

BAPTIST BIBLE TRIBUNE

JANUARY 2012 | VOL. 62 NO. 5

thy word
is a lamp unto my feet



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ON THE TABLE A new year

by Keith Bassham | Editor

If 2011 was the year of the King James Bible (it was the 400th anniversary year as we noted), I was thinking why not make 2012 your own personal Year of the Bible?

Upheavals in politics, philosophy, economics, and even in the geophysical world itself, drive us to seek out those things firm, ancient, and settled. The Psalmist in Psalm 119:52 observes, "Concerning thy testimonies, I have known of old that thou hast founded them for ever," a thought echoed by Peter when he writes, "But the word of the Lord endureth for ever" (1 Peter 1:25). What could be more needful and more beneficial in these uncertain times than a close walk with the words of God?

Therefore, in addition to the informative issue of *Global Partners*, the missionary supplement to the *Tribune*, I have included three articles having to do with Bible reading and study this first *Tribune* for 2012. In the first of the trio, former *Tribune* editor Mike Randall writes about the practice of regular Bible reading. This is a very personal and practical look at the importance of taking time every day to be with God in His Word. I have also included an excerpt from a new book written by Jim and Jeri Combs, *Search the Scriptures for Yourself*, about Bible reading and study. Mr. Combs is also a former editor of the *Tribune*. And in the final article, I give some instruction so you can do basic Bible study on your own between Sundays.

What confidence we can have living through 2012 when we know God's mind through His Word. Our knowledge of the Bible can inform our politics, our parenting, our finances, our relationships and even our future plans, but sitting on the shelf or thrown carelessly on the backseat of the car, the Bible is a mere decoration or accessory.

Resolve to make 2012 your personal Year of the Bible!

The past year was challenging for the *Tribune* financially, just as it was for most of us. Ministries have been hit hard, and some churches have had to make difficult choices. However, while 2011 did have challenges, our friends and supporters came through in some very unexpected ways, and we have no reason to complain.

So, first of all, I wish to thank all our contributors, subscribers, and advertisers who make the *Tribune* financially possible. And second, it is time to think about the February *Tribune* Offering, an annual offering we receive from the churches. Nearly 30,000 copies of the *Tribune* go out each month to churches, pastors, missionaries, students, and laypeople in the Baptist Bible Fellowship, and to many churches outside our Fellowship. This unique magazine ministers around the world at such a low cost, providing information, inspiration, and motivation for Baptists everywhere. Thousands are connected for ministry by the *Tribune*, and the annual February *Tribune* Offering helps make that happen.

Keith Bassham

BAPTIST BIBLE TRIBUNE

JANUARY 2012

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PRESIDENTIAL PERSPECTIVE

Relevant and timeless: not trendy and temporary

by Linzy Slayden | President | BBFI



Washington Irving, who wrote *Rip Van Winkle*, once said that change means “to shift one’s position and be bruised in a new place.” That may explain why he kept Rip sleeping for 20 years — so the rapid changes in America would not bruise the old Dutchman too much. After all, Rip went to sleep a loyal subject of King George III and awakened a citizen of the United States of America, with George Washington as his president. Talk about change!

All of us want progress, especially if it benefits us in some way; but few want change, in spite of the obvious fact that you cannot have progress without change. Life is something like the two or three hands on the old watches. The hour hand moves slowly, the minute hand moves more rapidly, and the second hand with great speed; but it required all three to know the time. Now in this digital age, some of you will have to just imagine!

Some changes in life are more painful than others. In fact, social scientists are telling us that change has changed. Many changes in our lives are no longer quiet and gradual, with time for us to understand the events and process them into our lives. No, these changes come with such force and speed that, as we try to shift position, we get bruised! When that happens we revolt against all change and say, “Why can’t things just stay the way they were?”

I may be wrong, but it seems to me that the good old days weren’t always that good. As a student of history, I have read enough to know that every older generation has condemned the younger generation and bemoaned the fact that the world is going to fall apart. I agree with the statement, “Wise is the person who learns from the past, but foolish is the person who lives in the past.”

Solomon said it best, “Say not thou, What is cause that the former days were better than these? For thou dost not enquire wisely concerning this.” (Ecclesiastes 7:10).

Change is really nothing new. In fact, all of life depends on change. God has established creation that there is order in change and change in the midst of order.

Of course, change for the sake of change is novelty.

True change motivated by the Holy Spirit is what we need today. The local church should not be a museum where we all get together and pay our respects to dead history. Our BBFI churches should be alive with the preaching of the Word and the soul-changing, life-changing power of the Holy Spirit!

I celebrate the great history of the BBFI but I am not living in the past ... I am looking forward to the future!

Will 2012 bring some challenges? Yes, but we serve a sovereign God Who will give us the wisdom we need and is well able to show Himself strong on our behalf.

WORLDWIDE MISSIONS

There are 7 billion of us

by Jon Konnerup | Mission Director | BBFI



Our world’s population reached 7 billion around October 31, 2011. It is believed that due to the high birth rates in the Asian Pacific and the Saharan region of Africa, baby number 7 billion was most likely born into poverty in one of these areas. It took only 11 years for the population to increase by another 1 billion people. Today, China is the most populated country in the world with 1.3 billion. However, estimates predict that India will be the most heavily populated country within 20 years. By then it will struggle to accommodate a projected 1.6 billion people in an area about one-third the size of China.

Asia, by far the largest populated region with more than 4 billion people, likely will increase to 5.3 billion by 2050. Africa’s population is also projected to double to 2 billion by 2050.

Approximately one in every five people on earth is between the ages of 15 and 23. Eight in ten of them live in Africa and Asia. Sub-Saharan Africa has the world’s youngest population while at the same time lacking the necessary resources to live day by day. These young people will most likely continue the current trend of moving from rural areas to cities in search of the basics: education, shelter, food, and employment.

When the world considers these population figures, they are concerned about hunger, fuel shortages, pollution, and disease. Africa, South Asia, and other fast-growing regions will continue to struggle to provide the basics of food, water, and other necessities for their increasing populations. Experts refer to this as global “resource inequality.” Governments, development agencies, NGOs, economists, and business leaders continually argue about how to balance the world’s resources.

In contrast, when Christians look at these numbers and situations, we should be concerned about “spiritual inequality” — that is, the opportunity for everyone to hear a clear presentation of the gospel of Jesus Christ, which is readily available to most people in the West but virtually non-existent for billions in other places.

Of the more than 11,600 distinct people groups in the world identified by mission research organizations, nearly 6,800 remain unreached. That means less than two percent of the population in each of those people groups are believers of Jesus Christ. Furthermore, 1,015 of these people groups not only are unreached, they are unengaged, meaning no church or mission organization is actively seeking to evangelize and plant churches among them.

We must focus on sending missionaries, witnessing, planting churches, and grasping the enormity of God’s harvest. We must share the gospel with these 7 billion people. The BBFI currently has 876 missionaries working around the world to reach them. Is this enough laborers? Are we doing all we can to reach the masses? Would you pray with me that 2012 would bring more fruit through the efforts of our churches and missionaries than ever seen before?

BBFI NATIONAL MEETING

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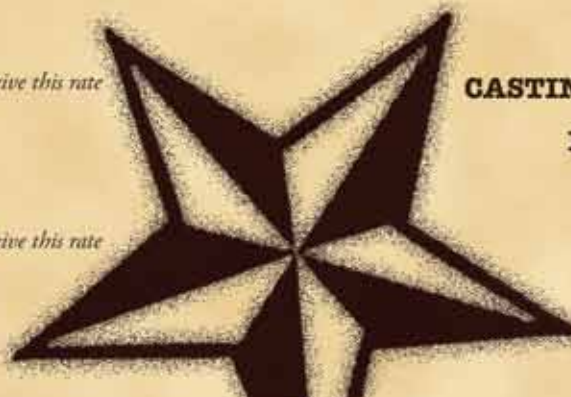
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CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

STUDENT MINISTRY

WORSHIP MINISTRY

THE BEST RESOLUTION

A CHRISTIAN CAN MAKE!

By Mike Randall, Editor of the Baptist Bible Tribune, 1995-2002

START HERE

JAN 1

There are many good arguments for reading the Bible every day and January 1 is an excellent time to start. Consider eight Biblical reasons you should open the Bible and read it every day.

1. Read it as an essential agent in your spiritual regeneration. First Peter 1:23 says, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." Second Peter 1:4 says, "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."

2. Read it as spiritual bread that sustains your life. Matthew 4:4 says, "But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

3. Read it for spiritual growth. First Peter 2:2 says, "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby." Second Timothy 3:16 says, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."

4. Read it as a light that provides unfailing guidance. Psalm 119:105 says, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." Psalm 32:8 says, "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye."

5. Read it as a source of protection against evil impulses and temptation. Psalm 119:11 says, "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee." Verse 9 says, "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word."

