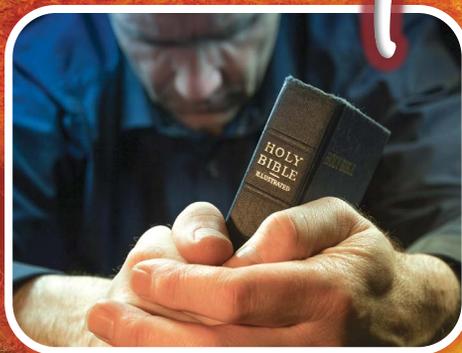


the MAGNOLIA Messenger

Volume 42 • Number 3
FALL, 2020

Please Help Us
EXPAND The Influence of the
Magnolia Messenger
PLEASE RESPOND
Use Attached Envelope
(See Pages 8/9)

Prayer



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Mississippi's "GOOD NEWS" Magazine
Serving Mississippi, Louisiana, and Adjoining States

*"Let us consider one another to provoke unto **LOVE** and **GOOD** works." (Hebrews 10:24)*

From Dennis

A STRONG PRAYER LIFE

I had been out of full time preaching for ten years when I felt the Lord tugging on my conscious again. I was attending the Highland Street congregation in Memphis. They had an ongoing program called "Mission 1,000." It was a three-month study designed to prepare those who were about to enter foreign missions. I felt that this would be a good way to get me back "in the book" as I prepared to enter the pulpit again.

The program had been started by two great mission-minded men; Joe Cannon, who had been a lifelong missionary to Japan and Papua New Guinea, and Larry McKenzie, one of the ministers at Highland Street. Other teachers were Don Green, long-time missionary to Southeast Asia and Europe, and Gordon Stalcup, a retired military chaplain.

It was a full-time program, eight hours a day of intensive studies. After a few weeks of sitting at the feet of these spiritually-minded men, I began to realize that this was mainly a study about prayer. No matter the subject, be it Luke, or Acts, or Corinthians, the class always got back to the teaching about prayer. You see, these men knew that for a missionary to succeed far away from home, he needed a strong prayer life.



I came to realize that this was one of the reasons I had become discouraged and had quit preaching. After twenty years of full-time work, I was spiritually depleted. I needed to learn how to pray. That being true, I had come to the right place.

Jesus was a missionary, wasn't he? I would think that he may have had the biggest case of culture shock of anyone ever. One thing for sure, he was a long, long, long way from home and his Heavenly Father. So what do we read

but that "Jesus Himself would often slip away to the wilderness and pray" (Luke 6:46), that he was in constant prayer (Matthew 14:23, Mark 6:46), and that sometimes "He spent the whole night in prayer" (Luke 6:12).

If we are to be like Jesus, we must be a prayerful person.

In truth, we are all a long way from home. Like Abraham, we too are "looking for a city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God" (Hebrews 11:10). We too need to be spending a lot of time talking to our Father.

Thanks to those who have sent me things about prayer, and I hope this issue encourages all of us to be a more prayerful person.

-dd MM



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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 (cannot) 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.
(Dennis Doughty, Editor)

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WINTER ISSUE: "THE CHURCH"
The Lord's church is important in saving souls, worshiping God, and in facing this pandemic.



Preachers and writers, do you have some good material on The Church?

Send it to me (600-800 words Please).

Send your response to me:
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PRAYER

Article by A. L. Franks, MAGNOLIA MESSENGER, Vol. 10 No. 3, March, 1988

QUESTION: 1

Does God really answer prayer?

ANSWER:

Yes, He does. Really! The Bible declares, "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James 5:16). Prayer avails MUCH. Prayer is powerful because the true God, to whom prayer is offered, is all-powerful. Nothing is too hard for the Lord. All things are possible to Him (Genesis 18:14, Matthew 9:26). Christians know the privilege of prayer because they believe in the power of prayer.

QUESTION: 2

Does God answer the prayers of non-Christians?

ANSWER:

Effective prayer must come from a godly heart. James wrote that the RIGHTEOUS person's prayer avails much (James 5:16). John said, "Whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight" (I John 3:22). The Psalmist stated that the ears of the Lord are open unto the cry of the RIGHTEOUS (Psalms 34:15; quoted by an apostle in I Peter 3:12).

Jesus also said, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you" (John 15:7). Effective prayer (prayer that avails) comes from the heart of a righteous person, one who keeps the Lord's commandments and who seeks to please the Lord. Therefore, it certainly comes as no surprise to read of one who said, "We know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth His will, him he heareth" (John 9:31).

Effective prayer to the Father must come from one of God's children. Jesus taught his disciples

to pray, "Our Father which art in heaven" (Matthew 6:9). A person outside God's family (one who hasn't been born again) cannot correctly address God as "Father." Are you in the family of God? Can you pray an effective prayer?

QUESTION: 3

Does God always answer prayer with a "yes"?

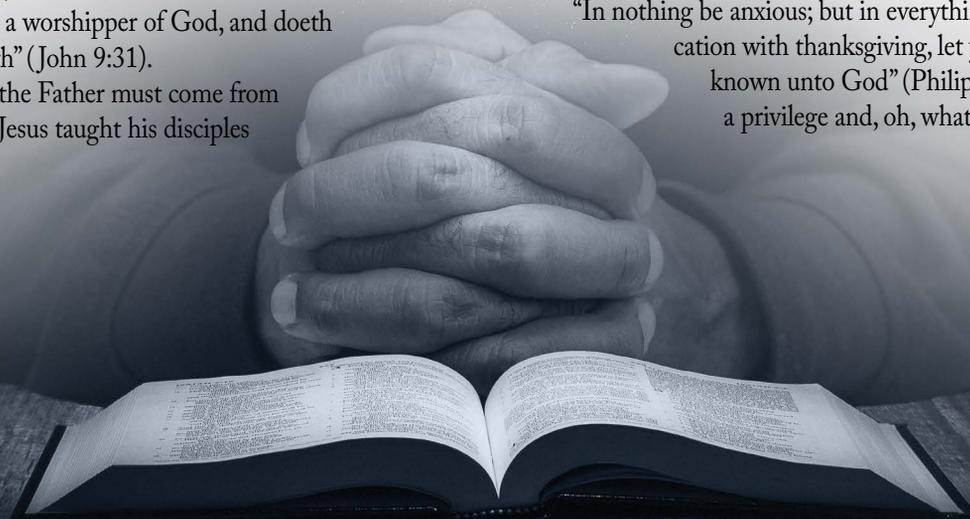
ANSWER:

No. Sometimes God, who knows best, answers with a "No." Consider Jesus. He prayed, "Let this cup pass from me." Jesus asked that he not have to die on the cross. But Jesus also added, "Not as I will, but as thou wilt." God answered the prayer of Jesus, not by removing the cup of suffering, but by sending an angel from heaven to strengthen him (See Luke 22:43). God's answer to the prayer of Christ was not according to the fleshly will of Jesus.

Consider also the apostle Paul. He was given a thorn in the flesh. Three times he asked God to remove the thorn. God answered his prayer. His answer was "No." God knew what was best for Paul, so He said to Paul, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness" (See II Corinthians 12:7-10). Therefore, if Paul and Jesus did not receive exactly what they asked for, we should not be surprised if our Heavenly Father, Who knows what is best, doesn't answer just as we request.

God is all-powerful. Whatever the need and/or desire of a Christian, he is blessed with the privilege of prayer. God is able and in harmony with His will, He will answer the prayers of His faithful children. But it may not always be with a "yes." But do remember: God knows best; His will is to be done. Scripture further teaches,

"In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God" (Philippians 4:6). Prayer: what a privilege and, oh, what power! **MM**



BIBBLE

Questions & Answers

MM Readers' ASK: Cecil May RESPONDS

Response: Jesus said, "Ask and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. Or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread will give him a stone? . . . If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him." (Matthew 7:7-11)

Ovens, in those times, were often holes in the ground. Stones were placed in the holes with a fire to make the stones hot. The loaves of bread, I am told, which were often round clumps of dough, were then put in the hole to be baked by the heat from the stones.

Suppose a hungry child, attracted by the aroma of the baking bread, were to come to the hole, point to one of the hot stones which look very much like the loaves of bread, and say, "Daddy, let me have some bread. Give me that one."

Will not the father put aside what the child asks for and give him what is best for him, the bread he really wants?"

So God, when we ask, seek, and knock, if He does not give us what we ask for, will give us a better blessing.

The apostle Paul and Jesus are biblical examples of this.

Paul had a "thorn in the flesh." Nearly everybody, including me, has a guess as to what this "thorn" was, but the Bible doesn't tell us; so, no one knows for sure. Here is what Paul says about it:

"So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. But He said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore I will

QUESTION:

"I prayed hard for three weeks for my daddy to live, but he died anyway." (J.A.) What can be said about the efficacy of prayer in view of experiences like that one?

boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong."

He was persistent:

"three times;" he was fervent: "I pleaded with the Lord" that it should leave. To no avail! The response Paul got was this word from the Lord: "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Paul went on to acknowledge that he would rather have the grace and power the Lord gave him than to have had the thorn removed. A prayer answered, but not in the way Paul originally intended, but a blessing received that was even better!

Another example is Jesus. He knew his death by crucifixion was coming; it was what he took on flesh to do. But in His humanity, He dreaded it. He would not have been human if He had not dreaded such torture and humiliation. Like Paul, He pleaded with God three times, "Let this cup pass from me." But, thankfully, He added, "Nevertheless, not my will but yours be done" (Matthew 26:44). It was, of course, God's will, and ultimately Jesus' will as well. Both wanted the sacrifice made so that mankind, including you and me, "should not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

These two precedents, Paul and Jesus, establish the pattern. God may not give what you prayed for, but He answers fervent, persistent prayers with an even greater blessing.

I do not know how to fit all of that into our questioner's situation. I do not have enough of the facts. Similarly, I do not know enough to tell every reader how it fits their particular situation. But I do know God has promised "those who love God" and "who are called according to his purpose, "that "all things work together for good" (Romans 8:28).

Continue earnestly in fervent prayer and expect blessings to come. They will. **MM**

Cecil May, Jr. • Dean Emeritus; College of Biblical Studies; Faulkner University. • cmay@faulkner.edu



EVERYDAY

Prayers

by Howard Cox

There are probably as many different ways to categorize prayers as there are Christians to pray them, but I think there are three useful ways to think of the kinds of prayer that we should probably engage in on a daily basis. I often wear a suit on Sunday morning, and I pray rather formally sometimes when leading large groups, but that doesn't mean that my "everyday" clothes and my "everyday" prayers aren't important, too.

1) The Daddy Prayer.

I've met people who feel like they are sort of wasting God's time if they ask him for small things. They're okay praying for someone's cancer to go away, or a hurricane to swerve back out to sea, but they have trouble asking God for the little day-to-day necessities of life.



Now, I realize that God is the almighty cosmic Heavenly Father who created the universe and is all-powerful and all-knowing. The Bible teaches that. But the Bible also teaches us that God cares about every little thing that happens to us. Nobody was ever as interested in you and me as God is. God knew us before we were born (Jeremiah 1:5), and God knows how many hairs I have on my head (Luke 12:7), and mine are turning gray and falling out. God cares about the little stuff, so it's okay to ask him about the little stuff.

In Matthew 6:9-13 God teaches his disciples how to pray in what we sometimes call the model prayer, and he says "give us each day our daily bread." Jesus says it's okay to ask God for the groceries.

In Matthew 7: 9-11 Jesus says "Which of you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!"

Children naturally run to their daddy when they need something, anything big or small, and the Bible encourages us to do the same with our Heavenly Father.

2) The Soldier's Prayer.

There's an old saying that there are no atheists in foxholes. We have a variation on this in higher education: there are no atheists during final exams.

However, that's not the kind of prayer I'm talking about. I'm

talking fighting the good fight. We're caught up in the middle of a war that's been going on for over 2,000 years. Every day there are new battles, and unfortunately, new casualties.

In Ephesians 6: 11 Paul urges Christians to "Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes." (NIV) He describes in such vivid detail how Christians armor-up for battle that we sometimes miss what he says in verse 17, "And pray in the Spirit on all occasions and with all kinds of prayers and requests."

Christian warriors are prayer warriors. In our everyday fight, we must pray for ourselves and our church families that we will "overcome evil with good" (Romans 12:21).

3) The Holy Spirit Prayer.

A little over a week ago my father-in-law collapsed in his bathroom. He had a blood clot in his heart, and a blood clot in his lung. He was 89 and every day for the past few months he had been in a good deal of pain.

I knew I should pray for him, but I didn't know what to pray for. I did not know what to ask for. I did not want him to die, but I didn't want him to suffer any more either.

Fortunately, God knows that very often we don't know what to say, and he takes care of that for us. In Romans 8:26 Paul reminds us that "the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we out to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans."

When we become Christians, we receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, and our spirit joins with God's Spirit. I do not claim to understand this, but it's like there's a little piece of God inside us, and our spirit talks to God's Spirit, and it understands us when we can't even put anything into words. How marvelous is God's design for the Christian life!

My father-in-law went home a few days ago to be with his Father, and I have the assurance that this was exactly what should have happened.

I hope these daily prayers will encourage you as you walk and talk with God each day. **MM**

(Howard Cox worked for Magnolia Bible College, and has preached for congregations in Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas, and presently teaches at the community college in Lufkin, TX. He can be reached at hcox@angelina.edu. -dd)

TRUTH

by Hugh Fulford

Truth is a precious and indispensable quality in every arena of human endeavor. In a court of law a witness is required to swear or affirm to “tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.” A family cannot thrive where falsehood and pretense exist, and truth and honesty are not practiced. In the fields of medicine, mathematics, physics, aeronautics, history, finance, and all other areas of human activity, truth must be known and followed. A nation cannot long survive that is not dedicated to the pursuit of truth and righteousness in all things.

