


B A P T I S T B I B L E
TRIBUNE

NOVEMBER 2016



THANKS PRACTICE GIVING

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2017

12 MONTHS

12 WAYS

THE *TRIBUNE*
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There are approximately 150 churches that support the *Baptist Bible Tribune* on a monthly basis. For the long-term health and sustainability of our ministry, this number must be increased. **Our goal is for 100 new churches to begin financially supporting the *Tribune* on a monthly basis in the coming year.** Will your church be one of them?



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Every Fellowship pastor and missionary receives the *Tribune* monthly.

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Every BBFI college student has access to the *Tribune* and the magazine is mailed to 46 college and university libraries across the country.

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Content ranges from inspirational features, to doctrinal treatise, to strategies for pastoral leadership, to prayer guides, to mission support ideas.

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The *Tribune's* content can support and enhance the pastor's message and approach to ministry.

6. OFFER A UNIQUE PERSPECTIVE

No other publication provides insight into what God is doing among the churches and missionaries of the BBFI.

7. PROVIDE A CENTRAL DIGITAL CONNECTION

Tribune.org complements the print magazine. *BBFI.org* is a landing page for all BBFI entities, state Fellowships, specialty networks, corporate information, and practical resources.

8. SPEAK INTO THE WORLD OF SOCIAL MEDIA

The Communication Office manages 5 different social media sites. Facebook alone has over 5,000 "likes" and an average weekly reach over 12,000. We are also on Twitter, Instagram, and Vimeo.

9. INSPIRE LEADERS

The BBFI Leadership Podcasts are monthly conversations posted to encourage and inspire today's leaders. Interviews focus on a wide range of leadership topics from dynamic leaders.

10. STAY CONNECTED ON THE GO

Within the BBFI mobile app, you can connect with any BBFI entity or Fellowship leader, you can listen to the BBFI Leadership Podcast or audio from previous National Fellowship Meetings, watch videos of previous Fellowship Meetings, read various BBFI connected blogs, search job openings, see a calendar of all upcoming national and state-level Fellowship meetings, and even read the entire *Tribune*. It literally puts the entire Fellowship in the palm of your hand

11. STRENGTHEN FOR THE MINISTRY

Lord willing, the new BBFI Coaching Network will launch with the National Fellowship Meeting in February 2017. This will be a great tool for pastoral accountability and to help pastors grow in their leadership and pastoral skills.

12. SUPPORT PERSONNEL

Karri Joy Perry, Director of Office Services, has been with the *Tribune* since 2002. Rob Walker, Assistant Editor, has been with the *Tribune* since 2006. Randy Harp is the new guy on the block. He is just finishing up his first year as the new Executive Editor and Communication Director. Monthly support goes much further than just ink on paper. It also supports these families including the combined eight children, all under the age of fourteen.



ON THE TABLE I am thankful

by Randy Harp | Editor

My wife thinks I am crazy, but I absolutely love the fall. She doesn't mind fall; she just really doesn't like what comes after it. But I love the warm days and cool evenings. I love building a small fire in my new fire pit. I love to see the colors changing on the trees. I really love college football (Go Hogs!). I also love the time we set aside to give thanks. Thanksgiving has long been one of my favorite holidays. Yes, I am guilty of loving the four "Fs" of Thanksgiving ... faith, family, food, and football. I just think it is a perfect combination. Being thankful or setting aside a day of thanks-giving isn't just a fall thing, it is a biblical thing.

This issue marks one year for me as the editor of the *Tribune*. My first words in print a year ago were, "I am thankful." Those words still ring true today. I am thankful to God for the incredible opportunities He has provided for me. He has been so faithful and blessed far beyond any hopes or dreams. I am also thankful for you. Each month you trust us to produce a magazine with enough quality content that you take the time to read it. I am also thankful for those who have partnered with us financially. Without your financial support we would not be able to produce such a quality magazine.

In addition to the thanksgiving theme, this issue of the *Tribune* also reports on the recent National Fellowship Meeting in Cape Cod. Ben Feldtott and Cape Cod Church did a great job of hosting the Fellowship. One of the important discussions during the business meeting was an update to the current BBFI Constitution and By-Laws. Take some time to review the Summary of Changes on page 26 as well as reading through the legal documents at www.bbfi.org/legal. There has been a specially called business meeting to be held during the February meeting in Tyler, TX, with the recommendation for a vote and approval.

One feature we are experimenting with in this issue is augmented reality. This page you are reading and the page to the left both contain hidden links to a virtual site. In order to view this augmented reality, you must first download an app for your smartphone or tablet from the applicable app store. The app is named LAYAR. Once downloaded and opened, simply scan this page and watch it come to life. I am looking forward to hearing your feedback on this feature.

As always, thank you for the opportunity to serve Christ as I serve you in the ministry of communication. If there is every anything I can do for you, please let me know.

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BAPTIST BIBLE TRIBUNE

VOL. 67 NO. 3

NOVEMBER 2016

THANKSGIVING



The Attitude of Gratitude _____ **8**
Humble faith combined with heartfelt gratitude can truly bring God's best into our lives.



In the Spirit of Thanksgiving _____ **11**
A look back at that first "Thanksgiving" might just shape the way we approach the day 395 years later.



Thanksgiving History _____ **12**
Beyond Pilgrims and stuffed turkey, the history of Thanksgiving Day in America has a lot to offer.



BBFI National Meeting Report _____ **13**
Host Pastor Ben Feldott and Cape Cod Church welcomed the BBFI to Falmouth, MA for the September 2017 national meeting.



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.

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FROM THE PRESIDENT THANKSGIVING

There is something about our fallen nature that grabs hold of criticism and lets it occupy our meditation while the encouragement of a word of praise easily slips away. One of the most important practices to stay resilient and positive is practicing gratitude.

The Bible has a lot to say about the importance of gratitude. Paul reminds us in Colossians 3:15-17 how important it is:

“And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.”

Even in the secular world the science of gratitude is pretty powerful. Derrick Carpenter, who runs corporate leadership programs and trains U.S. Army personnel on resilience, says: “The benefits of practicing gratitude are nearly endless. People who regularly practice gratitude by taking time to notice and reflect upon the things they’re thankful for experience more positive emotions, feel more alive, sleep better, express more compassion and kindness, and even have stronger immune systems.”

I am grateful for the Baptist Bible Fellowship. Our local churches are able to come together to educate future leaders, send missionaries, and plant churches. I am grateful for those who serve our Fellowship entities. I thank God for allowing us to have a part in His story of the ages.



Eddie Lyons
BBFI PRESIDENT

WORLD MISSIONS GIVING THANKS

Thanksgiving, as it relates to world missions, brings to mind the heartfelt words I hear repeatedly as I travel around the world, “Thank you for sending the missionaries who brought the Gospel of Jesus Christ. If the missionary had not come, I most likely would not have heard the Way, the Truth, and the Life — thank you!”

Thanksgiving is an opportunity to offer a public acknowledgement of the goodness of God. He has blessed us with wonderful churches that desire to see the Gospel spread throughout our country and around the world. We thank God for His goodness and blessings upon the BBFI.

With the many blessings from God come responsibilities. Just as our tables are full of food during the Thanksgiving holidays, our hearts are filled with the fullness of the Gospel. Many around the world hunger and thirst spiritually. We have Jesus Christ, the one who will satisfy their deepest need, lift their burdens, and forgive their sins! We thank God for His Son — the savior of the world.

Let us express our gratitude as we enter this time of year by thanking God for the Great Commission — the privilege to be part of God’s plan given to the church. Thank God for those who pray for and give to missions and for those who go as

missionaries. Thank God for the churches working together to send and support.

While the Thanksgiving holiday may not be celebrated around the world, we can always be thankful to God for the gift of salvation — anytime and anywhere!



Jon Konnerup
BBFI MISSION DIRECTOR

BBFI LEADERSHIP

CHURCH PLANTING A HELPING HAND

You cannot plant a church without help. How we choose to produce this help distinguishes the differences in church planting styles.

Two approaches to church planting have become popular in the last few years. One is what we’ll simply call the large group or core group method. In this method, the sending church allows a group of their members to accompany a church planter to a particular area for the purpose of helping the church planter establish the new church. From this group the church planter develops his leadership for the church. This approach comes with its challenges. The church planter can become more

involved in pastoring these initial partners rather than reaching the unchurched and lost souls of the community. Remember, the purpose of this new church is to reach the community through evangelism and discipleship.

The second style of church planting is the parachute approach. It’s been used since the church in Antioch sent Saul and Barnabas. In this method, a church that wants to meet the needs within a particular community sends a planter, his family, and maybe another couple to start a church. This style is typically slower, but many times proves to be more stable. With this approach, there is a bonding and a pioneer spirit

that can be acquired in no other way. It makes discipleship and evangelism a necessity on a daily basis. Faith and consistency is developed within the new converts who become part of the structure and leadership of the new church.

Each of these approaches is acceptable and exciting to those participating. The approach chosen becomes a matter of prayer through the leadership of the Holy Spirit.



John Gross
BBFI CHURCH PLANTING (APEX)

BAPTIST BIBLE COLLEGE THANKFUL FOR YOU!

Jesus healing the man born blind is one of my favorite Bible stories. The man states, “I was blind, but now I see.”

I often feel the same way. I get so wrapped up in the busyness of life, I forget to truly see. When I take time to stop and really look, then I can really see, and I am thankful.

Every day I see students from all over the country. I see students from San Antonio, Detroit, Kansas City, Dallas, Orlando, and Los Angeles. I watch them go to class, I see them worship in chapel, I see them help and love and encourage each other. I see them, and I am thankful.