6. Read it to establish your faith. Romans 10:17 says, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Acts 20:32 says, "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."

7. Read it to fortify the promise of your hope. Titus 1:2 says, "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began."

8. Read it because it is alive and powerful. Hebrews 4:12 says, “For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

How the Bible transforms us

All these reasons and verses describe what the Bible can do for us. As we read the Bible every day, we allow its life-changing power to influence us. As we obey it, the Holy Spirit uses it to transform us. Hebrews 4:12 shows three ways this is done. First, the Bible is described by the words “quick and powerful.” It works in the believer like a seed (1 Peter 1:23), which outwardly looks dead, inert, and inactive. But when the seed is planted in good soil, its life is revealed. Before long a sprout comes out of the ground, then a stem, branches, leaves, blooms, and ultimately fruit! God’s word works like that in us, transforming us to be the best we can ever be. This happens when we read it and heed it each day!

Second, Hebrews 4:12 describes the Bible as a “...twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow.” This sword works on our soul and spirit, convincing us of wrong we have done, cutting and taking away impurities and disease that cripples and destroys us. Then, the sword actually defends us from the enemy, becoming a comfort and consolation. We need the Bible as a sharp two-edged sword to help cut away the hurtful and damaging things that come in our lives. We need that sword to defend us too. We have that when we read and heed the Bible each day.

Third, Hebrews 4:12 describes the Bible as a searchlight. It says, “... and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” As we allow the Bible to influence us, it acts like an ethical searchlight, examining our thoughts and purposes, revealing whether they are right or wrong, good or bad, evil or righteous. God’s Word in our lives provides us a dynamic source of divine guidance. It is truly “... a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.”

Practical suggestions for getting started

Once you’ve decided to read your Bible each

day, you should make definite plans. First, I would suggest you get a Bible-reading schedule or guide. These can often be found in your church’s tract rack. It identifies books and chapters for each day of the year. Using this schedule is helpful, even if you can’t keep up the pace outlined on the guide. I prefer a guide that has daily readings out of both the Old and New Testaments.

Second, set your schedule. That is, determine a time each day when you can take from five to 15 minutes for Bible reading. Be sure to allow yourself time to pray once you’ve finished your reading. Over the years, I have found the morning best for me. Setting the alarm a few minutes earlier than normal will make a great difference, because that spiritual food will nourish your soul before you face the struggles of the day.

Third, schedule a comfortable, quiet place. Over the years, I have made a place in the basement where I could be alone for Bible reading and prayer. I have used the back porch, a spare bedroom, or even the living room before anyone else got up. Because I like coffee, I would set the brew time so it would be ready when I got up. Preparing a pleasant experience helps keep you on track.

Fourth, work your schedule. Determine that you will take time to read your Bible and do it. If you miss a day, get right back on schedule the next day. As you work your schedule, you will notice a difference in your spirit and attitude. You will be much more confident and content because you have spent time in God’s Word and time with God.

A positive habit you won’t want to quit

I’m convinced that once you get in the habit of daily Bible reading, you won’t want to quit. (Studies show it takes about 12 weeks for a practice to become a habit.) In fact, I believe that this habit is so beneficial, that soon you will want to read the Bible through in a year. It isn’t that hard after you’ve worked your schedule for a while. With the advancement in technology, some may want to use their computer, MP3 player, or other device to listen to the Bible being read to them. That’s a great idea, too.

However it is done, daily Bible reading (or listening) is essential to move us closer to the dynamic, victorious, abundant Christian life God wants and we all need.



**“AS WE
READ THE
BIBLE EVERY
DAY, WE
ALLOW ITS LIFE-
CHANGING
POWER TO
INFLUENCE US.”**

MAKE THE BIBLE A PRIORITY

IN THE NEW YEAR

*By James Combs, Editor of the
Baptist Bible Tribune, 1983-1995*

START
HERE



There are three main methods of mastering the contents of the Bible. J. Frank Norris declared, "The first thing is to read the Scriptures. Second, read the Scriptures! Third, read the Scriptures!"

Yes, it is absolutely essential to read the Word of God to master its contents. No matter how brilliant and powerful the preaching one hears, and no matter how profound the teaching a believer may hear, there is no substitute for personal Bible study.

Approach Bible study carefully

Since the Word of God relates to every life situation and the Divine Author longs to illuminate the Scriptures, open them carefully and prayerfully, eager to learn, know and do the will of God. Ponder these two questions as you read and study:

First, what do I need to know for my head? What wisdom, what facts, what basic knowledge do I need both for absorption of Absolute Truth and for instruction applicable to my life? "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not" (James 1:5). Here is mental instruction.

Second, what do I need to instruct my heart? The fire of the Word of God will kindle a flame of devotional zeal in the heart as the Spirit uses it. "Is not my word like as a fire? ..." (Jeremiah 23:29). Here is spiritual inspiration.

Therefore, study to educate the head and to inspire the heart. Each day we need both knowledge for the mind and food for the soul.

Ask the Spirit to teach you

Remember that the Holy Spirit is here to teach. Three words are important as we consider this area of truth: revelation, inspiration, and illumination.

Revelation is the divine act of communicating to man truth which otherwise could not be known. God's Word is therefore the revelation of truth from heaven.

Inspiration is the supernatural influence exerted on the sacred writers by the Spirit of God under which they wrote God's message with absolute trustworthiness.

Illumination is the enlightening ministry of the Spirit in enabling the reader to ascertain God's message.

Therefore, revelation comprehends the giving of truth. Inspiration embraces man under divine control receiving the truth. Illumination deals with man's understanding of revealed inspired truth.

"But the Comforter which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (John 14:26).

Only the Holy Spirit knows our capacity

A babe in Christ cannot grasp truths a more mature believer can understand. As you look to the Spirit, asking Him to be your instructor, He will illuminate the Word and make it a living, vital force in your heart and life.

Then, too, He knows and decides your future course. He will teach you things you will need in later life. A missionary in Zaire might need to know different things, unique emphasis of truth, which a pastor in Texas would seldom use. But beware lest Satan get you to ride a hobbyhorse. A false teaching or an improper emphasis can always be discerned. If it is something other than the gospel itself which is being repeatedly emphasized and overstressed out of its proper context, or which must always be defended, then the danger of warping a truth and twisting it into a false teaching is apparent. Have a well-rounded knowledge of the Word. Look to the Spirit to guide you. Ask Him to do it. Expect Him to give you precious thoughts out of His heart, particularly applicable to your life and situation.

Assign time to study

Get alone with God. Do not try to study with others around or with the radio or television blaring. Get away from distractions. Do not generally sit by a window where the traffic or some outside occurrence might draw your mind from the things of God. Satan is a genius at distractions. He does not want you to study God's Word at all and will strive to deter you from it.

Study with concentration. Banish other thoughts about the bills, the yard, friends or business. Shut the windows of your mind and focus on God's Word.

Be systematic. Do not just open the Bible here and there and read a chapter. Some people confuse such hit-and-miss scanning of the Scriptures with Bible study. Decide what you are going to study. Follow a plan, either one

that you originate or one laid out in a good book. You need not begin in Genesis. Generally speaking, beginner students should start in the New Testament.

Take time to look up marginal references and other passages suggested to your heart by the Spirit.

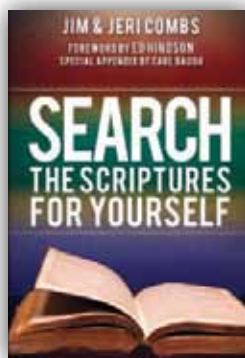
Analyze the Word

First, read. "Give attention to reading ..." (1 Timothy 4:13). Read through the Bible once or twice a year. A helpful schedule is usually available at a Christian bookstore.

Since the Bible contains 1,189 chapters, reading four chapters each day will enable you to cover the Bible in a year. Seven chapters read a day will carry you through the Bible in six months.

By reading just four chapters a day (15-30 minutes), the entire Bible can be completed in under ten months. With 260 chapters in the New Testament, it can be read in a little over two months. The authors recommend reading the New Testament in January and February, then the entire Old Testament and New Testament in the next 10 months, thus reading twice through the New Testament. It takes 70 hours and 40 minutes to read the entire Bible at a normal oral reading rate. A fast reader could probably read through the whole Bible in half that time, not aloud. It takes 52 hours and 20 minutes to read the Old Testament orally. It requires 18 hours and 20 minutes to read the New Testament.

This article is an excerpt from Search the Scriptures for Yourself, written by James and Jeri Combs. James Combs is a former editor of the Baptist Bible Tribune.



“LOOK TO THE SPIRIT TO GUIDE YOU. EXPECT HIM TO GIVE YOU PRECIOUS THOUGHTS APPLICABLE TO YOUR LIFE AND SITUATION.”