What is true with reference to secular and human pursuits is even truer with reference to spiritual and religious matters. Truth is required in order to both obtain and maintain a right relationship with God, our Creator. The wise man Solomon urged, “Buy the truth, and sell it not” (Proverbs 23:23). By this he did not mean that truth is a commodity to be bought and sold on the open market; rather, he was saying that truth is so precious that one should make whatever sacrifice is necessary to discover it and possess it, and having done so, to guard it jealously and not give it up.

Christ was “full of grace and truth” (John 1:14). He was the personification and embodiment of truth (John 14:6). He said, “And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:32). At the trial of Jesus, Pilate asked (apparently in derision and/or sarcasm), “What is truth?” (John 18:38). In His High-priestly-prayer Jesus affirmed, “Thy word is truth” (John 17:17, KJV). Pilate (and we all) will face that word on the Day of Judgment (John 12:48).

The Holy Spirit guided the apostles of Christ into all truth (John 16:13), and since the death of the apostles, no new or

additional truth from God has been made known. All religious and spiritual truth is found in the Bible (cf. II Timothy 3:16-17; II Peter 1:3). The church is the pillar and ground of the truth (I Timothy 3:15), and the responsibility of the church is to proclaim the truth to the whole world until the end of time (Matthew 28:18-20). God desires all men “to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (I Timothy 2:4).

Some are “always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth” (II Timothy 3:7), but are always jumping from one religious bandwagon to another, “tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine” (Ephesians 4:14).

Some have “erred/strayed concerning the truth” (II Timothy 2:28) and some have turned “their ears away from the truth” (II Timothy 4:4).

Christians are to handle aright the word of truth (II Timothy 2:15), walk in truth (II John 4; III John 3), and speak the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15). People of genuine love will not rejoice in iniquity but will rejoice in the truth (I Corinthians 13:6).

God’s truth is not determined by where on planet earth one lives.

God’s word/truth is universal and eternally relevant and applicable to all people everywhere. It is the same for those who live in urban areas and those who live in rural areas. God’s truth is the same in New York City and Calvert City (KY), Green

Bay and Greenway (AR), Palm Springs and DeFuniak Springs (FL), Dallas, TX and Dallas, GA, Detroit, MI and Detroit, AL, Portland, OR, Portland, ME, and Portland, TN! The same conditions for salvation from sin and faithful discipleship to Christ apply everywhere in all the world (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16).

Truth is not determined by the majority or by counting noses.

Spiritual truth
is not determined
by one’s religious
heritage or family
traditions.



PRAYER

“Ask, Seek, Knock”

“So I say unto you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives; and he who seeks, finds; and to him who knocks, it will be opened.”

Luke 11:9,10

I HAD TO TAKE TIME TO PRAY

The Difference

*“I got up early one morning
And rushed right into the day.
I had so much to accomplish
That I didn’t have time to pray.*

*Problems just tumbled about me
And heavier came each task.
“Why doesn’t God help me?” I wondered.
He answered, “You didn’t ask.”*

*I tried to come into God’s presence.
I used all my keys at the lock.
God gently and lovingly chided,
“Why child, you didn’t knock.”*

*I wanted to see joy and beauty,
But the day toiled on grey and bleak.
I wondered why God didn’t show me.
He said, “But you didn’t seek.”*

*I woke up early this morning
And paused before entering the day.
I had so much to accomplish
That I had to take time to pray.”*

Allan Grant

Only eight souls were saved from the world-wide flood that destroyed the rest of humanity (I Peter 3:20-21). Of the twelve spies sent by Moses to spy out the land of Canaan, only two brought back a truthful report (Numbers 13). With a small army of only 300 men, Gideon prevailed against the powerful Midianite army consisting of thousands (Judges 7).

Jesus said, “Enter in at the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in through it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it” (Matthew 7:13-14). Through the instructions of God’s word, we must “right-size” our life in order to enter the gate and walk in the way that leads to everlasting life.

Spiritual truth is not determined by one’s religious heritage or family traditions. What one’s parents and grandparents believed and practiced religiously does not make one’s religion right. Jesus said that the traditions and doctrines of men make one’s worship to be in vain (Matthew 15:8-9). The Savior went on to say, “Every plant (religious body) which my Heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted” (Matthew 15:13). Unfortunately, there are many such “plants” (religious institutions) in the world today, but the Father “planted” none of them (Ephesians 4:4; cf. Ephesians 1:22-23; Matthew 16:18). We have been warned about being taken captive by these things (Colossians 2:8).

The utterances of the Pope and the creeds, councils, and conferences of the Protestants do not determine truth. They change with the culture. They contradict each other, “But the word of the Lord endures forever” (I Peter 1:25; cf. Isaiah 40-6-8). The gospel of Christ is true and does not change. Woe to those who would dare to change it! (Galatians 1:6-9).

Let us reflect on the words of the apostle John: “For I rejoiced greatly when brethren came and testified of the truth that is in you, as you do walk in the truth. I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth” (III John 2-4).

Love the truth, seek the truth, obey the truth, live the truth, be guided by the truth! **MM**



the Magnolia Messenger

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Mississippi's
GOOD NEWS
Magazine

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

Dear Brethren,

As the new editor of the Magnolia Messenger, I have come to appreciate the good done by this publication more than ever. Through you, the readers of this magazine, great good is being done in the Lord's kingdom.

- *Jesus said, “I was hungry and you gave me something to eat” Matthew 25:35. We have run news about the work Steve Watson is doing in sending tons of food and medical supplies to Venezuela. As a result of the articles in the Messenger, he has received over two thousand five hundred dollars in donations.*
- *Jesus said, “I was in Prison and you came to me” Matthew 25:36. We recently received a letter from a man in prison in California. He was a Hindu but wanted us to know that he enjoyed the Magnolia Messenger. I have learned that we send many copies into prisons around the nation. His letter will get a reply from us.*
- *Jesus said, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel” Mark 16:15. The good news of the gospel being presented through this publication is being spread through all fifty states and the reports about foreign missions encourage us all.*
- *The apostle Peter encouraged his readers to “Love the brotherhood” 1 Peter 2:17. Through the news reported in the Magnolia Messenger we are all more aware of good works and activities among our churches in Mississippi and throughout our brotherhood.*

We have a great team in place that is more than able to keep this publication going. But we cannot do so without the necessary funds from individuals and churches. Please continue to contribute to this good work. Encourage your church leaders to remain steadfast in their support.

Your donations will help keep the life-long work of Al Franks going onward. The money you give towards this good work will honor the dedication and love that Paul Franks had for this publication. Will you get us a check in the mail today?

We will keep the Magnolia Messenger going, if you will keep it going. Send in your donations today. May God richly bless our work together in his kingdom.

Dennis Doughty, editor

Please return the envelope inserted with your donation, Thank You!



Letters from our readers

Dear Sir:

I have enjoyed reading the Magnolia Messenger. When I start reading it's hard to stop. May God bless you in your work. Beth Beall is my cousin. May God bless AL and Paul Franks' family. I will pray for all of you.

*Christian Love,
Betty Brown (Eucha, OK)*

Dear Franks Family and the Staff of Magnolia Messenger,

I meant to write to you sooner, but please accept my condolences at your very great losses! I was saddened to hear of them. My family was quite touched by all the tributes and remembrances of the Franks in the MM. I am so glad to get the MM in my mailbox! I am happy to see it has not diminished in edification and sound doctrine! My children (esp. the teens) have enjoyed reading it over the years. Keep up the good work! Sincerely,

Mrs. Humphrey (Prineville, OR)

Thanks for the Messenger. I enjoy it much. We love June and hope she knows how much she and her family means to us. May God bless and keep all of you well, and the Messenger reaching the people. Paul was just one on my children. I am sorry Paul & Jimmy, James & AL had to leave so soon.

Deanie Bradshaw (Indianola, MS)

MM is a breath of fresh air from the great state of MS! The truth is honorably presented all throughout this magazine. Keep on!

Dwayne & Sharon Archibald (Antioch, TN)

Dear June & Glenda,

I still enjoy the MM very much. I know Bro. Al & Paul would be happy to know the wonderful work you and the new staff are doing. Our prayers are with you both. I know there are some hard days with you two sweet and loving ladies. Love you much.

Peggy Shull (Southaven, MS)

I appreciate the excellent Bible articles in your paper. So needed today. Keep up the good work.

Ken Bray

Look forward to the MM every time. I read it cover to cover & even pass along to friends or family. Thank you so very much. Much Christian Love,

Barbara Rinard (Woodsfield, OH)

I enjoy the Messenger very much. I read all of it and thank all the ministers for writing their articles in it. I'll soon be 85 in October and I can't hardly write anymore.

Thanks,

Mrs. Hancock (Corinth, MS)

Dear Brethren,

This is but a small gift for all the enjoyment I get from reading the Messenger. I love it all but I especially look forward to Bro. May's answer to questions we all benefit from. Thank you so much for a great magazine. I always look forward to receiving it. My dear wife, Mary departed this life six months ago after a wonderful 72 years of marriage together. I look forward to seeing her again. I live alone at 93 and need the prayers of the saints. Thank you so much,

Sam Stidham (Arcadia, FL)

Dear Brother Doughty,

My husband and I have enjoyed the Magnolia Messenger for about 15 years, shortly after we heard brother Al Franks speak at the church in Rolling Fork, MS. We have gotten many people here in IL hooked on this terrific publication. Unfortunately, we did not receive the Summer 2020 issue so we read and completed "The Question Box" using the publication the Crystal Lake C. of C. gets..... We do appreciate the good this paper is doing. Our prayers are with you. In His Love,

Eddie & Jim Vermillion (Carry, IL)

June, Glenda & MM Staff,

I love everything about the MM. I know AL & Paul would be so proud of you all for carrying on this great work. God bless you for all you do for others and for your dedication to our Lord. Love in Christ,

Sue Fisher (Lexington, MS)

Dear Brethren, Keep up the good work! Love,

Milton Smith (Pineville, WV)

Dear Folks @ Magnolia Messenger,

Thank you so very much for the news you send to me in the Magnolia Messenger. I read and reread every single word from front to back.... Keep up the good work. I know I enjoy my copy and look forward to the next issue.

Sincerely, Dorothy (Dot) Grantham (Bush, LA)

Dear Brother Dennis,

Congratulations on your love and faithfulness in spreading the gospel to many of us. May the Lord guide in this effort. I have had many trials in my seventy-nine years. So when I was dealing with the sudden death of my husband at the early age of 50, I thought I would never get over it. I received my Magnolia Messenger with articles that were an encouragement and I knew our Heavenly Father was still on my side and I was able to deal with it.

Good luck on all your endeavors for the gospel of Christ.

Frances Shively (Martinsburg, WV)

Rhoda

*"You are
beside
yourself!"*

by **Ken Joines**

Perhaps there's someone in your life with this name. Maybe. Maybe not. We have a sweet friend in West Texas named Rhoda. Well, we're not talking about any of those just here. The Rhoda I want to bring before you figures prominently in a prayer experience; it has direct bearing on how we react to our own prayers. Read the story in Acts 12:6-19. King Herod had just killed James with a sword. We're talking serious, gut-wrenching stuff by powerful, heartless tyrants—decapitations, stoning—when the only thing you were guilty of was preaching Jesus and serving him. Peter was in prison, asleep between two guards and bound in chains. An angel awoke him and led him out through the main gate—where more guards were stationed—and this gate opened of its own accord! No remote. No electronic eye; this was something much more powerful. Is this exciting or what?



When Peter realized this wasn't a dream, he went straight to Mary's house where a lot of people were gathered in prayer, no doubt praying for Peter's release. When he knocked on the door—saying, "this is Peter, open up"—a servant girl named Rhoda approached the door and when she recognized Peter's voice, in her excitement she didn't even open the door, but ran back and told the crowd, a crowd that had been praying, remember? Well, when Rhoda told them Peter was at the door, guess what! Did anyone think to say, "Thank God Almighty! Praise the holy name of God....our prayers are answered?" No. They said, "You're out of your mind, Rhoda", v.15. But when she kept insisting, they still didn't believe, saying, "Well, if you saw anything, it must be Peter's angel." Peter kept on knocking and when they finally let him in, the scripture says they were amazed.

So. What does this story have to do with our prayer lives today? Let me explain. How many times have we prayed for something to happen—perhaps job-related, or health issue, whatever—and when it does happen, instead of thanking and praising God for His providential and healing hand, we say things like: "Let me tell you about my streak of good luck", or "I can't believe the MRI shows no sign of cancer", or, "As luck would have it.....". How this must pierce the heart of Jesus when we ask Him for something, and then when it happens we fail to give Him the praise He deserves! Folks, we can do better than this.

Now, to a related matter. Does it ever bother you when you think of multiplied millions of God's children across the globe talking to Him in prayer at the same time and He hears each one

of them? Have you ever asked, "how is that possible?" I'd like to share something that happened to me in January 1986. A friend, Chuck Walker, had retired from South Central Bell, and in a visit with him showed me three pieces of glass "string"—fiber optics—each piece five micrometers in size or about the size of a human hair. At the time he said FedEx was using this to transmit messages by laser beams. He told me that each piece carries impulses at the rate of 405 megabites per second; that's 405,000,000 per second. Each piece carries 6,000 channels, meaning these three pieces can transmit the conversations of 18,000 people at one time! He said that when he retired, the newer models operate at 20 gigabits. That's 20 BILLION times per second, meaning that each one could carry 500,000 conversations at the same time! This was technology 36 years ago. With the rapid technological advances since then, one can only imagine what is possible in 2020. I still have those three little pieces of fiber optics in a jar on my library shelf to remind me to not wonder at what our Great God is capable of.

