

MAGNOLIA Messenger

Volume 41; Number 1; SPRING, 2019

"Mississippi's GOOD NEWS" Magazine

Serving Mississippi, Louisiana and Adjoining States

"Let us consider one another to provoke unto LOVE and GOOD works."

**Magnolia
Bible Institute**

(A School of Biblical Studies)

Kosciusko, Mississippi

Classes to be Offered

SEE PAGE 26

**The flowers
appear on
the earth;**

**The time of singing has come,
And the voice of the turtledove
Is heard in our land.**

Song of Solomon 2:12

MAGNOLIA BIBLE INSTITUTE

A School of Preaching in Mississippi

Out of the ashes of Magnolia Bible College a "school of preaching" is born and is up and running! Under the oversight of the elders of the Kosciusko Church of Christ, the school began on Thursday night, September 13, 2018 with 12 credit and several audit students. Currently 18 students are enrolled in credit studies. Four of those students are members of our local church family. The remainder comes from different areas of Mississippi: Meridian, Tylertown, McComb, Hazlehurst, Grenada, Oxford, and Cleveland. Most are actively engaged in ministry in churches of Christ in those areas. Back in the days of Magnolia Bible College, we often used 2 Timothy 2:2 as our reason for existing. That passage is also the reason for MBI's existence:

"And the things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also."

We are endeavoring to accomplish that charge to Timothy from the pen of the Apostle Paul with a continuation of Thursday night classes and the addition of Saturday classes. The Thursday night class will finish their study of "The General Epistles" as this semester comes to a close on April 4. The Saturday classes will finish their studies of "The Minor Prophets" and "Hermeneutics" April 6. Our teachers, thus far, have been myself, Dr. Ray Paseur, and Will Anderson .

Our plans call for the use of several other qualified brothers in teaching the curriculum courses. Some of those include Dr. Willie Nettle, Dr. Roger Hines and Gary Hampton. Will Anderson has agreed to take on the duties of being our Academic Dean in addition to teaching some of the courses. He is our local preacher and is also an educator teaching in our local public schools and well qualified for this role.

I have agreed to try to fill the role of Director as well as teaching classes. My responsibilities will also see me out and about giving reports and seeking additional funding. Should you be interested as a potential student or as one who is vitally interested in teaching faithful men who can then teach other faithful men thus helping to spread the gospel in the state of Mississippi, I would love to visit with you. Please feel free to give me a call at 601-562-4226.



Les Ferguson, Sr.,
(Director of
Magnolia Bible
Institute)

"A Work In Progress"

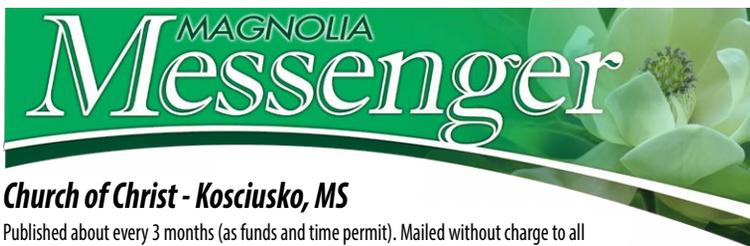
A phrase often heard about the need for growth and development is "I am a work in progress." Well, that is us here at MBI. We are blessed to yet have the facilities of the former Magnolia Bible College. As this is a new work in its infancy, it is obvious that we have a long way to go to utilize these facilities to their fullest. We have dreams about a dormitory full of MBI students taking day classes, of on line and live streaming offerings, of classes being taught at alternate sites throughout Mississippi. We are a long way from that, but we have made a start. We truly are a work in progress. Come help us train preachers for Mississippi and across the country.

Your prayers are needed. Your contributions will bless us. And you are invited to visit with us at any time. **MM**

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 4** "What Does It Mean to Be Saved?"
(May's response to MM reader's question)
- 8** "Reflections About Gluttony"
(Key presents a serious and thought provoking study)
- 12** "Beyond the Sacred Page"
(Joines challenges us to take a careful look)
- 18** The Power of Prayer
(Report on Preachers' Retreat)
- 19** Angels: God's Ministers
(Doughty shares a thoughtful study)
- 22** Salvation: "How Confident Are You?"
(Johnson asks that we seriously consider)
- 26** MBI Announces Upcoming Classes
(Offerings for Summer and Fall, 2019)
- 32** "The QB": You Are Asked to Answer
Study the "Teachings of Jesus" in Luke 6

MESSENGER Addresses: Changes and/or Additions:
glendafranks@yahoo.com • 662-792-2800



Church of Christ - Kosciusko, MS

Published about every 3 months (as funds and time permit). Mailed without charge to all who ask to receive it and to others for whom it is requested. Contributions from churches and individuals make possible the circulation of more than 30,000 copies of each issue of the "Magnolia Messenger". Your prayers and support are requested, needed and appreciated!

Supported By Contributions

A. L. Franks, Editor

franksmm@aol.com; 601-668-3344

Paul Franks, Associate Editor

apaulfranks@gmail.com; 662-792-2700

Cecil May, Jr., Bible Questions Answered

June & Glenda Franks, Special Assistants

Mark Bridges, Graphic Design

Magnolia Messenger

P. O. Box 1578 • Kosciusko, MS 39090

Editor's Note: The mention of a person or church in the Messenger does NOT necessarily mean that we either endorse or approve all the person or church may believe, teach and/or do. We do not (can not) have full knowledge of every person or church mentioned in the 'MM'; furthermore, we do not believe that our role before God is to be that of a judge. We pray, however, that we will never lend encouragement to anyone or anything in conflict with, or not in harmony with that which is plainly taught In Scripture. Your comments invited and encouraged.

(A. L. Franks, Editor)

E-Mail: franksmm@aol.com



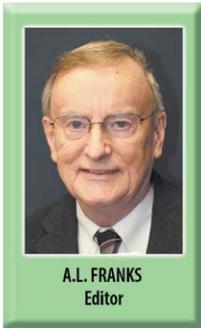
“AND HE DIED”

What happened to Ronald Reagan? *He died* (2004). What about Billy Graham? Well, *he died* (2018). What about Martin Luther King? He *also died* (1968).

Name someone... anyone, who was born over 120 years ago, and ask, “Where is he now?” The answer is always the same. **He’s dead; He died.** Every person (except those alive at Jesus’ second coming, I Thess. 4:13-18) faces certain death. Death is in my future. It is in your future! Life is real, but so is death.

The phrase, “*and he died*”, appears seven times in Genesis chapter five. Scripture tells us that Adam lived; he died. Seth lived; he died. And so on. Over and over Bible readers are called upon to face the reality of death. Just as life has a beginning, so it has an ending. One generation comes; another generation goes. Regardless of the number of years lived on earth, each person eventually meets death face to face. The only exceptions were Enoch who, after 365 years, was “translated that he should not see death” and Elijah who “was taken into heaven by a whirlwind” (Genesis 5:21-24; 2 Kings 2:1-11). I do not recommend that you plan to be another Enoch or Elijah. It is not going to happen. The urgent need for everyone is “get ready to die. Death is coming to you, to me!”

The Old Testament relates the stories of many people who are well known to Bible students. I think of Abraham, Rachel, Moses, Daniel and numerous others. Each was once very much alive, here on this earth. They had a limited earthly existence. But each one died. Even so, the New Testament abounds with stories about great men and women of God who were once very much a part of life on earth. But, what happened to Mary, Peter, Paul, Timothy and Dorcas? They all died.



A.L. FRANKS
Editor

Over the last two thousand years, history books tell stories of many notable, influential people. We have heard about the lives, the work and/or the writings of such people as Plato, Shakespeare, Aristotle, Confucius and others. They appeared for a little time on earth and made an impact; however, where are they now? They are dead. They all died.

Many among us today have been influenced by recent presidents of the U.S.A. such as Harry Truman, Dwight Eisenhower, John Kennedy, Ronald Reagan and George H. W. Bush. But, where are they? They are dead. They all died!

I cannot help but think of many preachers I have been blessed to know including Sam Berryman, Albert Franks, Murphy D. Phillips, V. P. Black, Thomas B. Warren, Basil Overton and Charles Coil. These gospel preachers had their time on earth. They were once among the living. What happened. They all died!

Then, there are family members. Oh, so many! My grandparents, parents, uncles and aunts. Once alive. Now gone, except for one uncle and one aunt. Death is no respecter of persons.

I also think of many wonderful people I have known, and with whom I have served in Kosciusko, that are no longer numbered in the land of the living. Forty-eight years ago, J. B. Hayes, Elihue Thompson and Marlin Ivey, elders of the South Huntington Street church, hired me as their preacher. But, all three are now gone. One by one, they departed this life. They died. Many other Christians, back in 1971, who were also very active in the Kosciusko church have since died. And, thank the Good Lord, we have reason to believe, they have also gone to be “with the Lord.”

What is the point of this article? The **point** is that you and I have an **appointment** with death (Heb. 9:27). Death is not just for others. It is for me! You too! The



Editor's Parents' Tombstones
Lucille (Belvin) Franks & Lovis Alfred Franks



Editor's last living uncle, Hubert Franks (Still preaching in Newton, Texas. Last living aunt, “Doc” Hewitt (still active in Lake Charles church)

real question is not “*Will I die?*” Rather, it is “*Am I ready to die?*” Are you prepared to die? At any time. Today? You can be ready. You need to answer “Yes” to two questions.

(1) Are you a Christian? Have you evidenced your faith in Jesus as the Son of God and the Savior of the world? Have you responded in faith, repented of your sins, confessed His precious name and been baptized for the remission of your sins. (Study Acts 16:30-34; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38.) You need to **obey** the gospel. Everlasting destruction awaits those who have **not obeyed** the gospel of Jesus Christ (2 Thess. 1:7-9).

(2) Are you a faithful Christian? Is your faith motivating you to be “Christ-like”? Are you living for Him? Does your daily life give evidence that Jesus is truly the “Lord” of your life. Only those who live in Christ can “die in Christ.” The Bible says, “Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.” (Rev. 14:13) Again, the point of this article is preparedness. Are you **ready** to die? You will die. Be ready! Nothing else really matters. Through Jesus Christ and, through Him only, is it possible to say, “I am ready!” **MM**

(If we can be of any assistance in your desire to learn and obey the will of Jesus, please feel free to contact me: A. L. Franks; P. O. Box 1578; Kosciusko, MS 39090; franksmm@aol.com; 601-668-3344)

BIBLE

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Response:

Thank you for the compliment, “in your usual thorough detail.”

A Baptist preacher friend said to me once, “You all quote over and over, ‘He that believes and is baptized shall be saved,’ but you don’t believe it. You believe something like, ‘He that believes and is baptized and does good works for the rest of his life might be saved.’”

To answer the specific question, “*saved*,” in different contexts, has several different meanings, including all three the questioner suggests: “saved from past sins;” in another context, “into a new relationship with Christ and saved, in effect, from future sins,” and in still other contexts, “saved eternally in heaven.”

We will elucidate, hopefully in thorough detail.

Saved From Past Sins, Plus . . .

When Jesus said, “He who believes and is baptized shall be saved” (Mark 16:16), He was promising unbelievers forgiveness of past sins, plus a new relationship with God the Father and with Jesus Christ. Saul the persecutor was promised the same, “And now why do you wait? Rise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on his name” (Acts 22:16). So were the Jews, listening to Peter’s sermon on the first Pentecost following Jesus’ death and resurrection, “Repent and be baptized

QUESTION:

Please answer in Magnolia Messenger in your usual thorough detail: What does it mean to “be saved.” Be saved from or for what, past sins, future sins, eternally in heaven? (Anon.)

every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38).

Also called “initial salvation,” this is salvation from sin, its guilt and power and its dominion over us (Romans 6). Sin exerts its dominion through “the law of sin and death” (Romans 8:2). The “law of sin and death” contains no grace, no provision for ultimate forgiveness. So, one sin and you die! “For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it” (James 2:10). “For the wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23a). Once we sin under a law of sin and death, sin and death have complete dominion over us. We have no price or power in ourselves to forgive even one sin, much less to save ourselves.

Sin also has dominion over all who continually practice sin, because of the enslaving, addictive power of sin.

“Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness.” (Romans

6:16-18)

The word translated “standard” (tupos, KJV “form”) also means “type,” “figure” or “picture.” Coming shortly after baptism is described as the “form” or

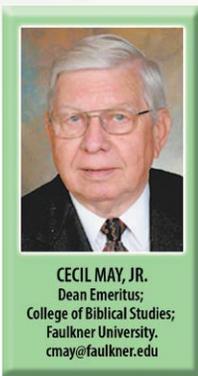
“picture” of Jesus’ death, burial and resurrection (Romans 6:3-4), it seems obvious that, when baptism is obeyed from the heart, is when we are “set free from sin” and “become slaves of righteousness. This initial salvation at baptism raises us to a new life-style in Jesus Christ.

“Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.” (Romans 6:3-4).

To be saved, then, in that sense, means to be saved from past sins and to be set free from the guilt and enslaving power of sin. Salvation puts us in Christ where salvation from future sins is found

Paul, in the Romans 6 passage we have cited, reminds us, “All of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death” (v. 3). The same apostle also told the Christians in Galatia, “For in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ” (Galatians 3:26-27).

“In Christ” is where “every spiritual blessing” is to be found (Ephesians 1:3). Among the spiritual blessings in Him is our victory over the constant struggle with temptation and sin. Paul describes this



CECIL MAY, JR.
Dean Emeritus;
College of Biblical Studies;
Faulkner University.
cmay@faulkner.edu

struggle which every Christian faces.

"I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law, that it is good. . . . For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. . . . So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members." (Romans 7:15-16, 18-19, 21-23)

Then he asks, and answers his own question, "Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!" (Romans 7:24-25a).

We need to inquire what Jesus does to give us this victory. Some have suggested the Holy Spirit frees us from having to struggle. That is not my experience, nor that of anyone I know.

Some suggest the Holy Spirit helps us win the struggle when it comes. If that is the case, with me and with others, I have to ask, "Why doesn't He do a better job?"

Consider, rather, the rest of what Paul says. **Ignore the "chapter change!"** Inspiration did not divide into chapters and verses. (I am thankful, though, that someone did.)

Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin. There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. (Romans 7:24—8:2).

Notice, victory is declared, but the struggle continues. But the difference is

there is no condemnation. Even though the struggle is lost, the sin is forgiven. That is the victory.

There are two stated conditions to be one for whom there is no condemnation: **(1) be in Christ Jesus** (8:2) and **(2) "walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit"** (8:4). To walk according to the flesh is to follow the desires of the carnal human nature; to walk according to the Spirit is to follow the life-style the Holy Spirit has revealed from God in Scripture. The promise is the same, though in different words, as 1 John 1:7, "But if we (continue to) walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son (continually) cleanses us from all sin.

Walking after the Spirit and walking in the light are the same. They include struggling against sinning, hating the sin and loving the right, as Paul was doing. That involves having godly sorrow for the sins we recognize we have done, repenting of them, confessing them and asking God's forgiveness. To refuse to do that is to stop walking in the light or according to the Spirit. But for those who do that, God does not wait until they do to forgive. Faithful Christians do not continuously fall out of and into grace every time they sin and repent. God's forgiveness is continuous. There is no condemnation. At the time of salvation, even our future sins are cared for. The blood of Christ continuously cleanses them.

Saved Eternally in Heaven

Heaven, in the eternal presence of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, is the ultimate goal of all salvation. Some passages specifically have final salvation in view.

For examples: Romans 5:9, "Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God."

Romans 13:11, "Besides this you know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed."

Hebrews 1:14, "Are they (angels) not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?"

Hebrews 5:9, "And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him."