I see them study together,

pray together for each other, go to work, eat together, and cheer for each other. I see them as they cry, as they share their burdens, and as they miss their families. I see them trust God enough to follow His plan for their lives. I see them, and I am thankful.

I see dedicated and godly professors, staff, and crews who are humble servants. I see them, and I am thankful.

I see a campus built by founders with a great vision. I see it, and I am thankful.

I see pastors and churches tell their students about Baptist Bible College, support BBC, and pray for us. I see them, and I am thankful.

I see people who give,

allowing BBC to exist. I see you, and I am thankful.

Let me encourage you to open your eyes and see what God has done at BBC. You will be thankful too.



Mark Milioni
BAPTIST BIBLE COLLEGE PRESIDENT

PERSPECTIVES

THANKS GIVING

BOSTON BAPTIST COLLEGE LESS OBVIOUS THANKS

Of late, I have become increasingly thankful for students I've known, present and past. Boston alumni are all over the map. I'm thinking now of Randall and Rachel doing incredible work for Jesus in a creative access nation. Half a world away I think of Luke, Brian, Tony and Joy, and I'm thankful to have a connection with their efforts to proclaim the Gospel to the nations. And stateside, I'm thankful for people like Rich, Wes, Ron and Michelle, Jeff, Devonne, Joe, Brad and Julianne, and Akeem. I even have some weird thanks. When you are in leadership with a bunch of independent thinkers, you are bound to have alumni from both

ends of the spectrum who have no plans to name any children after you! While I'm not saying I enjoy criticism, I'm learning to be weirdly thankful for detractors who want us to be “better.” How can I not be thankful for that?

But I'm profoundly thankful for the alums who are my fellow laborers now. Just yesterday, Randy Ward (for whom I'm eternally thankful!) and I were working on an academic project with one of our alumna, Kristin. I'm thankful Boston was and is part of her life and invaluable ministry. Today, other talented, hard-working alumna are really doing the heavy lifting on another complicated task. Just watching Rebekah, Jill, and

Lauren work makes me thankful to have them making us better! And I'm thinking of another alum who talked with me about his life recently and said, “My life's story probably doesn't look like much, because I've given my life to little churches that nobody else wanted.” I still hear those words ringing in my ear. Somebody, the only One who really matters, “wanted” those churches. I'm proud our college has been a part of those kinds of stories. Call it weird or profound or whatever you want, but just be sure to call it “thanks.”



David Melton
BOSTON BAPTIST COLLEGE PRESIDENT

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IN THE TRENCHES

Pastor

John Kerns

Pastor | Faith Baptist Church | Osterville, MA

THANKSGIVING

Early in our marriage and ministry, my wife and I encountered challenges that would test our faith. Two very significant events God allowed us to experience became stones of remembrance in our lives. The first came with a call to pastor Faith Baptist Church of Osterville on Cape Cod. The church had dwindled to about a dozen or so people and was about one month away from closing the doors. My wife and I sensed the Lord calling us to Faith. There were many obstacles, and if God did not intervene this church would close. At the time, they were not able to pay us, but we still agreed to come. As we stepped out by faith, God responded and brought a family into our lives who basically invested about \$300,000 into our family and church over a three-year period.

The next major event was the birth of our first child Emma. It started with one ultrasound and then many to follow. The doctors told us

there was a strong possibility Emma would be born with Down syndrome. I know there are worse things a child could be born with, but as a first-time dad I was overwhelmed with the unknown. I prayed like I have never prayed before and I asked everyone I knew to pray. At our last ultrasound we met with a genetic counselor and were advised it was not too late to abort our little girl. Needless to say, that was a very short conversation. A few weeks later, on December 25, we were blessed with a healthy little girl, the first of four girls to come.

These are just examples of events we have experienced. It is good to remember and be thankful. Every single one of us has so much to be grateful for, but the key is remembering. In Joshua 4:1-8, the children of Israel had crossed the Jordan River into the Promised Land. What a major event for the children of Israel!

At this moment the Lord spoke to Joshua and commanded him to have a person from each of the 12 tribes gather a stone out of the Jordan and place it where they stood. These stones were stones of remembrance. Why would God instruct Joshua to do this? So the children of Israel would not forget what God had done for them. So they would remember and be thankful.

Early on, my wife and I started putting stones of remembrance in a glass vase. We would take a small rock, write down God's provision for us as a reminder, and then place it in the vase. When I see these stones I am reminded of his faithfulness. This is not just for us but also for the generations to come as a testimony of God's faithfulness to our family. What a great time of the year to remember and be thankful.

Missionary

Keith and Mariella Mills

BBFI Missionaries | Scotland

We have had the privilege of serving in Scotland for the past 27 years, 30 as BBFI missionaries. We have celebrated Thanksgiving in many different ways. Sometimes we've celebrated with other missionaries, other times we've had Thanksgiving on our own (it is not a holiday in Scotland) or with Scottish friends.

At first, finding a turkey at the grocery store in November was a difficult thing to do! Traditionally, in Scotland, they have turkeys at Christmastime. When we did find them they were very expensive compared to America! One year a 10-pound turkey cost over \$50! And sometimes, even though they came from the grocery store, they still had to be cleaned before cooking! Finding other Thanksgiving ingredients was not so easy 27 years ago, either. But times have changed a wee bit and you can find what you need —

sometimes they are a bit more expensive than in America but it's worth the price to witness to the lost who have come to various Thanksgiving meals.

Once our local day center for the elderly asked us to host a Thanksgiving meal. My wife and I cooked and prepared a meal for 60 people. We invited Tom and Gail Gritts from England to come and be our speakers for the evening and present the Gospel to these dear Scottish people. We were able to do this as an outreach into our community and some of the people began attending church and came to know the Lord.

We have been invited into our local elementary school to share Thanksgiving with 11- and 12-year-old young people. When some teachers found out what we were doing they invited us to their classes also.

For the past few years, we have invited lost people to our home for Thanksgiving lunch. It began with one woman asking us what we ate

at Thanksgiving. We said, "Why not come and experience it?" She invited six of her friends to join us. We prepared a traditional meal for them. After they had been seated and we were ready to eat, one of the ladies, Sharon, spoke up and said, "Don't touch anything until Keith has said grace!" I was just opening my mouth to speak when she piped up! I also read a Thanksgiving tract to them before we served dessert.

At church we celebrate a traditional Harvest Sunday where the people bring canned items to share with those in need.

Whatever opportunity God opens for us to share the Gospel with the lost we will do — even something as simple as a Thanksgiving meal or a Harvest Service! Any chance to share how thankful we are for the Lord Jesus Christ giving his life for us so we can be saved. We are thankful! Let us give thanks!

Youth Ministry

Brad Salee
Beacon Baptist Church | Taylor, MI

Thanksgiving. Indian Corn, fake leaves, cheesy pictures of pilgrims and Native Americans gathered around a table holding hands, fall food drives, dry turkeys Each year this holiday comes and I rack my brain trying to figure out a way to present one of the oldest American holidays to high school students in a way that is relevant, dynamic, and fresh.

Sure, you can compare Thanksgiving to the ancient and modern Jewish feasts that were focused on God's provision for the Israelites. You can talk about all the commands in the Scriptures

to be thankful and generous. You can even integrate physical/visual activities during youth group to get students focused on being more thankful. All of these good things aside, though, I think many times I personally miss the boat on what it means to truly be thankful.

I am thankful for my salvation and the blessings God has given me in my family, life, church, abilities ... you name it! But how quickly I forget where these things come from and how easy it is to take for granted what has been given to me. In that respect, I am not unlike many

students in my lack of thankfulness year round. The reality — thankfulness and thanksgiving need to be core parts of my lifestyle every week, not something I focus on simply once a year. Thanksgiving is something that needs to happen in my youth group every time we get together, praising God for his continual goodness and blessing in our lives. Could that not be considered “worshiping in spirit and truth?”

Quite frankly, I am deficient in this area in my home life and my church/youth pastor life. I often get too busy to stop and thank God for what He is allowing me to accomplish or I fail to thank members of my church who sacrificially give of themselves to help me accomplish my goals. Teaching thanksgiving to my students begins with me authentically practicing what I'm preaching.

At its core, Thanksgiving is an idea that must be central to every believer. I must model thankfulness to my students throughout the year, otherwise it is impossible for me to expect that same attitude from them. Thanksgiving is more than a holiday; it is a lifestyle. So bring on the creepy scarecrows leftover from the 1980s and all the fake pumpkins. It's time to give thanks.

Children's Ministry

Sam Emile
First Baptist Church | East Longmeadow, MA

Thanksgiving, for the church, is more than just another holiday. It is an opportunity to express our gratitude for God's goodness and celebrate all He has done. Psalm 100:4-5 bears this out: “Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise! Give thanks to him; bless his name! For the Lord is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations.”

First Thessalonians 5:18 commands us to “give thanks in all circumstances” because it's the will of God. You see it is our privilege, responsibility, and command to bear this out at all times and in all seasons; but the month of November and, in particular, Thanksgiving, offers us an opportunity to be strategic in how our children's ministry approaches this time of year.

First Kids, the children's ministry of First Baptist Church of East Longmeadow, uses the *252 Basics Curriculum*, by Orange. We have found it to be grounded in the Word of God and it makes

learning the Bible engaging, relevant, and fun. For the month of November, we focus on honoring one another and God. Here's what our week-to-week focus will look like and some possible activities to reinforce those lessons:

Honor – Letting someone know you see how valuable they really are

Week 1 Bible Story: Samuel anoints David. Main

Idea: Honor others by giving them a chance.

Week 2 Bible Story: David and Jonathan. Main Idea:

Honor others by putting them first.

Week 3 Bible Story: David and Mephiboseth. Main

Idea: Honor others by keeping your promises.