Let me mention one other thing that may be bothering you. James 5:16 KJV says, ".....The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." Wonderful! Reassuring! But wait. Maybe you are one who says, "I know God hears the prayers of righteous people, but I don't feel so righteous with all my weaknesses and faults, and I doubt that God hears me." So you quit praying. Please listen carefully when I say that we are made righteous, not by living a sinless life, but by virtue of the fact that the Lord Jesus died for us and His blood keeps us clean and forgiven of our sins (I John 1:7-10) Then our brother James goes a step further. He names Elijah the prophet and says this man was subject to like passions as we are (5:17). He is telling us that here was a man who was not sinlessly perfect, but God heard him. He was discouraged just like we sometimes are, but God heard him. He was sometimes fearful and afraid, sometimes even critical of God for things that were happening in his life, but God still heard Elijah. I think it is just fascinating that God chose Elijah as an example of a righteous man whom God heard in prayer. So, my friend, do not stop praying. Pray without ceasing. Pray in faith. Don't ever doubt the power of prayer. Abe Lincoln is credited with saying, "More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of." God is listening and He cares what is going on in your life and mine. **MM**

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Father

by Dennis Doughty

The truly greatest teaching about prayer that Jesus gave us is when he said, "When you pray, say: 'Father, hallowed be Your name'" (Luke 11:2).

The name of God most used in the Old Testament was YHWH. It occurs well over six thousand times, and is most often translated as "LORD," or Lord GOD." in our English translations. It is thought to be a form of the verb "to be," which agrees with what God told Moses before the burning bush; "I AM WHO I AM" (Exodus 3: 14).

This name of God was held in such holy regard that in Jesus' day the Jews had stopped pronouncing the name. It was forbidden to all except the High Priest, who would only speak it in the temple activities. Once YHWH was written it could never be erased.

I cannot imagine the shocked look on the faces of the apostles when Jesus taught them to call YHWH, the creator of the world and the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; "Father." Jesus introduced them, and us now, to a new relationship to God. When we talk to God in prayer, we are not just speaking to the sovereign power of the universe, but also to a loving Father who cares about His children.

In his teaching about prayer Jesus said, "Now suppose one of you fathers is asked by his son for a fish; he will not give him a snake instead of a fish, will he?" Then Jesus spoke these words, "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the holy Spirit to those who ask Him?" (Luke 11:11-13).

We have a Father in Heaven who cares for His children and wants what is best for them. When we as children "ask," God is then ready to give "good gifts" in answer to our "asking."

In the Garden of Gethsemane Jesus prayed, "Abba! Father!... remove this cup from me" (Mark 14:36). "Abba" was the intimate, yet respectful, name children used to address their fathers. In the same way we are taught that Christ came and redeemed us, "that we might receive the adoption as sons. Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, Abba! Father!" (Galatians 4:5,6).

We have been adopted as sons of God. When did that adoption take place? Answer: when the Holy Spirit was given to us. When did that happen? Answer: when we believed, and then repented and were baptized, for then we were promised "the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). After our baptism we become adopted children of God and the Spirit within us allowed us to call God as "Abba, Father."

So, bow your head, lift your voice unto the throne of God almighty and say, "Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name." He is waiting to hear from you, His child. **MM**

THE MOST

The most destructive habit... **Worry**

The greatest Joy... **Giving**

The greatest loss... **Loss of self-respect**

The most satisfying work... **Helping others**

The ugliest personality trait... **Selfishness**

The most endangered species... **Dedicated leaders**

Our greatest natural resource... **Our youth**

The greatest "shot in the arm"... **Encouragement**

The greatest problem to overcome... **Fear**

The most effective sleeping pill... **Peace of mind**

The most crippling failure disease... **Excuses**

The most powerful force in life... **Love**

The most dangerous pariah... **A gossip**

The world's most incredible computer... **The brain**

The worst thing to be without... **Hope**

The deadliest weapon... **The tongue**

The two most power-filled words... **"I Can"**

The greatest asset... **Faith**

The most worthless emotion... **Self-pity**

The most beautiful attire... **SMILE!**

The most prized possession... **Integrity**

The most powerful channel of communication... **Prayer**

The most contagious spirit... **Enthusiasm**

Writer is Anonymous

(A great friend of this publication is Edgar C. Beard.
He sent me this bit of wisdom. -dd)

NOTICE TO READERS

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ELDER'S

Their Work

by Frank Parker

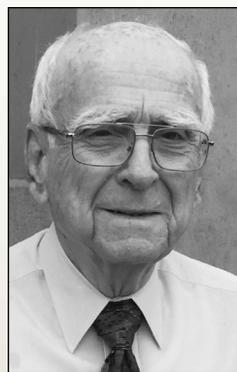
The Master Teacher had a discussion with the Pharisees and scribes about traditions and their relationship to commands of God. Traditions here are commands and actions authorized by man, not Divine authority. One of Jesus' conclusions was, "And by this you invalidated the word of God for the sake of your tradition". (Matthew 15:6 NASV)

As we explore elders and their work, we must first know who we are talking about. There are variable terms that identify these men. The meaning of these terms listed come from Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary: "elder: an old man, an elder, bishop, an overseer; pastor: a shepherd, one who tends herds or flocks; shepherd: metaphorically of those who act as pastors in the churches". As you can see, these terms are used interchangeably to describe the many facets of their work.

Now we will see these men in action in Acts. Barnabas and Saul respected the authority/leadership of the elders (Acts 11:30); Divine wisdom is seen in elders [plural] in every church [autonomous] (Acts 14:23); the apostles respected the bishops/overseers in Jerusalem and worked with them in this doctrinal matter (Acts 15:5,22,23); Paul admonished and challenged the elders from Ephesus in several points: to be on guard, reminded them they were overseers and shepherds, warned them of false teachers from the outside and inside the flock, and be alert (Acts 20:28-31); Paul met with all the elders

in Jerusalem to inform them of things which God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry (Acts 21:18,19).

We gather more information in the letters. Philippians is addressed to saints, overseers, and deacons (Philippians 1:1); Paul's first letter to Timothy at Ephesus includes vital information about the qualifications of the men who serve as elders, i.e. overseers. These requirements are directly related to their work as pastors/



shepherds (1 Timothy 3:1-7). Also, in 5:17,18, Paul discusses supporting those elders in their preaching/teaching. The letter to Titus contains additional insight to the elders' work.

Notice the strong emphasis on holding fast the faithful word, and exhort in sound doctrine, and refute those who contradict (Titus 1:5-11).

The Hebrew letter calls attention to the responsibility the flock has to the elders:

remember those who led you, imitate their faith, obey your leaders and submit (Hebrews 13:7,17). In this same text, elders are reminded of their accountability as shepherds of the flock. James (5:14)

notes the relationship of the elders to the sick.

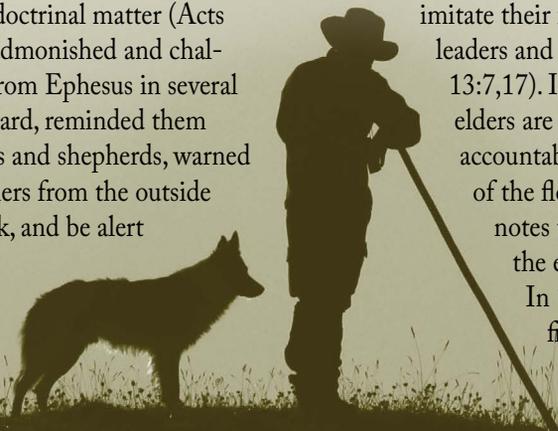
In 1 Peter 5:1-4, we find several instruc-

tions: shepherd the flock among you; do so voluntarily; have a proper attitude....; do not "lord-it" over the flock; be an example.

From the above cited scriptures, we have a clear picture of the qualifications, responsibilities, and work of these brothers. But what has happened? Traditions! Somewhere along the way, it became the tradition to bring in a financially supported "preacher" and dump much of the above work in his lap. Read bulletins and publications and see who does most of the teaching/preaching and who is most visible before the congregation. According to the above scriptures, shepherds/bishops were not behind the scene workers. Jesus also makes this very clear in John 10 where He shows the relationship of shepherd to sheep.

I know from experience this not a popular subject with some elders and preachers. Yet, brethren, if we are going to preach "restoration," let's practice it! We are surrounded in a world of denominations, and it is easy to be so tainted. It is amazing the number of disciples (old and young spiritually) that think the preacher is "the pastor!" This false mindset comes about by lack of teaching/studying and preachers so acting and/or shepherds failing to pastor. The Divine plan of congregational government is perfect. Beware: "And by this you invalidated the word of God for the sake of your tradition." **MM**

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COMFORT *in Prayer*

by Elizabeth Turner Beall

Tears flowed as I hit the table with my fists. My life had just been turned upside down. I was angry. I was hurt. I felt alone and helpless. I wanted to pray, but emotions so overwhelmed me that I could only repeat, almost chant-like, "Father, help me. Please, Father, help me." The tears dried and a calm settled over me. The tears released some of the stress and emotions, but there was more to it. I knew my prayer had been heard, even though it was not much of a prayer.

We have all been at that point in life where we have experienced something tragic and life-changing. For a time we are in shock, confused, and don't quite know what to do. But as Christians, children of the Almighty God, our first action should be to immediately turn to Him in prayer. What comfort there is in the promise that God hears all our prayers, especially those given when we are distraught and the best we can do is cry for help, not knowing what to say, how to say it, or what we need to pray for. Romans 8:26 promises "likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words."



The Spirit listens and is ever aware of our lack of ability to express our thoughts at times. He recognizes our cries, our

words that make no sense, and knows when our minds fail to function. He recognizes the help we need and is able to put our distressed hearts into words and give them to Christ, who is the mediator between us and God (1 Timothy 2:5). Christ Jesus then takes our request to God, who already knows our hearts (Luke 16:15) but wants us to come to Him and ask for help, comfort, strength, and wisdom in our need.

It should be a comfort in itself to know that anytime we pray Jesus is there to give our requests to God our Father. But in times of deepest troubles, knowing that all three persons of Deity are involved should put our hearts at ease. What an awesome thought to realize that we are loved so much by God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit that they would all attend to our needs in our weakest moments. It should calm us and strengthen our faith.

May we always remember to seek God first when troubles arise, and know those words we cannot form are understood by the Holy Spirit, and are taken straight to the throne of God so Christ can mediate our cause to God the Father. What a great promise! What a great comfort! **MM**



ARE YOU PRAYING?



The most amazing and thought-provoking statement I ever heard about prayer is this: "Are there things that happened, that would not have happened, because you prayed?" And "Are there things that did not happen, that could have happened, because you failed to pray?"

Have your prayers influenced world leaders, shaped lives, converted souls, insured safe journeys, and healed the sick? Have your prayers caused God to change his mind? If you believe in prayer the answer to all these must be "Yes!" After all, Jesus did teach us that prayer could even move mountains (Mark 11:23).

One the other hand what is failing to happen because you are not praying? There is much you can affect, change, and influence through your prayer life. But an absence of prayer leaves Satan to do his work without being hindered. All the more reason to "pray continually" (1 Thessalonica 5:17). -dd



Work for the Lord

“The things you heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also”

2 Timothy 2:2

This charge to Timothy did not happen overnight, but took years. He had to be taught, and he had his mentors that guided and helped him. The same is true with congregations and elderships now more than ever, but there are not many congregations and elderships willing to do this.

One congregation that has experienced this is in Childersburg, AL. Their leadership realized they must do things differently if they were to grow for the Lord. The planning for this change began some time ago when they realized how few of their members could teach the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They began researching for possible solutions and heard about the “HomeMission” program under the oversight of the Faith Village church of Christ, Wichita Falls, TX. The HomeMission Program provides evangelists, classes, and materials on how to help small, struggling congregations to evangelize their community and grow....and they do it for FREE.

John Orr serves as the Director of HomeMission, and he and his wife, Susie, made several trips to Childersburg to advise and help this congregation. Childersburg, like a lot of small congregations, had had several challenges that impacted their membership in a negative manner, and they realized they needed additional help. HomeMission contacted the eldership at Cox Blvd church of Christ, Sheffield, AL, and asked for their help in working with the elders at Childersburg. From that point, both congregations and HomeMission worked together and discussed a Back to the Bible Workshop and a Back to the Bible Campaign sometime in 2019-2020. Then the Pandemic of 2020 arrived.

Despite the virus, the three Childersburg elders, Gene Welch, Mike Ray, and Ray

Giddens, remained firm in wanting their members to learn a way to successfully teach their members how to teach others the Plan of Salvation. The same can be said for the eldership at Cox Blvd who have been just as firm in their commitment to teaching the Back to the Bible (B2B) Workshops and conducting campaigns. Cox Blvd has conducted over 70 Back to the Bible workshops and campaigns since 2007.

Cox Blvd’s elders began meeting with the elders at Childersburg and began to plan a B2B Workshop and Campaign so their members could reach and teach the lost in their community and the neighboring communities. After the first of the year, a Sunday was designated to have two motivational classes conducted by John Alexander and Roger Johnson from Cox Blvd. These classes were designed to not only inspire the members but show them how to lead people to Christ using the Safety Chain of Scriptures method. After their presentation, the congregation committed to not only a workshop but a summer campaign.

The Childersburg church of Christ minister, Lamar Russell, kept the elders at Cox Blvd updated and informed about the meetings of his eldership and any questions they had about the workshop and/or a future campaign. The workshop date was moved twice, and even with the COVID-19 virus, the workshop date was set for 10-11 July 2020. The workshop was advertised with invitations to members from the local congregations in and around Childersburg. The Back to the Bible workshop was conducted on Saturday, 11 July from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. There were 25 people who attended the workshop. Andrew Wynne from the Memphis School of Preaching, and his wife Nicole, were also in attendance (Cox Blvd

provides financial support for the Wynnes). The Childersburg elders decided to buy Bibles and notebooks to not only conduct a class for the members who were not able to attend the Saturday workshop, but to have follow-up sessions for those who did attend and were not able to finish marking their Bibles.

The Back to the Bible Program is a part of the Cox Blvd church of Christ’s Mission Program and is designed to help Christians reach and successfully teach neighbors, family members, and people in their community using the Bible only. The Back to the Bible Program has been successful helping small, struggling congregations in Alabama, Tennessee, and Mississippi, through workshops that teach their members how to reach and teach the lost in their community. This program has been presented in Georgia, Oklahoma, Mississippi, Texas, Kansas, Nebraska, Ohio, Guyana, and Korea. The Back to the Bible mission program began as an outreach at the Northwest church of Christ, Lawton, OK, in 1975 using the Safety Chain of Scriptures.