1 Peter 1:5, "who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."

1 Peter 1:9, "obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls."

Be faithful. Persevere. Heaven will surely be worth it all. MM



Cecil May, Jr. and Wife, Janice

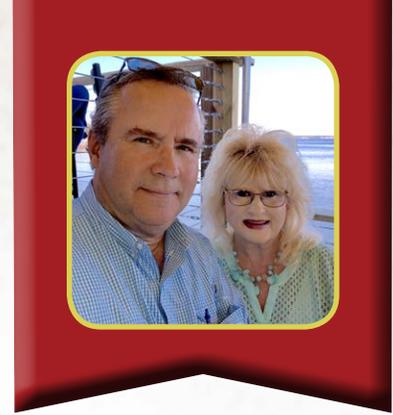
Recent Visitors in Kosciusko

The South Huntington Street church of Christ was blessed by a visit from Cecil and Janice May. On Wednesday evening, February 6, 2019, brother May presented a very meaningful lesson to the congregation about the need for "Setting Priorities".

Cecil had brought Janice, his new wife, to Kosciusko, not only to visit the church he once served as an elder, but also to see the facilities of what was Magnolia Bible College, where he served as president for nearly 20 years. Janice and Cecil, who were widow and widower, chose each other and became husband and wife about a year ago. Brother May's first wife, Winnie, known to MM readers, died about 3 years ago.

The Mays live in Montgomery, Alabama, home of Faulkner University and the V. P. Black College of Biblical Studies. For many years, after leaving MBC and Kosciusko, brother Cecil served as Dean. Now retired from the college, he is known as Dean Emeritus. He is perhaps best known to most readers of the Magnolia Messenger as "The Man Who Responds" to Bible questions asked by MM readers. (Page 4, this issue).

the JOURNEYS of PAUL



■ EUPORA

We were privileged to drop by for a Sunday visit with the church in Eupora, Mississippi where James Hill has long served as preacher. James led singing and also preached.

While enjoying our visit and benefiting from the public leadership of brother Hill, we were blessed to spend some time with church member Lera Doss who is now 90 years old.

When I used to work and travel on behalf of Magnolia Bible College, I was blessed to stay in their home overnight. Her husband, James Harvey Doss, who died in 2014, would encourage me to stay with them. Glenda and I enjoyed our visit with the Eupora church and looking forward to a return visit.



House of Worship for the Eupora Church



Lera Doss 90 Year Old Eupora Member

■ TISHOMINGO

David Lambert is among an increasing number of “part-time preachers” who preach regularly for small congregations scattered all over the Magnolia State. He serves as preacher for the church in the town of Tishomingo, located in the Mississippi county of Tishomingo. Michael Hodgin, one of the members, serves as a youth minister.

In addition to the meaningful worship services, on the day of our visit, the church provided a “fellowship meal” in which we were blessed to participate. We enjoyed the services and hope to return again.



Michael Hodgin



David Lambert



■ LIBERTY (Dennis)

The Liberty church of Christ, where David Conley serves as preacher, recently hosted an area wide singing at 2:00 PM on a Sunday afternoon. My Glenda and I were blessed to be a part of

the gathering. It was wonderful occasion with great singing led by many song leaders, representing several area congregations. We need more singings like this one.

■ OAKRIDGE

Over the past several weeks, we had opportunity to visit with one of the 3 or 4 “Oak Ridge Churches of Christ” in Mississippi. This Oak Ridge, located near Booneville, is served by Nathan Hale as preacher. Services were uplifting. The congregational singing was wonderful and Nathan preached a great sermon that day.

The Oak Ridge church has 3 services each Sunday morning. The first service is at 9:30, followed by Bible Classes at 10:15. Their final service for the day is at 11:00 A.M.

It was my privilege to speak at the 11:00 o'clock service. We saw several who were once members of the Mayfield church in Saltillo -- back in the 1950's. One of them was Lois Hutcheson, now 90 years old. She told us that she remembered my Dad preaching at Mayfield when he was about 18 years old. (Dad is now 80.)



Lois Hutcheson (Remembers my dad preaching at Mayfield over 60 years ago)



Nathan Hale, Preacher

■ FLORA

A few weeks ago, my Glenda and I enjoyed the opportunity of visiting with the North Flora church of Christ, located about 20 miles NW of Jackson. Ralph Flowers serves as their capable preacher and, after hearing his sermon that Sunday morning, I must say, “Ralph can really preach.”

We enjoyed the service very much. Over 100 were in attendance and the weekly contribution came to \$4,820.00. We look forward to a return visit, God willing.



Ralph Flowers



North Flora Church Enjoying Sunday Sermon by Ralph Flowers

Visiting with Christians

(Away From Church Buildings and/or Services)

Note: One of the fringe benefits and blessings enjoyed in our frequent journeys is the privilege of unexpectedly “running into” brothers and sisters in many different places away from church buildings. We would like to share some pictures and notes about just a few of the many folks we’ve “accidentally” run into during the last few months. (PF)



■ **Janice and William Richardson**

William served many years as sheriff of Scott County. They were both active members of the Forest church, where he served as treasurer during the time I was their preacher. We saw them at a funeral service in Morton, MS.



■ **Cathy and Doug Kimble**

Doug preaches for the Johnson Grove church near Brookhaven. We ran into the Kimbles at a restaurant. Good to be with them.



■ **Lionel and Jo McKee**

Members of the church in Marietta, MS. Very involved in our NE Mississippi RV rally. Ran into them at a Flea Market in Tupelo.



■ **Dwight Callens, Meridian**

After having lunch with the Meridian church (Hwy 19), Dwight invited us to accompany him to an open field and watch as he flew his model airplane. Good flying. Enjoyable visit with church and with Dwight.

■ **Nellie and Dean Caldwell**

Members of the ByPass church in Vicksburg, where Dean serves as an elder. We ran into them at an airshow near Vicksburg.



■ **Amanda and Donna Myers**

We have known the Myers family since we preached for the church in Mendenhall, MS (1977-1980). Enjoyable visit at the state fair in Jackson.



■ **Debbie and Ray Doucet, Batesville**

Accompanied by Glenda and Paul. We enjoyed visiting and eating with the Doucets who were members of the Enterprise church in Lake Charles, LA, where I used to preach. They now live and worship in Batesville, MS.



■ **Pam Hodges, Tupelo**

We have known Pam since she was a little girl. My grandmother provided day care for her when she was very young. So good to see her again!



■ **Ilia Amosov, Lithuania** Really enjoyed visiting and having dinner together while Ilia was visiting in Mississippi. He preaches in the European country of Lithuania where we have been going to help with Bible Camp for the past 20 years.



■ **Bubba Farish**

An elder of the Eureka Street congregation in Batesville. Saw him in Kosciusko where he was delivering supplies to the church

Reflections About Gluttony

Introduction

Gluttony, or excessive eating, is the most accepted sin in the Christian community. Obesity is the scourge of our times, the Black Plague of the 21st century. And most everyone is now aware that 67 percent of the U.S. is overweight or obese. Gluttony, like most sins, is a case of a thing of beauty that has been spoiled, a healthy and normal drive that has broken the bonds and runs rampant, a faithful servant who has assumed the throne and revealed himself a tyrant.

Gluttony (Latin, gula) is the overindulgence and overconsumption of anything to the point of waste. The word derives from the Latin *glutire*, meaning to gulp down or swallow. Gluttony is having a craving for food that conquers you. Whenever food controls us, whenever we live to eat, we are guilty of gluttony. Overeating is where the problem is, not how much you weigh. There are all kinds of reasons why a person might weigh too much or too little that is



not a result of gluttony. Part of the problem is that gluttony is frequently mistaken for obesity. Not all who are fat are gluttons, just as not all gluttons are fat.

Do you ever see medication that says never eat on an empty stomach? That is never a concern for most of us. A cartoon shows a sign in front of a cafe: "Specializing in meals that leave you bloated and lethargic, followed by self-loathing." A man says to his wife, "I liked it better when they called it comfort food." The sales of diet books outrank all other books on the market except for the Bible.

In our own lives we can see myriad ways in which gluttony has become an idol. We have an almost worshipful relationship with food. We eat when we are in-between meals. We eat when we are in our car. We eat when we are bored. We eat when we are restless, when we are frustrated, when we are watching TV, when we are on the computer. We eat constantly for no other reason than that we can eat

almost anytime we want -- for any reason, or for no reason at all.

It should be pointed out, even though it may seem odd, that compulsive dieters can also be guilty of gluttony. They and their pathological cousins, the anorexics and bulimics, have an unhealthy and inordinate concern about eating which is the essence of gluttony.



The Biblical Texts

The text of Scripture that holds out the biggest challenge on this issue is 1 Corinthians 6: 12 where Paul says -- specifically regarding food and drink, that he will not be enslaved by anything. He is saying, "I have one master, Jesus Christ, and I don't want any other master." Then in 1 Corinthians 9:27 he talks about disciplining his body: "I discipline my body ... lest I myself should be disqualified."

Some other Scriptures that speak to this subject: "Put a knife to your throat if you are given to gluttony" (Proverbs 23:2). "The one who keeps the law is a son with understanding, but a companion of gluttons shames his father" (Proverbs 28:7). "The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Look at him! A glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' Yet wisdom is justified by her deeds" (Matthew 11: 19; parallel in Luke 7 :34). "One of the Cretans, a prophet of their own, said, 'Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons'" (Titus 1: 12). Deuteronomy 21:20 commands that "a glutton and a drunkard" be stoned to death by the elders in his city.

"Their end is destruction," the Apostle Paul warned, for those for whom "their god is the belly." We worship this false idol (the god of our belly), whenever we succumb to the sin of gluttony. We replace the focus on the Lord with focus on our own indulgences.

We make a god of our belly and allow our souls to turn softer than the cream filling in our Twinkies. It should be added that you will not find spiritual texts condemning excess body fat.

We should esteem, extol, and cherish the biblical teaching that

***Gluttony,
like most sins, is a case of a
thing of beauty that has been
spoiled, a healthy and normal drive
that has broken the bonds and runs
rampant, a faithful servant who
has assumed the throne and
revealed himself
a tyrant.***

the Christian life is one of confronting our cravings and saying no to them. "Taste and see that the Lord is good." (Psalm 34:8) "Desire the sincere spiritual milk of the word." (1 Peter 2:2) "I am the bread of life. Come to me and you will not hunger." (John 6:35) "Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food." (Isaiah 55:1-2)



How to Respond

The primary way to fight cravings that we don't want is to experience higher cravings and have them master us. Very practically then, you can plan something after dinner that you want to do. It can certainly be something spiritual, but it can also be a type of exercise or a visit with a friend.

The goal for us, then, is to learn to take control of our eating rather than allowing food to control us, to be able to enjoy all the good gifts that God has given us without abusing them. To put it differently, we need to learn moderation, consuming neither too much nor too little, without being overly fastidious about our food choices. In the case of gluttony, the object is to break the control food has over us, enabling us to enjoy food as God intended. Thus, for many forms of gluttony, fasting is a good place to start.

A diet will never fix the tendency to gluttony. It is an external solution to an internal problem. Sure, you can restrict your food intake, but unless you learn to exercise self-control at the imagination level, you will go back to your old habits as soon as the diet is over. "Satisfy us in the morning with your unfailing love, that we may sing for joy and be glad all our days." (Psa. 90:14)



Dangers

We all know what happens when willpower gives out: you don't eat just one cookie, you eat the entire package, showing that food still controls you.

With care, this can even apply to compulsive dieters: if we find ourselves focused primarily on the weight loss effects of fasting rather than the spiritual dimensions, it can be an indication that food controls us. It's important to note that self-examination of food habits is different from dieting. Dieting often puts the focus on appearance, which can be self-centered, or on adhering to an externally imposed regime that has nothing to do with psychological wellness. Just like overindulging on food, dieting can also become selfish and weaken spiritual endeavors.

Two mistakes accompany most discussions on gluttony. The first is that it only pertains to those with a less than trim waistline; the second is that it always involves food. In reality, it can apply to digital toys, television, entertainment, sex, or relationships. It is about an excess of anything. We can stay up too late gorging on Facebook and Twitter.



Conclusion

Gluttony is a sin of the heart that manifests itself in the body, and the only way to rid ourselves of it is to deal with it as a matter of the heart.

The true danger of gluttony is not that it will lead to flabby waistlines but that it will lead to flabby souls. If we are unable to control our eating habits, we are probably also unable to control other habits, such as those of the mind (lust, covetousness, anger) and unable to keep our mouths from gossip or strife.

Since we can never get enough of God's love, we can feast freely without fearing we will become overfull. If we are to be gluttons, let us gorge on the gospel and God's glory. Let our desire be for God alone—for that alone is the only desire for which we can never overindulge. Food cannot fill up our emotional, intellectual or spiritual hunger.

Pray that God grant us wisdom in our eating habits and trust that he will answer our prayer. SLOW DOWN and really taste your food. Enjoy it.



Just A Little More

Romans 14:17: "For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit."

Christians celebrate their life together in Christ around a family meal, the Lord's Supper, initiated by Jesus -- one that anticipates an end-time banquet marking the consummation of history.

Doyle Kee
507 East Pleasure Ave
Searcy, AR 72143
Tel. 501-230-2247
E-mail:
Thekees@bluewin.ch

QUESTIONS TO ASK
ON NEXT PAGE 11



Don't leave out the Most Important Part!

I have often heard folks tell their friends, “You need to be baptized...”

It's certainly true that immersion is necessary (1 Pet. 3:21). Despite what many of our religious neighbors say to the contrary, **baptism is essential for salvation** (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16; Titus 3:5). But I fear that, at least at times, we've not said nearly enough when we tell people, “You need to be baptized...”

Hear me out.

Simply getting in the water is *insufficient*. Yes, I said *insufficient*. If there was something miraculous or holy about the water in and of itself, we could just strong-arm folks up to the baptistry and force them under. But there is no inherent power in the water itself. **Water is water.** Whether it's in a baptistry, a swimming pool, a jacuzzi, a pond, creek, river or ocean. An individual just has to be buried (Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12; cf. Acts 8:38).



MIKE BENSON

But sometimes well-intentioned church folk stop there at the water and in so doing, stop short of their responsibility (cf. Mat. 28:19-20). They push the *action* of faith without first properly and fully emphasizing the *person* of faith. They fixate on the water without focusing upon the One who mandates the water in the first place.

But beloved, without Christ, baptism is simply a bath. Christ is center, the beginning and the end, and He's why water is important in the first place!

Through the years I've watched us (i.e., the church) baptize folks in numbers I cannot recall, both stateside as well as on foreign soil. And I've also watched many of those folks who went down into the water leave the church soon thereafter because even though they got the water right, they never got the Savior right. They heard, “You need to be baptized...” And, “You'll be lost in hell if you don't get baptized.” They were told and heard “water” and perhaps wanted an insurance policy against fire.

Our friends sometimes accuse us of teaching what they call, “water salvation.” I suspect, on occasion, they may actually be right.

CHRIST IS EVERYTHING!

- **We are saved by Christ.** 1 Tim. 1:15
- **We are saved by faith in Christ.** John 8:24
- **We are saved by repenting of sins committed against Christ.** Acts 2:38; 3:19; 17:30-31
- **We are saved by confessing Christ.**
Mat. 10:32-33; Rom. 10:10
- **We are saved by baptism into Christ.** Gal. 3:27
- **We are saved by the name of Christ.** Acts 4:12
- **We are saved by the words of Christ.** John 6:63
- **We are saved by the works of Christ.** John 20:30-31
- **We are saved by the blood of Christ.** Rom. 5:9; Eph. 1:7
- **We are saved by the death of Christ.** Rom. 5:10a
- **We are saved by the perfect life of Christ.** Rom. 5:10b
- **We are saved by the resurrection of Christ.** Rom. 4:25
- **We are saved by hope in Christ.** Rom. 8:24
- **We are saved by calling on the name of Christ**
(i.e., baptism). Acts 22:16; 2:21

Let me say it here—and please don't wrest my words out of their context. It's not the water in and of itself that saves. It is Christ who saves and He graciously does so through obedient faith that accepts His word and goes down into the water (Mark 16:16; Eph. 2:8-9). **MM**

*In Christ alone my hope is found
He is my light, my strength, my song
This Cornerstone, this solid ground
Firm through the fiercest drought and storm
What heights of love, what depths of peace
When fears are stilled, when strivings cease
My Comforter, my All in All*

Here in the love of Christ I stand.

