



Our 35th Year

Magnolia Messenger

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

Volume 35
Number 4

WINTER
2013

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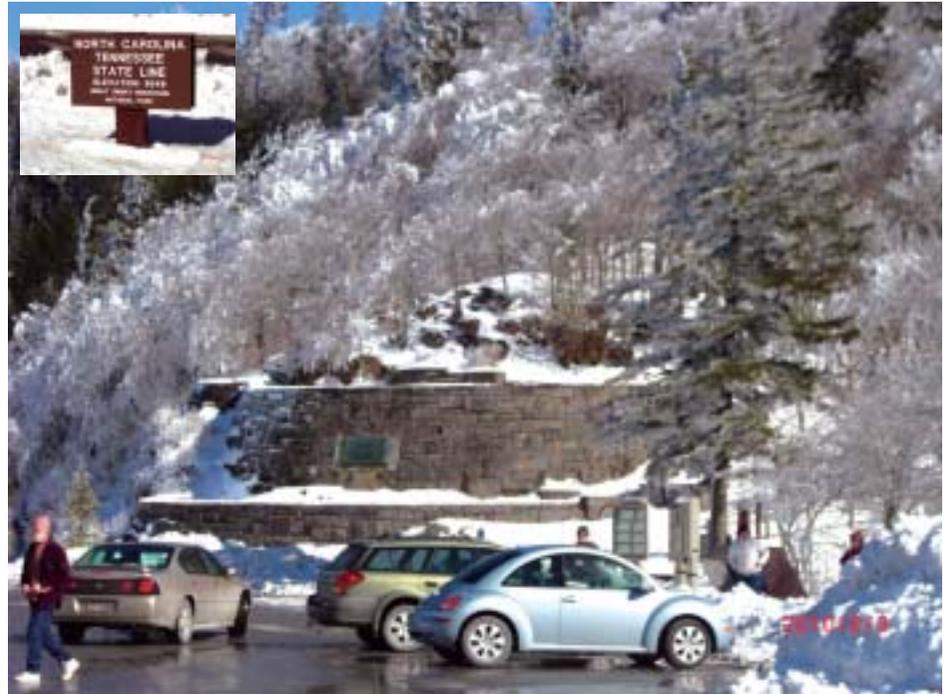
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A Mountain Winter Scene (Photo by editor) *Thank God for the Seasons!*

Winter is mentioned in the Bible 14 times.

(Gen. 8:22; Psa. 74:17; Song of Sol. 2:11; Isa.18:6; Amos 3:15; Zech. 14:8; Matt. 24:20; Mark 13:18 John 10:22; Acts 27:12; I Cor. 16:6; 2 Tim. 4:21; Titus 3:12)

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MM READERS ASK ABOUT

"THE ASSEMBLY"

(1) *What does the Bible teach about our worship services? What can be done during them and what kind of otherwise O. K. things should not be?*

(2) *Why are some things all right after a closing prayer but wrong before it?*

(3) *Please comment on the practice of some congregations, on Mother's/Father's Day, having a special recognition of mothers/fathers during the worship service, e.g. having them stand and passing out tokens of appreciation to them. Is this an appropriate or acceptable time and place to honor parents?*

**Read Response
by Cecil May, Jr.
(Page 3)**

On November 4, 2013, **Doug Greenway**, preacher for the West Main Church in Tupelo, MS wrote:

Brother, we start 'em off early reading the MM around here. This is Lilly Almon (last night at church) who will be 2 years old this week. He added:



Lilly Almon (Tupelo)

"Doug Greenway has read and approved this message..."

**Visiting Among
Churches in North MS
Travel with Eddie
(Page 11)**

How Did I Get On Your Mailing List?

The "Magnolia Messenger" is gladly sent to those who request it and to those for whom someone else makes the request.