The Cox Blvd eldership committed in 2007 to using this method to teach one-on-one Bible Studies and to conduct an annual campaign. When invited by an eldership, Cox Blvd will meet with their elders and conduct free workshops for congregations who request to learn a simple way to teach family, friends, and neighbors the plan of salvation. This is the command Paul gave Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:2 and is the blueprint the elders at Cox Blvd church of Christ follow. Any eldership or congregation interested in learning more about the Back to the Bible program should contact the Cox Blvd Elders at 303 Cox Blvd Sheffield, AL 35660 or call 256-383-1618/383-1905. **MM**

You want to...

by Mark Bridges

Back some 40 years ago I was questioned about why was I not spending some of my free time deer hunting while I had the opportunity. I like hunting, but at the time we were trying to get started. I was working two jobs, we had bought some land and had a few cows, and seemed so busy.

I just got used to saying I didn't have time with all the work I was doing, and that excuse or reason seemed to work, but was it the truth? That answer often made me wonder myself, why don't I hunt more. I discovered the reason for my answer to that question and a lot more when I came across this scripture that helped me understand why I didn't take the time to hunt.

At the time I had an NIV version of the Bible and came across (Philippians 3:10,11) where Paul writes about the power of Christ's resurrection and his sufferings, and how he might participate in it. The key to this passage was in the first five words: **I want to know Christ!** To *know* and *understand* and *participate* in his suffering; that was a deep statement that needed more study and research.

Paul proved to us by the actions he took in serving Christ. (2 Corinthians 11) "I am more: in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequently, in deaths often. From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness— besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches." His example shows us just how sincere and dedicated he was in wanting to know Christ.

It became clear, I didn't want to go hunting. I wanted other things more. I guess when you want something bad enough you sacrifice other things to get what you desire most, no matter the cost.

We can make excuses, but when it all comes down to it, we do just what we want to do. From athletes, millionaires, politicians, doctors, or whatever we desire to do, even our Christianity, we put the time and effort into it, which shows our true desires. Time and effort! (Matthew 6:21) "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." I understood, my heart was not in hunting at the time; it was in other things.

Discussing church attendance and Christian service through the years, it always reminds me of this scripture. It's not that hard to explain why there's a problem; we do what we want to do attend, study, read, pray, participate in worship or suffer for the cause of Christ.

"It's plain to see in Mark 10:21: "Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, 'One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me.'" I guess deep down he didn't really WANT TO!

Years later when my son started hunting, my want-to changed; I started going with him and let other things slide by. Remember, it's where your heart is.

The big question is how do we make people want to? Paul's example and desire to want to know Christ is a good place to start. Paul's heart was on serving, because he realized the price that was paid for his salvation and wanted to be a servant himself. **MM**



I want to know Christ

—yes, to know the power of His resurrection and participation in His sufferings, becoming like Him in His death, and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead.

Philippians 3:10,11

YOUTH & FAMILY

How To Deal With Difficult People



by **Greg Ledbetter**

It is inevitable, whether children or adults, we all deal with people who are not easy to get along with daily. Sometimes, we call these kinds of people bullies. How we react and deal with these people is so crucial to our spirituality. You see, we may not think about it much, but we are responsible for the way we treat people.

We can not react the same way the world reacts to people that get under our skin. The world says "you come after me, I go after you. You steal from me, and I steal from you. You yell at me; I yell at you. You bully me, and I will punch you in the nose." Is that really what the Bible teaches us? Romans 12:18 says, "Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, 'Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,' says the Lord." Then Matthew 5:44 says, "But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you." Do you mean you want me to do good to those who hate me? The last passage is Mathew 5:38-39, "You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him" also. If I have this straight, we have seen to repay no one evil for evil, love your enemies, then we have to turn the other cheek. Well, it looks like it is set up perfectly for the difficult person. It looks like we have to take what comes our way. On the surface, it does seem that way, but what we see is as a called-out people in I Peter 2:9-10, we are to act differently than the world. So how should Christians deal with difficult people?

This idea seems to be difficult because that is not what the world teaches us. So how should Christians deal with difficult people?

First, we have to respond as Jesus responds. You think back



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on your life, whether you are a new Christian or you have been a Christian for many years. How many times have we been difficult to Christ? How has He responded? He responds with forgiveness, mercy, and grace. I believe we can learn from that and extend a little grace and forgiveness to each other. In Matthew 26:62-63, when Jesus was arrested and faced the Sanhedrin looking for false evidence against him, they questioned Him. The scriptures tell us He remained silent. We need to learn not to be so ready to speak. Proverbs 15:1 tells us, "A soft answer turns away wrath, But a harsh word stirs up anger." The way we respond to people could defuse the problem, and if it does not, then know we have done the godly thing.

The second thing we must do is to live honorable lives. I Peter 2:12, "having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation." Live life in such a way that, when people have things to say against you, they will not be believed. It is incredible to me that even in the church, people get jealous of each other. Then they like to start trouble. If you are a man or woman of great character, then those things will be proven false. This attitude is hard to go through, but you will get through it.

Finally, for those who are being bullied—adults or children—understand who we are in Christ. Meditate on passages like Psalm 139:13-18, which tells us "that you are fearfully and wonderfully made and that God's thoughts toward you are too numerous to count." You need to know that you are special to God and created in His image with immeasurable worth and value. We cannot let the lies of the bullies influence us on what we think about ourselves, because what God says about us is the truth. He loves us and cherishes us because we are made in His image.

We cannot escape the problematic people of this world. It is my hope and prayer that we learn to deal with people properly. Our salvation depends on it. **MM**

WHAT ARE THEY DOING?

Millennials in the church.

by Wes Ayers

Let's just go ahead and get it out there. I am a millennial. There, I said it. Feels good to get that off my chest. I might be on the backside of the generation, but I still qualify. Most people equate my generation to being the generation which 'will' or 'has' ruined everything. Unfortunately, this is happening inside our churches as well. However, it is my belief, the contributions the millennial generation brings to the church have enhanced church growth and church stability.

Each church has its struggles, and each church has its strong points. This qualifies for our generational differences inside the church as well. I am confident we are living in extraordinary and challenging times in our society. Our churches across the world have felt the impact of the COVID-19 virus.

Things have changed for all of us. I remember like it was yesterday when the pandemic started, and an elder approached me. It was a Thursday in March. The question was, "Can you get us live-streaming by Sunday?" I immediately began discussing options and things needed to get us a quick, but not permanent, set-up. His response was so genuine and so unique. He said, "Wes, we trust you; just go get the church card and make it happen."

My generation is technology-driven. We always have been. We were the first generation to carry an iPhone. I am not saying all technology has been



Chapel & Wes Ayers

used to make things better. In fact, I believe sometimes technology and social media can create deep divides among our brethren. However, when used properly, technology has enhanced our ability to worship with our church family even when we are hundreds of miles apart.

Millennials believe in the power of connection. The ability to be able to connect is so very vital in today's world. A connection is more than passing out flyers for our special events. Connections are about understanding and gaining knowledge of trends and practices. It is important for the church to move with society. It is not a time for the church to change the message, but we can enhance how we share it. Proverbs 27:17 (ESV) says, "Iron sharpens iron and one man sharpens another." Connecting is something millennials just do naturally. It is a platform in which reaching others becomes a comfort level

to them. It makes us all better when we establish connections.

Millennials believe in working toward something. Now, you may be reading this and think, "Wes, I believe in working toward something too, and I am not a millennial." Sure, I agree with you; we are all working toward something. Let me explain. The millennial generation wants to see things played out with all scenarios before executing. The days of having a goal with no concrete plan do not apply to most millennials. In turn, people often believe we are lazy, or we do not see things through. It is quite the opposite. Millennials want to see things through, and we want to establish a working path to success.

I also hear this often. "They do not care about the past." This is an untrue statement and I believe that is even an understatement. Millennials seek guidance from other generations more than one would think. Not just from older generations, but younger as well. "Without counsel plans fail, but with many advisers they succeed" (Proverbs 15:22 ESV). Millennials are always seeking the guidance of those who have established and successful plans. It is no different with their service to the church.

I would like to close with this: the divide between the church and the millennial is the fear of change. Not a change in the message, but in the way we communicate it. If we as a church do not look to find all avenues of connected communication, we lose those around us.

Believe in one another, trust one another, love one another, and serve God! **MM**

Wes Ayers, Youth & Family Minister
Shiloh Church of Christ
Florence Alabama

"Wes, we trust you; just go get the church card and make it happen."

MM - MISSION REPORT

Lead by a Child

by Madolyn Gibson



"Total Orphan". A title Movin has carried with him most of his life. He, along with about 20 other children, ran for their lives in the open plains of Kenya, Africa. Their village was involved in a bloody tribal warfare and his parents were killed, but he survived. Movin was found wandering around with about 20 other children trying to survive off the land. His dwelling place now is in a village in a shabby house with cracks

in the boards, but at least he is safe and taken care of by Christians. His dry and powdered food is delivered in a sack. His water supply is limited. His needs are few and are met. His blessings are received with smiles and heart-felt thanksgivings. He gives glory to God for his life.

He is one of many that have needs, and yet he smiles and his eyes are full of joy. He teaches by example contentment with what he has. Hebrews 13:5 . . . "be content with such things as ye have, for he hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee". The prophecy concerning the coming of Christ in Isaiah

11:6 teaches that a little child shall lead. A child reinforces the purity, the innocence, and the trusting obedient attitude that is Christ-like. God's children had turned away from Him and were living in the luxury of abundance and sin. We can see that same pattern today, and know that they spent hundreds of years in captivity because of their turning away from God's laws. Our Lord is the same yesterday, today, and forever (John 13:8).

In this Pandemic time, we have been given an opportunity to reach out to the lonely, needy, sick, and hungry. It takes so little to open a door of opportunity and show love and share the Gospel. We don't have to



Venezuela Ministry News

(What Steve and Jane Watson are doing for the people in Venezuela, with their team of workers and supporters, is simply Amazing. Read this and be inspired to do more for others. -dd)

We have had an amazing few months at Pegrum Church of Christ for our Venezuela ministry. Even with the difficulties facing both the U.S. and Venezuela, God has done marvelous things, which is just His way!

After our March shipment (38 boxes) went out early, then the virus hit us like everywhere else. Suddenly, we could not get vital supplies because shelves were getting empty, and our purchases were limited to two or three items at a time.

Our sweet friends would still need to eat, so we just sent money. It's a little tricky to do that. We have to find a trusted someone here, who has a bank account there, plus a trusted person there, who will be a conduit for our money to the right people. Anjelica is so good at planning this kind of route, and she came through for us. We got some lovely pictures of Zara buying at the market just before it closed (COVID19 is there as well), and delivering eggs and Pan (cornmeal) to many families.

By June we were able to get supplies again, so we began our shipment process. We shipped 45 boxes and at the same time, Continent of Great Cities (a

church-planting ministry supported by churches of Christ) asked us to help them get supplies to several churches in Venezuela. We packed 30 extra boxes for this group. Our youth group did most of the double bagging of 150 pounds each of rice, lentils, black beans, flour, sugar, whole milk powder, oats, and 50 pounds of popcorn. There was so much more: spaghetti, peanut butter, jam, coffee, tea, canned meat, bullion, canned vegetables, plus

some much-needed Tootsie Rolls.

Wrapping these boxes for shipment is a task only for strong men. They weigh at least 120 pounds. However, I'm sure some weigh more because they are hard to budge. We count on some dedicated adults and young people to help here at the Pegrum congregation, along with several of our grandchildren.

Venezuela continues to have gasoline shortages. One of our distributors, Job, sent a great video of him delivering food on his bicycle. We decided to send two bicycles to Anjelic, Anjelica's sister. My friend, Jeanie, donated bicycle baskets, and we packed all of that up for our July shipment. Cristian had to create some unusual boxes, but as he's an engineer; he got it done.

We received a special donation of clothes from the Brentwood Hills and Otter Creek churches, left over from a consignment sale. We were able to pack many items of clothing around those bicycles, saving the cost of shipping. We have boxed up all the rest, so have 20 boxes ready to be shipped for the next few months. They make a stunning display in our auditorium, thanks to the Pegrum church's generous use of every available space.

While all our usual business was going on, we applied for our 5013c



TOP PHOTO: Cristian and Anjelica, Steve and Jane, are making a difference in the lives of many in Venezuela.

BOTTOM PHOTO: Almost two tons of food and medical supplies ready for shipment to Venezuela.

There are a tremendous number of mission efforts around the world supported by churches in the south. The Magnolia Messenger is pleased to report about these works. Like the mighty Magnolia tree, which grows in seven of our states, Central America, Asia and China, the Messenger is proud to report on the "Good News" being spread around the world. -dd

go to a store and buy a card. Remember the old fashion letter writing? We can still have phone visits (not too long) and bring happy cheery news and funny stories to the lonely shut ins. "God will open doors if we ask with a sincere heart desiring to serve". The world needs healing, and God's children have the healing balm. I challenge and encourage all of us to put on our Doctor's coat and begin ministering to our sin-sick world. We have a wonderful opportunity to follow a child's leadership and Jesus Christ our Savior.

The Christian Student Center at MDCC in Moorhead, MS adopted Movin. For 11 years we have provided his food, medical care, clothing, education, and spiritual training. He is now 20 years old and continues to be thriving and sharing his beautiful and thankful heart with others.

God bless as we serve. **MM**

status and were accepted to begin work with Kingsway Medical Charities. We supply six hospitals with basic wound care items, formula and diapers, mostly purchased locally or donated. We were requested by one of our doctors for more medical supplies and prescription medicines unavailable there. He sent a detailed list of needs, Cristian translated it, and then Kay (a nurse who has traveled many times to Liberia and runs medical clinics) consolidated and substituted items on his list for those more readily available. Kay and Cindy worked for hours on our first order which ended up to be 1000 pounds of medical supplies. Our cost was \$1600. That may seem like a lot, however, when we got the equivalents from Kingsway, the value of our order was \$70,600. Well, we are just "bowled over"!