Songwriters: Keith Getty / Stuart Townend

In Christ Alone lyrics © Capitol Christian Music Group

Mike Benson preaches for the church of Christ in Oxford, AL.
His email address: imikemedia@gmail.com

Questions To Ask Ourselves

Continued from page 9

1. Is it time for me to feast? There are times when God calls us to feast. We are even called to eat “too much” in celebration of God’s grace (Deuteronomy 14:25-26). Godliness does not consist in keeping a 2000 calories per day diet. It requires wisdom. We need to know when to feast, but we also need to ask:

2. Is it time for me to fast? The discipline of fasting teaches us many things, one of which is that we are not to be enslaved by food (Matthew 4:2-4), and that we cannot generate enough earthly strength to fulfill God’s will (Acts 13:2-3).

3. Is it time for me to moderate my food so that whether I eat or drink I do it all to God’s glory (1 Corinthians 10:31)?

4. Can I receive this next bite of food as a gift of God with true thanksgiving and with holy gladness (1 Timothy 4:4, Acts 2:36)?

5. Do I know that this food will serve as fuel to give me strength to seek and serve the Lord? Do I need these calories to accomplish the Lord’s will or not (e.g. Acts 9: 19)?

6. Does my “body-conscience” allow me to eat this?

Is my belly communicating that it is full enough or not full enough? Are my pants growing too tight? Just as the conscience can be seared in other ways, so we can become comfortable with sinful eating patterns and make adjustments to make our sin less painful. We should still pay heed to the warnings God has built into our physical bodies.

7. Can I legitimately say to younger Christians looking on “Follow me as I follow

Christ by taking this next bite?” Paul recognized that he could not fail to follow Jesus in food and drink, the most basic elements of daily life, and expect others to follow him in deeper matters of life and theology. So he said “I discipline my body and make it my slave, lest, after preaching to others myself should be disqualified” (1 Corinthians 9:27). **MM**



Two mistakes accompany most discussions on gluttony.

The first is that it only pertains to those with a less than trim waistline; the second is that it always involves food.

In reality, it can apply to digital toys, television, entertainment, sex, or relationships. It is about an excess of anything.

We can stay up too late gorging on Facebook and Twitter.

Let’s Celebrate?

EASTER...CHRISTMAS...?

In much of the “Christian world” there is an endless series of traditional feast days and celebrations that go from Christmas to Easter. On the twelfth day of Christmas, many Christians are asked to celebrate the feast of Epiphany, a celebration of Jesus coming. This begins the Carnival celebration which continues up to Fat Tuesday (“Mardi Gras”), the next being Ash Wednesday.

This marks the beginning of Lent, which continues for forty days, followed by celebrations of Palm Sunday, then Good Friday, and then Easter Sunday.

First, let’s acknowledge the fact that the church of Christ taught none of this -- not by Jesus or his apostles. Second, let’s recognize the fact that many of these “special days” were developed to compete with the many pagan holidays of the time. Looking at the Mardi Gras scenes on Bourbon street, it does look more pagan than Christian.

In contrast, Paul was disappointed in the Christians in Galatia for returning to and celebrating these “weak and worthless” pagan holidays, declaring that they were now “free” from such “slavery”. “You observe days and months and seasons and years,” he said, “I fear for you, that perhaps I have labored over you in vain” (Ga. 4: 9-11).

Clearly, the spirit of Christianity was directed away from such numerous celebrations.

As Christians we are taught to fast. But Christ said we should

do it in a private manner, not to be “noticed by men” but to do it “in secret,” acknowledging that our Father will know and reward you (Mt. 6:16-18).

The only “Special day” we are taught to observe is the weekly partaking of the Lord’s Supper. Jesus said to do it “often,” to which the apostles taught us this was to be weekly, on the first day of the week (Acts 2:42, 1 Co. 11:20, 16:2). We see by example that the church did exactly that (Acts 20:7).

I applaud any person who engages in an activity which they believe will bring them closer to God. But better to seek such spiritual growth by prayer, fasting, study of God’s word, and a weekly gathering with God’s people to partake the Lord’s Supper, rather than by the traditions of men. **MM**

I applaud any person who engages in an activity which they believe will bring them closer to God. But better to seek such spiritual growth by prayer, fasting, study of God’s word, and a weekly gathering with God’s people to partake the Lord’s Supper, rather than by the traditions of men

*By: Dennis Doughty who preaches for the Tunica church of Christ.
dennis1848@bellsouth.net*

BEYOND The Sacred Page

Bruce Henderson wrote in a December 2018 daily devotional about a woman who noticed a religious-sounding sticker on his motorcycle. She said, “Oh, you must know the Lord?” Bruce said he thought of saying, “Lady, I am a Bible-reading preaching minister of the gospel of Christ,” but that this was not what she asked. So he just said softly, “Yes Ma’am, I do know the Lord.”

From childhood I remember singing the familiar hymn, “Break Thou The Bread of Life” in our little Kentucky country church with my grandfather Roy McElwain leading. In the decades following, this hymn has meant much to me and countless others. One stanza reads, “Beyond the sacred page I seek Thee, Lord; My spirit pants for Thee, O living Word.” Like many others, I have mouthed those words at times without giving much thought to their implications and deeper meaning. But these words penned by Mary Artemisia Lathbury in 1877 present a challenge to the modern reader to look more deeply into what she may have intended.

The following thoughts probably won’t mean much to the reader who does not take in the full meaning of John’s first chapter. Here he says, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God” (v.1). Later, he says, “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us....” (v.14). We now see that there are two different “words” in scripture. First, there’s the Word which is Jesus Christ himself. Then there is the “word”, meaning the printed page. For the sake of clarity, in this article when referring to Jesus, I will use all caps in the WORD; whereas when referring to the written word it will be the lower case “word”. Here’s an example: The WORD has provided us his word to teach us, direct us, and lead us to the WORD.

First, I needed to work my way through something I have believed, and practiced my entire preaching life. That is that God has given us his total, entire, complete will in written form—the Holy Bible and that we must not go beyond what is written (II

John 9), and we must not add to or take from that written word. (Deut. 29:29; Rev. 22:18). I will always believe this. I also believe that there are no extra-biblical sources from which we can learn God’s will for us. I once owned a paperback by Orfali Potter titled, “The Lost Years of Jesus Revealed”. And there are others. They are pure fiction, and not very good fiction at that. God has given in his word everything we need to know about Jesus, his will, or his background—everything about “life and godliness”. (II Peter 1:3)

This being settled, I could then start to see what the song’s author was suggesting by the statement, “beyond the sacred page.” Only then am I able to harmonize these two things: (1) trying to find the WORD “beyond the sacred page” and (2) at the same time being confined to the written word. And herein lies our challenge: when reading the Bible, are we truly seeking to know the Lord Jesus, or are we simply looking for facts? I’ve been preaching for nearly 65 years and as I look back I am certain that too many times

I was looking for a passage to prove a point, win an argument, show someone his or her error, or simply to prepare a sermon or Bible class. While these may be legitimate reasons for learning scripture, they cannot be the primary reason.

Too many of us may have been coming to scripture with the same flawed mindset of the Jews encountered by Jesus in John 5:39-40 ESV: “You search the scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life, and it is they that bear witness of me, yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life.” Here Jesus seems to be saying that to focus on the word is one thing, but to find the WORD in that process is quite another.

Let me share an experience I had 50+ years ago as a student at Abilene Christian College (now University). A favorite Bible professor of mine was Dr. Carl Spain. In class one day he made an assignment (a lot of us were preacher students). The assignment was simple enough. He said, “Next Friday you are to bring

*“this man
really knows
his Bible”*

*“this guy quoted a lot of Bible,
but could not recall the
application of a single one
of those verses.”*

me a paper titled, "What Jesus Means To Me." I made note of this and thought to myself, "I've been preaching for ten years; this will be a breeze," so I put it off until later in the week.

When I began to put thoughts to paper, I wrote such things as "Jesus is the light of the world," or "he is the way, the truth and the light," or "he is the bread of life", and on and on. Then it dawned on me that I was writing what others had said about Jesus or what Jesus said about himself. I was writing what Jesus meant to Peter, Paul, Mary or John, and that simply was not the assignment. While these things were true, they were not necessarily what Jesus means to me. This assignment proved to be one of the hardest he gave that whole year. But it helped to open my eyes.

It has helped me to see that this may well be a real weakness among us of the restoration heritage. We have taken pride in knowing the scriptures. But have we been people who know the Lord? There is a difference. A big difference.

It has helped me to see that herein lies a challenge to those of us who preach. You and I have sat at the feet of preachers who could quote from memory literally dozens of scripture verses in a single sermon, and the people would oooh and aaah about how "this man really knows his Bible". But when we got home we remembered that this guy quoted a lot of Bible, but could not recall the application of a single one of those verses. This explains also how a man can step into a pulpit and wow an audience with his powerful memory, while outside the pulpit he demonstrates so little of the spirit and attitude of the Lord Jesus. Such a preacher knows the word, but doesn't know the WORD.

I've found that my most effective preaching is when I simply isolate a section of scripture, read it, and squeeze all we can out of it, and share with the audience what the Lord is asking of us, how it impacts our lives, and how we are blessed by doing what it says. This is called "expository preaching" and may be the most difficult. This may also be why we hear so little of it. I much prefer this to a sermon where I might've memorized 50 different verses and the hearers remember little other than

that I have an amazing memory.

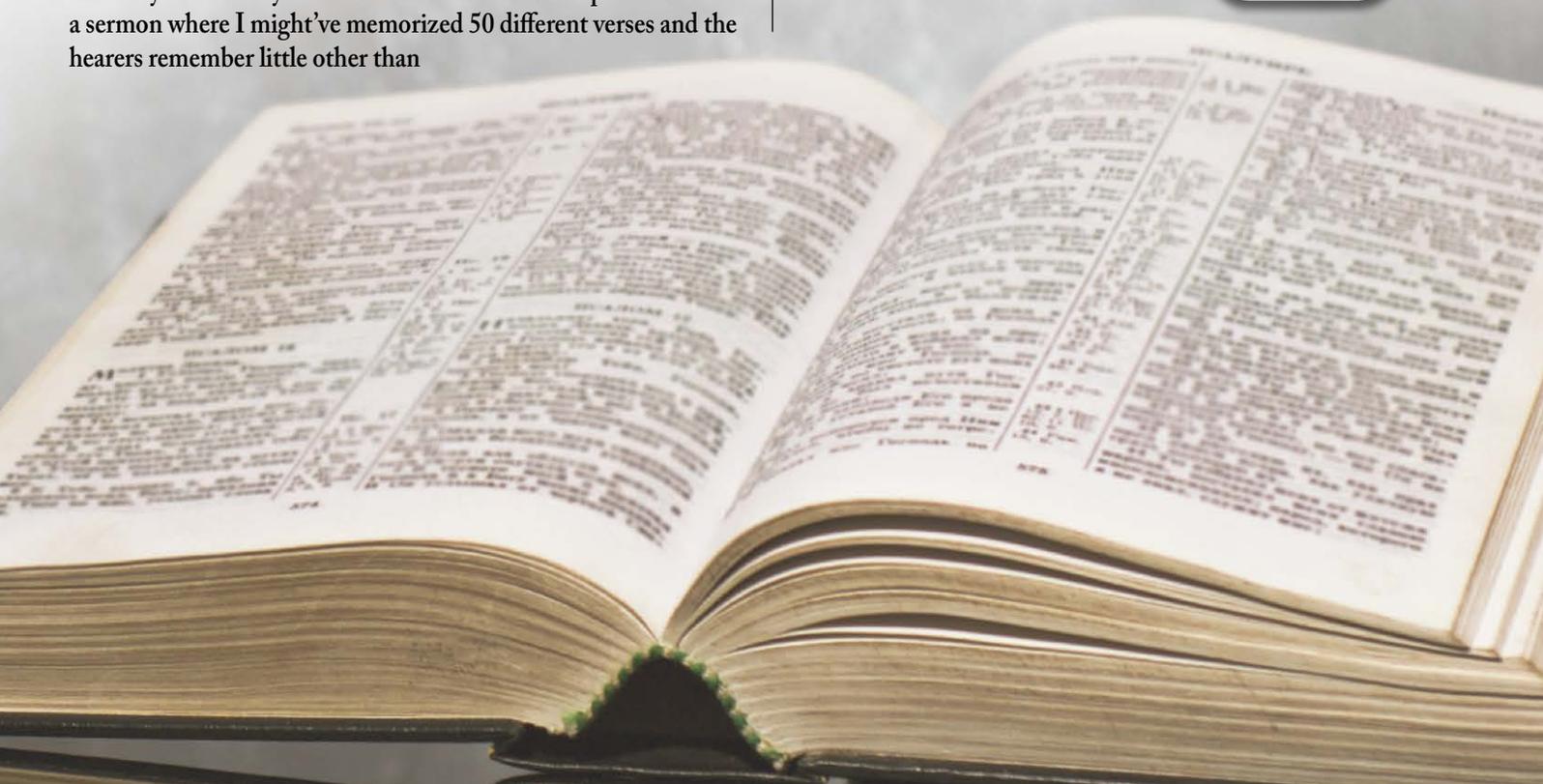
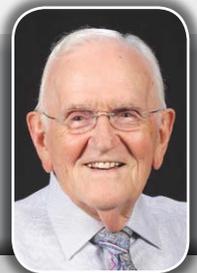
I'm still not real impressed with a sermon outline where there are three or four main points and a lot of sub-points with a Bible verse listed at the end of each line. Please don't misunderstand; there is a time and place for such but a steady diet of this will likely produce mostly spiritual dry-rot. And too many times it results in a congregation of people who can spout a lot of Bible verses to a friend but make that friend sick to his stomach because we have showed that friend so little of the attitude of Christ. This usually closes doors that can never be opened.

So... what am I saying with this whole article? I'm saying that our deeper need is to read the scriptures, soak them up, digest them and know them. But that we must take this knowledge a step further and develop a relationship—personal relationship—with the Lord Jesus Christ. Let Him become our best friend, the friend who actually controls our lives. All of our lives. Our personal life, married life, social life, business life and yes, even our political life!

Am I saying that as a preacher I am a model of all these things? NO! Far from it. But I'm trying. Please be patient with me.

So the next time you read through the word, make sure you don't overlook the WORD. When you quote the 23rd Psalm, it's really a good idea to spend some time getting to know the Shepherd. **MM**

Ken Joines
4449 Terrace Stone Drive
Olive Branch, MS 38654
kjoines35@hotmail.com
901-212-1601



2018 LA-TX RV Rally



A few of the many RVs with "Sunshine Inn" (red roof) on right

Report by Dean Caldwell

During the week of October 14-20, 2018 it rained in Grapeland Texas - and it rained a lot - and it rained every day. More than 10 inches were recorded that week. Several homes and businesses were flooded and streets closed during the week due to flooding. There were tornado warnings! But none of that dampened the spirits or cooled the warm hearts of Christians from several states gathered together for the "20th Annual Louisiana/Texas RV Rally" at Salmon Lake Park in Grapeland.