STUDY THE BIBLE

By Keith Bassham, Editor of the Baptist Bible Tribune, 1995-present

LIKE A PRO

START HERE



Once you determine to read the Bible

systematically, it is easy to see the value in the same approach to study. And lest you think a seminary education or hours poring over dusty texts are a prerequisite, all that is essential for serious Bible study is probably available to you right now.



In fact, you can study the Bible very much like your teacher or preacher does with little more than your mind and something to write with. This is true because in your study you are essentially going to produce a sermon or lesson in miniature as you go from observation (what does a passage say?) to interpretation (what does a passage mean?) to application (how do I put the passage into practice?).

I used to teach homiletics at Baptist Bible College. The word homiletics comes from two Greek words that mean “the same” and “to say.” When we preach or teach the Bible, we are

saying the same thing the text says. Here is an example using a simple text.

Philippians 4:6 - Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

Now, it would be helpful for a fuller understanding of this text to know something about the human writer (in this case, Paul the Apostle), the first people to read this text (in this case, members of the church in Philippi), and some other background material about Greece, letter-writing, and other subjects from the first-century Mediterranean world. However, even without extensive information on these issues, you can still read and interpret a text like the one in front of us.

You could begin with a simple restatement: “Paul is telling the Philippian believers that they should not worry, but rather they should pray to God with thanksgiving and requests.” You could even make it more practical by making it personal: “Christians should not worry, but pray to God with thanksgiving and requests.” An even more explicit proposition would be, “I will not worry, but pray to God with thanksgiving and requests.”

Haddon Robinson, a preacher and homiletics professor, describes this movement as going from the “then and there” to the “here and now.” It is important to the application process, but there are some potential landmines, so when you do that be sure of your footing. For instance, you wouldn’t want to interpret an Old Testament text containing instructions from God to Israel about killing off Canaanites in the same way.

6:10

Finally,
my brethren, be strong
in the Lord,
and in the power
of his might.

6:11

Put on the whole armour
of God,

that ye may be able to stand
against the wiles
of the devil.

6:12

For we wrestle not
against flesh
and blood,
but against principalities,
against powers,
against the rulers
of the darkness
of this world,
against spiritual wickedness
in high places.

The task is much simpler with the aid of an electronic Bible text and a word processor making liberal use of the Enter and Tab keys. You don't have to be a grammarian to do this, by the way, but a brush-up on some basics will help, especially if you had to think hard to remember what a subject and a predicate are. A

Bible with paragraphs clearly marked will also help keep the chunks bite-sized.

Stripping away all the details on the right side of the page, you can see the main thrust of the text is, “God wants us to be strong, and we are to take His armor, because we fight a spiritual battle with Satan.” The layout of the text shows me there are two main ideas Verses 10-11a are all about God’s strength. Verses 11b-12 are all about the devil, or Satan. If I wanted to organize the text at this point for a teaching outline, I might have something like this:

God's Strength Against the Devil

I. God's strength is available to all of us

A. We are to be strong

1. We are to be strong in the Lord
2. We are to be strong in the power of his might

B. We are to put on the whole armor of God

II. God's strength is necessary because Satan is our enemy

A. God's strength helps us stand against the wiles of the devil

B. God's strength helps us fight Satan's organization

1. Satan's organization is not flesh and blood
2. Satan's organization is supernatural
 - a. Principalities
 - b. Powers
 - c. Rulers of the darkness of this world
 - d. Spiritual wickedness in high places

Note a couple of things here. First, I emphasize the strength of God in this text. I do that because that is how God arranged the wording. He does not say, “Remember that the devil is a powerful and crafty enemy, and you need the strength of God.” Rather, he says, “You need to be strong in the Lord and take His armor ...” The strength of God is the emphasis, and remembering that gives us strength.

Second, just about any text of the Bible, indeed, any well-written text, can be studied in this way in order to find the central thoughts. Mr. Haddon, mentioned above, calls it the Big Idea. Mastering the skill will provide a lifetime of productive Bible study.



**“USING
YOUR MIND
AND SOME
WRITING
MATERIALS,
YOU CAN STRIP
AWAY ALL THE
DETAILS AND
SEE THE MAIN
THRUST OF THE
TEXT.”**



GLOBAL PARTNERS

By James G Smith • Associate Mission Director

The Mission Office's tri-annual supplement to the *Baptist Bible Tribune* is aptly titled *Global Partners*. Global tells us the scope of our responsibility, "all the world." A partner is a person who shares or is associated with another in some action or endeavor.

Most of us who participate in the missionary enterprise of the Baptist Bible Fellowship International do so believing in the concept of partnership. In order to fulfill the Great Commission, which is evangelism, discipleship, and church planting worldwide, we really do need each other.

Our churches need to take seriously the

responsibility to send our best servants, leaders, and theologians to the regions beyond us. Missionaries need to carefully and responsibly use the resources entrusted to them by the churches.

The development of the BBFI Mission Office over the years has been in response to the needs of our missionaries and churches. We really do serve as a bridge between those who go and those who send. We help our churches get their financial support quickly and efficiently to our missionaries. Our current team of 18 full-time employees serves effectively, efficiently, and caringly.



The BBFI Mission Office really is a World Mission Service Center

The mission of the Baptist Bible Fellowship International Mission Office is to serve churches and their missionaries as they endeavor to fulfill the Great Commission. We strive for professionalism and integrity through stewardship to God in all our dealings, particularly with His chosen servants, the pastors and missionaries whom we passionately serve.

The BBFI Mission Office is the World

Mission Service Center for BBFI churches and their missionaries — a bridge between those who give and those who go. We serve nearly 4,500 churches and 900 missionaries. Our team operates effectively and efficiently as we process over \$40 million per year.

Since the BBFI Mission Office is the World Mission Service Center for BBFI churches and their missionaries, we administrate the policies determined by the pastors of the BBFI.

However, we recognize the sending church as the missionary's final authority and as the Biblical sending agency.

Most pastors appreciate the process our missionaries go through to become a partner with the churches of the BBFI. It is not a perfect process, but it assures the supporting pastor that the missionaries have met certain doctrinal, educational, practical, and health requirements that are set before them.

FOR CHURCHES FOR MISSIONARIES

The BBFI Mission Office does not charge the approved missionaries, colleges, or Tribune for handling their contributions. They receive 100 cents of every dollar that comes in for them. Just as the individual missionaries, we are financed by faith — through the giving of churches, individuals, and missionaries. All support, whether from missionaries or churches, is voluntary.

The cost to provide a service center on behalf of the churches is approximately \$3.50 per transaction. We encourage each church or donor to contribute this amount every month per missionary they support. For example, if a church supports 10 missionaries through the BBFI, a \$35 monthly gift to the Mission Office would help cover these operational expenses.



We offer these services to our churches:

Screening of missionary applicants for approval
Contact Directory – online and printed copy

Contribution Services

- Process and receipt contributions
- Expedite emergency funds for churches to the missionary
- Provide various donor contribution reports
- Manage compliance with U.S. tax laws

Promotional materials

- Mission conference supplies
- Posters for foyers and classrooms
- Brochures
- Videos

Support Services

- Assist with mission conference bookings
- Provide information and assistance to Field Representatives
- Assist sending churches with missionary care

Website Services

- Detailed missionary contact information
- Profile information of missionaries
- Downloadable missionary pictures and videos

Other Services

- Mailing labels for churches and missionaries
- Furlough list of missionaries
- Missionary email list
- Monthly Missionary Connection newsletter
- Weekly Connection Point – a missions-focused email

We offer these services to our missionaries:

Processing of Funds

- Monthly and yearly statements and reports
- Yearly 1099

Financial Services

- Assistance with any type of foreign government requirements
- Bank letters of credit – to open bank accounts
- Letters of guarantee – to obtain work permits
- Loans – auto and emergency
- Notary public services
- Power of attorney
- Retirement options

Personal Benefits

- Worldwide medical coverage including medical evacuation for emergencies
- Life insurance
- Disability plan

Training/Networking

- Candidate School – preparation for the field
- Annual Missionary Family Reunion

Website Services

- Access to current and archived statements and reports
- Data that can be exported to prayer letters, labels, etc.

Other Services

- Crisis Action Team
- Mail and package services
- Missionary Projects Offering – A program that enables missionaries to live in suitable Fellowship-owned homes on the field and provides financing for the establishment of indigenous churches.

Mission Office personnel are available for ministry in your church

All of these speakers can be contacted through the BBFI Mission Office at 417.862.5001 or Info@bbfimissions.com.



Jon Konnerup's experience as a missionary kid born in Ethiopia, service as a missionary in Kenya, and time spent as an associate mission director in the Mission Office have equipped him to fill the position of mission director of the BBFI since 2005. Jon's unique, firsthand perspective on world missions will certainly challenge your church concerning God's passion for the people of our world. Youth groups, adults, and your entire church will be encouraged by his speaking as he shares his vision of world missions. His schedule does fill up quickly every year, so please plan ahead.