Week 4 Bible Story: David dances before God. Main

Idea: Honor God by giving Him credit.

Thankful Tree: Draw a tree trunk out of brown construction paper and place it on the wall. Have students trace both of their hands on fall colored (red, orange, or yellow) construction paper. Have them cut out their handprints and

write one thing they are thankful for on each one. Once all are done, the teacher can hang the handprints as the leaves on the tree trunk.

ABC Thanks: Have a large sheet of paper or whiteboard listing the alphabet from A-Z. Have students write one thing they are thankful for under each letter of the alphabet. The challenge is they must start with the corresponding letter (e.g., A-apple, B-basketball). This is a great activity for younger students, as it allows them to practice their ABCs, but it can also be a challenging one for the older students.

Give Thanks Scripture Cards: Pick several verses about giving thanks. For younger students, have these verses written out in advance on index cards. For older students, allow them to write their own cards. Each card should only have one verse. Allow the students the opportunity to be creative in decorating their cards. The cards should be hole punched in the top left corner and held together with a binder ring.



The attitude

T H A N K S

By Greg Burdine

The recent BBFI national meeting on Cape Cod provided a great opportunity to reflect on the early beginnings of our nation while visiting Plymouth Rock, the replica Mayflower ship, and Burial Hill. Those Pilgrims who landed on Cape Cod almost 400 years ago knew nothing of the affluent American lifestyle we enjoy today. More than half of the original settlers died that first harsh New England winter. After a successful agricultural season the following summer, aided by Squanto and other Native Americans, the Pilgrims shared a harvest feast in gratitude for all God had done for them.

While the Pilgrims did not have much, they possessed gratitude. Since then, gratitude to God has been a part of the American culture and the very thing that built America. Of all our attitudes, gratitude is the most central. Cicero once said, "Gratitude is not only the greatest of all virtues, but the parent of all others." There is nothing more toxic than a negative attitude. And nothing compares with the value of humility that allows us to be truly grateful for everything we have.

THE BIBLE ENCOURAGES GRATITUDE

Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Ephesians 5:20)

Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most High: (Psalm 50:14)

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

One of my favorite Bible stories about being thankful is in Luke 17:11-19. As Jesus traveled with His disciples through Samaria toward Jerusalem and the cross, He met ten lepers. This must have been an interesting encounter. I can imagine the awkward silence between disciples and lepers. Jesus had healed lepers before. Would he do it again? Could he do it for ten?

The lepers cried, "Have mercy on us." And Jesus directed them to see the priest. As they left, I expect they were a little disappointed. They finally met Jesus, the miracle worker, but were told to leave exactly as they came. Nothing changed. Jesus may have been their last hope. If he couldn't help them, they faced a life of sickness and isolation.

But as they went, something miraculous happened to them. They were cleansed. I'm sure they were so excited they ran to tell their family and friends and share the good news. Then we pick up the Bible story about one of the lepers:

And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan. And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger. And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole. (Luke 17:15-19)

One man turned around and went back to Jesus, falling before His feet and thanking Him. Jesus was pleased with his actions, but he seems grieved at the absence of the other nine. Weren't they cleansed as well? Why did only one return to thank Him?

I don't know what happened to 90 percent of the group. Perhaps they journeyed to show themselves to the priest in obedience to the instruction of Jesus. Maybe they ran back to their families. One of them could have said, "I want to see if this really lasts." But from Jesus' response, only one did the right thing. He wasn't content to see the priest. He wanted to see Jesus. Overcome with gratitude, he paused to offer thanks.

As I have read this story over and over again, I discover a few principles about the attitude of gratitude.

of gratitude

GIVING



GRATITUDE IS THE PROPER RESPONSE TO GOD'S BLESSING

This grateful leper recognized he received a tremendous gift. Leprosy changed his life into a hopeless situation affecting his body, his relationships, and his soul. But Jesus brought hope into his life. He was changed! He would never be the same again, and he had to express thanks.

The others were cleansed also, but in the excitement of their new health, they forgot their former condition, their cries for help, and the miraculous response of Jesus. It is so easy for us to forget all the good things that happen to us. In the excitement of God's blessings, we often forget where they came from. Or maybe we become accustomed to the blessings and the thrill lessens. We neglect to thank God for common blessings.

Being thankful is a courteous and appropriate response to a kind deed or action. We teach our children to say thank you. Though it should be, gratitude is not an automatic response. Jesus never solicited a grateful response. He didn't tell any of them to come back and thank him. They should have, but he did not require it. Gratitude is a voluntary response from a heart that recognizes God's blessings and desires to place the attention where it should be — at the feet of Jesus.

GRATITUDE COMPELS HUMBLE ACTION

This grateful leper recognized he had received a great gift and his action reflected the magnitude of the gift. He did not simply receive a nice gift. Because he had been radically improved, he responded with radical gratitude at the feet of Jesus. Falling at someone's feet is a picture of submission and worship. By falling before the Savior he soiled the very flesh that had just been made clean. The voice that cried for healing now rose with a loud cry of gratitude.

I don't know what motivated the grateful leper to move and the others to stay away. But I know his movement reflected his recognition of the miracle. Our gratitude reflects our deep understanding of the work God has done in our hearts. Jesus taught in another instance that the more we are forgiven, the more we respond in love (Luke 7:47). We all need forgiveness, but most of us don't recognize our sinfulness enough to be truly grateful. Too often we feel like we somehow deserve the blessings. The measure of our gratitude reveals the measure of our humility.

Most of us would never say we are not grateful for what God has done for us. But often we are like the pharisee who was simply grateful he wasn't like the publican (Luke 18:9-14). It is when we think we deserve

God's blessings that we become less grateful. As we remain humble, we will be motivated to express our gratitude more.

GRATITUDE IS A RARE ATTITUDE

Ten people were touched with God's power, but only one returned to give Him thanks. Nine were content to receive a blessing, but only one cared enough to return to the source of the blessing. How could anyone not feel thankful after being healed like this?

If this story is any indication of human nature, only ten percent of us express our gratitude. To make it personal, we probably miss nine out of ten opportunities to be grateful. I'm sure the other nine were grateful, but they failed to express it. I believe Jesus is still saddened by how few of us actually express thanksgiving to Him.

In my studying, I discovered a variation in the meaning of *grateful* and *thanksgiving*. We often use them interchangeably, but there is a difference. *Grateful* is an attitude. *Thanksgiving* is the action in response to a grateful attitude. This story teaches that we need both, and one without the other isn't complete. Being grateful without expressing thanks is just rude. Expressing thanks without being truly grateful is hypocritical.

GRATITUDE IS AN EVIDENCE OF A DEEP WORK OF GOD

Ten were cleansed but only one heard the words, “Your faith has made you whole.”

Expressing gratitude lets us know we are on the right path to wholeness. Humble faith combined with heartfelt gratitude is a combination that will truly bring God’s best into our lives.

The other nine were no longer leprous, but they were still sick at heart. It was the display of humility, dependence, and appreciation for Jesus’ goodness that brought the grateful leper to the feet of Jesus. It was an act of worship. He did not just want God’s blessings and miracles, he wanted a personal relationship with Jesus — to be close to the one who was so kind to him.

When we really understand what God has done for us in saving our souls, it results in a desire to be close to Him and perform grateful acts of service. When gratitude is part of our lives, it changes our attitudes, our relationships, and our actions.

Like leprosy, sin is a deadly problem only Jesus can fix. Like these men, to be cleansed from our sins begins with admitting our need and crying out to Jesus. As we realize the great miracle he has done for us, our proper response should be gratitude. As Paul encourages us, “In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God” (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

SO HOW CAN WE CULTIVATE AN ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE?

The supreme way to show gratitude for all you have been given is to humble yourself before God, admit your sinful condition, and beg for forgiveness. Jesus will never force you to follow him, but he loves you so much and wants to have a relationship with you.

If you have surrendered all you are to Him, I hope you realize the tremendous blessings you have been given. Like the Johnson Oatman hymn reminds us, “Count your many blessings. Name them one by one.” Maybe if we spent more time being thankful for what we have, we would have more to be thankful for. 🌿

10 WAYS TO PRACTICE THE ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE

THANK GOD
FOR EVERY CIRCUMSTANCE.

BE GRATEFUL FOR LITTLE THINGS.

SAY THANK YOU MORE.

CONSIDER WHAT YOU POSSESS
RATHER THAN WHAT YOU LACK.

HANG OUT MORE WITH GRATEFUL
PEOPLE.

EVERY DAY TELL SOMEONE WHY
YOU APPRECIATE THEM.

DO NOT LET PRIDE STAND IN
THE WAY OF THANKING GOD AND
OTHERS.

BEGIN YOUR DAY BY LISTING FIVE
THINGS FOR WHICH YOU ARE
THANKFUL.

END YOUR DAY BY THANKING
GOD FOR THREE THINGS THAT
HAPPENED TO YOU.

KEEP A GRATITUDE JOURNAL.

In the spirit of Thanksgiving

Our Corne did proue well, & God be prayesd, we had a good increase of Indian Corne, and our Barly indifferent good, but our Pease not worth the gathering, for we feared they were too late sowne, they came vp very well, and blossomed, but the Sunne parched them in the blossome; our harvest being gotten in, our Governour sent foure men on fowling, that so we might after a more speciall manner reioyce together, after we had gathered the fruit of our labors; they foure in one day killed as much fowle, as with a little helpe beside, served the Company almost a weeke, at which time amongst other Recreations, we exercised our Armes, many of the Indians coming amongst vs, and among the rest their greatest King Massasoyt, with some nintie men, whom for three dayes we entertained and feasted, and they went out and killed fiue Deere, which they brought to the Plantation and bestowed upon our Governour, and upon the Captaine, and others. And although it be not alwayes so plentifull, as it was at this time with vs, yet by the goodneses of God, we are so farre from want, that we often wish you partakers of our plenty.