Folks began arriving at the park before the weekend of October 15th. By Saturday, there were 20 early arrivals. On Sunday 27 people assembled for worship services at the Sunshine Inn, the meeting place for the rally. James Tidwell from Many, Louisiana spoke on Sunday Morning, and Ray Franks from DeQuincy, Louisiana delivered the message on Sunday Evening. Monday, Tuesday, most of Wednesday, every afternoon for the rest of the week, and often late at night, people were found playing cards or dominoes, working on jig-saw puzzles, or just enjoying being together.

On Monday evening about 46 people gathered together for hamburgers, hot dogs, and all the fixin's. Tuesday evening, "Seafood Night", found 56 people having a feast of fried and boiled shrimp, expanded this year to include fried oysters, thanks to David McGee from Wesson, Mississippi.

The scheduled program for the rally began on Wednesday evening. After a dinner of Shrimp Etouffee and ham, prepared by Danny Manuel of Many, Louisiana, 70 people received an excellent lesson presented by James Malone, minister of the Boulevard Church of Christ in Lake Charles Louisiana. His lesson was titled "Life is Not a Spectator Sport", which was in keeping with the theme of the 2018 rally, "In the Trenches." Following the lesson, all enjoyed an abundance of home-made ice cream of many flavors.

The annual auction was on Thursday morning. A lot of really nice items, donated by folks attending the rally, were auctioned to those attending the rally. The funds are used to finance the cost of

the rally and other great Christian works. People normally bid on items liberally, knowing that the monies are going for great causes. An outstanding feature of the auction was the sale of a caramel pie made by James Tidwell. The pie was sold for more than \$200, then put back in the auction, and sold again by the slice, raising several hundred dollars. The auction sometimes provides a bargain purchase, or a way to acquire a sentimental and much desired item, often hand made by a member of the rally family.

Nellie Caldwell, from the Bypass Church of Christ in Vicksburg, Mississippi, led a group of ladies doing crafts on Thursday afternoon. They made bracelets with red, white, and blue beads to wear during the patriotic program on Friday night. They also put together some great Christmas snowman decorations using candy boxes, ribbon and knitted gloves.



Rally Recreation: Physical & Spiritual

Dinner Thursday evening was Randy Henry's award winning chili, hot dogs, and chili pie. Randy Henry is from DeQuincy, Louisiana. Following the meal, James Malone delivered a message, titled "Abide by the Rules to Overcome the Opponent". Randy Henry was awarded a plaque in special recognition for his service to the rally over the years. In addition to providing the award winning chili each year, Randy does an excellent job organizing and operating the audio and visual equipment. He does an excellent job developing video programs and CD's, and in producing the great patriotic programs. Al Franks gave a brief history of the Magnolia Messenger, and presented the brand new style for the Magnolia Messenger, a bright and colorful magazine format.

Later on Thursday, several people provided entertainment, telling and reading a number of really funny jokes, yarns, and tales. A campfire gathering with Phil Hatton, from Lewisville Texas, to lead singing around a campfire was canceled because of the rains.

Rick Campbell from Madison Mississippi spoke to the men on Friday morning, presenting a lesson on "Core Values, Love, Generosity, Justice, Discipline, and Apprenticeship". During that same time Nellie Caldwell gave the ladies an informative

talk on The Lifting Lives Ministries in Vicksburg, Mississippi. Lifting Lives was established about six years ago by members of the Bypass Church in Vicksburg. The ministry operates a shelter in Vicksburg for homeless families, and an up-scale thrift store, known as The Warehouse, to provide some of the funding to operate the shelter. Joel Dimmette, associate minister of the Bypass Church, is executive director. Members of the Board of Directors are Willie Nettle, minister of the Bypass Church, Nellie Caldwell and Bobbie Heads of the Bypass Church, along with Stan Woodson of the 1-20 Church in Vicksburg, and Donnie Cain, minister for the Midway Church in Utica, Mississippi.

Friday night is always the night for the fish fry. About 95 people enjoyed a fish dinner, with fish furnished by Glen Franks from Lake Charles, Louisiana, and prepared by Glen and David McGee, along with a lot of help from other men.

And then it was time for the annual Patriotic Program, a favorite of the rally family. The program was developed and directed by Randy Henry and Ena Franks, with Ena serving as the emcee. The program began by posting of the colors by several members of Chapter 991 of

The Vietnam Veterans of America, from Palestine, Texas. The program included several patriotic videos accompanied by patriotic music prepared by Randy Henry, a video giving the history of our national anthem, "The Star Spangled Banner", and readings designed especially to honor veteran members of the rally family. Several veterans representing all branches of the U S Military were honored with a special presentation, including the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, and the Coast Guard. Randy Henry presented one of his unique and exquisite writing pens to Rodney Covington of Palestine as the veteran with the longest tenure in military service, with 21 years in the Navy.



James Malone (Keynote Speaker)

Dan Manuel, minister of the Crockett Road Church of Christ in Palestine spoke on "Honoring Those Who Are in the Trenches and Who Have Been in the Trenches". As a part of his presentation, Dan called on Rod Skelton of the Vietnam Veterans of America to give an account of his service in Vietnam. Rod gave a moving presentation, telling of one particular battle where he was one of only five men in his military unit who survived. And during all of his service, and for many years thereafter, how he carried with him a copy of The New Testament, given to him by his sister, who was only 12 years old at the time.

Candy Hony, Janie Tindall, and Elaine Byrd, with help from several others, prepared breakfast for all the rally family Saturday morning. Following breakfast, Danny Manuel led a "Gospel Singing Hour." During that time the group, under direction of Phil Hatton and Randy Henry, recorded a special song for Morris

Tirpitz of Shreveport, Louisiana. Morris and his wife Helen attended virtually every Louisiana/Texas rally over the years, and many of the rallies held in Mississippi in the spring. Morris loved to entertain at every rally by pickin' and grinnin'. His rendition of "When the Wagon Was New", became a favorite with the rally, and he would perform that song several times at every rally. Morris and Helen are now in a care facility, and no longer able to attend the rallies. So on Saturday morning, Phil Hatton led and Randy Henry produced a DVD of the group singing "When the Old Wagon Was New", to be given to Morris and Helen. Randy also had DVDs of Morris singing the song available for folks who wanted one. The DVD has been delivered to Morris and Helen. As they watched it, they felt the love from the group, and were able to recognize all of the rally family members as they sang his hit tune.

On Saturday evening a large number of rally members attended the "Dogwood Jamboree" at the Palestine High School auditorium. The "Branson Style" show is produced every year by Dan Manuel, and always includes a variety of country music

performers. The featured group this year was "Shake, Rattle, and Roll". It was an excellent performance.

Over 30 members of the RV Rally attended services on Sunday morning with the Crockett Road Church of Christ in Palestine. Ray Franks spoke during the Bible Study hour on the subject, "Get In the



RV Rally: Not just for the old folks!



Salmon Lake Park in Palestine, TX: "A Trip Back in Time"

Game and Off the Bench." At the morning worship hour, Dan Manuel gave a sermon titled "Go For The Goal." Sunday lunch was a potluck meal provided by members of the Crockett Road Church. They always extend great love to the rally family, and are really good cooks!

The 2019 Louisiana/Texas is scheduled for October 16th-19th at Salmon Lake Park in Grapeland, Texas. It will surely be a wonderful time as always, with the theme "Reactions Matter". There will be plenty of spaces for RVs literally in the yard of the Sunshine Inn, and plenty of cabins or motel rooms nearby for those who may not have an RV. The Louisiana/Texas rallies are planned and hosted by Ray and Donna Franks, 337-515-0866, rdcontracting@centurytel.net, and Glen and Ena Franks, 337-477-2660, gefranks@att.net. **MM**

A Teacher that blessed my life

"Country Preacher"
Bobby Wade

"Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." (Hebrews 13:2)

Teachers not only impart knowledge, they impact lives, and in some instances, save lives. Recently I read a Facebook account about a teacher who noticed that one of her students, a ten-year-old boy, was exhibiting behaviors that troubled her. Previously happy and involved, he had become increasingly detached and "seemed to be shutting down."

She was sufficiently concerned that she decided to visit his home and discuss the matter. Upon arrival she found that his mother had Stage 4 Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) and would likely need a transplant in the near future. However, her chance of procuring a donor kidney was lessened by a rare under-lying medical condition. Understandably, the young lad was fearful his mother might never receive the life-saving transplant. The teacher had discovered the answer to her question, but was now plagued by an equally perplexing one: "What can I do?"

She began by researching all that was involved in kidney transplants. As a matter of seeming providence, she had the same under-lying health issue as the mother, and thus was a possible donor. Tests proved her a match and she decided to donate. The operation was successful. Both the little boy and his mother were thrilled. When the teacher was asked why she decided to donate she replied, "His mother and I both care about the same little boy."

This account touched my heart for some very personal reasons. My first grade experience at Robert E. Lee Grade School in Owensboro, KY was not a good one. I'm sure I was ill-prepared. Pre-schools

were not yet available and kindergarten was not affordable to my family.

My teacher was an older lady who was retiring at the end of the current school year. I had several child-hood diseases that same year which caused me to miss a lot. Additionally, my teacher informed my mother that I was memorizing rather than reading. I was retained. Tears flowed and I felt utterly humiliated. In my young mind, I hadn't just failed, I was a failure. To compensate, I developed a rebellious attitude. Some real challenges lay before my young life. Fortunately, so did some great blessings, in the personage of another caring teacher -- a teacher that blessed my life.

Miss Bates, my third grade teacher, was a young, unmarried woman. She related well with her students and was warm and friendly. There was something about her and made me like her "right off the bat." For one thing, she was a gifted artist. She painted several murals in the school lunch room based on fairy tales and things of that nature. I also liked to draw and she picked up on that. She praised my effort at art and whether wittingly or unwittingly, she utilized a very important human relations principle: "Look for strengths and communicate them."

She dealt with my "attitude" forthrightly. I can't recall the exact issue, but I remember well her words: "If you don't [whatever], your name is mud!" She made sure I was aware she valued my contributions, however small. The class put on a play, "The Blue Boy." I was not a part of the cast but she assigned me the responsibility of going to a neighborhood home

and picking up a live rabbit, which was in the cast!

Perhaps her greatest expression of confidence was when she nominated me for the school boy patrol. The "Patrol Boys," as they were called, had a white belt that encircled the waist and over the shoulder on which was a badge. Our primary responsibility was to help the students as they crossed the streets to and from school. Often there would be a policeman on the busier traffic corners, along with the student patrol. It was definitely an honor, especially for a third-grader to be nominated. It also required good grades! One more indication of her faith in me, and another reason for me to start believing in myself!

I went on to finish high school and eventually college and to serve the Master for over sixty years as a minister. In fact, when I graduated from Tech High in Owensboro in 1954, I was high school valedictorian--no big deal--it was a small graduating class. Not bad for a first grade failure! And I feel I owe a huge debt of gratitude and thanks to Miss Bates.

To my knowledge, that was the only year she taught at Robert E. Lee Grade School. I went by her room on the last day of that school year. As I approached her door, I noticed she had her head on her desk and might have been crying. I decided not to go in. How many times, as I have looked back over my life, both its successes and failures, have I wished I had the opportunity to say a simple, "**Thank You, Miss Bates.**" **MM**

*Bobby Wade; 10595 Minor Hill Highway;
Goodsprings, TN 38460*

NORTHERN'S NOTES

God Has Not Lost His Way!

By *Fenter Northern*

We Christians have a lot to contend with in our social environment. We are, as the apostle said, to strive for perfection (maturity) in righteousness. We are bombarded daily with mouths that have the stench of the unburied dead. We are mocked for righteousness sake by those who serve their god of personal lust. Satan has become militant, organizing disruptions against anything bearing any resemblance of Christianity.

We are in the midst of a generation trying to rewrite or completely wipe out history to suit their private philosophies of life without respect for anyone outside their own views. However, it doesn't seem the faithful thing to do for us Christians to always be gloomily mouthing our national state of affairs as pessimistically as the non-Christians.

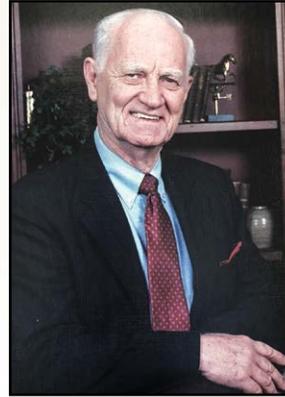
Of course we are very concerned, but we are not one whit beaten down. We are disillusioned with the sad political conditions that have developed in our beloved country as well as the horrible lack of good manners we are seeing continually, but we Christians must not forget that we believe our

**God, in his own way and good time,
will have the final word.**

We do believe in the victory of Jesus we sing about in worship, don't we?

Then, in all the sinful confusion we see about us we must believe our own faith. While we are the children of light, let us not forget that God knows what is going on in the darkness. He has always kept every promise that he has made, although sometimes

it has taken a few generations for it to be fulfilled. God is timeless and therefore does not confine his actions according to the human calendar. He has not gone off on a far journey and lost his way or deserted his beloved creation.



Fenter Northern, Academic Dean of MBC for many years. This picture is still hanging in the academic building in Kosciusko, MS. (Brother Fenter, who lives in Montgomery, AL, probably looks a little older now.)

While we never realized all the mature responsibilities of discipleship at our baptism, within a reasonable amount of time, disciples should recognize the true faith and know it is worth fighting for. The church is the pillar and support of the truth in all generations, in all circumstances. There is no other fellowship on earth that can be compared to it for a split second.

We hear daily loud, shouting, fanatic voices yelling unitedly their deep party prejudices. But there is a voice that is much louder than theirs; however, Jesus said one must have ears to hear it. Each time the family of God assembles at worship that voice can be heard from loyal pulpits in league with the writer of Hebrews saying, "You have come to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven."

God Has Not Lost His Way (Isa. 59:1).

Therefore, "Be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for you know your labor is not in vain in the Lord." "Blessed are they who die in the Lord ... that they may henceforth rest from their labors..."

(I Cor. 15:58; Rev. 14:13). **MM**

*Fenter Northern 6213 Bell Grove Pl
Montgomery, AL 36117-4360 fnorthern@charter.net*



4th Annual MBC Retreat/Recharge

The Power of Prayer

March 10-13, 2019. A date to remember. This is when an event, unlike any other in which I have participated, took place on the campus of Magnolia Bible Center. Approximately 35 men came together in Kosciusko to share a great spiritual feast. The occasion was the 4th annual "Preachers' Retreat." For three nights and three days attendees were privileged to hear twenty stirring Biblical lessons, presented by four capable preachers/teachers from four different states. The theme of the 67 hour retreat/recharge was "The Power of Prayer."

The four men from four states were: Gary Hampton (Mississippi), Kirk Brothers (Alabama), Dan Winkler (Tennessee) and Michael Whitworth from Texas. Each instructor came well prepared and effectively presented each of his lessons. Prayer has been described as the "greatest earthly privilege enjoyed by a child of God." Just think! Prayer enables every child of God to speak to his Almighty Heavenly Father at **any time, any-where** and about **anything!**

The first of the four speakers was Dan Winkler of Huntington, Tennessee. Brother Dan is widely known and highly respected for his scholarship and speaking abilities. On Sunday evening, Dan kicked off the three nights and three days meeting with the topic, "Improving My Prayer Life." This was followed on Monday morning by three lessons on "Learning from Jesus' Prayers in Gethsemane."

The second of the four speakers was Kirk Brothers of Florence, Alabama. He, too, is well known for his scholarship and speaking abilities. About a year ago, he accepted the challenge of serving as president of Heritage Christian University in Florence. Brother Kirk's first retreat lesson was entitled, "Prayer in Jesus'



Dan Winkler



Kirk Brothers

Sermon on the Mount." This was followed by other vital lessons, such as, "What Makes Prayer So Powerful?" the "Prayers of David", "Prayers in the Jewish Synagogue" and "How Can I Improve My Own Prayer Life?"