We are so thrilled to be able to help even more than we have in the past, and we just wanted you all to know what a grand thing God is doing through this little group of people in this little church, in this little community in Tennessee. We could not begin to do this without your help, so we don't take your part for granted, and we want to thank you in such a heartfelt personal way. When we receive knowledge of your generous gifts, we tear up and praise our God for his goodness to put Steve and me in this place at this time. It's just awesome! **MM**

Love, Jane Watson

God answers prayer

by Larry McKenzie

Editors Note: I mentioned Larry in my editorial, He was one of the ministers at Highland Street in Memphis for over forty years, and one of the most prayerful men I have ever known. Many prayers were offered, and answered, during his "adventure." -dd

I memorized many years ago Proverbs 3: 5,6 "Trust in the Lord with all of your heart and lean not on you own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight." I began to discern what it really means to "trust God with all my heart." I begin praying God to teach me what "all my heart" means. No answer for 30 years, but what an answer He gave me!

I was on a mission trip to Asia in May 2019. My first stop was to visit missionaries Alvin and Fe Luther and their son and his wife, Nathan and Karen Luther, in Bacolod, Philippines. The afternoon I arrived I was met at the airport and taken to the home of Alvin and Fe where I was to stay for the 6 days I was there.

After we arrived, I began to feel chest pains up to my throat and jaws. I knew what I was having as I had my first heart attack in 2015. I called the family and told them I needed medical help. They took me to the hospital. In the emergency room, the nurse was told I was having a heart problem and immediately the doctor and staff checked me, did an EKG and put me in ICU.

The custom in Bacolod hospital is when one is in the ICU, a family member or someone stays with the patient 24/7. The Luther family took turns staying with me the 9 days I was there.

Now I know in my knower the answer to "all my heart." I was in a foreign

country, did not know anyone except the Luther family, did not know medical staff, nor the medications I was asked to take, nor what the IV's given me. I remember thinking I cannot help myself; I was being waited on and tended to.



Fortunately, I had purchased "trip insurance," not knowing I was to need it. The insurance paid for 9 days in Bacolod hospital, being air lifted to Manila where I could have

the heart procedure needed. On arrival in Manila, I was taken to the ER, the Doctor did an immediate exam and told me I needed 3 stents. He could do that the next morning at 8 a.m. I remember thinking I didn't know if I wanted him to do the procedure or not, then I thought if it is not done, they will never allow me to return to Memphis. The procedure was done, and I was in the hospital for 7 days. The doctor came by every day to check on me and said I could be released on Saturday.

I did not know the trip insurance required a medical doctor to travel with me back to Memphis. The insurance provided two business class tickets for me and the doctor, from Manila to Memphis. When I left the hospital, I knew I could not walk far, so a wheelchair was provided which got me to the front of the long lines at check in. The doctor monitored me, checked on me and made sure I was all right till we arrived in Memphis.

Now I know God answers prayer, and I am deeply grateful to Him and all who cared for me in this adventure. **MM**

Jimmy Allen Passes at Age 90

By Eddie Cloer

One of the truly great preachers in our brotherhood, Jimmy Allen, left this world on August 5th at Age 90. He taught at Harding University for fifty years.

Jimmy's boyhood days, teenage years, and early twenties make one of the most touching narratives of a boy—with almost nothing in his favor—arising and making someone tremendously special out of his life. His abilities and accomplishments as an evangelistic preacher have produced some of the most thrilling chapters in the history of preaching in the church.



So far as I know, Jimmy never took a preaching class; he learned about preaching by preaching. His life as a local preacher (from 1953 to 1959 in Prescott, Magnolia, and Lepanto, Arkansas) involved preaching two and three times each Sunday, teaching Bible classes, debating when necessary, studying with non-Christians, solving church struggles as best he could, and preaching in ten to twelve gospel meetings each year. The more he preached, the clearer it became that Jimmy Allen was God's gift to the church at that unique time in history.

At the beginning of Jimmy's preaching career, the big cooperative meetings among the churches of Christ began in the early sixties and lasted into the late seventies. Jimmy held over 50 of these cooperative meetings. Some of them went over 8,000 in attendance. During the latter part of Jimmy's preaching life, he continued to hold twenty or more meetings a year. In 1990, Jimmy reported that in his meetings, 7,600 had come for baptism and 24,500 had come for prayer.

Jimmy believed that all preaching must be persuasive, but evangelistic preaching to Jimmy Allen was a public attempt with the Word of God to move the unsaved to a decision regarding Jesus Christ. From the start, he preached to make a difference, and responses came to almost every sermon that he preached. **MM**

● Pine Grove Church of Christ, Fulton, Ms

Jimmy Tucker, an elder at Pine Grove, announced they have hired a new preacher. Haston Handler and his wife, Chloe, will begin their work at Pine Grove, beginning in September. Ronnie Livingston from Marietta preached the last four Sundays at Pine Grove.

● Skyline Church of Christ, Tupelo, Ms

We worshipped at Skyline on Sunday, August 30, 2020. It was very encouraging to see so many young couples with children in the audience that Sunday morning. Norman and Joyce Maranto are working with the Skyline congregation. Norman Maranto and Mike Willis serve as elders. June Franks

PREACHER SEARCH

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Hurricane Hits Lake Charles

I am sure we have all seen the devastation Hurricane Laura did to the city of Lake Charles Louisiana. The city was left with no water or electricity, hundreds of trees blocking roadways, and many homes and businesses destroyed.

However, the Enterprise Boulevard church building survived with little damage, and within 36 hours had become a center of activity handing out food and water to area residences. Pray for our fellow Christians, many of whom suffered great damage to their homes. **-dd**



READERS' RESPONSE

Reasons Why We Continue Publishing the Magnolia Messenger

- Lord bless ya'll for the good work that ya'll are doing with this publication of reaching lost souls and encouraging the saved.
(Sandra Corn, Etowah, TN)
- Thank God for all of you who work so hard doing God's work through the Messenger.
(Ken & Linda Harris, Senatobia, MS)
- Outstanding magazine.
(Charles Hamilton, Homer, LA)
- We appreciate your good magazine. Keep up the good work in very trying times.
(James Hendrix, Arab, AL)
- The Magnolia Messenger really encourages me. I enjoy it so much.
(Sue McDaniel, Eddy, TX)
- We want to see the work of the Messenger continue.
(Ray & Melba Penna, Holladay, TN)
- Keep up the good work. We enjoy your magazine.
(Dan Silvers, Matthews, MO)
- May God bless you richly for the work you are doing in spreading the gospel.
(Lessie Tanson, Stockton, CA)
- I thank God for you all and the work that you do. May the Word keep blessing us all.
(Bertha Rockingham, Brookhaven, MS)
- Enjoy the magazine. Keep up the good work being done through the magazine.
(John K. Wills, Owingsville, KY)
- We look forward to reading each publication. Thanks and God bless.
(Myrna Cooley, Merryville, LA)
- May God continue to bless the great work of the Magnolia Messenger.
(Pierce & Nell Flatt, Montgomery, AL)
- Love your paper especially Cecil May's comments. Also Dennis' weekly "inscriptions"
(Jerry L. Jacques, West Plains, MO)
- Love your magazine.
(Marie Spoerl, Knoxville, AR)
- Enjoy your paper. Keep up the good work.
(Herb Smith, Molino, FL)
- The work you do is wonderful, and we love reading the Magnolia Messenger. We also love Bible quiz.
(Mitchell & Judy Gurley, Potts Camp, MS)
- We enjoy MM so very much! Keep up the good work!!!
(Tom & Barbara Cloninger, Sherwood, AR)
- Love the Magnolia Messenger!
(Lynn & Sandra Grisham, Ripley, MS)
- We appreciate the good work you do for Christ.
(Michael & Michelle Simpson, Amory, MS)

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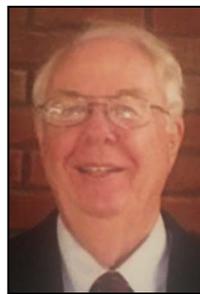
BORN? IN SIN

by **Bill Becker**

The lady seated before me was a mother of ten children. A comment from a neighbor, questioning how many of the ten could possibly be “elected unto salvation,” was troubling her. “Did it seem likely all ten had been predestined to salvation?” Oh the agony and despair she felt thinking that even one of her children was not elected to salvation and could not have God’s grace! “Alas,” she was told, “such is the reality of inherited sin. All are born in sin, like David, and are doomed to damnation unless God had predetermined to save them.” The neighbor, knowingly or not, was reflecting on John Calvin’s comment that David’s statement in Psalm 51:5 afforded “striking testimony in proof of original sin entailed by Adam upon the whole human family” (Calvin). Some theologians claim the unction of the Holy Spirit (anointing) came upon David “after the previous work of grace upon his heart by the Holy Spirit” (McConnell, Moody, Fitt, p522) This claim, that prior to Samuel’s anointing of David (1 Samuel 16:1-12), the Holy Spirit had miraculously converted David’s heart, is the supposed explanation as to how those who inherit original sin can be saved--only by a miraculous conversion of the heart through the agency of the Holy Spirit. But does David’s statement, “I was shapen in iniquity and in sin did my mother conceive me” really support the doctrine of original sin?

David was the youngest of eight sons born to Jesse (1 Samuel 16:1-10). Yet the verse says the sin in the conception lay with his mother. This cannot mean, as some may think, that David was an illegitimate child, for she bore all eight sons, including David, to Jesse (Ruth 4:17). This sin isn’t David’s acknowledgment of hereditary depravity either. Why?

Psalm 51 is supposed to be in reference to King David’s sin with Bathsheba. Before David was anointed as king, God referred to David as “a man after mine own heart” (1 Samuel 13:14 cf. Acts 13:22). If David was a man after God’s own heart before he was anointed, then what happened after he was anointed, for it was King David who sinned with Bathsheba? The question here isn’t whether one who has been reconciled to God (forgiven) could succumb to temptation and sin again, but whether one whose heart had, as Calvinism alleges, been once miraculously regenerated must now plead for another “regenerated” heart! For David cried “Create in me a clean heart, O God” (Psalm 51:10).



If we view this sin as having taken place after David’s heart had been miraculously regenerated by the Holy Spirit (per Calvinism), questions beg to be answered: Why would the Holy Spirit need do so again? Was David included in the “elect” when the Holy Spirit first miraculously regenerated his heart? What power had overcome the Holy Spirit’s miraculous regeneration of David’s heart? Is David’s heart now to be viewed as un-regenerated? Is he, at that point, no longer in the “elect”? If not, how do we explain an unregenerate heart found in “the elect”?

If to avoid these questions one is moved to assert that the occasion of Psalm 51 refers to a time prior to David’s anointing, such an occurrence is still during a time in which David’s heart had supposedly already been regenerated, for the work of grace by the Holy Spirit is alleged to have been before his anointing. On the

other hand, if one attempts to place David's statement prior to a miraculous work of grace by the Holy Spirit, then it was while he was still in the alleged unregenerate state of hereditary depravity that God said David is "a man after mine own heart" (Acts 13:22). What kind of heart was that? This text, obviously, is a difficult one. But there is a solution which neither contradicts scripture nor reflects adversely upon the character of God.

The sin to which David refers is a sin of his ancestral (not biological) mother. David refers to a birth some ten generations previous in which Tamar had born twins (Pharez and Zerah) by her father-in-law, Judah, out of deception. When Tamar's husband, Er, died, Judah asked her to stay with his family, promising to give her his other son, Shelah, for a husband when he was grown (Genesis 38:11). Judah did not keep his promise, so she disguised herself as a prostitute, and Judah went in to her and the twins were conceived (Genesis 38:16). As a result of the law against those of illegitimate birth entering the congregation of the LORD (Deuteronomy 23:2), these descendants were prohibited

from entering "until the tenth generation." A reading of Matthew 1:3-6 shows that David is the tenth in this ancestral line: 1) Phares, 2) Esrom, 3) Aram, 4) Aminadab, 5) Naasson, 6) Salmon, 7) Boaz, 8) Obed, 9) Jesse, 10) David.

David, too, brought forth an illegitimate child (Solomon by Bathsheba) and practiced deception against Uriah (2 Samuel 11). The similarity of his sinful actions stirred within him memory of a like event in his ancestral line (Judah and Tamar), one which had kept his people out of the house of the LORD until the tenth generation. He keenly identified with that sin of long ago and expressed himself accordingly in Psalm 51. The realization that David was the first of his family to have the privilege of "entering in to the congregation of the Lord" in ten long generations gives rise to a greater appreciation for his heart-felt statement in Psalm 122:1: "I was glad when they said to me, Let us go into the house of the Lord." **MM**

Commentary on Psalms by John Calvin, 1557: English translation, John King, 1847-1850, www.sacred-texts.com/chr/calvin/cc09/cc09016.htm.

Record of Christian Work, Vol. 22; ed. Alexander McConnell, William Revell Moody, Arthur Percy Fitt, Record of Christian Work Company, p. 522: books.google.com/books?id=2EkUMfOvZ_YC&pg=PA522.

A THOUGHTFUL PAUSE

Jerry Groves, Minister

Higher Ground Church of Christ • Aurora, Colorado

"Therefore when we could endure it no longer, we thought it best to be left behind at Athens alone, and we sent Timothy, our brother and God's fellow worker in the gospel of Christ, to strengthen and encourage you as to your faith" (1 Thessalonians 3:1-2).

The term "therefore" in scripture, sends the careful Bible students to previous verses to investigate what the "therefore" is there for. We read in chapter 2:17 that Paul communicated he and his traveling companions had "been taken away from you (the Thessalonians) for a short while—in person, not in spirit—were all the more eager with great desire to see your face." Acts 17: 10 informs us, "The brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea". Acts 17:1-10 is a report of their missionary work and of their hasty departure from Thessalonica. This happened because of the mob assembled by some jealous Jews of the city who were upset because many were turning to Jesus "as the Christ".

Paul had spent so little time with them and he knew they needed direction. Even though they received God's word in "much tribulation and joy" (1 Thessalonians 1: 6), they still needed to be discipled.