E.W. (Edward Winslow) Plymouth, in New England, this 11th of December, 1621.

By Rob Walker

In his work *The Fast and Thanksgiving Days of New England*, 19th century author William Love documents how the Separatist Puritans viewed religious occasions as a time of solemn reflection and fasting. In part, the platform for their separation from the Church of England was built upon what they felt was an increasing contamination of holy days with mirth, recreation, and indulgence. But, after examining the Edward Winslow letter above (one of the only two eyewitness accounts to the “first Thanksgiving” in the New World), there doesn’t seem to be much solemnity to the event that took place in the autumn of 1621. So what exactly is the spirit of the Thanksgiving Day we celebrate? Should we strive to incorporate extra acts of thanks-giving beyond blessing the day’s fare? Immerse ourselves with family and friends in football and parades? Sacrifice and serve others who may be less fortunate? Is it really just Black Friday Eve?

In the writings of William Bradford from those early days on Cape Cod, one notices perils and struggles were usually followed with a time of giving God “solemn thanks and praise” for His deliverance. Says Love in his book,

“Such were the Pilgrims and such their habit day by day. Yet we should hardly suppose that, throughout the sufferings of that first

dreadful winter, they had other than these spontaneous recognitions of their afflictions and blessings ... There was no demand for a special day of humiliation; it was a life of fasting enforced by their suffering condition ... But there was prayer, — constant prayer, like the throbbing of the pulse; and so an infant nation was born.”

Perhaps, in that sentiment, is the challenge for believers today. Not whether our Thanksgiving Day contains enough thanks-giving, or too much football, or social agendas openly paraded down city streets, but rather, are our lives lived in such a way that no special day is needed for us to express our gratefulness and praise to God. Can it be said that prayer and thanksgiving are as constant as the pulse of blood through our veins? Most of us do not come to this Thanksgiving Day having repeatedly escaped death by the elements, starvation, and sickness over the past year, but that is no excuse to minimize the deliverance from our daily struggles as less worthy of constant solemn thanks and praise to God.

So let us glorify God through all we do and say on this upcoming Thanksgiving Day. But more importantly, let us strive to live every day in complete dependence upon our Almighty God, never faltering in our expressions of thanks to Him. If that is our heart’s objective, I think we can agree upon William Love’s

assessment of the events of 1621 and their role in our celebration of Thanksgiving Day:

“That this was a harvest festival cannot be disputed. But it has generally been termed the first autumnal thanksgiving in New England, and some have supposed that it was the inauguration of a continuous series of thanksgiving occasions. Such is not the fact. We have already learned what their idea of a religious thanksgiving day was, and the account itself shows that this was altogether a different celebration. ...

The harvest festival at Plymouth in 1621 was an inspiration. It was not made; it was born. It did not look backward into the past; and, as for the future, no one thought of the real influence such a celebration would have. The present alone commanded it; its wonderful autumnal season, its relief from anxiety, its food for those who had endured hunger, — this benediction of the New World reanimated their drooping spirits. They could serve God as truly on a holiday in its recreations as on the Sabbath in its services. All slumbering discontent they would smother with common rejoicings. When the holiday was over they would be better, braver men, because they had turned aside to rest awhile.”

Love, William DeLoss. *The Fast and Thanksgiving Days of New England*. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1895.

THANKSGIVING HISTORY

BY GREG BAXTER

THANKSGIVING IN AMERICA: CELEBRATED SINCE ... 1619?

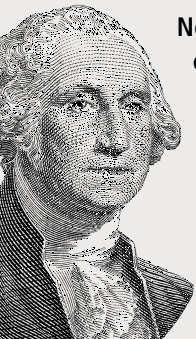
Along the James River in Virginia, the Berkeley Hundred colony held a religious service on December 4, 1619, to give thanks for "the day of our ship's arrival" and proclaimed the date would be "yearly and perpetually kept holy as a day of thanksgiving to the Almighty God." However, in 1622, after nine of the colonists were killed by Powhatan Indians, the colony was abandoned. Had this group not departed, they would probably be known as the originators of the Thanksgiving holiday, rather than the Pilgrims of the Plymouth colony.

Source: Catherine Clinton. "A History of the Thanksgiving Holiday," The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History.

A "day of Thanksgiving and Praise" was proclaimed on December 18, 1777, in light of the Continental Army's defeat of the British the preceding October. This was the first holiday officially celebrated in all 13 states.



On October 3, 1789, President George Washington issued a proclamation directing Americans to celebrate and give thanks on Thursday, November 26.



"Now, therefore, I do recommend and assign Thursday, the 26th day of November next, to be devoted by the people of these States to the service of that great and glorious Being who is the beneficent author of all the good that was, that is, or that will be; that we may then all unite in rendering unto Him our sincere and humble thanks for His kind care and protection of the people of this country previous to their becoming a nation; for the signal and manifold mercies and the favor, able interpositions of His providence in the course and conclusion of the late war; for the great degree of tranquilly, union, and plenty which we have since enjoyed; for the peaceable and rational manner in which we have been enabled to establish constitutions of government for our safety and happiness, and particularly the national one now lately instituted; for the civil and religious liberty with which we are blessed, and the means we have of acquiring and diffusing useful knowledge; and, in general, for all the great and various favors which He has been pleased to confer upon us."

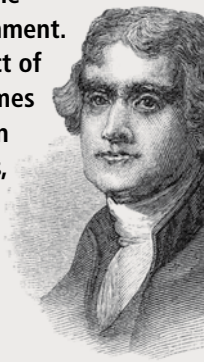
In 1808, President Thomas Jefferson was pressed by a personal letter from Reverend Samuel Miller to call the nation to a national day of prayer and thanksgiving. Jefferson graciously declined by laying out his position on the separation of church and state in such matters:

"... Certainly no power to prescribe any religious exercise, or to assume authority in religious discipline, has been delegated to the general government.

... Fasting and prayer are religious exercises. The enjoining them an act of discipline, every religious society has a right to determine for itself the times for these exercises and the objects proper for them according to their own particular tenets and this right can never be safer than in their own hands, where the constitution has deposited it.

... civil powers alone have been given to the President of the United States and no authority to direct the religious exercises of his constituents."

Read Jefferson's full response at www.founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/99-01-02-7257



The majority of the credit for making the annual Thanksgiving holiday a national holiday goes to Sarah Josepha Hale. She was the editor of *Ladies Magazine* and *Godey's Lady's Book*. In 1827 she began to advocate for Thanksgiving by printing articles in the magazines. She also published stories and recipes, and wrote letters to

governors, senators, and presidents. It took her 36 years to persuade the President and Congress to her point of view. On October 3, 1863, supported by the Union victory at Gettysburg, President Lincoln proclaimed November 26 a national day of Thanksgiving, to be observed every year on the fourth Thursday of November.

After the Civil War, Thanksgiving began to evolve into a more commercial celebration. In the neighborhoods of New York City, the holiday took on a more secular tone. One person commented in 1881: "About 150 persons were in coaches or on horseback, all in fancy costumes and many of them such as to create much merriment among the crowds that flocked to see them." The festivities began to rival Mardi Gras or Mummers' parades on New Year's Day, and in 1921, Gimbel's Department Store in Philadelphia sponsored its first Thanksgiving parade. Starting in 1924, Macy's of Manhattan transformed the day's events into a patriotic extravaganza.

Source: Diana Karter Appelbaum, *Thanksgiving* (New York: Facts on File, 1984).



HOW MANY SHOPPING DAYS BEFORE CHRISTMAS?

President Franklin D. Roosevelt, in order to give depression-era merchants more selling days before Christmas, assigned the third Thursday to be Thanksgiving Day in 1939 and 1940. He met stiff resistance because the change required rescheduling Thanksgiving Day events such as football games and parades. In 1941, a Congressional Joint Resolution officially set the fourth Thursday of November as a national holiday for Thanksgiving.

Source: Smithsonian, "Thanksgiving in North America: From Local Harvests to National Holiday." Prepared by the Division of Cultural History, National Museum of American History, in cooperation with Public Inquiry Services, Smithsonian Institution.

BBFI RECEIVES WARM WELCOME FOR NATIONAL MEETING



The BBFI fall meeting was held in the northeast for the second time in the past five years, this time on beautiful Cape Cod. Ben Feldott and Cape Cod Church went above and beyond expectations as a host church and did everything short of rolling out a red carpet. The church facility, which is less than two years old, was an ideal venue. The large auditorium comfortably sat the approximately 600-650 registered guests and church members. Church staff and volunteers (sometimes you could not tell them apart) were always gracious and helpful. Even the city itself provided an accommodating environment with plenty of local restaurants, amazing history, beaches, and Martha's Vineyard nearby. I heard one attendee say this was the first meeting he could remember in 25 years of attending BBFI meetings that had a host hotel on the beach.



GUEST SPEAKERS

There was a good balance of BBFI pastors along with special guests. Steve Van Winkle opened the conference Monday night reflecting on the past decade in light of Psalm 37:4. Gordon MacDonald, Editor-at-Large for *Leadership Journal*, followed with principles from the life of John the Baptist. Tuesday morning's speaker line-up included Jon Slayden on having a big faith (1 Thessalonians 1), Kevin Whitacre on the challenges of moving to where God leads (Deuteronomy 1), and Paul Blue answering, "When will it be my turn for God to do something through me?" (John 5). Tuesday night Jen Merryman shared her testimony and what God is doing through the organization Children in Christ, and Mark Batterson, author and pastor of National Community Church in Washington, D.C., preached from Acts 10 and the power of a single prayer. Wednesday night included two speakers: Dick Yue, a professor at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and originator of MIT OpenCourseWare, and Archie Emerson, pastor of Ocean State Baptist Church, Smithfield, RI. Yue challenged the church to utilize modern technology to spread the Gospel in a greater way. Emerson's message was one of vision from the book of Nehemiah. Breakout sessions were held Tuesday and Wednesday morning covering an array of topics. Each evening message is available in both audio and video formats on the BBFI mobile app, iTunes, and www.bbfi.org.