Steve Bender served as a BBFI missionary in Korea for 15 years and has served as an associate mission director since August 2000. Steve's primary responsibilities are the Missionary Care Program and the Missionary Project Offering. Steve preaches mission conferences and weekend mission Sundays to encourage a commitment to missions giving. He is also available to speak for State Fellowship meetings addressing missions in general or to explain in detail and encourage participation in the Missionary Projects Offering.

Pastors and missionaries offer perspective on Mission Office services

We wanted to hear from our most generous supporters so we asked them some questions. We hope that hearing what their motivations are in faithfully and generously supporting the work of the BBFI Mission Office will inspire others to follow their kind example. So we communicated with the pastors of the churches and the missionaries who have committed to superior levels of support. Most of them responded immediately. We are very pleased and even humbled by their kind words. We think you will find this thought provoking.



Eddie Lyons
High Street Baptist Church, Springfield, MO



“We support the Mission Office because we believe in the mission! And we appreciate all you do for our missionaries. You provide a vehicle to get support to the missionaries. You are a hub of communication. You are a supportive place when missionaries have a need in the United States and they are far away. Thank you for all the great things you do on a daily basis for all our missionaries.”



Herbert Gilbert
Beacon Baptist Church, Taylor, MI



“We understand it costs you to service our missionaries, so we like to help pay some of that expense. The Mission Office is always there for our missionaries when they are in need — financial, spiritual, or guidance. We thank God for that. You handle the finances from every contributor properly and give a report to everyone who gives. We thank God for the good job the Mission Office is doing and for the great staff!”



John Henry Theisen
Midway Baptist Church, Aubrey, TX



“I think most people understand the idea of overhead in mission funding. People often ask what percentage of their financial support is actually used for ministry purposes. They understand that funding for administration has to come from somewhere. We support the Mission Office monthly, which allows

100 percent of our financial support for our missionaries to be used for their ministry purposes. It's not a shell game but an efficient means of making sure the administrative needs of our missionaries are met without being a financial burden to them.

The Mission Office is a hub that provides an amazing network of mission opportunities for local churches. The sheer volume of missionaries and ever-changing issues would be quite a challenge for one local congregation to shoulder. Our partnership enables us to provide dedicated support for numerous missionary personnel.

We think the best thing you do is the candidate school and approval process that provides accountability and keeps our hearts tender toward the Great Commission. Both the pre-committee meetings and approval day during Fellowship Week are highlights. While the sending church is a safety net for our BBFI missionaries, it is comforting to know that we have capable and experienced individuals to assist with all kinds of issues that arise in cross-cultural environments.”



Paul Hylton served as a BBFI missionary to Taiwan for 29 years. He began his ministry in the Mission Office in July 2001. His area of service involves missionary finances, providing documents and letters to missionaries for visas and government paperwork, and he is a liaison for retired missionaries. Brother Hylton enjoys preaching the Word of God and is glad to serve BBFI churches in mission conferences, State Fellowship meetings, and also provides pulpit supply for area churches.



Jim Smith served as a BBFI missionary to Ecuador for 30 years before coming to work in the BBFI Mission Office in August 2008. His primary responsibility is the new candidate application process. Jim preaches in mission conferences and mission emphasis weekends. He also is available to preach in Spanish. As the BBFI chaplain endorser, he has preached in military chapels as well.



Don Baier
Seminole Baptist Temple, Springfield, MO



“As a church we understand the important role the Mission Office has in the life of the missionary. We see the Mission Office as an extension of the ministry of our church. You help the church in fulfilling its purpose. We appreciate the fact that you offer the missionary quality service at no cost to them.”



Lewis McClendon
Ventura Baptist Church, Ventura, CA



“We support our BBFI Mission Office for three reasons:

1. The Mission Office provides vital services to our missionaries. Without the Mission Office our missionaries could not do what they do on the field.
2. The Mission Office does not charge the missionaries for their services. Many mission organizations charge their missionaries a percentage of their support for the services they provide. Our

missionaries receive every dollar that is sent to them by individuals and churches. That is a great benefit to our missionaries, but it does not come without a cost. If we do not support our Mission Office, the day could come when our missionaries will have more issues to worry about and deal with on their own.

3. We want to fully support our missionaries. If we just send money to the Mission Office for our missionaries and do not support the Mission Office, we are not paying the full cost of having our missionaries on the field. We don't want another church to have to carry the financial load for the work the Mission Office does for our missionaries. We consider it a privilege and honor to be allowed to contribute to the Mission Office each month.

I do not know all the things the Mission Office does for our missionaries. Some of the things the Mission Office does that I think are very important are:

1. Processing funds
2. Keeping up on IRS laws and making sure every missionary is compliant so that they will not face a ministry-killing audit.
3. Taking their calls and helping missionaries when they are discouraged or something tragic has occurred.
4. Preparing missionaries for the approval process and for deputation.
5. Administering a self-funded insurance policy that covers a missionary anywhere in the world.

6. Promoting missions and missionaries to our Fellowship.
7. Working with BBC students to prepare them to be missionaries.
8. Allowing individuals and churches to send packages to the Mission Office that they in turn send to the missionaries.
9. Visiting missionaries in their countries.
10. Putting up with pastors like me.



Matthew Trill
New Testament Baptist Church, Largo, FL



“Our involvement with the BBFI Mission Office is the result of a few factors. First, our church has a sincere love for our missionary families, many of which are affiliated with the BBFI. We are committed to their support including prayer and finances. Second, we understand the importance of the Mission Office — standing behind our missionaries offering vital support in day-to-day matters, as well as the larger issues of seeing a missionary successfully get to the field and minister there.

The BBFI Mission Office is a service center for world missions in several aspects. It begins with creating an awareness of the spiritual needs of foreign countries. This is furthered by helping the individual missionary families create

Our former Mission Directors are also available for speaking engagements in Mission conferences or for a mission emphasis Sunday. They both bring with them much missions ministry experience and are compelling preachers.

Carl Boonstra (top photo) was the BBFI mission director from 1972-1986. Bob Baird (bottom photo) was the BBFI mission director from 1986-2005.



Rick Vanhooser is the chief operations officer at the BBFI Mission Office. Rick retired from the U.S. Air Force after 22 years and served at Baptist Bible College and Graduate School for 11 years. He has extensive leadership experience in non-profit and ministry settings and

brings an understanding of planning and expertise in management and administration. He has conducted professional seminars in estate planning, planned giving,

an awareness for their particular nation and ministry. They also provide a valuable service to sending and supporting churches and their pastors by maintaining lines of communication.

Generally speaking, the efficient processing of finances for the missionaries is a remarkable feat. Even more impressive is that every dollar given goes to the intended missionary. As pastor, I take many opportunities to remind our church how valuable that is to our missionaries.

Specifically, the Projects Offering may be the best thing that BBFI Missions does. To have funds available for building homes and churches is a great blessing. For our church to be able to directly help in the support of projects for "our missionaries" is highly rewarding.



Bob Baier
Antioch Bible Baptist Church, Gladstone, MO



“For us it is simply a matter of good stewardship. It makes sense to support the Mission Office because of everything they do to support the missionary endeavor of the BBFI and the local church.

What the Mission Office does administratively is so helpful for everyone involved. We appreciate that the Mission Office provides accountability between the church, pastor, and missionary. The Mission Office oversees and assists in the daily challenges of mission life in various countries and cultures around the world.

We are very pleased with our relationship with the Mission Office. Phone calls and answers to questions are promptly dealt with and relayed back to us.



Ken Board
Missionary to Japan



“Five Reasons Why I Support The Mission Office

First, the Mission Office is efficient. Whenever I call in a request, the request is handled quickly and efficiently.

Second, the Mission Office staff is approachable. Every time I have gone to the office I have been greeted warmly and been asked, "How may we help you?" Not one time has there even been a "we're-busy-so-don't-bother-us" attitude.

Third, the Mission Office is helpful. When my wife suddenly went home to be with the Lord, the Mission Office contacted me right away and offered their assistance. I shall ever be grateful for their help with the transportation and funeral arrangements. In addition, I especially appreciate their assistance



Keith Taylor
Southside Baptist Church, Denison, TX



“It is our joy to support such a concerned, caring, attentive staff from top to bottom. The description you use as a service center for world missions is certainly fulfilled in everything you do whether for the missionary or the supporting church. Southside Baptist Church is grateful for the BBFI Mission Office, and we feel like the amount we support the office is a worthy investment.