Paul had his hands full in Berea and Athens, but he had discipled a faithful protégé, Timothy, whom he could send to them without reservation, who could build them up in the faith and encourage them to overcome the tempter and stand firm in the faith (1 Thessalonians 3:5,8).

He also prayed for them "night and day" that he could complete what was lacking in their faith (3:10). They, for their part, had remained faithful and loving and they missed Paul, too. This news gave Paul great comfort and peace of mind (1 Thessalonians 3:6-7).

(A thoughtful pause.) Who's missing in our assemblies? Are we praying for them? Do we long to see them excel in the faith? The baptismal waters are not the end of the faith walk, but merely the beginning of our journey with God. Rest assured, jealous onlookers will set traps for the newly converted, and the Tempter will seek to lure them back to the beggarly elements from which they have been rescued.

Therefore, the faithful among us, like Paul, must be earnestly concerned for their growth and development. We must have the same attitude he had for the newly converted—an attitude of love, care, and action to seek their best. It's not only the preacher's job; he probably has his hands full.

(A thoughtful pause.) Who are we missing?

The faithful must think about them, pray for them, check on them, and encourage them in the faith. **MM**

Visiting among Churches in north Mississippi



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

May through August 2020

by Eddie Lewis

This has definitely been an unusual year for all of us as we have faced the COVID-19 pandemic. All the churches closed in-person services for April and May. It was a time when many churches had to think outside the box and begin streaming their services and streaming Bible studies. I hope these online services will continue and grow as we think about ways to reach out to our communities.

I appreciate so much the opportunity to inform you about my mission work among the churches in North Mississippi. I appreciate the Germantown church of Christ sponsoring me the last seven years in this ministry. This report covers ten Sundays during the months of May through August. I was able to speak at five churches including serving as an interim for Coffeerville and Pine Grove near Fulton, MS, and visiting with three other churches. Because of the COVID-19 virus pandemic, I had to stop in-person visits until May 31st.

■ **May 31:** I visited with the **West Corinth church of Christ**. Blake Nicholas is the minister there. He has been with the congregation for several years. They have two elders and over 100 in attendance. This is the first visit I have made to a church building since the COVID-19 restrictions. The congregation practiced social distancing and handed out individual communion cups or what most people call travel cups. They only had the worship service. They have been,



Sammi and Blake Nicholas- West Corinth

and continue, to stream the service and special Bible classes. I am thankful that things have improved to the point that congregations are feeling they can assemble at their buildings and have worship again.

Blake did a wonderful job of preaching. He has been doing a series on "Identifying the New Testament church from what we read in Scripture." The last few lessons have centered on Salvation. He said he had preached on verses that emphasize the importance of salvation. He talked about the birth of Christ, the blood of Christ, and the authority of Christ in salvation. This Sunday he preached on Grace. He gave four verses that emphasize Grace and Salvation. It was a great lesson. I enjoyed my visit and seeing old friends.

■ **June 7:** I was invited to preach for the **Central Academy church of Christ** near Batesville, MS. Ed Casteel has been the minister there for nine years. I was going to visit with Ed, but he told me his wife, Iris, was in the hospital and he needed me to teach his Bible class and preach for him. I was happy to sub

for him. I am always glad to help out whenever I can. The church has two elders and around 45 in attendance. Ed also has a weekly radio program on the station in Batesville. It is a good congregation with lots of friendly folks. I enjoyed my visit with them. I pray that you will keep Iris in your prayers. She has been suffering with health issues for a while.

In Bible class I led a discussion of Nehemiah 4:9-23, "Discouragement: It's Cause and Cure." It is an interesting story about the challenges Nehemiah faces as he rebuilds the wall around Jerusalem. We looked at some causes for discouragement and some steps to overcome it.

In the worship I preached on "The Graciousness of God" based on Jesus' parable in Matthew 20:1-16. Jesus gives this parable to instruct the Apostles



Tommy Boyette and Johnny Berryhill-Central Acad-Batesville



Iris and Ed Casteel-Central Academy-Batesville

on their motivation to do the work of God. It teaches us so much about God's grace.

■ **June 14:** I visited with the **Senatobia church of Christ**. After 30+ years of serving as the pulpit minister, Mike Jones, has stepped down and taken a secondary roll. The new pulpit minister is their previous Youth Minister, Grant Azbell. It has been an easy transition since Grant has been there for several

years. I congratulate Grant on his new role in ministry. I know he will do a wonderful job and is well loved by the church. The church is served by four elders and has around 250 in attendance. Of course, because of the COVID-19



Mike Jones and Grant Azbell-Senatobia

crisis, they took several precautions to make sure everyone was safe, including social distancing and individual (travel) communion cups. They had a group of greeters that checked my temperature and took me to my seat.

Grant has been doing a summer series in the book of Genesis. His lesson was on the "Fall" recorded in Genesis 2&3. He mentioned this section as a drama in four acts. Act one is God's Creation, Act two is God's Community, Act three is the Disruption, and Act four is God's Judgment and Expulsion. He ended by telling us of Act five where God sends his son to redeem man. It was a very good lesson and I enjoyed my visit.

■ **June 21:** I was invited to preach at the **Coffeerville church of Christ**. This was the first of four Sundays during this quarter. They continue to look for a minister. I am hopeful that they will find someone soon. It's been over a year since their preacher left.

They had 40 in attendance and practiced social distancing. They had the individual communion cups and wore face masks. It was good to see everyone. This was their second week meeting at the building.

Since it was "Father's Day," I had a special lesson on "Enriching Your Marriage." I missed Mother's Day, so I combined the two and talked about the importance of the husband/wife relationship as the foundation of the family. The other three Sunday's I preached on

three of the parables of Jesus. I talked about the Laborers in the Vineyard, Seeking the Lost, and The Unmerciful Servant.

■ **June 28:** I visited with the **Old Union church of Christ** near Carrollton, MS. Mike Schnitz is the minister there. He has worked with the congregation for 15 years. He retired from his work and now preaches for the congregation. They have no elders, and on this Sunday about 20 in attendance. It was a joy for me to meet the brethren there. It is a warm and friendly congregation. The building they are meeting in was constructed in 1910. The congregation dates from the 1840's.

Mike has been preaching a series on Angels. This was his third lesson in the series. He looked at Revelation 12 and the figurative battle in Heaven between Michael and the dragon. He asked the question: Does God need a war to defeat Satan? He answered it by considering some examples of Jesus and how many soldiers He used to defeat Satan



Bonnie and Mike Schnitz-Old Union- Carrollton

in Matthew 26 and John 18. Our battle is a spiritual one, and we need the armor of God to defeat Satan. It was a good lesson. I enjoyed visiting with the church.

■ **July 5:** I was invited to preach at the **Tunica church of Christ**. Dennis Doughty is the minister there. He has done a wonderful work with the congregation. They have seen some growth even with some critical losses. The church has no elders and normally around 40 in attendance. Dennis and Kathy were away on a vacation trip with family. I was happy to help while they were gone. It just so happens that their song leader was gone too, so I led singing and preached. It reminded me of my days in college

when I had to do everything; prayers, song leading, pass the communion, and preach. It was good to see the brethren there again.

In the worship I presented a lesson on the parable of the "Graciousness of God" based on Matthew 20:1-16. Jesus used the parable to warn the Apostles about having the right attitude about their service in the Kingdom.

■ **August 2:** I was invited to preach for the **Pine Grove church of Christ** near Fulton, MS. They have a new preacher coming in September. He is Haston Hadley from the Florence, AL area. He is a graduate of MSOP in Germantown, TN. He has been preaching the last two years in Kentucky. I welcome him to Mississippi and pray that he will be a blessing to the church at Pine Grove. The church has three elders and normally around 100 in attendance. This Sunday I think it was around 70. The church has a good mix of ages, and I have enjoyed helping them during this time of change.

In the worship I presented a lesson on Luke chapter 15. This chapter is often called the "Gospel in the Gospel," the story of the Prodigal Son, and the "Pearl of the Parables." It tells us how God views the lost and His great love for us. It also shows us how a lost son comes home. It is a great lesson on seeking the lost.

Update: The Tiplersville church of Christ has hired Seth Williams, a recent graduate of FHU and son to the new preacher at West Main church in Tupelo, Kerry Williams. **MM**

"PREACHER STUFF" IS GOOD STUFF

Harding University, under Dan Williams, Director of Church Relations, puts out an email called "Preacher Stuff." It is filled with sermon ideas, illustrations, comments, and even a joke or two. I enjoy it and highly recommend it to all preachers. Just send your email address to: PreacherStuff@harding.edu and ask to be added to their mailing list. -dd

THE CONFIDENCE OF PRAYER

by **Bill Brandstatter**

One of the great blessings of being a Christian is answered prayer. We can have confidence and assurance as we pray to God. Some Christians appear to lack the confidence they need. Often a person might say, "I hope God heard my prayer." Others may state, "I think God heard my prayer." John tells us in 1 John 5:14 that we have an assurance and a confidence that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.

First, John states whose prayers will be heard. The simple word "we" tells us. He is writing to Christians. But he may also be writing to faithful Christians. He is writing to those who are born of God (1 Jn. 5:1,18). James reminds us that the "effective fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much" (James 5:16 NKJV). If I am where I need to be with God, He will hear and answer my prayer according to His will.

Next, John states we should ask. Jesus had said on one occasion that the Father knows what we need before we ask (Mt.6:8). If that is so, why ask? God wants us to show our humility and our trust in him. We do not ask just to be asking. We ask to show we know who can help us and that help is beyond ourselves. James tells us that sometimes we may not get what we need because we don't ask. He writes, "Yet, you do not have because you do not ask" (James 4:2 NKJV). So, we must ask God with confidence that He will answer our prayers.

Then, John tells us that prayer must be according to His will. The will of God is sometimes revealed to us in Scripture. It is the will of God that all men might be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth (1 Tim. 2:4). Paul prayed that the Ephesian Christians would understand what the will of the Lord is (Eph. 5:17). I can understand the Lord's will regarding prayer as well.

The Lord's will is that

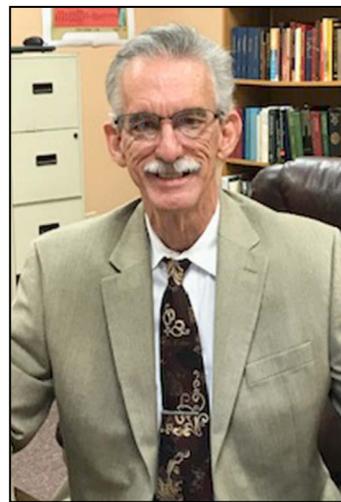
I am righteous when I
pray (James 5:16).

It is his will that I should pray without doubting (James 1:6). It is His will that I pray without ceasing (1 Th. 5:16). It is His will that I put away sin, and worship Him so He will hear me (John 9:31).

I don't know how God will answer my prayers. John says He will. I also don't know when. His answer may be yes. The answer may be no. The answer may be for me to wait awhile. When Paul prayed for his thorn in the flesh to be removed, he got a different answer than what he expected. It was an answer, however, according to God's

will. The response from God was "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness" (2 Cor. 12:9 NKJV).

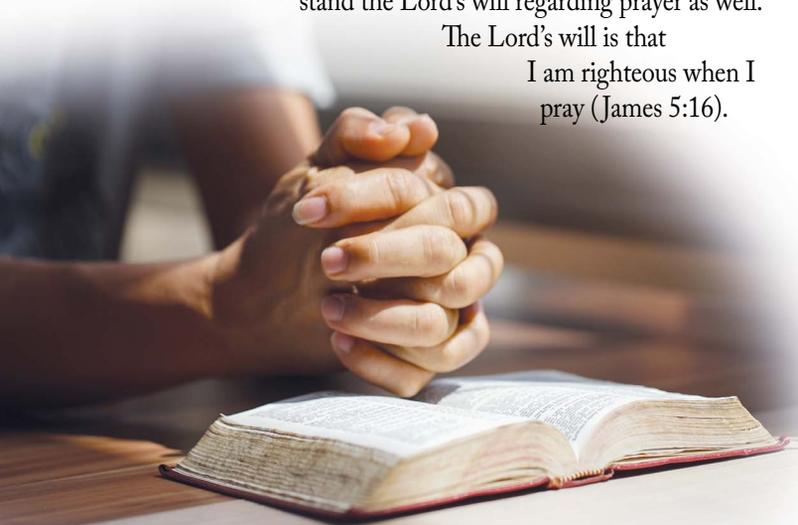
He hears us. This is important to us. God hearing us simply means He answers our prayers. Some have argued that God hears all prayers. In the way John uses it, that is not so. God hears or responds to those who ask according to His will. But man sometimes blocks the connection. Here is what Isaiah adds, "Behold, the LORD's



hand is not shortened that it cannot save; nor His ear heavy, that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear." (Is.59:1, 2). What great assurance we have! If we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. The more we know about Him, the more confidence we will have of our prayers being answered. John writes in 1 Jn. 5:15, "And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him." One of the great assurances of the Christian is answered prayer. I am glad God hears and God answers, aren't you?