MISSIONS

Mission Director Jon Konnerup shared many victories from this past year, highlighting that missions is the strong right arm of the Fellowship.

- In 2015, 117,000 salvations as a direct result of BBFI missionaries were reported.
- BBFI missionaries started 96 churches outside the United States in 2015.
- To date, 12,733 leaders have been trained by BBFI missionaries.
- Currently, there are about 740 missionaries serving in 84 countries.

Four career missionary families and one single missionary were approved: Greg and Mary Albert (Wales), Kaitlyne Ames-Dixon (Guatemala), Nathan and Tiffany Folz (Tanzania), Blake and Megan Hunter (South Africa), and Daniel and Luz Palavicini (Nicaragua). Three TEAM (short-term) missionary families were approved: Justin and Jessica Anderson (Philippines), Jeremy and Andrea Eulberg (Bolivia), and Eric and Ashley Woodworth (Honduras).

Keith and Marietta Mills received their 30-year pin for faithfully serving in Scotland.

A BBFI creative access nation missionary serving with displaced people also gave a special presentation. Details cannot be given, but prayers for those serving in this capacity are needed.



TEAM MISSIONARIES

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Jeremy and Andrea Eulberg – Bolivia

Contact Info: (517) 547-6222, jeremy.eulberg@bbfimissions.org

Eric and Ashley Woodworth – Honduras

Contact Info: (937) 372-9188, eric.woodworth@bbfimissions.org





CAREER MISSIONARIES

Greg and Mary Albert – Wales

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Contact Info: (727) 536-0481, greg.albert@bbfmissions.org

Kaitlynne Ames-Dixon – Guatemala

Sending church: New Testament Baptist Church, Largo, FL
Contact Info: (727) 536-0481, kaitlynne.dixon@bbfmissions.org

Nathan and Tiffany Foltz – Tanzania

Sending Church: Baptist Tabernacle, Shreveport, LA
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Blake and Megan Hunter – South Africa

Sending Church: Faith Baptist Church, Madison Heights, VA
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Daniel and Luz Palavicini – Nicaragua

Sending Church: Mid-Way Baptist Church,
 Raleigh, NC
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daniel.palavicini@bbfmissions.org





BUSINESS

The BBFI Annual Business Meeting is held during the September meeting each year. This year's business meeting on Wednesday afternoon included reports by the Mission Office, colleges, APEX, and *Tribune*. Tim Adrian assumed the seat of first vice president while all other offices remained the same. (Eddie Lyons, President; Doug Cox, Second Vice President; Dan Greer, Third Vice President; Ron Hoffman, Treasurer; Paul Foster, Secretary).

The bulk of the business meeting focused on proposed changes to the BBFI Constitution and By-Laws. A sub-committee was formed during the May 2016 national meeting to examine the current document and present a revised document to the national directors (also known as state representatives) during the September 2016 meeting. A summary of changes was read during the business meeting. A special business meeting was called and announced for the upcoming national meeting in February 2017 at Central Baptist Church, Tyler, TX, with a key agenda item being the vote and approval of the updated BBFI Constitution and By-Laws. A summary of the changes can be seen on page 26. To view the legal documents, visit www.bbfi.org/legal.

Upcoming Meetings

- February 20-22, 2017, Central Baptist Church, Tyler, TX (Pastor Kim Beckham)
- May 8-11, 2017, Baptist Bible College, Springfield, MO (Mark Milioni)
- September 18-20, 2017, Friendship Baptist Church, Owasso, OK (Pastor Linzy Slayden)



A NOTE FROM HOST PASTOR BEN FELDOTT

After a few days of recovery from the September Cape Cod BBFI meeting I would like to say thank you to a few groups of people.

First, thank you to all who came and participated. Five hundred and nineteen pastors and church leaders registered for this event. There is something special about a Fellowship meeting. Beyond the event itself, there is always an element of a family gathering. One of my favorite times during the week was the worship. I told our worship team, "Preachers will sing you to death," and you did not disappoint!

Thank you to our speakers who came to share what God put on their hearts. I loved watching how God wove together, without any orchestration on our part, a theme all of His own. Monday night's combination of messages by Steve Van Winkle and Gordon MacDonald were a good example of this. I am also grateful to some of our non-fellowship/ministry speakers like Dick Yue (MIT) and Tom Manchester (Dunkin' Donuts), who brought their stories and expertise to inspire and inform.

Also, thank you to our staff and volunteers. Events like these are a good opportunity to be reminded of the good people surrounding us. A BBFI meeting was a bit foreign to our people, but they eagerly embraced the opportunity to serve the pastors and churches of the BBFI. One of my favorite details was our church families hosting over 20 missionaries and/or church planting families in their homes. Truth be told, I think they wish we were doing another one (the volunteers, that is ... the staff is still recovering).

I am looking forward to our winter meeting in Tyler, TX, with Pastor Kim Beckham and then next fall with Pastor Linzy Slayden in Owasso, OK ... See you there!

Ben

BAPTIST history

By Doug Kutilek

JOHN RIPPON — 63 years a London pastor

The mortal remains of Baptist pastor John Rippon (1751-1836) repose in Bunhill Fields cemetery, London, the burial site of many famous and faithful names in English Non-Conformity (non-Anglican Christians), some 120,000 souls, all told, interred between about 1650 and 1850.

For 63 years, from 1773 until 1836, John Rippon pastored the South London congregation then known as Carter Lane, and later New Park Street Chapel, but most famously known in its 360-plus-year history as the Metropolitan Tabernacle. So lengthy a tenure as pastor of one congregation is almost unprecedented, and not surprisingly exceeded that of all his many predecessors and successors in that pastorate, some of whom had ministries of not inconsiderable length themselves. Among the most notable of these: Benjamin Keach was pastor for 36 years (1668-1704); John Gill, easily the most academic and scholarly of the lot, shepherded the flock for 51 years (1720-1771); the world-famous Charles Spurgeon served the congregation for nearly 38 years (1854-1892); and the current pastor, Peter Masters, has led the church since 1970, more than 45 years.

Rippon, a Baptist pastor's son, was privately educated in his youth and was converted to Christ as a teenager. At 17, he entered Bristol Baptist College. When just 21, in response to a request from a London congregation left pastorless by the death of the very learned 74-year-old pastor John Gill, he was sent by the college to preach with a view to a call to the pastorate. When a majority ultimately decided to extend a call to young Rippon, 40 members thought him too young, and so they withdrew, formed a separate church — and immediately called a 19-year-old to be their pastor! (John Gill had only been 22 when called in 1720, and Spurgeon would be but 19 when called to pastor this same church in 1854).

Rippon was much less of a scholar than Gill, but much more of a warm-hearted pastor and shepherd to his people. His preaching was fervent and impassioned, and unlike Gill, he openly offered the Gospel to the lost, and urged upon them the necessity of repentance and faith. The congregation immediately grew and prospered both numerically and financially (it had greatly declined in Gill's last years). This prosperity continued throughout all but the final years of Rippon's pastorate. Rippon immersed about 900 converts while pastor. Spurgeon characterized Rippon and his ministry as "Beloved at home, respected abroad, and useful everywhere."

Besides being a pastor, Rippon was also an author and editor. He penned a fine biography of his predecessor John Gill (reprint, 1992), and a history of Bristol Baptist College. He also founded and edited *The Baptist Annual Register*, a monthly publication (1790-1802) that included accounts of Baptist history, letters from churches, associations, and missionaries, notices of books and articles by Baptists, engraved portraits of pastors, obituaries, and whatever else Rippon deemed beneficial to the Baptist and Christian cause. These volumes serve today as valuable resources for Baptist historians. Rippon also compiled a popular and influential hymnal. It went through many editions in his lifetime, and from its sale he was able to enjoy a comfortable lifestyle.

One unfinished writing project was a history of Bunhill Fields cemetery. Toward that end, Rippon spent many hours carefully transcribing the headstone and monument inscriptions — really testimonies to faith — hoping to copy them all (today only a tithe of the original grave markers still exist, and most of these are now wholly illegible). The numerous volumes that he compiled are preserved, unpublished, in the British Library in London.

In his declining years, Rippon would often pray for God to raise up a young man, he knew not who, to lead the church to far greater things. Some of his surviving members saw God's answer to those prayers in the call of Charles Spurgeon almost 20 years after Rippon's death.

Not unlike some other long-tenured pastors, Rippon continued to serve after his ministry had ceased to be effective (such had been true of his predecessor Gill). Spurgeon wrote, "He retained the will to govern after the capacity was gone, and he held his power over the pulpit though unable to occupy it with profit." Zeal to be of service until death is commendable; knowing when to retire for the church's sake requires wisdom.

Information about Rippon's life and work can be found in: *Charles H. Spurgeon, The Metropolitan Tabernacle: Its History and Work* (reprint, 1990), pp. 48-54 [essentially identical to Spurgeon's unabridged Autobiography, vol. I, pp. 310-315]. William Cathcart, *The Baptist Encyclopedia* (1988, reprint), pp. 990-1. See also *The Dictionary of National Biography*, edited by Leslie Stephen and Sidney Lee. An extended account by Sharon James is found in *The British Particular Baptists*, edited by Michael A. G. Haykin, vol. II, pp. 56-75.