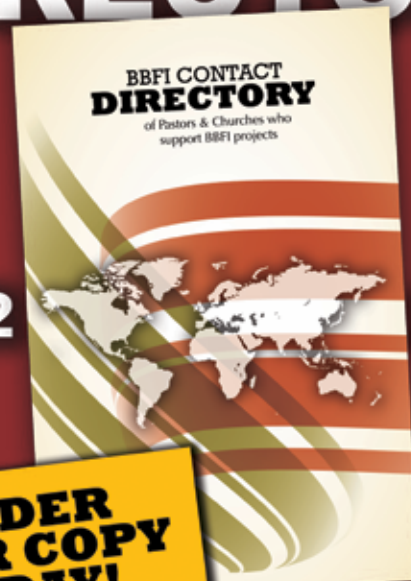
and the use of charitable trusts in local churches.

Having a seminar in your church would give your congregation information on Christian wills, revocable living trusts, and other areas of estate planning. The purpose of the seminar is to encourage and challenge individuals to prepare for the distribution of their estate in a Christian manner by remembering their local church and the Mission Office in their wills or revocable living trusts. The seminar is about one hour in length with time devoted to questions and answers. If you are interested in partnering with the Mission Office to sponsor a trust and estate planning seminar in your church, please contact us.

BBFI CONTACT DIRECTORY

2012

2013



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with the quarterly reports. I don't think I have ever sent in one that was completely correct, but they always explain my errors in detail and work with me until I get it right.

Fourth, the Mission Office is encouraging. The monthly letters from Brother Konnerup always seem to arrive when I need a word of encouragement.

Fifth, the Mission Office is informative. I have many missionary friends I have met on deputation and furlough. My only contact with many of these friends is the information I receive through the Missionary Update from the Mission Office.

For these five reasons I support the Missions Office gladly and willingly. Without reservation I recommend the ministry of the Mission Office to the churches and missionaries of the BBFI.

phone call or email away. They not only handle all of the monthly processes (finances and mail), but have also been ready to help with special needs such as home and church projects as well as emergency loans. In addition, they have been valuable partners in developing appropriate processes that have enabled us to bring more than a dozen interns to the mission field.



Mark and Michele Hale
Missionaries to Portugal



“I was a non-BBFI missionary for two and a half years before being approved as a BBFI missionary in 1987. The difference was astounding to me and still is. The Mission Office doesn't just process our support like most other mission organizations, they also itemize all of our supporters, generate helpful lists for the missionaries, provide invaluable support in dealing with governments, taxes, education, and many problems that people in America thankfully don't have to deal with. The Mission Office labors to make our lives and ministries as uncomplicated as they can in spite of the complex and confusing laws and restrictions so many missionaries have to deal with. The Mission Office stands ready to help the missionaries and their supporting

churches in any way they can and they do this without taking one cent from any funds sent in for a missionary. Every cent that is given to a BBFI missionary reaches that missionary. The personnel of the Mission Office live by faith, just like we as missionaries do. They could have higher-paying, less-stressful jobs but they choose to look at their work as a ministry. They labor for the Lord and to advance the cause of Christ across the world. That is why we support the BBFI World Mission Center and will continue to do so.

During the past quarter of a century as BBFI missionaries, we have received tremendous support from the Mission Office in home and church projects, help with difficult and seemingly impossible situations with governments hostile towards missionaries, and have benefitted from constant advice and help with a multitude of questions, problems, and concerns. Personally, I have received wise and godly counsel from various members of the Mission Office staff over the years. Don Brown guided me in biblical responsibility in personal and ministerial finances. F.C. Lasater counseled me to forgive those who had done me harm in the ministry and focus on Christ. Jim Smith testified to me the difficulties of leaving a growing and successful ministry after over 30 years because it was the Lord's will, and he and his dear wife have shown us all how the Lord can sustain you through terrible loss. Personally, Paul Hylton has helped me the most with his wise and godly counsel about massive changes in our lives and ministries and how to follow the Lord through those upheavals for God's glory.



Mike and Jill Ivey
Missionaries to Korea



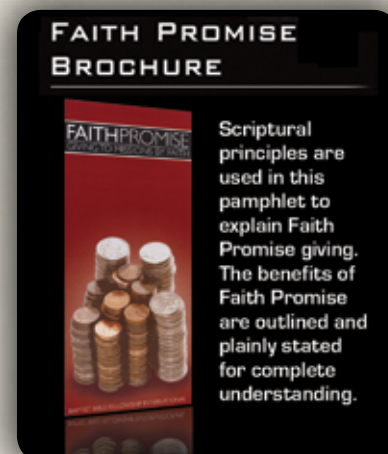
“Jill and I realize that every donation that is processed for us costs over \$3 (it may well be more than that now). Other organizations and clearinghouses charge right up front, so we determined at the very beginning of our ministry that we would support the Mission Office each month.

The office personnel have always been a

Planning a mission conference?

Let the Mission Office help with your mission conference materials

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(417) 862-5001





Blake and Meagan Fortner
Missionaries to Ethiopia

we did not feel like we were burdening her or giving her a ton of extra work to do. We appreciate the fact that the office is there to help us in ways that we cannot help ourselves when we are out of the U.S.

“We feel like if we hired some other company to do all the services that the Mission Office does for us we would be paying a whole lot more. We realize the Mission Office has to raise their support just like we do. We support the Mission Office out of thankfulness for all they do. The office helps us in so many ways at any time with no hassle. We just appreciate the office staff!

We see the Mission Office as a major resource to missionaries. We are provided guidelines and services that keep us legal in the eyes of the IRS. We can't tell you how many "independent" missionaries we come across that have no one to take care of their money and make sure they are following the law. All the hard work is done for us so we don't have to worry about it and we can concentrate on the task at hand in our respective fields. I can say the same for health insurance. Many "independent" missionaries have none ... and we are very blessed in that area.

Just a few months ago we needed some serious help Stateside to have some documents gathered, notarized, and sent over so that we could obtain a work permit and residency status in Ethiopia. Jacque Burkholder worked so hard to help us and did it in such a way that



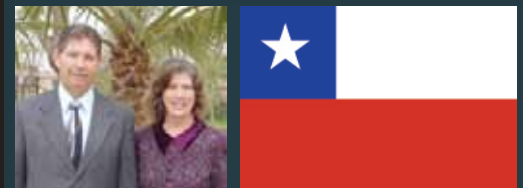
Bill and Rhonda Smith
Missionaries to Belize

“The Mission Office manages our financial support each month, requiring no payment in return for their service. We have a moral and spiritual obligation to help repay them for the work they do for us.

As missionaries, we rely upon the Mission Office staff as our consistent and dependable source for making our bank deposits and managing our medical coverage. These are tasks that American residents often take for granted. However, for those of us living outside the United States, a simple task such as banking can often prove to be a source of frustration.

We also depend upon the Mission Office's commitment to help us with evacuation if we are faced with a life or death emergency. Living in a third-world country, political stability can change at a moment's notice.

The Mission Office is as much a partner with the missionary as those who give their mission dollars each week in their local churches.



David and Hope Reinhardt
Missionaries to Chile

“We began supporting the Mission Office when we were approved back in 1981. We were glad that our agency (different from many others) did not charge a commission for the amount of support processed for each missionary. They give 100 percent of that which is designated directly to the missionary. Thus they are operating by faith as much as the missionary is. So I felt that I would do my part, grateful for the service that they render to us.

After 30 years on the field, I cannot imagine how it could have been done without the help of the Mission Office. Besides the processing of our support, there have been many other services such as letters given to justify the use of funds on the foreign field for projects here, they have notarized copies of important documents needed to conduct business with the government, these also given in order to begin purchases of properties, we have received letters showing we belong to an

COUNTRY POSTERS



We provide full-color posters of nearly 100 different mission fields. These posters are approximately 17 1/2" x 23" and are attractive for special mission emphasis occasions as well as year-round decoration. The posters may be ordered separately or as a set.

PLACEMATS

These full-color placemats can be used for your missionary banquets, international dinners or any occasion intended to emphasize missions. They are 11" x 17" and come in packets of 100.



FAITH PROMISE CARDS

These commitment cards are designed especially to fit the appropriate groups in a congregation. They come perforated to allow one portion to be tallied for the Faith Promise Goal and the other portion is designed for the individual to keep as a reminder of his commitment to Faith Promise Missions Giving.



internationally recognized organization, etc.

We also have received loans for cars and churches, and have a structure in order to put away funds for travel. We are also kept up to date on legal issues such as paying taxes, and other requirements. I know they do much more, such as help in moments of political crisis, national disasters in a country, or even help in the crisis in the personal life of the missionary. They process our mail, work as our extension with the bank in Springfield, and even have taken an interest in our daughter who is presently studying at the Bible college across the street. I know that the help is different with each missionary, for each field, as the need arises, yet maintaining the autonomy of the missionary in his work.