William Brandstatter, cocpreach@gmail.com **MM**

(Bill preaches for the church in Marion, Illinois. I am not sure exactly how he and I connected. He began getting my "Inscriptions" years ago and I began getting his bulletin. He writes good articles and I appreciate him answering my request for articles on prayer. -dd)



Precious Memories

IN MEMORY OF

JUDI BETTS

Virginia C. Henley
(Daphne, AL)

INEZ BRANNON

Herschel & Dorothy Ford
(Florence, MS)

CLARA HALES

Gloria Shiers
(Greenwood, MS)

BURGESS

JACKSON

Gay Jackson, Debbie Hall,
Brenda Stokes
(Louisville, MS)

DOTSY DOWNS

Reid & Frieda Thompson
(DeRidder, LA)

Garnett & Betty Harris
(Brandon, MS)

Wilburn DeLancey
(Delhi, LA)

James Anderson
(Gatlinburg, TN)

Buck & Annette Vinson
(Leesville, LA)

John & Wanda Eaves
(Merryville, LA)

Donna Franks
(DeQuincy, LA)

Vera Spencer
(Jackson, MS)

ANDREW DICKINSON

Vera Spencer
(Jackson, MS)

JOHN SIMPSON

Jimmy Moffett
(Memphis, TN)

LARRY MAYEUX

RICHARD MORGAN

Reid & Frieda Thompson
(DeRidder, LA)

LEE ADAMS

Clarissa Watson
(Byram, MS)

T.J. PEDIGO

Bobbie Pedigo
(Prattville, AL)

EVIE G. SMITH

Rhenda Miltner
(Coldwater, MS)

AL FRANKS

Reid & Frieda Thompson
(DeRidder, LA)

Garnett & Betty Harris
(Brandon, MS)

Carroll & Amy Foote
(Somerville, AL)

Wilburn DeLancey
(Delhi, LA)

Aron & Jeanette Horis
(Harrison, AR)

Donna Franks
(DeQuincy, LA)

Charles & Mary Johnson
(Hattiesburg, MS)

Betty (Jean) Harris
(D'Lo, MS)

EVELYN JAMIESON

Anonymous

JOHN ALDRIDGE

STEPHEN ALDRIDGE
Garnett & Betty Harris
(Brandon, MS)

JACK HENSON

VIRGINIA PHILLIPS THORNE
Alma & Jerry Mitchell
(Athens, AL)

PAUL FRANKS

Reid & Frieda Thompson
(DeRidder, LA)

Garnett & Betty Harris
(Brandon, MS)

Lori Ivey

(Madison, MS)

Carroll & Amy Foote
(Somerville, AL)

Wilburn DeLancey
(Delhi, LA)

Donna Franks
(DeQuincy, LA)

Charles & Mary Johnson
(Hattiesburg, MS)

Betty (Jean) Harris
(D'Lo, MS)

MARNECE MOORE

Lori Ivey
(Madison, MS)

OLIVIA SANDERS

Wanza Gray
(Corinth, MS)

BILLY F. SMITH

Lou Smith
(Arlington, TN)

FRANCES THOMPSON

Lori Ivey
(Madison, MS)

CINDY DOYLE

Cindi, Jared & Jon Franks
(DeQuincy, LA)

BONNIE YELLOTT

Cindi Franks & Amber Wylie
(DeQuincy, LA)

RANDY HAZLIP

KYLE HAZLIP

DWIGHT HAZLIP

Kathryn Papillon
(Houston, TX)

VERNON CROTWELL

Betty (Jean) Harris
(D'Lo, MS)

RUTH PRITCHARD

Wilburn DeLancey
(Delhi, LA)

HELEN KIRK

Alice Dempsey
(Bradford, AR)

CAROLE CHILDERS

J W Johnson
(Dothan, AL)

FORREST RICHARD

Ray Hyatt
(DeQuincy, LA)

JOANN HALL

JANE DOUGHTY
Barbara Parks
(Somerville, TN)

RUTH MANNING

Earl Manning
(Memphis, TN)

RAY FRANKS

Reid & Frieda Thompson
(DeRidder, LA)

Wilburn DeLancey
(Delhi, LA)

Garnett & Betty Harris
(Brandon, MS)

Donna Franks
(DeQuincy, LA)

DORSA SPARKS

Nancy Bolton
(Belmont, MS)

INEZ BRANNON

Talley & Barbara Neely
(Florence, MS)

CHERRY DANIELS

KYLE HAZLIP

Nelma Hazlip
(Natchez, MS)

VELMA DELANCEY

IRA BULTER

JAMES BRADSHAW

Wilburn DeLancey
(Delhi, LA)

Donna Franks
(DeQuincy, LA)

ALPHA LITTLE

Catherine Hollie
(Amory, MS)

LEE MCADAMS

Betty Bulter
(Florence, MS)

BILLY GOFF, SR.

Mary Ruth Goff
(Mooreville, MS)

CLYDE NEAVES

Anonymous

LEO & SHIRLEY ELY

Elaine Ely
(Johnson City, TN)

SHELIA YOUNG

Tony Young
(Rogers, AR)

BETTY WALKER

Carolyn Stanford
(Byhalia, MS)

JAMES (Tom) Bonner

Carol Bonner
(Batesville, MS)

PAT & RODNEY MELTON

Jean & Sid Clemmer
(Faulkner, MS)

VICKY BEARDAIN

Jean Morrow
(Duck Hill, MS)

AL FRANKS

PAUL FRANKS

Betty Love Pearson
(Winona, MS)

CARL SPENCER

Mary Henley
(Brandon, MS)

DONNEL ASKEW

JIM DAVIS

JESSE FRANKS

HUBERT FRANKS

M.B. RENA FRANKS

JUANITA FULGHAM

ROD HYATT

GWEN LAROCQUE

Donna Franks
(DeQuincy, LA)

JUANITA WILSON

Alice Humphries
(Natchez, MS)

IN HONOR OF

PEGGY & TOMMY SHULL

JUNE FRANKS

GLENDA FRANKS

Wilburn DeLancey
(Delhi, LA)

SHERRY GORDON

Joyce Stephens
(Grenada, MS)

THE LA-TX RV RALLY

FAMILY

WILBURN DELANCEY

PALESTINE CHURCH OF

CHRIST "FAMILY"

DEQUINCY CHURCH OF

CHRIST "FAMILY"

Donna Franks
(DeQuincy, LA)

CHARLES FULGHAM

BONNIE STRICKLAND

HELEN STEWART

Bob & Glenda Singleton
(Water Valley, MS)



Due to the COVID19 Situation two large gatherings have announced their postponement of events;

Harding University Lectureship
have been postponed until next year's date of
September 26-29, 2021.

Even though **PTP** was not held this year at the Tennessee physical location, they will continue to have online material available. See ad on page 20.

from a Woman's Viewpoint

It is my privilege to introduce to you, the readers of the "Magnolia Messenger," the author of the article, "Reflections of a Son," written by our youngest son, Stephen. Dennis Doughty, Editor of the Messenger, asked Stephen if he would write an article about growing up with Al Franks as his father. Stephen doesn't claim to be a writer, but he agreed to do the article. Knowing his dad as he did, I know Stephen felt honored to share with you his memories from his childhood. Stephen may not think of himself as a writer, but as his mom I really appreciate his good memory and his willingness to share with us his article, "Reflections of a Son."



My Dad's Prayer Life

REFLECTIONS OF A SON

by Stephen Franks

I am Stephen Franks, the youngest son of Al & June Franks. I was blessed to be born into this family on September 6, 1966. For fifty-three years I was so thankful to have my dad in my life. I have many fond memories of my dad being a devoted man of prayer.

Mom has told me many times the events that happened the day I was born. She had a doctor's appointment the afternoon of September 6. The doctor told her to go to the hospital immediately; she was about to have her third baby. Being in a panic, my mom said she rushed home to tell my dad they needed to go to the hospital immediately. My dad, the laid-back person he was, responded by saying, "let's stop and have prayer before we go." Mom was already panicking and worried she would have me before they got to the hospital. But before they did anything else, my dad led a prayer. Mom said it seemed like at the time my dad prayed forever. They arrived at the hospital in Yazoo City, MS, about 5:30 that Tuesday evening, and I was born at 6:40. Dr. Moorhead announced to my parents, "You have another little preacher." Little did he know I would be a car salesman, but my parents told me whatever career I pursued to always be a Christian.

One thing I learned growing up with

my parents is how much emphasis they put on prayer. As a family we had nightly devotionals, with all of us being involved. My dad would read and teach, and all three of us boys would lead prayers. Before every trip we would have prayer, whether traveling in the car or the airplane. My dad was a pilot, and would taxi to the end of the runway and say a prayer. As a child I can remember thinking we might get hit by another plane sitting on the end of the runway. But we had to pray before we took off. I feel confident that dad's prayers worked. He had over 4,500 hours of flying time and never had an accident.

My dad had a way to pray that I did not appreciate when I was younger. I learned he could really lay it out there in prayer.

I can remember he studied his Bible and spent hours in prayer during the week. Dad always had a folded sheet of paper in his front pocket. On this folded sheet of paper he would write his schedule for praying and studying God's Word for the day.

Last year, I invited my dad to attend a luncheon with me at the Jackson Country Club in Jackson, MS. It was a fund raiser for a United States Senator. Dad was always busy, and this really wasn't his cup of tea. I told him we would fly down and I would make sure he could lead the prayer. There were about 40 in attendance--mostly car

dealers from across the state and, of course, some politicians. I was a little nervous, knowing my dad like I did. Sometimes politicians and car dealers get a bad rap. Let me tell you, I have heard my dad preach thousands of times, and pray many more times, but that day he really laid it out there. When he said "amen," the group expressed their gratitude to dad and told him it was a wonderful prayer. One gentleman, who usually said the prayer at our meetings, indicated he was never going to say the prayer again after hearing my dad.

Dad never made a statement on what he was going to do without saying "if it's the Lord's will." He always searched the Word and prayed before all decisions, even what we might call little decisions.

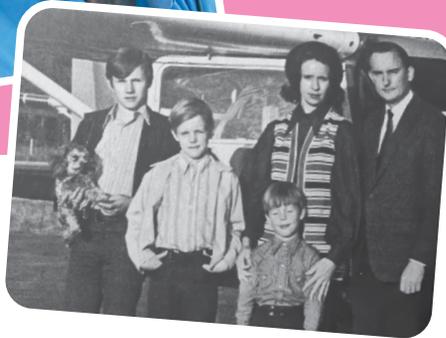
A lot of people today say "I'll be praying for you," but when my dad said it, I assure you with the help of his notes in his front pocket, he did pray for you on a daily basis.

I have the Chevrolet Buick GMC dealership in Kosciusko. Dad really enjoyed coming to the dealership, and did so three or four times a week. He always talked to





Stephen and his dad enjoying one of their last flights together.



The Flying Family

Picture appeared in the local newspaper on November 18, 1971. Paul holding Peppie their little Toy Poodle, Philip, Stephen, Al and June Franks.

everyone there. We sponsor, along with many other businesses in town, "Cruise for a Cure". We usually kicked it off with my dad blessing the event, saying a few words, and saying the prayer. We are thankful this prayer was recorded. My niece, Alison, typed the recorded prayer and made it available to you, the readers of the Messenger. My Dad's words are so beautiful in this prayer:

"Let's pray together. Holy and Righteous Heavenly Father, we're so grateful that we could be together on this occasion, and encourage each other in some of the struggles and the battles we have to fight here upon this earth. Father, we're thankful that in the midst of our illnesses that we can come together and work together and seek to find solutions to some of the problems that we face. We are especially mindful of those who are suffering with Cancer. We ask, Heavenly Father, Your blessings upon each and every one of them. We are thankful to those who are trying to find cures and ways to help people who are suffering. We pray that You will bless every such effort. We are thankful for the American Cancer Society and for their good efforts. And Father, we are thankful that people in this community, and nearby communities, can join together in an effort to raise funds to help people who are suffering with these various diseases. We are grateful that this vehicle can be used in a way that will get attention and cause people to want to give to a good cause. And we pray Your blessings upon everyone who is participat-

ing in this program. We pray that You will bless those who will be driving about and going from place to place and spreading the word. We pray that their efforts will be very fruitful. We are thankful again that we can be together and give you thanks for the gift of life. We pray for better health on the part of all those who are sick, and pray that You will help us to realize that through Jesus Christ it is possible for us to look for a place, for a Home where there will be no more Cancer, where there will be no more sickness, and we will live forever. Thank you for Jesus Christ. In His name we pray. Amen."

About two weeks before the passing of my dad, we were at the airport talking. Dad, out of the blue, told me he was closer to God than he had ever been. Little did he know he would be in the very presence of God in two short weeks. We also talked about the future of the Magnolia Messenger. He loved the Messenger and enjoyed so much being the Editor for over 40 years. I am so thankful that with the help of all involved, the Messenger is much alive and thriving. My dad always prayed and gave thanks for those who contributed to the Messenger.

My dad was the best role model I have ever known. Oh, to be more like him, but I fall short every day. **MM**

PERSONAL WORKERS' SEMINAR

IT IS A JOY TO ONCE AGAIN host a Personal Workers' Seminar on Techniques at the Cecil May, Jr. Academic Building on the campus of Magnolia Bible Center in Kosciusko, MS.

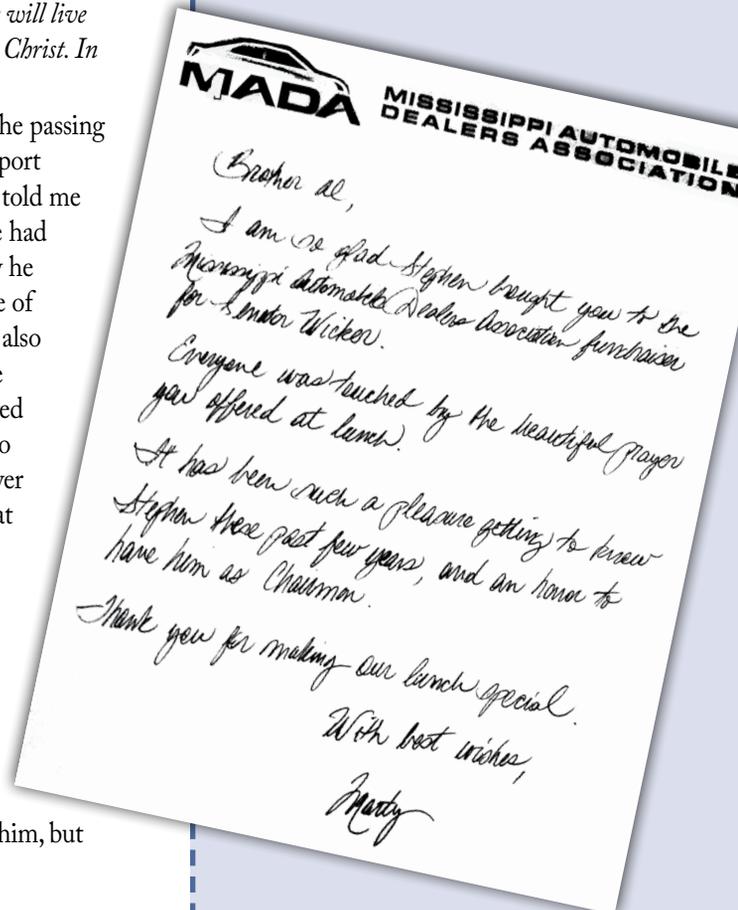
The seminar will be held on Friday, October 16, from 10:00 a.m. till Noon and offers a free lunch for anyone attending with us. I hope this pandemic will be under control by October and allow us to host this Personal Workers' Seminar this year of 2020.