THE RIGHT ANGLE

BIBLICAL WISDOM FOR A CONTEMPORARY WORLD

Q.

The election is over ...
what do we do now?

By Kevin Carson

A. Crazy. Absolutely crazy. Have you ever experienced anything like this? I haven't. So how do we handle this contentious contest when the election is over? What are we to do now? Whether or not your candidate is on top, there is good news for each of us — even with our concerns (and possibly fears) for our country, our children, our family, our economy, our morals, our court system, and our churches. Let me share three biblical principles to help you move forward from this election in a God-honoring way.

OUR RESPONSIBILITIES REGARDLESS OF THE OUTCOME OF THE ELECTION

Our primary responsibility is to pray for governmental leaders (1 Timothy 2:1-4). There may be other good and helpful things you can do today, tomorrow, and over the many days before the next election. But, the best thing you can do is obey the Bible which says to pray for your leaders. Our prayer begins with gratitude for God providing us protection through government, and continues for the leaders, that God would grant them wisdom and strength. We pray God would protect the government as it seeks to protect us.

Why is it necessary to pray diligently for those who lead us? Because power corrupts. It seems no matter how much power or things we get, we always want more. We are never satisfied (Ephesians 4:17-19). Those who are actually the servants of God for our good also happen to be sinners. They have the same problem we do — self-interest. It is the natural response to life, but the opposite of what God desires from us (Matthew 22:34-40). Power

and self-interest create a powerful temptation. As go the leaders, so goes the government. Therefore, it is imperative we pray for those in authority.

We also are to live a life that honors God in whatever we do. As we live a God-honoring life, we seek to demonstrate godliness and respect. This both helps our communities as a whole and our neighbors individually. This is part of God's plan for every Christ-follower (1 Timothy 2:3-4). Honoring God daily looks like submitting to governmental authority in Christ, while demonstrating respect for those who are in authority (1 Peter 2:13-17).

OUR ULTIMATE HOPE

The ultimate hope is that all men everywhere have a personal relationship with Christ (1 Timothy 2:3-7). God wants all people to experience forgiveness of their sins through the death of Christ on the cross. Jesus willingly died to pay the penalty for sin. The Bible teaches we are to be grateful for government because, when it operates the way God planned, it provides us the opportunity to share the wonderful Gospel message — Christ's love, mercy, forgiveness, and sacrifice.

Many are concerned the church will be persecuted in the near future. Indeed, it is not difficult to see how Christianity is under attack. Certainly in a postmodern world where anything and everything is valid, the world does not want a strong church with a biblical view of sin and truth from an authoritative, inerrant, and sufficient Bible. But the Gospel shines brightest and clearly articulates an alternative way of living in this context.

OUR COMPLETE CONFIDENCE

As this election becomes just a time in history, we again commit our complete confidence in God's power and plan. The Bible encourages us to recognize that God's control includes elections and election results. Whether it is by the democratic process or through revolt, ultimately God controls government. Daniel, when speaking to Nebuchadnezzar, explained it best, "Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, for wisdom and might are His. And He changes the times and the seasons; He removes kings and raises up kings;" (Daniel 2:20-21; cf. Psalm 75:7). Regarding nations and kingdoms, Isaiah wrote, "Behold, the nations are as a drop in a bucket, and are counted as the small dust on the scales; ... All nations before Him are as nothing, and they are counted by Him less than nothing and worthless" (Isaiah 40:15-17). Essentially, all nations and their leaders fall under God's providential control. The winner of this election only wins because it fits inside God's plan. This plan is for our good and His glory as we strive to become more like Christ (Romans 8:28-30). With complete confidence of God's Word, we can trust God.

So, regardless of your candidate's finish, let's keep our hope in Christ and focus on gratitude for the gift of government and, even greater, God's control. Let's also pray and hope those elected will focus on serving people rather than being served. As Christ-followers, let's commit ourselves to respecting those in authority as we seek to live lives that honor God.

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.

URBAN CURRENT

The pastor and the witch

"Bring drums, rattles, whistles, and noise makers of all types. Dress to shock and/or impress. Come in costumes and show your rage."

So trumpeted the handbill promoting what was being called a "Pro-Choice Rally" in front of Armitage Baptist Church, "a base for anti-choice activities." The flyer stated the event was sponsored by a coalition of ten groups including: The Fight Back Network, The National Committee to Free Puerto Rican POWs, Queer Nation, Refuse and Resist, and Sister Serpents.

Sister Serpents. Hmmmm.

The first time I saw this flyer I was standing at the auditorium door after the morning service nine days before the date advertised. My immediate thought was "Oh my! Quite a collection of anarchists, sexual libertarians, and occultists. How many kooks, radicals, and crazies are there in Chicago?" The person handing the circular to me was a young student. It had been put in her hand at her campus. My mind raced. "On how many campuses are they distributing these?" I wondered.

Better be safe than sorry, I thought. We organized our men to function in various roles related to security. People associated with the rally sponsors had already attempted to take over one of our Easter services, put glue in our church door locks, slashed church vehicle tires (while they were filled with people), graffitied our building, and plotted to attack us with AIDS-tainted, urine-filled super soakers. (How do we know this? We had a secret agent in their planning meeting. Oh yeah, serving Christ in the city is an adventure.)

I knew we couldn't count on the local cops. We put about 40 men in front of the entry doors so we wouldn't get rushed. We had people on the roof, the highest point in the neighborhood,

monitoring surrounding streets. My house was guarded. I mean we were ready to rumble. We mobilized the rest of the body for a concert of prayer. We planned to pray for revival and the souls of our attackers.

The local Christian radio station somehow got wind of what was taking place. They allowed us to invite believers from across the city to come and pray. I had no faith this would produce much response given the low spiritual temperature across our metropolitan area.

The night of the demonstration, the motley throng massed in front of our building. Our front door security force witnessed a self-proclaimed witch clutching a doll she was calling Charles Lyons. Gleefully she jabbed it with hatpins. This was hardly shocking among the lesbian kissing sessions, sundry lewd chants, and the beating of pots and pans accompanied by blowing of whistles.

At one point the crowd took up the cry, "Feed Charles to the lions."

A black youth choir from a sister church took over the front steps. They rocked it, singing the boisterous crowd into reluctant listening. Inside, hundreds prayed for the demonstrators and revival in Chicago. The glory of God was all over the block. This took place in 1994.

Several years later, church member Ron told me Melba, the witch, had died. "Remember?" Ron said, "She was the one in front of the church the night of the demonstration."

I knew right then I needed to go to the funeral home. I couldn't imagine what I might find. I could not picture Melba the witch or Sheila her lover of 17 years. I don't think I'd ever met them. Ron tells me they had lived right up the street all this time. I had no idea.

That Friday night, I navigated crowded city streets to the funeral home on Diversey Avenue.

I have been there many times. The quiet of the chapel makes the street ruckus in front of our church building during the demonstration seem a million miles away. Sure enough, the remains of Melba the witch rested in the casket. She did not look very old. I found out later she was 51. She died in her sleep.

I am in funeral homes way more often than anybody should have to be. I rarely go to the casket unless it's with a family member. After signing Melba's guest book, I stood before the casket several moments, head bowed, praying that somehow, some way, God would use our contact and our witness to bring her friends to Christ. I lifted my head and turned away when a lady, I'm guessing in her late fifties, steps forward.

"Pastor Lyons?"

"Good evening," I reply.

"I'm Sheila, Melba's roommate."

The most incredibly gracious conversation followed. Sheila introduced me to some mutual neighbors who approach during our conversation. Sheila thanks me several times for coming. She said Melba had become a Catholic in the last year, "looking for faith." How tragic, I thought, after living 50 years to begin looking for a way to God and possibly not find it.

We shook hands. I turned to go when Sheila called me back. "Oh, I just wanted to tell you this. You have been such a good neighbor."

I'm stunned. "Thank you," I replied. "We really try hard."

A few more brief words. I said good evening again. I walked out into the balmy evening.

I am so sad. Tears came to my eyes as I wrote this. I wish, oh, I wish I had assurance Melba was in heaven.

AT ONE POINT THE CROWD TOOK UP THE
CRY **"FEED CHARLES TO THE LIONS."**

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



SPRINGFIELD, MO

HIGH STREET BAPTIST CHURCH HOLDS MISSION CONFERENCE

High Street Baptist Church and Pastor Eddie Lyons of Springfield, MO, hosted their annual WorldProject Mission Conference October 5-9. Guest missionaries were Vernon and Mary Smith (Tanzania), Peter and Zorka Abrman (Slovakia), Brian and Rachael Weed (Nicaragua), and Ben and Raelene Walker (New Zealand). "High Street has been part of giving to missions since it began 80 years ago, and missions continues to be the church's heartbeat," notes Gary Wilson, High Street's WorldProject director.



The conference kicked off Wednesday night with dinner and missionary presentations. Other events included a luncheon hosted by High Street's 50+ group, a ladies dessert night, a men's breakfast, a meeting with the mission committee, and treating the missionaries and church staff to *Moses at the Sight and Sound Theater* in Branson.

High Street held a candlelight service Sunday morning. "As our church brought their commitments to the altar, our missionaries lit their candles as a reminder that together we can bring the light to the world," says Wilson. The conference ended with an Annual Pie Auction to raise money for mission trips and help with missionary projects. Wilson reports they raised \$125,000 this year and \$500,000 in the

past six years with their pie auction.

High Street currently supports 147 missionaries, mission projects, and church planters with 25 sent from the church. Last year High Street gave \$1,250,000 to missions. "We are on target to do the same this year and maybe even exceed that," states Wilson. "God has truly blessed our church with people who have a heart to reach the world."

