Lyons, Pastor
Armitage Baptist Church,
Chicago, Illinois
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EDDIE LYONS

Pastor, Highstreet Baptist Church
President of Baptist Bible Fellowship International
Springfield, Missouri

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SEOUL, KOREA

BBFI GLOBAL FELLOWSHIP MEETING HELD IN SEOUL



The BBFI Global Fellowship Meeting took place right as this issue of the Tribune was going to publication. Above are a few photos from opening night. A more in-depth report will appear in the May issue of the Tribune.

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YORBA LINDA, CA

CROSSPOINTE CHURCH HOSTS REVITALIZATION CONFERENCE AND CA BBF MEETING

Crosspointe Church and the California Baptist Bible Fellowship hosted over 100 attendees for the Revitalization Conference February 15-17. Attendees were challenged by church leadership authors Gary McIntosh and Larry Osborne. McIntosh, professor of

Christian Ministry and Leadership at Talbot School of Theology, Biola University, and president of the Church Growth Network, spoke on organizational leadership and shared key insights. Larry Osborne, senior pastor of North Coast Church, Vista, CA, and author of

books such as *Sticky Church* and *Sticky Teams* spoke on “Change and Innovation and the Dirty Little Secret” and leadership, based on I Peter chapter five. Brian Moore, host pastor, spoke on the topics of developing a leadership pipeline and self-leadership. For more information about future Revitalization Conferences contact Crosspointe Church at (714) 777-3440.



SPRINGFIELD, MO

BBFI ELECTIONS

The Baptist Bible Fellowship will hold an election for the officers who constitute the Executive Committee. The following is the section of the BBFI bylaws that governs the election:

Article VI, Section 2a. The President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer shall be elected biennially. These officers constitute the Executive Committee. The Directors will serve as the nominating committee and will present nominations at the National Fellowship by May. 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.

Nominations will be received at the meeting of the National Directors Monday during the May Fellowship Meeting. A ballot will be approved by the Directors, and it will be made available to eligible pastors in the plenary business session during the May Fellowship Meeting.

Pastors attending the May meeting can cast their ballots at that time, or they may choose to mail the ballot to the BBFI Mission Office, so long as it is submitted before July 1. Likewise, pastors who are unable to attend the May meeting may request a ballot from the BBFI Mission Office and return it by mail by July 1.

A copy of the complete bylaws is available electronically at www.bbfi.org on the link “About Us.”

BBFI President Eddie Lyons and BBFI Communication Director Randy Harp were special guests for the California state fellowship meeting held at Crosspointe Church in Yorba Linda. State Chairman Brian Moore shared several positive reports during the business meeting. Many church planters in the state reported growth of their churches and plans to start more churches. Steve Boshen, pastor of Ocean View Church in San Diego, reported on his church’s short-term mission trips to Mexico and a future church plant in Tijuana.

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JEFFERSON CITY, TN

MARK CAMPBELL INSTALLED AS NEW PASTOR AT FAITH BAPTIST

Sunday, February 17 Faith Baptist Church held an installation service to formally introduce Mark Campbell as senior pastor. Campbell served as the church's associate pastor for 24 years under senior pastor David Cross, who passed away in 2015 after serving as pastor for 31 years. At the installation service, charges were

given to Campbell and the members of the church, respectively; confirming their commitment to each other and to the Lord Jesus Christ. That evening there was fellowship held in honor of Campbell and his family.



Mark and Terri Campbell (center) with their children.

MISSIONARY LETTERS

DAVE & PEGGY DISNEY • CHILE

In one church we visited this furlough, the pastor's son was baptized in the Sunday morning service. Afterwards, he came and gave us a dime. He said he wanted to give what he had to help the missionaries in Chile. Were so impressed! The very first thing this young boy did after taking his first step of obedience to the Lord in baptism was to give a gift for world evangelization. May God bless his life and use him for his glory.

KEN BOARD • JAPAN

"Why did Christ die on the cross?" That was Mr. Watanabe's question. When I heard it, I was both happy and sad. I was happy because his question was the kind of response I have been trying to elicit from my Friday English classes. I welcomed

the opportunity to tell him Christ died on the cross for him. I was sad because he is in his seventies and until now no one has ever told him why Christ died on the cross.

CHRIS & SONYA GOODMAN • AUSTRALIA

Joanna has a Catholic background and her husband, Jason, has no religious background whatsoever. Joanna shared with us that her son told his father, "God created me." Jason said, "No, your mother created you." The child then responded, "Well, God created my mummy who then created me." This response put Jason in his place and he didn't know what to say. Isn't it wonderful to see the children's Bible teachings impacting the whole family? We continue to build a friendship with this young family and

look forward to what the Lord will do with them. Please pray for their salvation.

JAMES & LORI BRADLEY • MEXICO CITY

While we were in the U.S., our friend and English student, Mario, came to the church looking for us. When we returned, we tried contacting him, but his cell was not working. This past Saturday Mario came to the church to speak with James. He shared his wife had been kidnapped and then killed. He was consumed with grief and was seeking comfort. God gave James the words Mario needed, first for salvation as he prayed to receive Christ as his Savior and then for consolation and hope available to us through our relationship with Jesus Christ. It's at times like these we are so thankful God placed us in our part of Mexico City to minister to people like Mario.

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SPRINGFIELD, MO

TROPHIES OF GRACE COMES TO BAPTIST TEMPLE BEAST FEAST

More than 10,000 inches of antlers were on display January 29 for the seventh annual Beast Feast sponsored by Baptist Temple in Springfield, MO. The 27 monster buck replicas came courtesy of Trophies of Grace, a ministry based in Molino, FL.

This year's Beast Feast was attended by 245 hunting and fishing enthusiasts and included a catered dinner, a wild game taste contest, free t-shirts, and dozens of door prizes.