I WILL PRESENT conversation techniques, which benefit the personal worker as biblical studies are sought with friends and fellow citizens of any community. Of course, a pandemic time may hinder us doing personal work in the homes, but the use of the internet system for this good work will be discussed.

There are many more attitudes which we as Personal Workers encounter; let's get together and share some techniques which help out the people in this Personal Workers' Seminar. Contact: Robert Rawson, 662-457-2468 **MM**



Robert Rawson



by Dennis Doughty
"INSCRIPTIONS"

WEDNESDAY PRAYER MEETINGS

In New York City an out-of-work, down-on-his-luck man named Jeremiah Lamphier walked the streets feeling hopeless. He turned to his faith and invited a few folks to join him in a Wednesday prayer service at noon in an abandoned floor of a church building. Six people attended that first Wednesday noon service, September 21st, 1857.

By the third week the number had grown to 40. A few weeks later the weekly prayer service had filled three floors of the old church. Other locations were set up and by spring the next year the newspaper reported that over 6,000 were attending these services. The prayer services were said to have "profoundly changed" the city. Two years later it was reported that Wednesday noon prayer services were being held in 1500 cities across America!

Jesus taught his disciple to pray (Luke 11), and prayer was one of the main practices of the New Testament church (Acts 2:42). When we are in troubled times, and do not know what to do or where to turn, we are taught to pray. When we need to praise God or ask for forgiveness, we are taught to pray. Many Christians discount or ignore the power of prayer. But Jeremiah Lamphier taught us the value and power of pausing during the week and praying and praising our Lord.

THE LANGUAGE OF PRAYER

Developing a strong prayer life is very much like learning a new language. The linguist Yancey writes, "If I want fluency in a foreign language [i.e. Prayer, dd], I must set aside time, no doubt giving up something else in the process. I must keep working at it, persisting despite the awkward feelings of a beginner. I persevere only because I value the final result. Nearly everything worthwhile involves the same process." Are you working on this language of all Christians?

To develop this language of Prayer we need to;

Find a Place.

Find a Time.

Establish a Routine.

Be Present; Get away from the distractions of daily life.

Be Persistent; pray often.

Adjust Expectations;

Give God time to work.

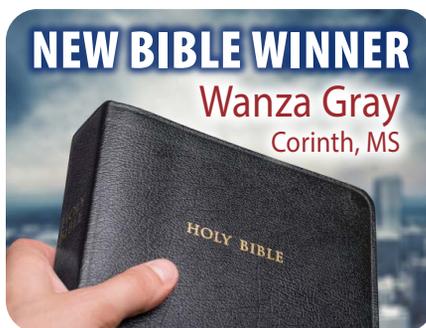
To learn any language, you must study and practice the language and be around those that speak it. It is the same with learning to pray. The apostles asked Jesus, "Lord teach us to pray" (Lu. 11:1) He taught them the simple language of prayer. How fluent are you in speaking this language? **MM**

TUPELO

The **East Main Church of Christ** in Tupelo plans a Fall Gospel Meeting with David Lipe doing the speaking. The dates are September 13-16, 2020, Sunday, 8:30; 10:00 A.M. and Monday-Wednesday at 7:00 P.M. Barry Kennedy is the local minister.

BOONEVILLE

Ken Forrest is the new preacher at the **Booneville Church of Christ**. Ken and his wife, Anita, moved to Booneville from Summerdale, AL. Brother Ken preached his first sermon at Booneville on July 26, 2020.



The Berean Children's Home

is funded through donations from individuals and churches. If you, your church, or business would be interested in helping with this work, please contact us. We are a registered 501 c(3) nonprofit organization under the Internal Revenue code and a registered charity in the state of Mississippi. Therefore, all donations are tax deductible as allowed by law.

Director: Andrew Redd 601-754-4138

Berean Children's Home
 1180 Berea Tr SE
 Bogue Chitto MS 39629

Email: bereanchildrenshome@cableone.net
Website: bereanhome.org
Facebook: Berean Children's Home
Twitter: @bereanhome

Office Phone: 601-823-5776
Office Hours: Monday - Friday
 8:30 am-4:30 pm
Fax: 601-823-5997

Our mission at Berean Children's Home is to provide children with a loving home and to assist each child to mature spiritually, intellectually, emotionally, socially and physically.



We are looking for a set of House Parents for our Home and if anyone is interested please contact me at my cell number or personal email.

These Sent In Answers to QB, Last Issue

- | | | | | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Wanda Yancey | 65. Danny Stacks | 128. Willie Carter | 187. Wm & Atlean Snow | 251. Darryl David Cook | 313. Stephanie Slaydor |
| 2. Patrilla Maddox | 66. Wanda Orman | 129. Lillie Williams | 188. Betty Spears | 252. Sue Glenn | 314. Earl Franks |
| 3. Ora Gladney | 67. Terri Sykes | 130. Ellen Welsh | 189. Bill Moore | 253. Beulah Rupert | 315. Rachel Valentin |
| 4. Idna Eddington | 68. Betty VanBuren | 131. Sylvester & | 190. Daniel Carter | 254. Marilyn Frierson | 316. Mark Hayden |
| 5. McArthur Williams | 69. Carolyn Stanford | Linda Burton | 191. Freeman Joseph | 255. Henry Norris | 317. Laura Nanney |
| 6. Mary Patrick | 70. Ken Harris | 132. Mary Brannan | 192. Janie Green | 256. Sue Mason | 318. Rick Bishop |
| 7. Charles Coffey | 71. Patricia Glover | 133. Alice Dempsey | 193. Ann Kimble | 257. Josephine Carter | 319. Kimmola McNairy |
| 8. John Gates, Jr. | 72. Cindy Heathcock | 134. Nathan Bugg | 194. Evelyn Baker | 258. Judy Gurley | 320. Marcella Moore |
| 9. Debbie Scroggins | 73. Melba Ogg | 135. Billy Alford | 195. Dorothy Grantham | 259. Mitchell Gurley | 321. Toni Burnett |
| 10. Mary Turner | 74. Donna Gulley | 136. Mildred Carroll | 196. Garry Gooch | 260. Clara Mae Francis | 322. Jerry Neighbors, Jr. |
| 11. Annie Mae Pipkin | 75. Bobby Howell | 137. Sharon Praytor | 197. Jerry Fleming | 261. Mary Jacobs | 323. Fran Williford |
| 12. Joseph Bolden | 76. Eva Almon | 138. Dot Winsett | 198. Charlene Jent | 262. Ida Tuggle Walls | 324. A. DeVeva, Sr. |
| 13. Ruby Wright | 77. Jim & Judy Hill | 139. Faye Stamps | 199. Sarah Morton | 263. Edie Motes | 325. Rosie Taylor |
| 14. Jimmie Brown | 78. Carrie McGrone | 140. Carole Shelby | 200. Admiral & Ruth Tidwell | 264. Marilyn Manning | 326. Gwendolyn Bryant |
| 15. Paul & Diann O'Guin | 79. Ann Cockroft | 141. Gloria Wilborn | 201. C. W. O'Kelley | 265. Victor Boone | 327. Sid & Jean Clemmer |
| 16. Barbara Baker | 80. Kimberley Easterling | 142. Ma'Nia & | 202. Barbara Skrobak | 266. Gregory Mac Hawkins | 328. Kaylee Bauer |
| 17. Althea House | 81. Bobby Brown | Bralan Womack | 203. Peggy Engel | 267. Stacey & | 329. Bonnie Dixon |
| 18. Martin Torres | 82. Della Rhodes | 143. Berus & | 204. Mary McDonald | Melinda Hawkins | 330. Vera Winfrey |
| 19. Bonnie Holcomb | 83. Linda Swan | Nicole Womack | 205. Carolyn Perry | 268. Jane Barnett | 331. Johnnie Mobley |
| 20. Brenda Broderick | 84. Lexi & Allison | 144. Jeremiah Woodard, Jr. | 206. Kay Shiers | 269. Jane Walker | 332. Lucille Anders |
| 21. Dillie Horton | Netterville | 145. Jeremiah & | 207. Chloe Howe | 270. Kathie Bordelon | 333. Michael Euer |
| 22. Ray Brown | 85. Charlotte Ritter | Shelia Woodard | 208. Mary Dyer | 271. Artis Hinton | 334. Joe Arnold |
| 23. Pearlina Hurst | 86. Bethany Stephens | 146. Irene Wright | 209. Patricia Hubbert | 272. Christene Holliday | 335. Thomas Forrest, Sr. |
| 24. Lynell Garlington | 87. Kelly Key | 147. Linda Holt | 210. Rhenda Miltner | 273. Bobbie Loggins | 336. Loretha Widger |
| 25. Peggy Jackson | 88. Robert Thompson | 148. Judy Willis | 211. Terry Miltner | 274. Belinda Esoubas | 337. Meredith Peek |
| 26. Peggy Wroten | 89. Nadine Patton | 149. Mary Adams | 212. Henry & Elsie Brock | 275. Sandra Sturdivant | 338. Judy Von Dollen |
| 27. Don Lee | 90. Carolyn Garrett | 150. Helen Logan | 213. Sharon Huckaba | 276. Linda Kennamore | 339. DeAnna Epler |
| 28. George Dotson | 91. Perkins Cochran | 151. Brenda Byrne | 214. Betty Standard | 277. Barbara Loden | 340. Larry Cross |
| 29. Julius Wales | 92. Wanda Cochran | 152. Brailey Jade Bryan | 215. Marsha Pace | 278. Mary Williams | 341. Vivian Holman |
| 30. Carolyn Miuer | 93. June Faulkner | 153. Mary King | 216. Ginny Luther | 279. Marvin England | 342. Peggy Vinson |
| 31. Thelma Tucker | 94. Mary Mann | 154. Wilda Pounds | 217. Ann Kelley | 280. Arthur & | 343. Barbara Rinard |
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| 63. Carolyn Ware | 126. Carroll Porter | 185. Fannie Johnson | 249. Greg Ward | 311. Wes & Rhoda Jeans | |
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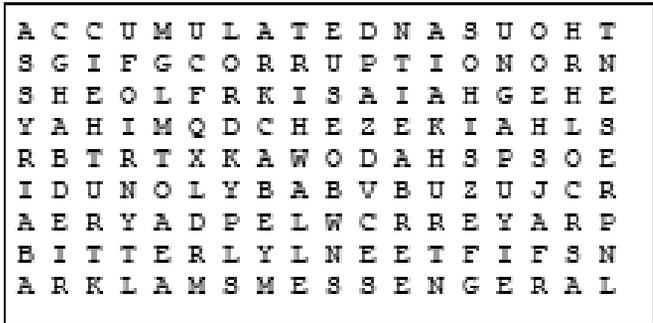
HEZEKIAH'S PRAYER

Read 2 Kings 19:8-20; 19:35-20:19 and Isaiah 37-39 (NKJV) and fill in the blanks. Each answer is also a word in the puzzle below. Hezekiah's life was threatened by an infected boil. In his sick bed he rolled toward the wall and prayed to God. He was 39 years of age at the time. God cured Hezekiah's malady and added fifteen years to his life. Subsequent to the answered prayer, Hezekiah is portrayed as showing off his possessions to some representatives of Babylon. This opened their eyes regarding what their country could obtain by capturing Jerusalem. Hezekiah, our hero of prayer, could have been an even greater example by concluding his life in thanksgiving and humility rather than display and pride.

1. Hezekiah made the claim to God that he had walked before Him in _____ (*2 Ki 20:3*).
2. A lump of _____ was placed on Hezekiah's boil in order to heal Him (*2 Ki 20:7*).
3. By what four-letter English word is Yahweh, Jehovah, or the Self-Existent One designated in Isaiah 38:1?

4. The LORD, (Jehovah or the Eternal) would deliver Hezekiah's soul from the pit of _____ (*Isaiah 38:17*).
5. Hezekiah prayed with his face toward the _____ (*2 Ki 20:1-3*).
6. Hezekiah said the LORD had cast all his sins behind His _____ (*Isaiah 38:17*).
7. Hezekiah was healed by medicine (a poultice of figs) and by _____ (*2 Ki 20:2 & 7*).

8. The King feared that he would not see _____ (shortened form of Yahweh) in the land of the living (*Isaiah 38:11*).
9. Rather than Sennacherib and Esarhaddon of Assyria, Israel needed to fear _____ (*Isaiah 39*).
10. Learning he would die, Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and wept _____ (*2 Ki 20:1-3*).
11. Resulting from his trust and prayer, the LORD added _____ years to the life of Hezekiah (*2 Ki 20:6*).
12. A sign from Jehovah, indicating Hezekiah would be healed, was shown on the sundial of Ahaz: the _____ was brought back ten degrees (*2 Kings 20:8-11*).
13. Hezekiah, after his prayer was answered, showed the Babylonian visitors all his house and his _____ (*2 Ki 20:13*).
14. Having shown his treasures to the Babylonians, Hezekiah was told by Isaiah that all that was in his house that he had _____ would be carried off to Babylon (*2 Ki 20:6-7*).



Prepared by Glenn & Beth Beall, foyfoyirish@gmail.com

Please Send Your Answers To Us

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

Name: _____
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NOTICE: Each person who sends in answers will be recognized in the next issue of the "MM" (see page 31). ALSO, by random drawing, the name of ONE student will be selected to receive a beautiful New Study Bible.

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