The third speaker was Gary Hampton. Brother Gary, like the others, has provided remarkable leadership in the Lord's church in his service as a preacher and educator. He presently preaches for the Siwell Road church in Jackson, Mississippi. His first lesson in the recent retreat was entitled, "Learning From Jesus' Prayer in the Upper Room." This was followed by "Learning From Jesus' Prayers on the Cross." Other lessons included "The Prayer Service/Worship of the Early Church" and a study on "Prayer and Providence."



Gary Hampton

The youngest of the four teachers, Michael Whitworth, calls Mississippi "home"; although, he and his family presently lives near Fort Worth, Texas. He is also very talented and is an excellent student. He presently travels extensively conducting workshops for Bible teachers. Michael's first topic, during the retreat, was "Learning from Jesus' Prayer in Emmaus." Other lessons included "Preachers Who Pray Like Paul" and "Combining a Relationship with God and a Respect for God When we Pray." His excellent efforts contributed greatly to the success of our 4th annual Preachers' Retreat/Recharge. We give thanks! We thank God and each of the four instructors. I believe it can be truthfully said that all who came to the "retreat" left "re-charged!"



Michael Whitworth

Lord willing, our 5th annual "Retreat/Recharge for Preachers" will be held beginning the second Sunday in March, 2020. You are cordially invited to make plans to attend. Look for more information to be published in the Magnolia Messenger as the date draws nearer. (alf)

Youth in Tupelo's West Main Church of Christ Conduct Evening Worship Services

A few weeks ago, when visiting with the West Main church in Tupelo, we were very impressed with their meaningful evening services. All aspects of the service were led or conducted by several of the young men of the congregation. Nathan Foster, who works closely with the youth, identified the service participants (pictured at right) as follows. (From left to right, excluding Nathan) are: Tucker Cowsert, Brooks Johnson, Cade Holliday, Channing Hooper, Chance Speed, Logan White, Caleb Kellum, Jacob Camacho, Ty Clayton, and Simpson Almon.

The privilege of worshipping with our brothers and sisters at West Main reminded us anew of the importance of our young people and their role in the church. Also, our visit caused us to consider the fact that the youth are not just the "church of tomorrow"; they are, very much, the "church of today."

According to the website for the West Main church, the Tupelo congregation is overseen by four elders, served by 14 deacons and benefits from the long time preaching ministry of Doug Greenway. (Paul Franks)



Angels

God's Messengers

Many Christians do not understand the work and activity of Angels, and because of this, it limits us spiritually. The word "Angel" simply means "messenger," and is defined as; "a supernatural representative of God, sometimes delivering messages, sometimes protecting God's people" [Mounce].

God created these special creatures, and they have been around his throne since the creation (Job 38:4-7, Revelation 5:11).

God used these heavenly messengers to perform His will.



DENNIS DOUGHTY

They led the Israelites into the promise land (Exodus 33:2), struck down 185,000 Assyrians (2 Kings 19:35), delivered the manna every day in the wilderness (Psalm 78:23-25), shut the lion's mouths to spare Daniel (Daniel 6:22), rolled away the stone from the Lord's tomb (Matthew 28:2), delivered Peter from prison (Acts 12:7) and will come with the Lord "in flaming fire" on the great Day of

Judgement (2 Thessalonians 1:7).

Angels became God's connection to man. He used these mighty creatures to communicate important information through unusual means. They were sent in the form of men to warn Lot of

There is so much going on in the spiritual world, more than we can ever comprehend, and much of it involving the angels. Speaking of such, Hebrews 1:14 says, "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation?" (That's you and me!)

Sodom's destruction (Genesis 19:1), appeared to Moses from the flames of the burning bush (Exodus 3:2), spoke through the mouth of Balaam's donkey (Numbers 22:22-32), and in Michael's majestic form, told Mary, then Joseph, of the child to be born to them (Matthew 1:20, Luke 1:35).

There are amazing insights found in a story in the book of Daniel. The prophet had been busy praying to God on behalf of Israel (Dan. 9:4). Three weeks later an angel appears to him in response to his prayer. Here is what happened: Daniel prayed, an angel was sent immediately in answer to the prayer, but that angel was intercepted by an angel of Satan ("prince of the kingdom

of Persia") and fought with, and hindered God's angel for three weeks. Michael was then sent to engage Satan's forces and therefore free up the angel to complete his journey to Daniel in answer to his prayer (Daniel 10:10-14).

In the same way we can be assured that God uses the angels to respond to our prayers. This, of course, would require great number of angels, to which we are told, there are "myriads and myriads, and thousands of thousands" of angels in service to God (Revelation 5:11). When Jesus was arrested, he told Peter to put up his sword, "do you think that I cannot appeal to My Father,

and He will at once put at My disposal more than twelve legions of angels?" (Matthew 26:53). That's seventy-two thousand angels!

There is so much going on in the spiritual world, more than we can ever comprehend, and much of it involving the angels. Speaking of such, Hebrews 1:14 says, "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation?" (That's you and me!)

There is much happening around us in the spiritual realms, and God's angels are in the middle of it all. "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood," Paul wrote, but "against the spiritual forces of wickedness in heavenly places" (Ephesians 6:12). If we could see angels, we might be surprised how often they are around us, answering prayers, fighting off Satan's forces, protecting us, and serving God on our behalf. **MM**

(Dennis serves as preacher for the church of Christ in Tunica, Mississippi. His email: dennis1848@bellsouth.net)



Magnolia Messenger's News

Danny Jackson (MBC Grad) Recently Died

Danny Jackson's (age 67) funeral service was held in Ripley, Mississippi on February 11, 2019. In his younger years, Danny served as preacher for Mississippi churches of Christ in Lexington, Louisville and Thyatira (near Senatobia).



Danny Jackson

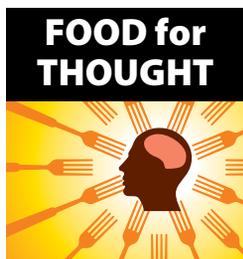
Danny also served on the Parole Board during Mississippi Governor Kirk Fordice's administration. He was a Senate nominee and had retired from the Mississippi Department of Corrections.

Gary Kirkendall had a wonderful message. Craig Shackelford, present preacher from the Thyatria church, did a fine job with the obituary and opening remarks.

"Filling the Church"

It is a peculiar thing that some brethren think they can fill the church with worldliness (worldly things that attract) and cause it to grow spiritually. IT IS NOT SO! Things of the world and of the flesh never arouse any kind of response but a fleshly and worldly response.

Why would anyone think bringing "loaves and fishes" or entertainment would attract the spiritually minded or make anyone more so? The more banqueting and partying and entertainment is brought in, the more it will require, and worldly and fleshly things will only make the church more worldly until it is swamped and spirituality is lost sight of and forgotten. (As seen in a church bulletin)



90th Birthday Surprise Quida McCarter Reeves

Quida McCarter Reeves celebrated her 90th birthday on Saturday February 9, 2019. Her son, Tim McCarter who preaches for the Cleveland church of Christ in Cleveland, MS was there, along with many other people.

Those of us who were blessed in join in the celebration, enjoyed a catfish supper at Catfish Country in Booneville, Mississippi. We pray many more happy birthdays for sister Quida, a great Christian servant!



Quida McCarter Reeves
And her son, Tim McCarter

MESSANGER Contact info:

franksmm@aol.com

662-289-3559 or 662-792-2800

P. O. Box 1578; Kosciusko, MS 39090

Addresses: Changes and/or Additions: glendafranks@yahoo.com

READERS' RESPONSE

Reasons Why We Continue Publishing the Magnolia Messenger

Thanks for the good publication. We still hold in dear memory the visit by Al and June Franks who spent the night with us. In Christ,
(Gene & Wilma Watson, Star City, AR)

We love the new format and the continued scriptural articles. May God continue to bless your work.
(George & Roberta Folk, Crossville, TN)

Really enjoy your paper. New format is great. Always look forward to getting the next copy.
(Herb Smith, Pensacola, FL)

Thank you for the Magnolia Messenger. I hope this helps to keep it going. I read it front and back and enjoy seeing what a great work is in Mississippi... In Christ,
(Frances Shevely)

I truly enjoy the Magazine. It is good to read about old and new friends. Thank you. My prayers are with you. God Bless.
(JoRene Kendrick)

May God continue to bless this Mission Work!
(George E. Johnson, Calhoun, LA)

Thanks for all the Franks for their good works for the Lord. Best regards,
(Jim Presley)

I really enjoy the MM. Reading and answering the Questions. Thanks,
(Linda Sue Kennamore)

Thank you so much for the Magnolia Messenger and all the mission work you do. May God continue to bless you in all that you do to spread the gospel. I always enjoy reading the MM.
(Martha Magee, Greenwood, MS)

We continue to appreciate the publication. We've [received] MM for most of the 40 years.
(Carol Pipes, Clovis, NM)

Would like to see more scripture printed and less on outings and dinners.
(Name withheld by editor who promises to ponder)

We have enjoyed the Magnolia Messenger for almost 40 years. Please keep it going.
(Duke & Donna Loden, Belden, MS)
Thank you for spreading the gospel. Keep up the good work. Sincerely,
(Evon Jarrett)

Thank you for your good work with the Magnolia Messenger. I enjoy each issue.
(Jerrie Barber)

Thanks for the quality (the soundness) of the articles printed in the MM. I like the articles your contributors write. May God continue to bless your work.
(Pierce Flatt, Pike Road, AL)

Deeply appreciate your Kingdom work! God bless!
(Jimmy Moffett)

From Rod About Ray

Brother Al,

My dad, Ray Hyatt, called me and asked about articles he had read [in the Magnolia Messenger] some time back. He now wishes he would have saved. He always shares the paper with others. He thinks they were written by Cecil May. One was on homosexuality and the other on women's work in the church. Can you send him these issues or articles. Thanks. (Rod Hyatt)



Ray Hyatt
(Almost 93)
Still Preaching!

Rod included his dad's address: Ray Hyatt Sr.; P.O. Box 417 DeQuincy, LA 70633 and then added, He, soon to be 93, still preaches from time to time at Boxwood [near Merryville, LA]. Thanks Rod and Ray! (editor)

Notes & Information



Our Next MM RV Rally Lake Tiak-O'Khata (Louisville, MS) April 22 - 25, 2019

The 21st Annual Magnolia Messenger RV Rally will be held, Lord willing, April 22-25, 2019 (Monday through Thursday) at Lake Tiak-O'Khata in Louisville, Mississippi. You are invited to be a part of this exciting and uplifting event.

This beautiful resort in central Mississippi has a nice RV park with full hook-ups, including cable. For those of you who don't have an RV or want to leave your RV at home, you can stay in one of the resort's many cabins or in the beautiful

resort lodge. Lake Tiak-O'Khata is also famous for its award winning restaurant.

We are expecting to fill up the RV Park. If you are thinking you might go, please call the park at 1-888-845-6151 and reserve a RV site, hotel room or a cabin.

For more information you can go to their website at www.ltok.com. We have already reserved some RV sites, some hotel rooms and some cabins. You must call to secure a place.

If you have any questions, please call me at 662-792-2700. (Paul Franks)

Siwell Road Church of Christ Hosts New Year's Singing



We were blessed to be among those who assembled in the meeting house of the Siwell Road church to help kick off the new year of 2019 with an area-wide singing. The gathering took place on Friday evening, January 4.

Great Singing, with many song leaders and many people. Enjoyed fabulous refreshments at the break. Singing also! Fellowship also! Drew Dulaney, a local member of Siwell, provided leadership for the area-wide singing. (PF)

Seeking a Preacher

■ Winnsboro, LA

The Winnsboro Church of Christ, located in Winnsboro, Louisiana, is seeking a preacher. At this time we do not have elders. This congregation of 65-70 is the most loving group of people you will ever meet. If you are interested in more information, please contact: **Buddy Frost • 318-334-0469**

Berean Children's Home Annual Auction • Set for Saturday, April 13

The Berean Children's Home annual fundraising auction will be held on Saturday, April 13, 2019 at 1:00 P.M. They are in need of items to be auctioned off. All donations will be considered tax deductible and tax receipts can be written for donations given. Thank you in advance for your help in making this year's auction a success. If you have any questions, please give the Berean (Brookhaven, MS) office a call at 601-823-5776.



(During a Bible Class on Sunday Morning)

What Some Students Were Doing

"As seen from above"

Bibles and Bible Apps were open!
Students were paying attention.

**LISTENING, READING,
LEARNING, GROWING!**

This is what Bible classes are all about!

Remodeling or Building? National Interior Furnishings, Inc

(A Single Source Provider for Churches)

- Pews • Pew Cushions • Pew Upholstery • Commercial Carpet
- Pew Chairs • Steeples • Stained Glass • Baptisteries
- Furnishings for Classrooms, Nurseries, and Fellowship Halls

Furnished over 100 congregations in 20 states
Representing over 40 quality manufacturers

Contact:

Rick Jones at 1-888-798-6481

churchfurniture@mail.com

P. O. Box 1282

Iuka, Mississippi 38852

How Confident Are You About Salvation?

There is a common conception on the part of some that you can neither know anything for certain nor be sure about anything. The atheist asks, "How can you be certain that God exists? You have neither seen him nor had a face-to-face conversation with him."

How can one be certain of the truthfulness of the claim that Jesus is the Son of God?

After all, we're almost two thousand years removed from the time He walked on this earth. For that matter, how can we be certain that the Bible is a divine revelation from God? There are other religious documents that make a similar claim to be of divine origin.

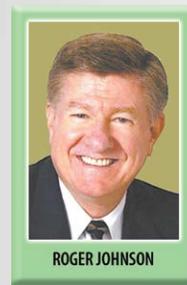
These are great questions and are worthy of serious study, but they are not the focus of this article. We direct our attention to the subject of salvation.

The question under consideration is, "*Can we know we are saved? If so, how?*"

Before we consider the basis for the Christian's assurance of salvation, we need to briefly examine some false standards upon which hope is built. For instance, **assurance is not based on our feelings.** We all know from experience that feelings can be deceptive. In fact, they are as deceptive as the testimony that produces them. A case in point is that of Paul who never violated his conscience (Acts 23:1) when he persecuted the church, but later realized he was mistaken in his zeal. Solomon was right when he wrote by inspiration of God, "There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death." (Prov.

14:12, ESV). **Neither is assurance obtained by a perfect obedience to God's word.** All of us sin in that we transgress the will of God.

In fact, the apostle John wrote, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us... If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us" (1 John 1:8,10). **Assurance cannot be obtained by tipping the scales in our favor by**



ROGER JOHNSON

countering our sins with good works. Salvation is not granted on the basis of meritorious deeds, but depends on the grace of God (Ephesians 2:8-9).

The prophet Isaiah summed it up when he said, "...all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment" (Isaiah 64:6).

If, then, assurance is not based on feelings, perfect obedience, or meritorious deeds, upon what does it depend? Can we have assurance? Paul did. He wrote, "Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness,

which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing" (2 Timothy 4:8). Some may reason that Paul could say that because he was an apostle. Did you notice that Paul said that the assurance he had was also available to all those who love the Lord's appearing? The same God who promised salvation

to Paul; the same Jesus who shed his blood for Paul's redemption; and the same gospel that Paul obeyed to have his sins washed away, is the same God, Christ, and gospel to which Christians have access. We can have the same assurance of salvation that Paul had. When

*We can
have the same
assurance of
salvation that
Paul had.*

we submit in loving obedience to the gospel of Christ (1 Peter 1:22), are baptized into Christ (Galatians 3:27), and continue to walk faithfully before God (1 John 1:7-9), we can depend upon God to save us for He will never break His promise.