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BRIGHTON, CO

ORCHARD CHURCH

Orchard Church, led by BBFI pastor Doug Dameron, was listed in Outreach Magazine's 100 Largest and Fastest Growing Churches as the 29th fastest growing church in America. Below is the article as found in Outreach Magazine.



"If you focus on church health, growth will be a natural byproduct," says Doug Dameron, lead and founding pastor of Orchard Church in Brighton, Colorado.

The pastor points to his church's simple, biblical plan for growth. "Jesus said, 'I will build my church.' Nobody wants the church to grow more than Jesus does," Dameron says. "I think it's our responsibility as pastors to see that the church is in a healthy environment, so that it can grow the way Jesus intends it to grow."

Dameron began planting Orchard Church in July 2005, out of an apartment ministry in the Denver, Colorado, metropolitan area. He prayed for a clear vision so that his team could get involved where God was already at work.

God pointed them to Brighton, located about a 30 minutes' drive north of Denver, and considered one of the fastest-growing communities in the area. Because of the availability of affordable housing, Brighton has become a magnet for both retirees and young families.

The church plant held its first service on Easter 2007, and its numbers have grown exponentially since. Orchard currently holds three weekly services that meet in a local high school.

Dameron says the church was founded with a simple plan. "Some churches are like The Cheesecake Factory restaurant, which has a menu like a phone book, and others are like In-N-Out Burger, which only focuses on a few things," Dameron says. "We are like In-N-Out. We just try to do three things really, really well."

To keep their church model simple, Dameron and his team use three words to help people understand the process: reach (Sunday morning services), relate (small-group ministry) and reproduce (one-on-one discipleship).

Dameron credits Orchard's intentional one-on-one discipleship process with playing a big role in maintaining the church's health. The church currently has more than 250 adults involved in meeting together for encouragement and growth. The adults meet in pairs, wherever and whenever works best for them. They could be found at McDonald's at lunchtime, or in the evening at Starbucks, for example.

"We take the Great Commission to make disciples very seriously," Dameron says. "We are not satisfied with mere attendees. Many churches talk about making disciples but don't seem to have an intentional process. I believe and have seen first-hand how God blesses a church that does what he told us to do by reproducing reproducers."

So, what does the future look like for this growing Orchard? For one thing, Dameron hopes to be planting more churches in the surrounding communities and beyond. The church has been involved with eight other church plants, and Dameron is currently working with a church planting mentoring program. The goal is for more healthy growth and more kingdom fruit.

ALVA, OK

OKLAHOMA BBF MEETS IN PRISON CHAPEL

Pastor John Clapp and the congregation of Bible Baptist Church in Alva, OK, hosted the October meeting of the Oklahoma BBF October 2 and 3. Clapp arranged for those attending the Monday evening portion of the meeting to visit a local correctional facility and hold a service with some inmates. Mike Gleason of Friendship Baptist Church, Owasso, OK, Greg Baxter of Journey Church in Lawton, OK, John Arnold of Rockwall, TX, Doug Kutilek of Wichita, KS, and Keith Bassham, former editor of the *Baptist Bible Tribune*, assisted John with the service at Charles E. Johnson Correctional Center.

John Arnold shared his own online account of the evening. He wrote, "We loaded into a van and drove to the local prison. They checked us in, gave instruction, and off to the chapel we went. The pastors were introduced to the men, and we were able to engage with them before the service began. Mike Gleason led us in singing praise to the Lord. Everyone sang with enthusiasm. Keith Bassham opened the Word of God for the message. The men were riveted to every word, and when the invitation was given many responded as they stepped out and came forward to pray with us. Names were taken for follow-up."

Arnold also notes that Clapp has a weekly ministry with the men at Johnson, and scores are being saved through his ministry among them.

The Tuesday pastors' meeting in the Bible Baptist's recently rebuilt sanctuary featured messages from Doug Kutilek on missionary training and preparation, John Arnold on prayer, and Keith Bassham on developing patience while waiting on God. The pastors met briefly to discuss Fellowship business, and afterward enjoyed fellowship and a delicious barbecue meal provided by the church.

John and Teresa Clapp have faithfully served their church and community in Alva since 2002.

THE BAHAMAS

HURRICANE MATTHEW REPORT

Hurricane Matthew blew through all 700 Bahamian islands October 5 and 6. Rick Schuessler, BBFI missionary to the Bahamas, reports, "Even with fair warning and time to prepare, over 500 Bahamian people had to be rescued from many coastal communities in the capital city. All of our churches have reported in and we thank God all of the church buildings were spared with little to no damage. Our current ministry, Freedom Baptist Church, saw great flooding all around the building but only a small roof leak inside. Pastor Henri Charmaine of Calvary Haitian Baptist Church said many of their church family live in a community just south of the airport. They were hit very hard and many lost everything. We are now in the clean-up stages."

One year ago hurricane Joaquin did over \$100 million dollars in damage throughout the Bahamas.



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NOTICE IS GIVEN FOR A SPECIALLY CALLED BUSINESS MEETING TO BE HELD DURING THE FEBRUARY 2017 MEETING OF THE BAPTIST BIBLE FELLOWSHIP INTERNATIONAL AT CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH IN TYLER, TX.

The key agenda item will be the updated Constitution and By-Laws, as presented during the September 2016 meeting, with a recommendation for vote and approval of same to be taken at the meeting.

According to Article IV of the current Constitution and By-Laws, the president of the Fellowship may call a special meeting as the need arises with 30 days advance notification of such business sessions to be published in the Baptist Bible Tribune. Visit www.bbf.org/legal to review official documents. For more information contact BBFI Communication Director Randy Harp at raharp@tribune.org.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED CHANGES

Article I - Name

No changes made

Article II - Purpose

No changes made

Article III - Affiliation

No changes made

Article IV - Meetings

Clarified the date of annual meeting in September to match current practice. (Changed from 4th Monday in September to allow any week in September).

Article V - Voting Rights

Each pastor shall have one vote regarding issues submitted for decision. Guideline indicating that pastors may only hold one national office at a time has been moved to this article.

Article VI - Officers

Existing Article VI **has been expanded** to Article VI, VII and VIII for better clarity regarding: officers, directors, and committees

Separated the Articles, putting like (similar) content together for the sake of clarity.

Clarified that the Board of Directors is in fact the Executive Committee. (This was previously inferred, based on corporate structure and the language of the Articles of Agreement filed with the Secretary of State in Missouri.) Also made clear that the Executive Committee is “the highest executive authority.” Previous language was confusing.

Moved former Article VI section 5 to Article V section 2. (re: no multiple offices being held by one person) as the second paragraph defining officers in the fellowship.

(New) Article VII - Directors

Clarified the language used and made distinction between directors and state representatives. Previous language was confusing: “national director” was used as a label for state representatives and “director” was used to indicate the leader of a fellowship entity.

Removed references to a national education director. This position was never filled and is not needed.

A director is an appointed position for the purposes of overseeing a Fellowship entity (currently, the Mission, Church Planting and Communication Offices).

A state representative is elected/appointed by a state fellowship to represent that state’s interests in national fellowship meetings.

Included language to clarify that directors serve at the discretion of the Executive Committee.

(New) Article VIII - Committees

Clarified that State Representatives are responsible for the formulation of the ballot for election of the Executive Committee. Pastors elect the members of the Executive Committee.

Combined other areas of the bylaws into the section about Committees for clarity.

Created a section on elections to indicate that state fellowships will determine who their representative will be. Language was removed that indicated term and election methods, allowing states to determine this for themselves.

Added a section to reflect current practice regarding missing representation in a state; if a state fellowship does not send a representative, the executive committee may appoint a qualified pastor from that state as a temporary representative to develop that states Fellowship of pastors.

Mission Committee

Cleaned up language for mission vs. missions (made all statements reflect current practice of “mission” singular).

Education Committee

Complete rewrite. All language related to BBFI oversight of colleges has been removed to reflect current legal and practical realities. ALL NEW language in Article VIII, section G. has been included at the request of the current Vice President of Education and both college presidents (BBC Springfield and BBC Boston).

Communication Committee

This section is new and was added to reflect the change from BBFI Tribune to a larger scope communication office. It also includes language missing from the previous bylaw iteration defining the *Tribune* or the communication office of the BBFI.

Article IX – Subsidiaries and Properties of the BBFI

Moved the statement about an annual audit to this section.

Article X - Constitutional Amendments

Clarified that the constitution may be changed at any annual meeting, as long as proper notice is given.

Article XI - Relationship to Churches

No changes made.

(New) Article XII - Dissolution

At the recommendation of our attorney, this has been included to clarify the distribution of assets in the event an entity ceases operations.

TAYLOR, MI

GILBERTS CELEBRATE 50 YEARS AT BEACON BAPTIST

September 18, 2016, was a monumental day for Herb and Glenda Gilbert, their family, and Beacon Baptist Church as they celebrated Gilbert's 50th year as senior pastor. Special speaker Gary Grey preached in both services and a reception with over 400 people was held that evening. During the celebration, the Gilberts were honored through videos, special music, and remarks from Fellowship leaders. The church

also presented them with a monetary gift for their years of service.

Gilbert graduated in 1963 from Baptist Bible College, Springfield, MO, and went to Battle Creek, MI, to start a church. In August 1966, Beacon Baptist called him as their second pastor. The church has grown numerically, financially, and spiritually under his leadership.

Herb and Glenda Gilbert through the years



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Pastor Ralph Sexton, Jr.

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Norwood, OH 45212
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First Baptist Church

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First Baptist Church

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Annual preaching calendar

By Randy Harp

I try to live by this simple principle: begin with the end in mind. I am sure it has something to do with my engineering background. As a senior pastor, I applied this in sermon planning. Sometime around November or December I would begin praying and preparing for the coming year. My goal was to have a clear preaching direction for all 52 weeks of the year. I understand everyone is not naturally wired to do something like this, and there are some who might even argue against it, but for me it was one of the most important things I did. The principle from Proverbs 24:27 of planning and preparing before you build your house is true in the long-term spiritual development of your church.