For Baptist Temple, Pastor

Mark Rounsaville and Associate, Ike Porter, this event is about reaching people with the Gospel. Special speaker Gary Dedmon, pastor of the Diggins Baptist Church, is a noted speaker for such events and often draws on his extensive hunting experiences to illustrate his points.

In addition to sharing the Gospel, the team at Baptist Temple encouraged guests to return for other activities, including youth camp, the annual skeet shoot, and a five-part video Bible study featuring the cast of *Duck Dynasty*.



WITH THE LORD

SAN ANGELO, TX

NEAL BRILLHART

Long-time pastor Neal Brillhart, 86, passed away peacefully at his home February 15, 2016. Brillhart was born September 25, 1929, near Mapleton, KS. After graduating from Baptist Bible College he started New Testament Baptist Church in Girard, KS. He pastored West Side Baptist Church in Emporia, KS, for 15 years before moving to San Angelo, TX, where he pastored Baptist Temple Church (currently Lifepoint Baptist Church) for 29 years. After formally retiring from the pulpit, he remained pastor emeritus and taught a Sunday school class for another 12 years.

He is survived by his wife of 63 years, June, two daughters, one son, and many grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Services were held February 20, 2016, at Lifepoint Baptist Church.

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Taking *your* next step

By Randy Harp

Throughout this issue we have emphasized the importance of taking the next step. We have attempted to make application for both the local church and its leadership as well as for all Christ-followers in general. One truth I hope you have been reminded of is that you cannot stay the same. There is no neutral. The unfortunate reality, however, is that unless there is an intentional strategy, we all have the tendency to coast.

Now that you have been reminded of this truth what is your next step? Take some time and work through each category, writing down an intentional next step for you and/or your ministry. Writing down your thoughts will help to clarify exactly how God is working in your life.



NOTES

IN YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD (see page 6)

(Ephesians 4:1)

- Write a Bible-reading plan for the next two months.
- Write the titles of two books you can read.
- Write one thing you can do to step out of your comfort zone.

IN PERSONAL LEADERSHIP (see page 7)

(Luke 2:52)

What books are you reading? What are you listening to? Who are you surrounding yourself with? Write a plan to grow in your personal leadership.

IN PERSONAL FINANCES (see page 16)

(2 Corinthians 9:6-7)

Write a plan to help you put God first in your finances. (You might consider researching Dave Ramsey's "7 Baby Steps")

IN DEVELOPING COMMUNITY (see page 16)

(Acts 2:42)

Write the name of at least one person you can spend more time with.

IN CONNECTING PEOPLE TO YOUR CHURCH (see page 12)

(Hebrews 10:25)

- Pastors, write a plan to help guests take their next step with your church.

IN OUTREACH (see page 19)

(Mark 10:13-16)

- Pastors, write a plan to connect more unchurched families to your church. (You might consider the "Bless the Children" campaign.)

IN SURRENDERING TO SERVE (see page 14)

(Isaiah 6:8)

- Pastors, write the name of one person in your church you believe God might be calling to full-time, vocational ministry. (Consider investing time with this person and share with them your personal call to ministry.)


IN OUR FELLOWSHIP (see page 18)

Philippians 1:3-5)

- Pastors, write the name of another pastor you can call and encourage this week. (You might consider a different person each week.)

MARCH 2016

PRAYER CALENDAR

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1  MISSIONARY Scott & Norma Edwards <i>Portugal</i>	2  CHAPLAIN LCmdr Steven & Jennifer Benefield <i>U.S. Navy</i>	3  MISSIONARY William & Kathleen Busch <i>Germany</i>	4  T.E.A.M. MISSIONARY Brandon & Rachel Adams <i>Kenya</i>	5  MISSIONARY Don & Delores Swearingin <i>Mexico</i>
6  MISSIONARY Earl & Joyce Koon <i>Australia</i>	7  MISSIONARY John & Marcia Riggs <i>Zambia</i>	8  MISSIONARY Bill & Jane Coley <i>Kenya</i>	9  MISSIONARY Betty Lou Holske <i>Retired</i>	10  MISSIONARY Jim & Barbie Waters <i>Zambia</i>	11  MISSIONARY Joshua & Ashley Bell <i>England</i>	12  MISSIONARY Jonathan & Roberta Steffy <i>Philippines</i>
13  WORKERS IN Restricted Access Nations	14  MISSIONARY Ron & Vicki Letts <i>Australia</i>	15  BBFI MISSION OFFICE - SPRINGFIELD, MO Paul Hylton <i>Associate Mission Director</i>	16  MISSIONARY Tony Pizano <i>Mexico</i>	17  T.E.A.M. MISSIONARY Ali Alexander <i>Colombia</i>	18  MISSIONARY Elmo & Kathryn Compton <i>Peru</i>	19  MISSIONARY Bill & Barbara Neel <i>Japan</i>
20  MISSIONARY David & Candyce Homer <i>Taiwan</i>	21  MISSIONARY Dalton & Paulette Walker <i>New Zealand</i>	22  MISSIONARY Brian & Jaidy Brown <i>Mexico</i>	23  Baptist Bible College <i>Springfield, MO</i>	24  MISSIONARY Larry & Martha Stringfield <i>Kenya</i>	25  MISSIONARY Mike & Jill Ivey <i>Korea</i>	26  MISSIONARY John & Pam Quinlan <i>Philippines</i>
27  MISSIONARY Ron & Christine Enoch <i>South Sudan</i>	28  Church Planters	29  MISSIONARY Sam & Carita Masters <i>Argentina</i>	30  MISSIONARY Ray & Wanda Hoover <i>Ethiopia</i>	31  MISSIONARY Greg & Michelle Windell <i>Kenya</i>		

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Martin Luther

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