To further assure Christians of their salvation, Paul asks five questions in Romans 8 that Satan cannot answer.

- 1** *“If God is for us, who can be against us?”* (vs. 31). God is on our side. Satan is a defeated foe; therefore, whoever (Satan) comes against the Christian is coming against the One who stands for him.
- 2** *“He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?”* (vs. 32). God will not deprive or withhold anything from us that would be necessary to redeem us. He “...desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (1 Timothy 2:4).
- 3** *“Who shall bring any charge against God’s elect?”* (vs. 33). To be sure, Satan will try, but he who is the father of all lies and in whom there is no truth (John 8:44) is not in a position to successfully bring a charge against God’s own. It is God who justifies and because of what He did through His Son, there is no incrimination.
- 4** *“Who is to condemn?”* (vs. 34). Because of His sinless life, the only one qualified to condemn us is the One who died for us and in Him there is no condemnation (Romans 8:1). In fact, “...he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them (Hebrews 7:25).
- 5** *“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?”* (vs. 38). In the verses following this question, Paul affirms there is no power on earth or in the satanic realm that can prevent God from loving us. Neither is there any one in heaven who would want to.

Brethren, if we are trying to live in such a way that pleases God and are genuinely penitent when we stumble and sin, through the grace of God and in keeping with His promise, we have an abundant assurance of our salvation (2 Peter 1:10-11). However, if we have not obeyed the gospel in being baptized for the remission of our sins (Acts 2:38), or have strayed from God after being baptized there is also an assurance, but not of heaven (2 Thessalonians 1:8-9). From this brief examination we have learned that in Christ there is no intimidation, no deprivation, no incrimination, no condemnation, and no separation. Don’t you want that? **MM**

Roger Johnson • 508 W. 6th St.
Tuscumbia, AL 35674 • (706) 718-0526
rlj126@gmail.com

Life’s Two-Minute WARNING

Almost every contest has one. They have something to signify that the end is near. In Nascar, it is the white flag to let the drivers know that there is just one more lap left in the race. In the NBA, it is the clock winding down in the fourth quarter towards zero. In the NFL, it is the referee’s whistle blowing to pause the game for the two-minute warning when there are only two minutes left in the game.

Whether the device is a flag, or a clock, or a whistle being blown, when the contestants realize that there is little time left, the contest often takes on a different dimension. Every move, every play, is critical. The participants know that the outcome may rest on just how the remaining time is utilized.

Life is no different. Since the beginning, God has made it so that life as we know it has only so much time. Solomon made this point with “there is a time to be born and a time to die” (Ecclesiastes 3:2). The writer of Hebrews affirms it with his concise statement, “And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment” (Hebrews 9:27). The writer of the 90th Psalm understood that for any of us, our time is limited here on earth as he concludes



that “The years of our life are seventy, or even by reason of strength eighty” (Psalm 90:10).

If any would doubt this sobering fact of life, I would encourage them to take a stroll through a cemetery. There you will perhaps find those who lived beyond 100 years along with every age in between. It’s the sobering realization that if Christ doesn’t come first, someday, and perhaps without any advanced notice, we will be taking our own place among those graves. If you will allow it, this should serve as our own two-minute warning from God. It will be the wise person who not only accepts this reality but uses it to motivate them to make every day they have left to count.

“Do this, knowing the time, that it is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep; for now salvation is nearer to us than when we first believed. The night is almost gone, and the day is near. Therefore let us lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light (Romans 13:11-12). **MM**

*Written by Larry Macomber,
preacher for the I-20 church in Vicksburg, MS.*

Taken from their church bulletin dated January 2, 2019

Visiting among Churches in north Mississippi



EDDIE LEWIS

By Eddie Lewis, Missionary to North Mississippi, 9423 Laurel Hill, Olive Branch, MS 38654. E-mail: lewis7946@gmail.com

■ **October 7:** I was invited to preach at the Pine Bluff church of Christ near Oxford, MS. Allen Drewrey is the minister there. He and his family were away on fall break. I was happy to substitute for him. The church had just finished a Gospel Meeting and Homecoming. They had 92 in attendance the Sunday before. Their regular attendance is around 44. It's always a joy for me to visit with the church in Pine Bluff. They are very friendly and support several mission works.

In the Bible class I presented a lesson on "The Family of God." It is a good lesson on God as our Father and the blessing we enjoy as God's family. Of course, I cannot leave out the responsibilities we have as family members. I pray it was a lesson that encouraged them.

In the worship our lesson was on "The Spirit of a Servant" based on Matthew 20:17-28. Jesus is calling us to serve one another in love. Jesus gives some strong statements about the importance of us learning to serve. It is a challenging lesson for all of us.

■ **October 21:** The Germantown church of Christ, which is my sponsoring congregation, was celebrating its 70th Homecoming and Anniversary. Mark McInteer from the Hillsboro church in Nashville, TN and CEO at 21st Century Christian, was our guest speaker. He talked to us about "Who Do You Look Like?". It was great to remember so many from the past and celebrate how much has been accomplished for God in this place.

■ **October 28:** I visited with the Church of Christ that meets on Gilmore Street in Senatobia, MS. Michael Cathey is the minister there. He grew up in the congregation. They have about 70 in attendance

and no elders. Michael taught the Bible class. They have been studying Jude. He finished up the study and then gave the class a quiz. They all did good on the



Shirley and Michael Cathy

quiz. I was kind of nervous, but I did ok. Its been a long time since I have taken a test.

In the worship he preached on "Faith and Works" based on James 2:14-26. He did a masterful job of emphasizing that our faith in God is to be an active faith. He gave some great thought on the verses. I enjoyed my visit with the folks there.

■ **November 4:** I was invited to be the guest speaker for "God and Country" Day at the Acton church of Christ in Michie, TN. I appreciate so much the invitation from the elders to come and celebrate this day with them. Shawn Weaver is the



Michael Harvill (YM); James Eley, Nor Hagy, and Joe Story (Elders)

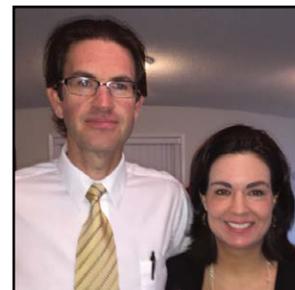
minister there. He was away on vacation. I did get to meet their youth minister, Michael Harvill. They have around 200 in attendance and three elders. They are involved in many great works and have an active youth program. It was a blessing

for me to get to renew friendships from the past and get to know the brethren in Acton.

The theme for the day was "God and Country" and they celebrated the veterans that were present. I talked about some Christian principals our nation is built on. I considered three that I felt were important to our nation and Christians. I talked about: Gratitude, Faith, and Service. In Bible class I mentioned three relationships for which we are to be grateful: The family, friends, and God.

In the worship I talked about "Faith" and how we can develop our faith. In the afternoon service, I talked about "Serving One Another In Love." I pray that the scriptures we looked at were an encouragement to the brethren there. What a blessed day.

■ **November 18:** I was invited to preach at the Oak Grove church of Christ in Harmontown, MS. Stefan Dickerson is the bi-vocational minister there. He and Mary were away and invited me to sub for him. It was a pleasure for



Stefan and Mary Helen Dickerson

me to visit with the folks there. It's been three years since my last visit. They have around 20 in attendance and no elders. I was touched by an announcement by one of the couples of the congregation. They stood before the church and thanked them for their love and support during their time of sickness. They said, "You are truly a family to us." What a wonderful

testimony of love and service by the church to this couple in need.

In Bible class I presented a lesson on the "Nature of the Church." We looked at six characteristics of the church.

In the worship I preached on "Wired for Connection" based on Philippians 1:3-11. Paul talks about the wonderful fellowship that he enjoyed as a Christian.

■ **November 25:** I visited with the Bluff Rd. church of Christ in Arkabutla, MS. They were having a dedication service for their new building. Orlando Davis has been the minister there for 47 years. On this Sunday they had over 200 present to honor Bro. Davis for his many years of service. They had a guest speaker, John Shannon, from the James Rd. church in Memphis, TN. Bro. Davis's sons welcomed



NEW Meeting Place for Bluff Road Church of Christ



Orlando Davis & John Shannon

the crowd and led the singing. It was a very spirited time of singing and Bro. Shannon presented a wonderful lesson on "God Had A Temple For His People; God Has A People As His Temple." It was one of the old time sheet sermons. I haven't seen one of them in a long time, but Bro. Shannon made it come alive. It was an honor for me to meet Bro. Davis and Bro. Shannon. They are both great soldiers of the cross. One man came forward to be baptized. He was the third baptism in two weeks at the church.

In the Bible class one of the members, Lee Holland, led the class in a time of study of Genesis 2. It was a good lesson

and very challenging to all those present.

■ **December 2:** I visited with the Oxford church of Christ. Les Ferguson, Jr. is the new minister there. The church has six elders and around 280 in attendance. They



Les Ferguson Jr. & Eric Dahl (elder)

have an active campus ministry at the University of Mississippi and a youth program. They have four ministers and Les has been with them for a few months. I appreciate the many ministries of the congregation and the warm welcome I received from the congregation. It was good to see and hear Les speak. It was good to see some old friends.

I got to attend the Home Builders class. I know I'm a little old for that class, but I enjoyed the discussion and the study of Ephesians 2:8-10. Eric Dahl, one of the elders, taught the class. He did a great job of leading the discussion and encouraging all of us in our faith in God.

Les was the speaker for the worship service. He did a wonderful job and led us in a study of Luke 13:1-5. He entitled his lesson, "Do You Hear What I Hear." It was a wonderful lesson on how to fix the brokenness of our world. We must understand that repentance begins with me. Holding a grudge is something people do because they are more comfortable holding the grudge than to forgive. It was a great lesson. I enjoyed my visit and eating a meal together after services.

■ **December 9:** I visited with the Greenwood church of Christ. Mark Shiers has served as their minister for seven years. They have four elders and around 125 in attendance. They have a Hispanic ministry and Alan Zuniga, one of their deacons, works with that ministry. They help



Mark Shiers & Alan Zuniga

with several mission works and have an active prison ministry. I enjoyed meeting Mark and hearing him preach. Of course, since I lived in the MS Delta for 11 years, I knew several of the elders and members. It was good to visit with them and renew old acquaintances.

One of the elders, Doug Segars, taught the auditorium Bible class. His lesson was from 1 Peter 1:17-25. He asked several good questions and got lots of good discussion as he led us through these verses. He pointed out that we are redeemed by the blood of Christ. He asked how we will be judged. He emphasized that we are to love each other. It was a good lesson.

In the worship Mark was in a series on Connections. The week before he talked about our "Connection to God's Strength" based on Psalms 21. He said we can see God working in our lives. I agree with that.

This Sunday his lesson was on "Connection to Christ" based on 2 Timothy 1:8-13. Mark said that Paul had a connection to Christ that was life changing. He talked about us being saved by grace, but that grace requires a response. Also, he said that because of our connection to Christ we have a connection to each other. We must love each other deeply. It



Elders: Doug Segars, David Franklin, Bill Daves, and Gene Barrett

was a great lesson and I enjoyed hearing Mark speak.

After services the congregation has a weekly fellowship meal for all who want to stay and eat. I enjoyed eating and the fellowship.

■ **December 16:** I was invited to speak at the Tiplersville church of Christ. Their regular minister, Conner Patterson, was out of town for a wedding. I was happy to sub for him. The church has about 41 in attendance and two elders. It is always good to see old friends. I enjoyed visiting

with everyone and eating lunch with one of the elders.

In Bible class I taught a lesson on “The Nature Of The Church.” We considered six characteristics of the purpose and function of the church.

In the morning worship I preached on “One Thing I Do” based on Paul’s statement in Philippians 3:13-15. Paul’s goal was to go home to heaven. He challenged the Philippians to have the same goal.

On Sunday night I preached on “The Supremacy Of Christ” based on Colossians 1:13-20. Paul tries to prove the preeminence of Christ with four arguments: Christ is the Savior, Creator, Head of the Church and Beloved Son. I pray each lesson was an encouragement to all present.



Conner Patterson

■ **December 30:** I was invited to preach for the Ripley church of Christ in Ripley, MS. Josh McCrary, their minister, was out of town. Cody Hardin is the youth minister. Both were gone to EYC in Huntsville, AL. I’m always happy to fill in when needed. The Ripley church is a wonderful congregation. They have around 300 in attendance and four elders. They support many mission works and are very active in their community.

In the Bible class I led the class in a study of the “Nature Of Church.” We talked about six characteristics as to the purpose

and function of the church.

In the morning worship I preached on “The Supremacy of Christ” based on Colossians 1:13-23. Paul defends the preeminence of Christ with four arguments.

In the evening service I preached on the “Focused Mind” based on Philippians 1:12-26. Paul faces his chains, critics, and crisis with a mind focused on Christ and his mission. As a result he had great joy.



Josh McCrary and Cody Hardin

Antioch: Three Sundays I preached at the Antioch church of Christ in Independence, MS. It is always good to visit with the brethren there. One Sunday I was there for the monthly fellowship meal. Lots of good cooks there. They have around 32 in attendance and no elders.

In Bible class I’ve been teaching a series on “Images of the Church.” We’ve talked about the church as the Kingdom of God and the Nature of the Church.

In worship I’ve been preaching a series from 2 Corinthians. I’ve talked about “Motives for Ministry” based on 2 Corinthians 5:9-21, “Blizzard of Troubles” based on 6:1-10, and “The Supremacy of Christ” based on Colossians 1: 13-23. **MM**

Magnolia Bible Institute

Classes to be Offered

■ Summer Session

May 9 through August 10, 2019

(Thursday Evenings and Saturdays)

- (1) OT Survey**
- (2) Systematic Theology**
- (3) Paul’s Epistles, 1**

■ Fall Session

(Beginning September 12, 2019)

- (1) History of Israel, 1**
- (2) Paul’s Epistles, 2**
- (3) Romans**

For more information or to enroll, please contact:

Les Ferguson, Sr., Director
601-562-4226 (voice/text)

lfergusonmm@hotmail.com

Will Anderson, Academic Dean
662-832-0457 (voice/text)

willmanderson@yahoo.com

Reach your community with

3 great issues!

We have found that churches who reach the same people more often have the most responses. Therefore, we will address three evangelistic topics for three consecutive months. If you send all three, you likely will receive more responses than you ever have. If you are not reaching your neighbors with *House to House* call or email us today to find out how.