There are many reasons for planning an annual preaching calendar. Allow me to share three, with a key word being balance. The first is, it helps provide balanced content. In his farewell address to the Ephesian elders in Acts 20:27, Paul declared he did not shrink from sharing the whole counsel of God. We can all be found guilty of speaking on topics that are more personal, passages that are more familiar, or genres we find more comfortable. When you take time to plan your messages in advance, it allows you to balance time spent in the Old Testament and New Testament. It allows you to see all the different topics or themes that are being covered. It helps you see how to balance book studies, biographic studies, and topical studies.

A long-term preaching calendar also helps you balance the types of messages you preach. In John 1:39 Jesus said to “come and see” but in Matthew 16:24 he basically said “go and die.” Both types of messages need to be preached today, but in a balanced effort. This is how a church can balance both depth and breadth. The author of Hebrews uses the illustration of

milk and meat to differentiate between types of teaching. Peter challenged his listeners to grow both in grace and knowledge (2 Peter 3:18). As you are planning, some messages should be more evangelistic, some should be more growth oriented, and some should be both.

Having a balanced tone in your messages can also be accomplished with an annual preaching calendar. Paul, in speaking to the Corinthian church, said those with the gift of preaching should strengthen, encourage, and comfort their people. Each of these require different tones and should be balanced throughout the year in your preaching.

So how does one develop an annual preaching calendar? The first and most important element is prayer. We must remember we are only under-shepherds to our congregations. When we pray we are seeking God’s perspective and His direction for our churches. Some may say it is not spiritual to plan so far out, but it is no more spiritual to plan at the last moment. A second element is to seek input from others. Even though you are the primary voice speaking to your church, you are not the only person of influence. It is not only good leadership to seek counsel from others, it is also wise for sermon planning. One criticism of the American church is that we are answering questions people are not asking. This can be addressed by seeking input from others.

Once you complete your annual calendar, your work is not done. It is only beginning. You must still do the hard work of sermon study. When it comes to preparing your annual preaching calendar, trust God to use your planning to strengthen your preaching, nurture your congregation, and honor the Scriptures.

5 TIPS ON PLANNING YOUR PREACHING CALENDAR

Write it down.

Until you write something down it is only an idea. Use technology to help gather and compile resources. Create a folder in Evernote or Dropbox that allows you to store information and edit from multiple platforms. Share what you write down with your team.

Know your church’s calendar.

When are your scheduled “Big Days?” When are national holidays? When are special events such as mission conferences, youth camps, VBS, etc.

Know the seasons of your church.

As Solomon points out, there is a season for everything and that includes your church. There are times of the year where visitors are more likely to attend. There are times when your members are more likely to miss. It is important to know these seasons.

Allow time to rest.

This can be done by creating buffer weeks in between lengthy series or by being strategic when you invite others to preach. Make sure to include personal vacation time in your planning.

If you can’t plan an entire year, start with three months.






If this is something new, don’t overwhelm yourself. Start small and after three months continue for another three months.

The plans of the diligent lead surely to abundance, but everyone who is hasty comes only to poverty.

(Proverbs 21:5)

NOVEMBER 2016

PRAYER CALENDAR

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1  MISSIONARY Richard & Joy Kelley <i>Guam</i>	2  CHAPLAIN LtCol Chip & Sherry Fields <i>U.S. Army</i>	3  MISSIONARY Adolfo & April Ruesga <i>Mexico</i>	4  T.E.A.M. MISSIONARY Eric & Ashley Woodworth <i>Honduras</i>	5  MISSIONARY Jerry & Sharon Daniels <i>Kenya</i>
6  MISSIONARY Jenny Carpenter <i>Ecuador</i>	7  MISSIONARY Steve & Pam Workman <i>Botswana</i>	8  MISSIONARY Damian & Ruth Ann Pickett <i>England</i>	9  MISSIONARY Jay & Linda Ferrell <i>Retired</i>	10  MISSIONARY Jerry & Kristin Hickey <i>Brazil</i>	11  MISSIONARY Deneen Akers <i>Japan</i>	12  MISSIONARY Luke & Kelly Lyons <i>Philippines</i>
13  WORKERS IN Restricted Access Nations	14  MISSIONARY James & Cristina Sinde <i>Greece</i>	15  BBFI MISSION OFFICE - SPRINGFIELD, MO Reception Staff	16  MISSIONARY Son & Stephanie Chau <i>Singapore</i>	17  T.E.A.M. MISSIONARY Josh & Erin Taylor <i>Honduras</i>	18  MISSIONARY Dan & Cricket Young <i>Panama</i>	19  MISSIONARY Anna Marie West <i>Costa Rica</i>
20  MISSIONARY Richie & Missie Orrick <i>Wales</i>	21  MISSIONARY Blake & Megan Hunter <i>South Africa</i>	22  MISSIONARY Phil & Vala Long <i>Madagascar</i>	23  BAPTIST BIBLE COLLEGE Faculty and Staff <i>Springfield, MO</i>	24  MISSIONARY Randy & Sandy Roberts <i>Costa Rica</i>	25  MISSIONARY John & Tammy Cooley <i>Burkina Faso</i>	26  MISSIONARY Jeff Barker <i>Brazil</i>
27  MISSIONARY Dwayne & Tammy Wright <i>Ethiopia</i>	28  MANNA Worldwide	29  MISSIONARY Daniel & Luz Palavicini <i>Nicaragua</i>	30  MISSIONARY Doug & Eva Doan <i>Lithuania</i>			

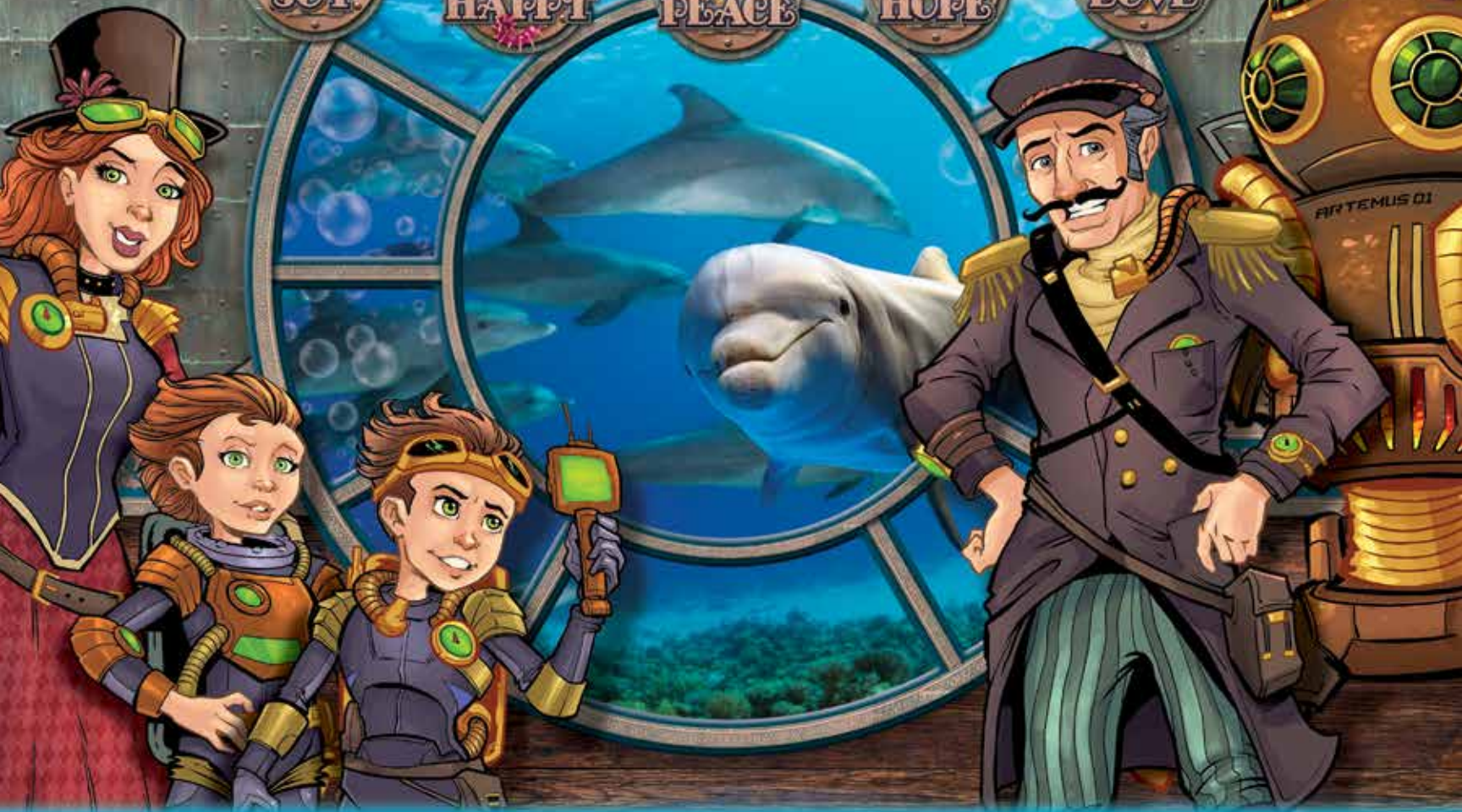
As is the business of tailors to make clothes and cobblers to make shoes, so it is the business of Christians to pray.

Martin Luther

VBS
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I KNOW *THAT* MY REDEEMER LIVETH.

JOB 19:25



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