Brent and Sheila Moeller
Missionaries to South Africa



“We support the Mission Office because of the valuable support that we receive. We have friends from other mission organizations who pay between 10 to 15 percent of their support to have their headquarters handle their funds

and do other important business. What we give is not even close to that figure.

We also give because we believe it is a scriptural principle that we should honor those who are faithful in their stewardship. The staff of the Mission Office has been an incredibly helpful and faithful servant to not only our supporting churches but to us for over 20 years.

The Mission Office assists the missionary in so many ways. From the very beginning of our approval until now we have been served. Some of these services include: Candidate School, wise counsel on multiple issues over the years, help with financial letters and financial and legal matters, financial loans for automobiles, emergency needs, and the purchasing of the home that we live in on the field. We have a partner who looks after our stateside banking issues, mail, insurance programs, IT advice ... the list could go on and on.

The Directors have been personally interested in us and have come to visit us on the field. We have the confidence that the office is strongly in our corner! Last but not least they are a very efficient channel between supporters and the missionaries. The office does so much and charges absolutely nothing for their services. We find it hard to understand how a missionary would not feel compelled to financially support the Mission Office!

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www.bbfimissions.com

BAL PARTNERS

As we consider the effect of the ministry of the missionary work of Baptist Bible Fellowship International over the last 60+ years, we are moved with gratitude. It is truly amazing to see how the Lord has blessed the work of our global partners to the extent that we now have thousands of local, biblically sound, Baptist churches all over the world. These churches are now or are on the path to becoming autonomous and indigenous.

They don't all look like your church. Their language is probably different. Their styles will vary. These churches have given birth to thousands of pastors who have been trained at more than a hundred different Bible institutes, Bible colleges and pastoral training centers. These pastors are reproducing themselves in the lives of younger leaders every day.

However impressed we may be with the results of the labor, let's keep our hearts focused on the ultimate goal. We look forward to the fulfillment of the Revelation when those who have been redeemed gather to worship the King of kings from every kindred, every tongue, every people and every nation.

We love the missionary psalm, Psalm 67:

"God be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause his face to shine upon us; Selah.

That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations.

Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee.

O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth. Selah.

Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee.

Then shall the earth yield her increase; and God, even our own God, shall bless us.

God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear him."

"Let's worship the Lord with our giving" is not just a catchphrase pastors pull out to indicate to the ushers that it is time to pass the offering plates. That really is how this works. We give as a part of our expression of worship and awe of our Great God. That which is given is then administrated by faithful people so that many more can join us in the ultimate and

eternal worship!

We all experience different motivations when we consider the giving of our resources. Sometimes we give out of obligation. We give something that we consider ours because we have to. Or we give in exchange for a service or product received.

Sometimes we give out of gratitude. We are so grateful for someone or something that our reaction is to give something.

Sometimes we give out of love. Our heart is full of selfless affection for someone, we simply want to see them prosper or have what we have.

For God so loved, that He gave! Let's be grateful and godly in our stewardship.

We call upon the churches and missionaries of the Baptist Bible Fellowship International to seriously consider this partnership with the Mission Office as a priority in your ministry stewardship in 2012. Let's truly BE global partners. To quote our former Mission Director, Dr. Carl Boonstra, "Think what we can do together!"



TO THE BAPTIST BIBLE FELLOWSHIP INTERNATIONAL FAMILY

The trustees of Baptist Bible College have announced a search for the next president of the college. Applications will be received at the address of the board secretary listed below until January 16, 2012. Applicants are welcome to respond by e-communications as well as traditional mail.

THE PROCESS

In accordance with the bylaws of the college, each applicant will be asked to follow the steps detailed below:

1. Each candidate will be asked to submit a completed application.
2. Candidates will be asked to give written permission for a background check to include financial information.
3. The trustees will read and pray about each candidate before meeting to develop a short list of finalist candidates. Until the candidate agrees to be a finalist, their candidacy will not be revealed publicly.
4. Each finalist will be asked to appear before the trustees, the BBFI President, the President of the Alumni Association, and the chief administrator of the college for an oral interview at the February 2012 National Fellowship Meeting in Fort Worth, Texas.
5. It is the desire of the trustees to present a presidential candidate to the fellowship for ratification no later than the May Graduation Fellowship 2012.

THE PROFILE

The applicant profile of the candidate desired by the trustee board is as follows:

- Candidate must demonstrate a clear salvation experience and calling to the ministry of God.
- Candidate must adhere to the doctrinal statement as approved by the BBFI.
- Candidate should possess Biblically demonstrated character, spiritual maturity, and balance.
- Candidate should be able to model visionary leadership and communication skills.
- Candidate must produce a resume that verifies significant life experience in pastoral / missions/ ministry leadership.
- Candidate is required to have a firm understanding and involvement in the BBFI. This will be a significant factor in the decision process.
- Candidate must understand the need for academic development in his own life. The trustee board has clearly stated that their expectation is a minimum of a Master's degree in relevant studies with the understanding that a terminal degree is preferred.
- Candidate must be able to relate inter-generationally and cross culturally.
- Candidate should be able to demonstrate a working knowledge of academic processes and objectives.

The application may be submitted electronically or by postal mail. All applications should be sent directly to the secretary of the trustee board. For the sake of integrity, any application submitted through the Fellowship, Missions, *Tribune* offices or the college will not be considered.

Address of the board secretary is:
Rev. Randy Harp
Solid Rock Baptist Church
2222 South Belsay Rd
Burton, MI 48519



URBAN CURRENT

The Gospel of Good Works

I don't do things like that," the pastor on the other end of the line said in a quiet but determined tone. "I preach the gospel."

The Chicago schools were bankrupt. By state law unless the legislature appropriated some funds from somewhere, schools would not be opening in four weeks. I was inviting pastors to join our group to voice concern to the mayor, pressuring him to pull strings, move mountains, do what big city mayors do, so our kids could start school on schedule. I had called this pastor cited above and was met with his flat-footed response.

The phrase caught my eye in Titus. Good works are to be an outward example (2:7), marked by holy enthusiasm (2:15), the result of purposeful engagement (3:8), and to be the result of Christian education (3:14). The language here is "Keep on learning how ..."

Of course, my mind went to Matthew 5, "Let your light so shine ... that they may see your good works ..." References began to jump out at me. In 1 Timothy 6:18, the apostle charges the wealthy to be rich in good works. Paul challenges believers in Galatia to do good unto all, especially those who are of the household of faith (6:10). Clearly, he speaks here of good works not confined to believers.

There is Paul's famous line to the Ephesians, "We are ... created in Christ Jesus unto good works which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Hmmm. One of the primary purposes of salvation is good works. Second Timothy 3:15-16 essentially says it's the Word which furnishes us for every good work. The whole point of scripture is to equip us for good works. Now take these two texts together. Ponder the nexus of good works prepared for us, and believers prepared for every good work.

Rightfully, some of the biggest doers of

good works are believers. The entire rescue mission movement is Christian run, Christian funded. Think of all the schools and hospitals overseas that Christians have founded, funded, and run. Look at all of the informal good works done through bus ministries. What of the millions of people impacted through counseling, children, and youth programs? We've been serving soup, providing shelter, teaching reading, writing, and arithmetic, giving shots, providing reading glasses, and on and on. Whole tribes in the South Pacific stopped eating each other because of Christians. William Carey transformed societal and cultural structures in India on his way to evangelize the nation.

I don't know where these anti-social action people are coming from. Oh, I get that they're concerned over liberals who are all soup and no salvation. But to spiritually react to an effort to get children back in school and say "I just preach the gospel" is one of the biggest misreads of New Testament Christianity I can fathom. It's a misunderstanding of the gospel.

I thought one of the best things I could be giving myself to as a pastor and community leader was to try to get those schools open. My effort didn't displace the gospel. It flowed from the gospel. And oh yeah, it gave me an opportunity to pray a gospel-based prayer in a packed conference room with community leaders of all stripes from all over the city. Mayor Daley shooed the press out and was about to start the meeting. He looked down the table and said, "Pastor Lyons, would you open us in prayer?"

As I studied good works in the New Testament, I was shocked by the lack of treatment of several commentators I referenced. How could they blow right by this? This is such a big deal in my context. Service has been a huge door-opener in this deep blue, spiritually hostile

environment. Good works have been absolutely necessary in this jungle of human need.

Here's my theory. Our social and cultural status shapes our theology. Our American, white, middle-class Christianity has been provincialized by its Americanness, blinded by its whiteness, weighed down by its bulging middle, and restricted by its class. Our cultural Christianity, and I'm talking fundamentalists and evangelicals here, has been less shaped by the New Testament than it has been by its culture.

The schools did not open on time. The Armitage Baptist alternative school did open, staffed by CPS personnel from our own congregation who weren't going to work anyway. The headline in *Chicago Sun Times* read "Baptist Church gets Kids Back to Books. The city lists 600 alternative school sites. But few are as comprehensive as Armitage Baptist Church with math, reading, free lunches and athletics." What they didn't add was "... and a big dose of Jesus."