TOPICS:

- What Does “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and You Will Be Saved” Mean? (July)
- Has Man Outgrown the Gospel? (August)
- I Quit Church after a Bad Experience. Should I Go Back? (September)

HTH@HOUSETOHOUSE.COM | 1.877.338.3397

MAGNOLIA Messenger

IN MEMORY OF

KENNY COLEMAN

By: Mary Freeman
(Senatobia, MS)

IDES & MAEY GLENN RUTHERFORD

By: Shirley Spain
(Jasper, AL)

LOUIS STRICKLAND

By: Bill & Helen Lambert
(Searcy, AR)

HAROLD HUNTER LONG

By: Mrs. Lucy Long
(Old Hickory, TN)

JUANITA FULGHAM

VELMA B. DELANCEY
MADELINE F. BROADWAY
SHIRLEY SHIVE
By: Charles E. Fulgham
(Yazoo City, MS)

BILLY SMITH

By: Lou Smith
(Arlington, TN)

AUNT ODELL GURGANUS WOLFE

By: Mr. Gary Wolfe
(Lillian, AL)

SHIRLEY RAY

SHIRLEY COTTING

By: Betty Butler
(Star, MS)

CARL SEY

By: Barbara & Gene Persinger
(DeRidder, LA)

MRS. SHIRLEY J. RAY

MR. & MRS. WILEY C. EDWARDS
CLAUDE & SHERRIE RAY

By: Bernice Richardson
(West Point, MS)

EDMOND H. PACE

By: Ralph & Virginia Pace
(Winona, MS)

ALLEN GRAY

By: Larry & Brenda Summers
(Yazoo City, MS)

JOYCE GATEWOOD

By: Carolyn Faye Stanford
(Byhalia, MS)

BETTY MARSHALL

By: Mary Brannan
(Bay Minette, AL)

EVIE G. SMITH

By: Rhenda Miltner
(Coldwater, MS)

W. D. SMITH

JAMES LEFAN
By: Frances Smith
(Montgomery, TX)

T. J. PEDIGO

By: Bobbie Pedigo
(Prattville, AL)

SYBIL FAY WARD

By: Reid & Frieda Thompson
(DeRidder, LA)

DAVID JOHNSON

By: Charles & Mary Johnson
(Hattiesburg, MS)

KENNY COLEMAN

ROBERT MARTIN TOOLEY
NORA NELSON COLEMAN
By: Tony & Barbara Coleman
(Oxford, MS)

LYNN LONG

By: Pierce Flatt
(Pike Road, AL)

CAROL HATFIELD

By: Tony & Barbara Coleman
(Oxford, MS)

VELMA DELANCEY

ROBERT BLACKWELDER

JUANITA FULGHAM

ALLEN GRAY

By: Wilburn DeLancey
(Delhi, LA)

(Correction from last issue)

WANDA CHAUNCY

By: Wilburn DeLancey
(Delhi, LA)

JAY HENLEY

By: John & Beth Pigg
(Ridgeland, MS)

IN HONOR OF

OTIS BOWMAN

By: Helen Nevels
(Delhi, LA)

RAY & SHIRLEY COLEMAN

JOHN & SANDRA COLEMAN

TONY & BARBARA COLEMAN

SID & VICKIE COLEMAN

By: Mary Freeman
(Senatobia, MS)

BONNIE STRICKLAND

By: Bill & Helen Lambert
(Searcy, AR)

WILBURN, SUSAN AND SANDRA

DELANCEY

JOEL & JEANETTE COLLINS

RAY & DONNA FRANKS

By: Charles E. Fulgham
(Yazoo City, MS)

Celebrates 50th Anniversary

DIANA Singing

June 14-15, 2019

Promoting Great Gospel Singing Since 1969!

The Diana singing is, as you might know/guess, in Diana, Tennessee. It is a twice-a-year phenomenon. (Every second full weekend in June and September). It was begun 50 years ago, in 1969, by Tom Holland and William Sanders. The Diana singing is a "Bucket Event" that you would do well to add to your list of things to do before going to your "long home." After going once, you will probably want to go back again.

The dates for this year's singing, attracting thousands, are June 14, 15 and September 13, 14, 2019. There is no charge to attend.

Food is available on the grounds and is reasonably priced. Motels are not too far away. A RV park is available with no charge for parking. You can go to www.dianasinging.com and sign up for the Diana newsletter. The last time we went we had so much fun -- we had a "little taste of heaven." We are planning to go again and are looking forward, Lord willing, to seeing you at Diana, for "The Singing!"



Tom Holland
(One of the founders and popular leader for half of a century)



A sample of the crowd from the past. Join thousands attending this year!

Skyline Church (Near Tupelo)

Strengthens Leadership By Installing Deacons

In a continuing effort to be like the first century church, the Skyline church has installed three men as deacons. They were selected from among the male members to serve as special representatives of the congregation that meets on old Highway 78, a few miles east of Tupelo, Mississippi.

The installation of deacons followed not long after the earlier appointment of Mike Willis and Norman Maranto as elders (shepherds) over the flock of about 80 souls. We commend our sister congregation for their desire and their efforts to become fully organized as a New Testament church in Century 21.

EDITOR'S NOTE: We apologize for the unintentional delay in running this news report about leadership in the Skyline church. It has been several months since the appointment of deacons took place. We regret that, somehow, even though we had the information in hand, we overlooked publishing this good news in our last issue of the MM. Sorry! (alf)



Charles Goff



John Goff



Jake Johns

Memories from long ago

By Al Franks

The year was 1959. The place was Yazoo City, Mississippi. My June and I, along with our first born son (Paul), were enjoying our first year serving as the preacher's family for the Yazoo City church of Christ. We were very thankful to be part of a friendly city of several thousand and to work with a loving congregation of about 80 precious souls. The challenging work was exciting. Everything seemed to be going just great; that is, up until that unforgettable Tuesday night.

Yes, it happened on a Tuesday night at about 9:30 P.M. Shortly after going to bed, a very strange feeling overwhelmed my entire being. It seemed that my body was about to explode. I began to shake uncontrollably all over. I had feelings never felt before. Pains were especially felt in my chest. I was scared. Although, I was in my early twenties, I thought it was all over; that my earthly life was about to end and that I would never see another sunrise.

I don't remember all of the details; however, my loving and yet very nervous wife, somehow, made arrangements for me to go to the local hospital where I received immediate attention. A physical examination, accompanied with various tests, was quickly made. The doctor was encouraging. He differed with me, saying he thought I would make it through the night.

After what seemed a long time, I began to feel some better. The shaking stopped, almost as suddenly as it had begun. The pain decreased. But, I was told that I would need to stay in the hospital for further tests. (I had never spent a night as a patient in a hospital; not even when I was born!) However, realizing I was no longer in control; that someone else was telling me what to do, I had no choice but

to listen and obey "doctor's orders."

After being placed in a "ward" with other patients, my June was taken to the home of the Lawsons to spend the night. But, there I was. In a hospital. In a strange room with three others. I had never felt so alone. Then there were those constant nagging thoughts about "Never seeing another sunrise" and not seeing my son grow up. They just wouldn't go away. My faith was weak. Yet, I prayed. Oh, how earnestly I prayed.

Thankfully, by the grace of the Good Lord, the sun did rise the following morning and I saw it! After a few hours of sleep, I felt much better. I was ready to go home. I just needed to call my wife and ask her to pick me up. However, the doctor (I forgot his name) said, "No. You will need to stay today and tonight. We need to find out what is wrong." So, twenty-four long hours later, I was finally released from jail (hospital) with an official diagnosis, I had "Asian Flu", so the doctor said.

The doctor, although sincere, was mistaken. (A lot of folks were sick with Asian Flu in those days.) After six weeks of physical and psychological anguish, it finally became apparent that I was suffering with mental exhaustion; I had come to experience first hand what it is like to have a "nervous breakdown." It affected my mind. For the next five weeks, every Tuesday night, at about the same time, I had a repeat "spell", very similar to the first one.

Over the course of a few months, different treatments were suggested and various "remedies" were tried. Some suggestions and/or prescriptions were of value. But, as I continued to fight with my nerves and find a permanent solution to my ongoing and nagging problem, something significant came to my attention.

I recall one day sitting in my little



office at the church building on Jackson Avenue at Fifteenth Street and thinking about my problem. I had begun to realize that I was apparently taking life far too seriously and that it was adversely affecting my health. It was then, on that day in 1959, when a simple answer/solution came to my attention. The answer was in the form of a short slogan that I do not recall ever having heard before. It was simple and held out great promise. There were only five words to remember: "Let go and let God!"

I wrote out the simple words of advice, printed them on a small piece of paper and attached the "slogan" to the top of my desk so I could see it every time I sat down. I also remember thinking that the "profound" slogan was probably original with me; that no one else had ever thought about reducing such a meaningful

suggestion to such a simple statement. Of course, as I look back over these past sixty years, I realize how *wrong I was*. No doubt, the little statement, the slogan, has been repeated over and over in every generation through many centuries. “Nothing original.” I was reminded of this when I recently saw the slogan on a church sign (pictured in this article).

Though the simple words are not original with me, nor new to this generation, the advice, reduced to a short slogan of just five words, is a powerful application of inspired Scripture. Bible students know that God’s word repeatedly teaches that we should “*Let go*” and “*Let God*.”

Jesus, in His great “Sermon on the Mount,” asked his disciples who were anxious about their physical needs, to “*Behold the fowls of the air*” and “*Consider the lilies of the field*.” He called upon them (us) to “*Be not anxious...* and to remember, “*you have a heavenly Father*.” (Matt. 6:24-34)

The apostle Paul admonished Christians at Philippi to “*Be careful [anxious] for nothing, but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God*.” The admonition for each is: “Don’t worry about anything; pray about everything.” (Phil. 4:6)

The apostle Peter commanded “*Casting all your care [anxiety] upon him; for he careth for you*.” (I Peter 5:7)

For the past sixty years, the simple and scriptural idea of “*Letting go and letting God*” has been a significant influence in my life. However, I must confess: There have been times, with weakened faith, I have failed to really turn loose from self and truly depend upon God. I am thankful to say, however, that when I have and when I do, “**Let go and let God**” I enjoy a “*peace that passeth all understanding*” which serves to “guard/keep” my life.

You and I have every reason to believe that our heavenly Father will provide, will take care of all our needs and will work all things together for good, not only for you and me, but for all who love the Lord. Accept the challenge: “*Let go and let God*.”

A. L. Franks; P. O. Box 1578; Kosciusko, MS 39090;
franksmm@aol.com; 601-668-3344

Differing Paths

Caution! - Beware! - Warning!

When traveling through the Appalachians, I have noted the markers indicating the Eastern Continental Divide. This line denotes the watershed between streams that feed into the Atlantic Ocean and those that feed into the Gulf of Mexico. Two drops of rain, falling only inches apart on the ground, will end up separated by hundreds of miles before they reach the end of their journeys.

As we consider, personally, the choices we make day by day, we should recall the words of our Lord, “One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much.” (Luke 16:10) The small things in our lives can well lead to big changes, either for good or for evil. This principle extends to congregations, as well.

Frequently, an emphasis on doctrinal exactness is greeted with a roll of the eyes. Why should we, after all, be concerned over “small departures” here and there? Isn’t it just “nit-picking” to question everything that doesn’t measure up to the truths we understand from Scripture?

We should be concerned about apostasy, even in the smallest measure, because it is a step down a path which will end in destruction. Every heresy that has divided the church began with a small departure from the truth, which lead to greater and greater departures over time.

Our fellowship must stand firm on the inerrancy of Scripture, the total truth and authority of God’s word. We must stand firm in attempting to understand and follow

the pattern of faith and practice outlined in the Bible. Most centrally, we must stand firm in teaching the exclusive truth of God’s way of salvation through Jesus Christ. Even the slightest deviation in our commitment to these basic truths will plunge the church quickly into all manner of false teaching.

When Christian teachers and preachers depart from a complete confidence in Scripture, they stand in danger of losing their faith altogether. When congregations begin introducing unauthorized elements into the worship and work of the church, there is no end to the changes which will occur. When the church begins fellowshipping outsiders as if they were members of the Lord’s church, soon the very

???

Why should we, after all, be concerned over “small departures” here and there? Isn’t it just “nit-picking” to question everything that doesn’t measure up to the truths we understand from Scripture?

heart of the gospel is laid aside. Constant vigilance is needed to keep the Lord’s church true to the Lord’s way.

(NOTE: I regret that I have misplaced the author’s name who wrote this excellent, thought-provoking article. Editor)