We diligently try to produce a "Good News Newspaper" with the belief that almost everyone likes "good news" and that there are yet many "out there in the land of print" who love to read quality articles with sound Bible teaching. (Editor)

A MM reader who did **not** personally ask for the "Messenger" wrote:

I do not know how I came about to receive the "Magnolia Messenger" but many thanks for it, as it is a pleasure to read. I have read it over and over and enjoyed it thoroughly. I am a member at Rolling Creek Baptist Church, Quitman/Stonewall, MS Pastor Bro. Ronnie Cooper. Thank you so very much for the paper. It is really an enjoyment to read. Please keep it coming! (Doris Sowers, Quitman, MS)

(CONTACT)

Magnolia Messenger
P. O. Box 1578
Kosciusko, MS 39090
662-289-3559 (office)
601-668-3344 (Al)
662-792-2700 (Paul)
franksmm@aol.com
apaulfranks@gmail.com

"Dying To Self?"

**A Real Challenge!
Answer
"The Question Box"
(Page 24)**

Recent Bible Winner



Carolyn Perry
(Delhi, Louisiana)
**Bible Delivered by a
Deligation of Eight
(See Picture on Page 24)**

Magnolia Messenger
South Huntington St
CHURCH OF CHRIST
P. O. Box 1578
Kosciusko, MS 39090

"Put them in mind... to be ready unto every **GOOD** work." (Titus 3:1)

Readers' Response

(Comments & Suggestions Invited; Criticisms Considered)

I just wanted to let you know that Faye Caldwell, our sweet mother, passed from this life on August 23 at the age of 93. Please take her name off your mailing list for the Magnolia Messenger. She was one of your readers from the beginning, and she looked forward to receiving it. She always read it from cover to cover... we are thankful that her suffering was short and most importantly that she was a Christian. That gives us peace of mind as we face the difficult days without her. Thank you for sending her the Magnolia Messenger for all those years. (Joyce Morgan, Booneville, MS)

I recently got my hands on a Magnolia Messenger for the Fall of 2013. I really enjoyed it very much and would like you to put me on your mailing list to receive the Magnolia Messenger. If it is possible I would really like you to send me a couple of back issues. I would like to say thank you for doing such a good job with your Messenger. I am currently in Rankin County Jail awaiting trial. Sincerely, P.S. Thank you for such a wonderful paper!! (Charles Dukes, Brandon, MS)

We picked up a copy of your Magnolia Messenger on our travels to Gulf Shores, Alabama last year. Enjoyed reading all the wonderful articles. I would like to sign up the following family to receive your Messenger also. (Frank & Chris Swan, Roscommon, MI)

Thank you for all your hard work in printing a great paper. I anxiously

await each edition. You and your staff are such a great blessing to so many. May God continue to bless you all in your efforts to spread the "Good News." In Christian love, (Linda K. Hughes, Smithville, MS)

Thanks for the paper. Very well done and informative. May God continue to bless your labors in the Kingdom. Your fellow servant, I preached in meetings at Biloxi and Gulfport back in the 70's. (Carroll Sites, Fairfield Bay, AR)

I have received the Magnolia Messenger for several years and enjoy reading it. I would like for you to send it to my son who is in prison at Wiggins. Since he has been in prison he has been studying the Bible continuously. He has been a Christian for years but strayed for a while and made some grave mistakes. Thank you for the Messenger and your devoted work for the love of God. Yours in Christ, (Betty C. Fletcher, Long Beach, MS)

MM ADDRESSES

Changes & Additions

Contact

Glenda Franks

glendafranks@yahoo.com

662-792-2800

P. O. Box 1578

Kosciusko, MS 39090

THANK YOU

THANKS FOR READING & RESPONDING TO MAGNOLIA MESSENGER

Magnolia Messenger

Church of Christ - Kosciusko

Published about every 3 months (as funds and time permit). Mailed **without charge** to all who ask to receive it and to others for whom it is requested.

Contributions from churches and individuals make possible the circulation of more than 24,000 copies of each issue of the "Magnolia Messenger". Your prayers and support are **requested, needed** and **appreciated!**

Supported By Contributions

A. L. Franks, Editor

Paul Franks, Associate Editor

Cecil May, Jr., Bible Questions Answered

June & Glenda Franks, Special Assistants

Telephone Numbers

Office/Home

662-289-3559

Cell

601-668-3344

Mailing Address

Magnolia Messenger

P. O. Box 1578

Kosciusko, MS 39090

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

E-Mail: franksmm@aol.com

GRACE of God

SALVATION

MERCY of God

Jesus Did For Us
What We
Cannot Do For Ourselves!