P.S. (with God, there is always more)

How was I to know that the following spring, political radicals, anarchists, and gay activists would canvass our neighborhood to solicit support for a pro-choice, anti-Armitage demonstration in front of our building. Later, we were told that again and again after hearing the activists' spiel, our neighbors would say, "Well, I don't know anything about that, but I know they're good people. They opened a school when public schools were closed."

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



BAPTIST BIBLE COLLEGE

Dude, you're crazy



by Ron Sears | Interim President | Baptist Bible College

Those were not the words of congratulations I expected to hear from my son. The reality of his observation made us laugh. Yet, how do you explain choosing to step out of the boat onto a sea of uncharted waves? I tried to assure my son (read, myself) that I was strong in faith but I found myself silently replying, “You’re right. It is crazy.”

But, isn’t that what faith is all about? If you can see it ... if you can explain it ... it’s probably not faith. Steps of faith cause others to say, “You’re crazy.” Sarah laughed when she heard the words of promise. Thomas doubted as he declared his faith required physical proof.

Experience says that steps of faith are birthed in the heart. There is a perceived value in the results. It’s based on a hope that God is actually at work and it usually desires for others to step out and walk together. If no one responds, faith will choose to walk alone. In God’s world it’s the right thing to do.

Baptist Bible College is experiencing a few waves. They are not a tsunami, but nevertheless a strong storm is present. This college is a living organism. She is continuing the purpose of her founders — enter to learn, go forth to serve. Eternity has been impacted by souls saved, churches started, missionaries sent, and minds and hearts trained by His Word and heaven’s servants. Friendships have been forged here. Many have met the love of their lives while walking these halls. A few pranks have been pulled (don’t ask how I know that), but the college is alive. She is spiritually well while physically hurting.

By faith, my wife and I have stepped out with no promise other than, “Lo, I am with you always ...” I am tasked to bid others to step out with us. There is a great need for a unified step of faith. So, allow me to say, “Step out and come stand on the waves.” You’re a vital part of the solution and we need your help. Who cares if someone yells, “Hey, you’re crazy for doing that!” You’ll find yourself silently agreeing while filled with hope that God is at work for His glory.

Isn’t that what faith is all about?

Ron Sears was named Interim President of Baptist Bible College just before the Thanksgiving break. His father was among the founders of the Baptist Bible Fellowship, and he has been a BBFI pastor throughout his ministry. Until the end of 2011, he served as pastor of First Baptist Church in Wilmington, DE.

BOSTON BAPTIST COLLEGE

Then and now



by David Melton | President | Boston Baptist College

I am a history guy. I won’t try to hide it because it wouldn’t do any good. History shows.

Give me a TV remote and it will automatically drift toward a documentary. Send me on vacation and I’m trying to wriggle my family toward some historical site (usually against popular opinion!). Put me in a class with students and history is coming out ... regardless of the material.

I’m pretty sure my sons sometimes think I am history. One of my boys, a baseball buff, asked me if I ever saw Babe Ruth play! Some of my students probably have a similar view of my personal antiquity.

I want to say that while it is a grave mistake to live in the past, it is a tragic misstep to be ignorant of it. The key is to balance then and now. The Bible is history — timeless to be sure — but history nonetheless. In Boston we live where history is engrained into our culture. I think it makes it a little easier for us to equip students who understand and appreciate the past, but who have a firm grip on this moment. We just have to succeed in that.

I want our students to know biblical history. We travel the biblical world each spring to enhance that. I also want Boston students to know and understand church history (to the degree that is possible!). I even want them to understand our own history. One of the dangers young students face is a myopia that God’s working in the world started with them. That can lead to lives and ministries that are self-absorbed, thinking only about the now — my personal now. We just cannot afford to do that. History is a great humbler, and a great teacher.

Did you realize that this month is the 200th anniversary of American foreign missions? If not, you get zero history points.

Two hundred years ago, Adoniram and Ann Judson, and a few others, left Salem harbor (others later from Philadelphia) and headed toward the unevangelized masses of the East. They were driven by history — a historical “commission” to go. They were obligated by the truths of a historical text — the Scriptures that command us to live and serve because eternal souls hang in the balance. Those young missionaries were enabled by history — the history of their own lives, families, ministers, churches, and educational institutions that had grown them into the “now” ... now being the moment of their departure for foreign fields.

I think they remarkably embody how and why the past and the present must be inseparable. We are all what we are because of our history. That is even true of our fellowship of churches. Like any family or any congregation, we have our historical hiccups and headaches. But we are a brotherhood that, when we have hung together with past, present, and future in our scope, has done far more collectively than we ever could have done individually. That is history not to be forgotten or ignored.

I want my sons to understand that. I am determined that our students understand that. I am a history guy.

Ventura Baptist Church sponsors missionary workshop

Running Springs, CA

Ventura Baptist Church and Pastor Lewis McClendon sponsored a communication workshop for BBFI missionaries at Ponderosa Pines Christian Camp November 6-11. The coaches for the week were Brian and Rachael Weed, missionaries to Nicaragua; Steve and Jenell Bender from the BBFI Mission Office; and Lewis and Karen McClendon from Ventura Baptist Church. Twenty-three missionaries attended the workshop.

Designed to help BBFI missionaries improve their speaking skills so that they can clearly communicate the passion they have for the people God has called them to, Ventura Baptist Church provides the workshop to BBFI missionaries without charge. This is the third year



for the event, and participants have included missionary interns, missionaries on deputation, and veteran missionaries.

Pastor McClendon says, "One of our 20-year veterans said he was a comfortable speaker before, but now he will be more focused and better able to use the tools to be a better communica-

tor." Another participant said, "This is one of the most beneficial things I have ever done."

Dates for the 2012 workshop are November 4 - 9. More information is available at www.aboundmissionaryservices.com.

High Street church hosts Filipino concert

Springfield, MO

High Street Baptist Church hosted Filipino musician Kuh Ledesma November 27 in a concert outreach to the Filipino community of Southern Missouri and Northern Arkansas. Kuh



Kuh Ledesma with pastor Lyons

Ledesma has been performing for 25 years with more than 300 concerts, numerous awards in

the Philippines, and 18 albums. She was the first Filipino singer to become a recipient of the Salem Music Awards in London in March 1989. She is also an outspoken Christian. Kuh offered to come to Springfield because she wanted to share the gospel through her concert.

Pastor Eddie Lyons of High Street made the contact through a friend, Pastor Ednor Sebag, a leader of a Filipino Church at Glenstone Baptist Church in Springfield. The two partnered to host the event that attracted more than 500 people. Concertgoers were treated to Filipino food at the concert. Springfield Mayor James O'Neal and his wife were also in attendance.

Lyons, who served as a missionary in the Philippines with several of his family members, says, "The personal testimony of Kuh was powerful." He also reports, "At the end of the concert she invited me on stage to share the gospel. It was a joy to share the gospel with the great crowd assembled. After growing up in the Philippines and serving as a missionary for 20 years I will always have a heart for Filipino people."

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Michigan church rebuilds, dedicates collapsed building

Flint/Grand Blanc Township, MI

Great Lakes Baptist Temple of Flint, MI, celebrated and rededicated the church's new education wing with a homecoming service November 13. Pastor David Chittenden joined former preachers associated with the church, including Gerald Cheney, Ted Wille, Glenn Tatterson and Tom Merrick for the event. Former Pastor Gerald Cheney preached the morning message.

Chittenden has a vivid recall of the events that led to a rebuilding of the wing. He said, "Wednesday, March 23, 2011, at about 10:15 a.m. the roof in the educational wing collapsed under the weight of the overnight snowfall. Because of the icy conditions, the AWANA, Junior department workers, and cleaning volunteers were not in the building as they usually were." The pastor was the only person in the building at the time, and he was in another section so no one was hurt.

The church made the necessary changes



Guests and members attended a building rededication at Great Lakes Baptist Temple. In the front, from left to right are Gerald and Judy Cheney, Verneta and Ted Wille, David Chittenden, Verlin Stogdill (music director), and Tom and Christine Merrick & family. Not pictured but present for the service were Glenn and Marylin Tatterson.

and arrangements for the many ministries the education wing housed, and began rebuilding almost immediately. Pictures of the damage and the construction are posted on the church's website, www.glbtfllint.org.

Great Lakes Baptist Temple was founded in 1946 as Grace Bible Baptist Church located on Red Arrow Road. The present facilities were

built under the ministry of Gerald Cheney (1966-76) in 1972. Dwayne Hardin pastored from 1976-1984. Ted Wille was the pastor from 1984-2006. David Chittenden arrived in June 2007 as the sixth pastor of the church's 65-year history. The church has a great love for missions and can boast of many from the congregation who are in the ministry.