These Sent In Answers to QB, Last Issue

- | | | | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Earline Boyd | 71. Dale Housh | 141. Lisa Dearman | 211. Faye Stanford | 281. John Hazel |
| 2. Michael Coleman | 72. Steve Moore | 142. Carolyn Miller | 212. Doyce Britt | 282. Larry Shoemaker |
| 3. Bertha Rockingham | 73. Carolyn Jackson | 143. Mildred Carroll | 213. Barbara Beard | 283. Barbara Loden |
| 4. Loretha Widger | 74. LaVerne Corley Becker | 144. Wm & Atean Snow | 214. Barbara Beard | 284. Bonnie Howell |
| 5. Natalie Stewart | 75. Brenda Green | 145. Frederick Alan Jones | 215. Steve Johnson | 285. Mark Grigsby |
| 6. John Comer | 76. Linda Gentry | 146. Gary Willis | 216. Betty & Arvel Miles | 286. Nikeda Jeffrey |
| 7. Gwendolyn Gray Bryant | 77. George Lowrey | 147. Wanda Cochran | 217. Shellie Hancock | 287. Ginny Luther |
| 8. Patricia & James Thornton | 78. Mark & Ann Moore | 148. Perkins Cochran | 218. Pearlie Hurst | 288. Shelia Hall |
| 9. Bonnie Glass | 79. Gary Wolfe | 149. Mary Turner | 219. Ann Hulsey | 289. Artis Hinton |
| 10. Bonnie Lipsey | 80. Lee Wolfe | 150. Mary Lewis | 220. Priscilla Smith | 290. Rocky Dial |
| 11. Vera Spencer | 81. Lois Nielson | 151. Michael Barnes | 221. Anne Shelton | 291. Princess Watson |
| 12. Kay Shiers | 82. Bea Hunt | 152. Diane Dunaway | 222. Marvin England | 292. Sandy Dean |
| 13. Ann Cockroft | 83. Annie Greer | 153. Joseph Bolden | 223. Roger King | 293. Greg Ward |
| 14. Annie Mae Pipkin | 84. Betty Jackson | 154. Irene Wright | 224. Lasheka Williams | 294. Patricia & James Thornton |
| 15. Stan Neuenschwander | 85. Melinda Ann Hawkins | 155. Edward Yancey | 225. Shirley Carroll | 295. Linda Sue Kennamore |
| 16. Bobbie Loggins | 86. Stacey Mac Hawkins | 156. Daniel Carter | 226. Patricia Glover | 296. Doyle Warner |
| 17. Bobbie Sindle | 87. Gregory Mac Hawkins | 157. Admiral & Ruth Tidwell | 227. Don Lee | 297. Blaise Fernandez |
| 18. Emily Overton | 88. Charlotte Langley | 158. Lynell Garlington | 228. Sherry Johnson | 298. Franks Wining, Jr. |
| 19. Roy Gambrell | 89. Rosie Shepherd | 159. Charles Beal | 229. Ira & Florine Riley | 299. LaRane Dillinger |
| 20. Ima Jean Fogus | 90. Brenda McDougal | 160. Angela Watson | 230. Robert Phillips | 300. Jimmy Dillinger |
| 21. Sylvester & Linda Burton | 91. M/M Arthur Burnett | 161. John Ray | 231. Larry Melton | 301. Sue Glenn |
| 22. Nell Rigby | 92. Rick & Betty Bishop | 162. Charlotte Vandiver | 232. Barbara White | 302. Shelia Ganier Williams |
| 23. Mary Adams | 93. Jo Ann Richardson | 163. Wanda Orman | 233. Hedy Lewis | 303. Vickie Comer |
| 24. Carolyn Stanford | 94. Jerry & Jean Lewis | 164. Phillip Bradley | 234. Scott Balentine | 304. Betty Harris |
| 25. Pauline Jones | 95. Kittie Edwards | 165. Earlean Williams | 235. Willa Fox | 305. Carolyn Harvill |
| 26. Sherian Martin | 96. Velma Isom | 166. Lyman & Betty York | 236. Joe Holmes | 306. Kimberley Easterling |
| 27. Mary Lois Moore | 97. Betty Standard | 167. Clyde Ray Branford, Jr. | 237. Carol Cooper | 307. Joe Tackett, Jr. |
| 28. Pat Pritchard | 98. Madonna Langford | 168. Glenda Jefcoat | 238. Janice Galloway | 308. Natelle Waugh |
| 29. Verna Jones | 99. Ava Jacobs | 169. Thomas Forrest, Sr. | 239. Linda Keirn | 309. Ruby King |
| 30. Inez & Laura Brannon | 100. Irene Rogers | 170. Christine Holliday | 240. Doris Darnell | 310. Lisa Frazer |
| 31. Herschel Ford | 101. Marilyn Howell | 171. Betty Skinner | 241. Billy Alford | 311. Gayla Lang |
| 32. Victor Boone | 102. Carrie McGrone | 172. Sue Fisher | 242. Maggie Edmonds | 312. Gwendolyn Bryant |
| 33. Charlane Stanfield | 103. Eddie & Lucille Clark | 173. Dee Kepler | 243. Tommy Muirhead | 313. William Free |
| 34. Ann Kimble | 104. Connie Fountain | 174. Brenda Collums | 244. Nancy Floyd | 314. John Brooks |
| 35. Dean & Chris Baumgartner | 105. Alice Humphries | 175. Gloria Wilborn | 245. Garry Gooch | 315. Gloria Houck |
| 36. Judy Willis | 106. Linda Cook | 176. Ashley Figueroa | 246. Sharon Praytor | 316. Elle Darnell |
| 37. Eva Almon | 107. Elsie Brock | 177. Ann Embrey | 247. Judy VonDollen | 317. Wanda Yancey |
| 38. Jim & Francis King | 108. Rachel Pruitt | 178. Mary Brannan | 248. Sherry Gordon | 318. Carolyn Perry |
| 39. Patsy Howard | 109. Ken Harris | 179. Chris Townley | 249. Joe Arnold | 319. Lisa Dettor |
| 40. Ray Parham | 110. Evonne Stewart | 180. Ann Marie Baker | 250. James Coleman | 320. Bernita Booker |
| 41. Nell Millsaps | 111. Doris Townsend Britt | 181. Pierce Nell Flatt | 251. Sherron Dixon | 321. Helen Downs |
| 42. Beverly Miles | 112. Brenda Taylor | 182. Cheryl Holeman | 252. Elizabeth Todd | 322. M/M Paul Bryson |
| 43. June Faulkner | 113. Joyce King | 183. Ann Holeman | 253. Elizabeth Todd | 323. Peggy Hartman |
| 44. Dorothy Brunson | 114. Mable Boone | 184. Ruby Wright | 254. Velva Dykes | 324. Geraldine Wilbanks |
| 45. Amy Hutson | 115. Mary Mann | 185. Billye Wiygul | 255. Evelyn Laney | 325. Lena Mae Barber |
| 46. Melba Ogg | 116. Bobby Brown | 186. Sue Mason | 256. Foy Cladien Smith | 326. Althea House |
| 47. Coy Daily | 117. Jeremiah & Shelia Woodard | 187. Missy Ivey | 257. Lynn Grisham | 327. Paul Briley |
| 48. Brailey Bryan | 118. Jeremiah Woodard, Jr. | 188. Carolyn Ware | 258. Sandra Grisham | 328. Carolyn Garrett |
| 49. Mary King | 119. Benrus & Nicole Womack | 189. Brenda Burlison | 259. Regan Hall | 329. Natalie Stewart |
| 50. Joyce Talbert | 120. Ma'Nia & Bralan Womack | 190. Cheri Moore | 260. Michael Harvill | 330. Eddie Vermillion |
| 51. Donna Gulley | 121. Bonnie Skates | 191. Juanita Brown | 261. Dorothy Mallett | 331. Jim Vermillion |
| 52. Billy Willingham | 122. Jim & Judy Hill | 192. Steve & Jo Ann Gooch | 262. Claude Edwards | 332. Evelyn Curtis |
| 53. Peggy Wroten | 123. Cheri Nicole Smith | 193. Marie Lively | 263. Gail Winter | 333. Vera Winfrey |
| 54. Wilda Pounds | 124. Abra Hassell | 194. Bobby Lively | 264. Gerald Worthey | 334. Steve Galberth |
| 55. Julius Lee Wales | 125. Alisa Faye McCullar | 195. Janice Griffin | 265. Ruby Worthey | 335. Shelia Jackson Grant |
| 56. Carron Vanderford | 126. Sarah Childers | 196. Fran Williford | 266. Jessie Allen | 336. Cathey Roberson |
| 57. Bettye McCool | 127. Jacquelyn Caldwell | 197. Betty Spears | 267. Clara Allen | 337. Jenny Thompson |
| 58. Janie Green | 128. Fannie Johnson | 198. Della Rhodes | 268. Roscoe Slate | 338. Quincy Allen |
| 59. Glen Skelton | 129. James Watson | 199. Ellen Welsh | 269. Ella Gentry | 339. Arva Fisher |
| 60. Charlene Jent | 130. Bill Brown | 200. Nadine Patton | 270. Shirley Richardson | 340. Brenda Harvill |
| 61. Mary Dyer | 131. Tishia L. Williams | 201. Emile & Peggy Rollins | 271. Kavan Young | 341. Dorothy Franks |
| 62. Herbert Trulove | 132. Carole Shelby | 202. Mable Lean Hodges | 272. Bill Moore | 342. Jordan Nicole Jeans |
| 63. Ann Sims | 133. Frances Smith | 203. Mary Robinson | 273. Mary Patrick | 343. Madison Jeans |
| 64. Faye Stamps | 134. Sharon Dantzler | 204. Wanda Robinson | 274. Shirley Bostick | 344. Wes & Rhoda Jeans |
| 65. Dennis Smith | 135. June Kuykendall | 205. Jerry Fleming | 275. Tommy Hicks | 345. Earl Franks |
| 66. Mattie Ann Owens | 136. Bobby Garrett | 206. Juanita Slaughter | 276. William Pyror | 346. Tomas Hare |
| 67. Foster Owens | 137. Terry Miltner | 207. Jimmy Black | 277. Mark Williams | |
| 68. Sandra Corn | 138. Rhenda Miltner | 208. Pat Shadle | 278. Charles Coffey | |
| 69. Jeff Ennies | 139. Neil Marshall | 209. Fern Land | 279. John Gates | |
| 70. Dorothy Winslett | 140. Sarah Dantzler | 210. Charlotte Ritter | 280. Stephanie Wilson | |

Last Issue (Winter)

Answers to “The Question Box” “The Birth of Jesus” (Luke 2. KJV)

True or False

- (False) 1. Joseph and Mary were at home in Bethlehem when Jesus was born.
- (False) 2. At the time of Jesus' birth, Augustus was governor of Syria.
- (True) 3. Joseph was a descendant of King David.
- (True) 4. Jesus and David were both born in the city of Bethlehem.
- (False) 5. The Bible clearly states that Jesus was born in a stable.
- (True) 6. One angel announced the birth of Jesus to the wise men.
- (False) 8. Mary and Joseph decided, on their own, to name their son “Jesus.”
- (True) 9. Moses' law required an animal sacrifice at the time of the first born.
- (False) 10. At the age of 84, Simeon said he was ready to die.
- (True) 11. Anna served God in the temple with fastings and prayers.
- (False) 12. Jesus' parents traveled annually to Galilee for the Passover.
- (True) 13. Jesus, at the age of 12, amazed the educators of His time.
- (True) 14. Jesus knew from an early age that Joseph was not his real father.

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------|
| 1. Held Jesus in his arms | (5) Augustus |
| 2. A Governor | (2) Cyrenius |
| 3. City in Galilee | (3) Nazareth |
| 4. The name given by angel | (6) Bethlehem |
| 5. A Caesar | (9) Jerusalem |
| 6. “City of David” | (11) Mary |
| 7. An old prophetess | (4) “Jesus” |
| 8. Saw/heard angels sing | (8) Shepherds |
| 9. Home of the temple | (12) An angel |
| 10. Annual Jewish feast | (1) Simeon |
| 11. Visited by Gabriel | (7) Anna |
| 12. Announced birth of Jesus | (10) Passover |

Fill in the Blanks

(Supply the missing words in each of the following scriptural quotations taken from Luke chapter two)

1. “...Fear **NOT**: for, behold, I bring you **GOOD** tidings of **GREAT** joy, which shall be to all **PEOPLE**. For unto **YOU** is **BORN** this **DAY** in the **CITY** of **DAVID** a **SAVIOUR**, which is **CHRIST** the **LORD**.” (Luke 2:10,11)
2. “**GLORY** to God in the **HIGHEST**, and on earth **PEACE** and **GOOD** will toward **MEN**.” (2:14)
3. “But **MARY** kept **ALL** these **THINGS** and **PONDERED** them in her **HEART**.” (2:19)
4. “And the **CHILD** grew, and **WAXED** strong in **SPIRIT**, filled with **WISDOM**: and the **GRACE** of God was **UPON** him.” (2:40)
5. “And **HE** said unto **THEM**, ‘How is it that ye **SOUGHT** me? wist ye **NOT** that **I MUST** be about my **FATHER’S** business?’” (2:49)
6. “And **JESUS** increased in **WISDOM** and **STATURE**, and in **FAVOR** with **GOD** and **MAN**.” (2:52)

- 347. Missy Blackmon & David
- 348. Keitha Hare
- 349. Jane Walker
- 350. Kenneth Harmon
- 351. Nettie Doss
- 352. Charles McClain
- 353. James Hurlbut
- 354. Esther Hall
- 355. Elsie Moore
- 356. Arlee & Susie Jordan
- 357. Rhea Forum
- 358. James Bricker
- 359. Sue Hamrick
- 360. Michele M Elliott
- 361. Alice Nix
- 362. Don Nix
- 363. Michael Euer
- 364. Dorsey & Margie Burton
- 365. Trayton Hughes
- 366. Mary Fowler
- 367. Tori Brown
- 368. Carson Moss
- 369. Margie Burton
- 370. Karen Williams
- 371. Mark Hayden
- 372. Leora White
- 373. Joycelyn Thornton
- 374. Seth Burnett
- 375. Caiden Holliday, Jr.
- 376. Jamia Brandon
- 377. Karmen Paine
- 378. Keneley Wofford
- 379. Kayia Paine
- 380. Jada Burnett
- 381. Alex Williams
- 382. Jaden Rodgers
- 383. Braxton Williams
- 385. Rex Ann Roderick
- 386. Peggy Havard
- 387. Evelyn Doss
- 388. Lillie Williams
- 389. David Everett
- 390. Frankie Moore
- 391. Sherry Townsend
- 392. Dillie Pear Horton
- 393. Charles Goff
- 394. Taylor Murphy
- 395. Brooke Murphy
- 396. Rileigh Hammons
- 397. Barry Cole
- 398. Anna Brown
- 399. Chloe Latham
- 400. Sidney Clemmer
- 401. Doris Fletcher
- 402. Herb Smith
- 403. Martin Torres
- 404. Linda Carey
- 405. Noah Crider
- 406. Jim Ridenour
- 407. Sharon Huckaba
- 408. Valerie Sykes
- 409. Mary Salinas
- 410. Lucille Anders
- 411. Mary Jane Hollis
- 412. Katheryn Lee
- 413. Phyllis Spiers
- 414. Darryl James Sterling
- 415. Joy Long
- 416. Nellie Lester
- 417. Maxine Lucas
- 418. Pamela Clark
- 419. Bonnie Dixon
- 420. Joseph Shumpert
- 421. Bonnie Glass
- 422. Charlotte Rauchle
- 423. Ted Russell
- 424. Sarah Hill
- 425. Jewell Trice
- 426. Betty Chatman
- 427. Manuel & Al Cotton
- 428. Michelle Simpson
- 429. Lou Smith
- 430. Rosie Lee Odoms
- 431. Bertha Rockingham
- 432. Brenda McCullum
- 433. Ann Whetstone
- 434. Betty Shackelford
- 435. Carolyn Pitts
- 436. Loretha Widger
- 437. Tina Ann Wells
- 438. Jean Coplan
- 439. Millie Goode
- 440. Earline Boyd
- 441. Catherine Allen
- 442. Minnie Garner

NEXT ISSUE.

Your *Name*?
Answers received after March 7 will be recognized in our next issue, God willing.

New Bible Winner
Dillie Pear Horton
(West, MS)

Congratulations

Thank you for answering
“The Question Box” (Page 32)





South Huntington Street
Church of Christ
P. O. Box 1578
Kosciusko, Mississippi 39090

Non Profit Org.
U. S. Postage
PAID
Permit #3592
Atlanta, GA

THE QUESTION BOX • “The Teachings of Jesus”

Officers were sent to arrest Jesus. When they returned without him, the Pharisees asked, “Why have you not brought him?” Their simple answer, “Never man spake like this man” (John 7:45,46). When Jesus completed the greatest of all sermons (“Sermon on the Mount”), his hearers were “astonished at his teaching” (Matt. 7:28,29). Nicodemus, having observed the miracles of Jesus, said, “Rabbi, we know you are a teacher come from God...” (John 3:2).

Although far removed from the first century, when we seriously study His teachings, as recorded in the New Testament, we find ourselves astonished and ready to agree with those of the first century, “Never man spake like this man” and that Jesus is, indeed, “a teacher come from God.”

This issue of the “Question Box” asks you to prayerfully study Luke chapter six, which contains a small sample of Jesus’ teachings. In answering each section of the “QB” you will find it helpful to use the King James Version (due to wording and spelling). By sending in your answers, you will encourage others (see page 31) and you may be our next Bible winner. Thank you. (ALF)

NOTE: (All answers in this study may be found in Luke 6)

Fill in the Missing Words

1. “_____ ye in that _____, and _____ for _____: for behold, your _____ is _____ in _____: for in _____ manner did their _____ unto the _____.” (Verse: _____)

2. “And as ye _____ that _____ should _____ unto _____, do ye _____ to _____ likewise.” (Verse _____)

3. “But _____ ye your _____, and do _____, and _____, hoping for _____ again; and your _____ shall be _____, and ye shall be the _____ of the _____: for _____ is _____ unto the _____ and the _____.” (Verse 35)

4. “And _____ call ye me, _____, _____, and _____ not the _____ which I _____?” (Verse _____)

TRUE or FALSE

____ 1. You can be sure, if you are poor financially, the Lord is well pleased with you.

____ 2. As a Christian, you can expect to be hated and slandered.

____ 3. Christians do not have to wait until the next life to receive all the great rewards promised by God.

____ 4. False prophets were often well spoken of by their contemporaries.

____ 5. Being spoken of as evil may be a good sign of being faithful to the Lord.

____ 6. As God’s children, we are to be kind and merciful to the unthankful and evil.

____ 7. I am required to do more than sinners who love and do good to those who love and do good to them.

____ 8. A “hypocrite” sees the mote in his brother’s eye but doesn’t see the beam in his own eye.

____ 9. Figs are produced by thorn trees and grapes by bramble bushes.

____ 10. An obedient hearer is like a man who digs deep and lays the foundation of his house on a rock.

____ 11. Jesus teaches the necessity of faith but not obedience.

MATCH (Match the word or phrase in the left column which is best associated with the word or phrase in the right column)

- ___ Poor
- ___ Those who weep
- ___ Blind leading blind
- ___ Mote
- ___ Forgive
- ___ Good tree
- ___ Judge not

- 1. Be not judged
- 2. Good fruit
- 3. Be forgiven
- 4. Beam
- 5. Fall into ditch
- 6. Shall laugh
- 7. Kingdom ownership

EXTRA: Which is the hardest command given by Jesus?

(List in order of difficulty for you: 1,2,3)

- _____ “Do good to them which hate you.”
- _____ “Give to every man that asketh of thee.”
- _____ “Pray for those who despitefully use you.”

Please Send Your Answers To Us

(Print your name... Please. Thank you!)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____

Zip: _____ Phone: _____

NOTICE: Each person who sends in answers will be recognized in the next issue of the “MM” (see page 30). ALSO, by random drawing, the name of ONE student will be selected to receive a beautiful New Study Bible.

“The Question Box”
P. O. Box 1578 • Kosciusko, MS 39090