Over 1,000 attend Congo BBC graduation

Lubumbashi, Democratic Republic of Congo

By Mike Randall, Former Editor Baptist Bible Tribune

A large crowd of over 1,000 people attended the graduation ceremonies of Congo Baptist Bible College November 12. Services were held in the facilities of Bethel Baptist Church. The commencement events were conducted by the school president, BBFI Missionary Elmer Deal, with assistance from Vice President Felicidad Felicilda M.D., Administrator Matombo Twite, and host pastor Jean Kayenge Salumu. Ten students received diplomas, recognizing completion of the three-year program.

Honored guests, families of the students, visitors, and graduates attended, along with local pastors and most of their congregations. Mrs. Rhodora Felicilda, the school's general secretary, prepared caps and gowns for all the faculty, professors, and graduates, adding to the beauty of the celebration. Four choirs from area churches sang. Deal presented the commencement address, exhorting the graduates to "preach and teach the true and precious Word of God," from 2 Timothy 4. He also gave each graduate a copy of his autobiography, *Out of the Mouth of the Lion*, which has now been trans-



lated into French. They also received copies of the Scofield Reference Bible and other gifts. The celebration ended with sandwiches and cold drinks.

A new addition to the Bible college facilities in Lubumbashi is under construction. The foundation has been poured and steel is in place. The nearly 50 students who attend are excited about this additional facility, which will provide more room for classes and activities. Besides the local campus, the school has two extension locations. Deal reports that gifts from churches in the

United States and fund raising in the Congo has enabled the churches there to pay government-imposed property taxes so that no property has yet been confiscated. Deal is grateful to all whose giving is helping and encouraging gospel outreach in the Congo. All the November Congo BBC graduates are now pastoring churches or have committed to plant new churches. Deal said the graduation was "one of the greatest events I have experienced since arriving here in Congo over 50 years ago."

BBFI women attend missionary retreat in Peru

Lima, Peru

Eight BBFI missionaries and Sharon Smith, wife of BBFI Associate Mission Director Jim Smith, attended the Pure Joy International retreat held

October 5-8 in Lima, Peru. Pure Joy International is a retreat ministry for missionary women around the world. The purpose of the ministry is to offer spiritual refreshment and rest from responsibilities to strengthen and encourage the women. The ministry provides their room, meals, and materials for the retreat.

Attending were missionaries Miriam Williams, Mychelle Garrison, Raquel Avila, Debbie Harmon, Laura Duke, Tonya Liles, Gloria Williams, and Jeanette Gillespie. Sharon Smith was a speaker for the event.

BBFI missionaries have attended Pure Joy



retreats in Ecuador, Uganda, and Costa Rica. Debbie Harmon of Peru had an enthusiastic response. She said, "It was wonderful — great, biblical teaching, sweet fellowship, uplifting singing. We had such nice accommodations and gifts every time we turned around. They thought of everything, and they truly came to minister to us."

Mychelle Garrison, also of Peru, reported, "It was exactly what I needed at this time in my life. I left so encouraged and challenged by the Word of God. Sharon did a great job speaking, leaving with us a piece of her heart. This is a great ministry and I wish that each BBFI missionary would get to experience this retreat."

With the Lord

Anna Mae Baldwin

Wrangell, AK

Anna Mae Baldwin, 76, of Wrangell, AK, wife of Daniel S. Baldwin, was called home Monday, November 21, 2011. She was born in Pratt, KS, April 8, 1935.




Mrs. Baldwin was a graduate of Baptist Bible College, Springfield, MO. She retired from Wrangell Air Service as office manager. Later she ran a home daycare for many years. Anna Mae had also been a missionary with Baptist Bible Fellowship. She was an active faithful member of Wrangell Bible Baptist Church for many years. Anna Mae served the Lord with her husband establishing numerous churches throughout Alaska for many years.

Survivors include her husband, three daughters, a son, 12 grandchildren, and 16 great-grandchildren. A memorial was held November 29, 2011, at Bible Baptist Church in Wrangell.

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Reflections on prayer

By John Arnold – Pastor, Library Baptist Church

About 20 years ago the Lord laid on my heart the possibilities of prayer. In retrospect I could have never known what I was about to learn over the 20-year period. I do remember standing before our Sunday school teachers challenging them to begin a journey of prayer with me. One teacher said after we were into the prayer journey a few weeks, “This has transformed my life.” Drawing closer to Christ will transform anyone’s life.

This journey has morphed from one phase to another throughout the years. From the simplest form of prayer into a growing maturity, not only of prayer, but other spiritual disciplines: assimilation of the Word, fasting, personal worship, memorization of the Scripture, and finally, praying the Scripture. All of these disciplines were first items of prayer before they became a reality.

I had this conviction — that if I could pray about the disciplines in the will of God that He would answer these requests. I never really knew how simple it was to pray in the will of God. I guess you could say, “I stand amazed.”

Right now I’m enjoying more and more the joy of practicing the disciplines and learning as I practice that God opens up new variegations of each discipline as you grow in them.

Learning to memorize scripture is one of the main keys to standing strong in the Lord. I have chosen to memorize the familiar verses that define what we believe and how to present the gospel, but have in recent years majored on verses that deal with the worship of God.

Everyone knows if you don’t use the verses you lose them, so in my quest to be “the best memorizer I can be and the best worshiper I can be,” I use these verses in two ways. The first is reviewing them while walking on the treadmill in the morning. As I walk I review and I’m renewed by the Word and energized by the walk. This keeps the verses fresh on my mind. Also I pray these verses to God as I worship Him, trying to use as many scriptures as possible in my time of praise. In other words, this prayer time turns into a shower of scripture as I stand in the presence of God. I find now that I have many things to say to the Lord that are scripture-based and what I have hid in my heart and mind comes pouring out in adoration. This type of prayer is about giving, not receiving; it is more blessed to give than receive.

Variety in places and formats to prayer are good as well. I am a creature of habit, but every now and then I find it is good to be open to a change of place to pray and change of position. Singing to the Lord is a good element to incorporate as we worship. I have several songs that I’m using now, two of which are, “Holy, Holy, Holy” and “O Come Let Us Adore Him.” A.W. Tozer said, “I would not even attempt to tell you how many hymn books are piled up in my study. I cannot sing a lick, but that is nobody’s business. God thinks I’m an opera star!”

Using memorization, praying the Scriptures, and singing round out a very meaningful period of worship that enriches the soul and gives a glimpse of heaven. Everything that we spiritually crave develops from an intimate relation with our Lord.

I’m persuaded that we are expecting too much of the church worship hour as it relates to our own needs. Now, more than ever, I see personal worship as paramount to our own spiritual vitality. With this vitality we can bring our overflow of worship to church rather than expecting to receive it from the service.

Worship also opens the door for incredible possibilities of service. A. W. Tozer said, “We have great churches and we have beautiful sanctuaries and we join in the chorus, ‘We have need of nothing.’ But there is every indication that we are in need of worshipers ... Practically every great deed done in the church of Christ all the way back to the apostle Paul was done by

people blazing with the radiant worship of their God. A survey of church history will prove that it was those who were yearning worshipers who also became the great workers. Those great saints whose hymns we so tenderly sing were active in their faith to the point that we must wonder how they ever did it all.”

The early church was known for its daily adorations. The contemporary church should be known for that as well. What better way to enhance the corporate worship of the church than to have the members bring their worship with them?

Of all the things God has taught me in the last 20 years, the experience of personal worship is at the top of my list of disciplines. Memorizing scripture is the key to standing strong in the Lord. And using them in personal worship is the epitome of spiritual experience.



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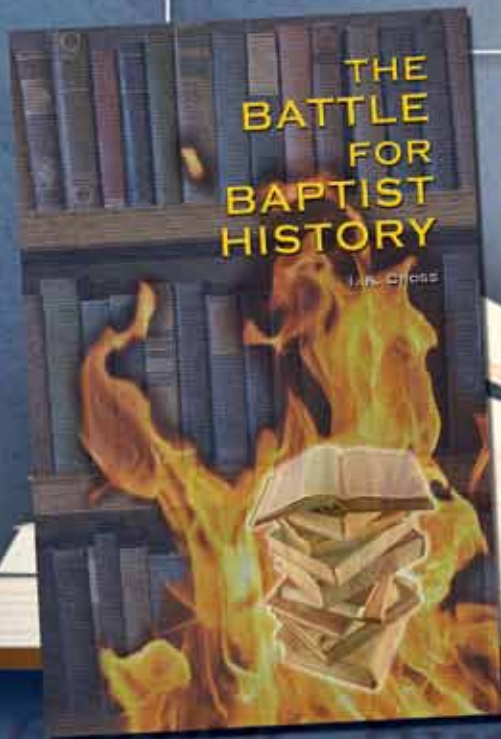
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