LOVE of God

- Editor -

As a responsible human being, I am in constant need of a Saviour. The Bible says, "All have sinned..." (Rom. 3:23). This includes me. I cannot save myself. I need that salvation which only God -- through His **love, grace** and **mercy** can provide. Oh, how I need help from above!

Jesus is God's answer to man's greatest need -- **salvation**. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son..." (John 3:16). Because He loved, He manifested His grace and mercy in the gift of His son. The love, mercy and grace of God was immeasurably demonstrated in the greatest of all sacrifices at Calvary. Truly, Jesus did for me and for you what we could never do for ourselves.

Salvation is "by *grace through faith*" (Eph. 2:8,9). Paul wrote further about the grace of God that "brings salvation," saying that it has "appeared to all men" (Tit. 2:11) His love, mercy and grace has been made available to *everyone* (there is no respect of persons with Him, Acts 10:34,35).

Vital questions need to be answered, (1) "Why are *multitudes* still lost?" (2) "Why did Jesus say that *many* would enter and travel the road to destruction, but that only *few* would enter and travel the 'strait and narrow' road to eternal life? (Study Matthew 7:13,14.)

In other words, if God **loves** the *whole world*, and His **grace** has appeared to *all men* and His **mercy** is available *for all*, why are many lost and only a few saved? What separates the saved from the lost? Is there something that man has to **do** to become an eternal beneficiary of God's love, grace and mercy? Is some kind of response to God's goodness required of a lost soul?

The truth of the Scripture is that man must **accept** the love, grace and mercy of God. This *acceptance* is manifested through *faith* in Jesus, God's Son -- the **only** way to Heaven (John 14:6). This is why Paul wrote "for by **grace** have you been saved by (through) **faith**..." (Eph. 2:8,9) Unbelief separates the lost from salvation. A true acceptance of Jesus is shown by a faith that is *living* -- a faith that *acts* -- a faith that *obeys*.

Yes, **obedience is necessary**. Hearing about God's love, grace and mercy is good news -- it is "gospel;" but, responding by simply saying "Jesus is God's Son" or "*Jesus is Lord*" is **not enough!** Jesus asked, "Why call me 'Lord, Lord' and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46). He also declared, "Not everyone that saith unto me Lord Lord shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in Heaven." (Matthew 7:21) Faith without works (action) is **dead**. So teaches the word of God in James 2:24,26.

To become a Christian one must *accept* the love of God in His offer of grace and mercy. A sinner must evidence his faith in Jesus, as **Lord**, by humbly **obeying** Him as his "Lord and Master." This involves;

yes, requires *obedience* to the Lord's plan of salvation which is so clearly taught in the Holy Scriptures.

The Saviour Himself stated, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." He added, "He that believeth not shall be condemned." (Mark 16:16) In this verse, Jesus named two steps to be taken by a lost person prior to salvation. (1) "He that *believeth*"; (2) "and is *baptized* shall (3) *be saved*." Who among men has the right to change the order as given by the Saviour. Not me!

On another occasion when lost people asked, "What shall we do?" an inspired apostle commanded *another step* in the Lord's plan for salvation. He said, "**Repent** you and **be baptized** everyone of you... for the *remission of your sins* (Acts 2:38). So, according to Jesus and one of His inspired apostles, it is clear that something must be **done in faith** in order for a sinner to benefit eternally from the love, mercy and grace of God.

A lost sinner is required to respect the **Lordship** of Jesus as he calls upon Him. When Saul of Tarsus became a believer in Jesus and made known his repentance, he was commanded: "Arise and *be baptized* and *wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord*" (Acts 22:16). In turning from sin and submitting to baptism, a precious soul evidences faith and true acceptance of the Lordship of Christ Jesus. In so doing, he "calls on the name of the Lord."

God loves everyone, but he expects and requires response from sinners. God's grace has been revealed in a marvelous manner through the gift of His Son, but sinful man must respond in faith to that grace. God's mercy makes salvation possible for all, but only for those who respond in faith to the plan presented by the Saviour.

Are you a Christian? Are you benefiting from God's love, mercy and grace? Have you **obeyed** the gospel? **Obeying the gospel** is your believing response to a gracious, loving and merciful God. And it is that response, in and/or by faith, that separates the lost from the saved! And, it is that continued response to the Lordship of Jesus, as we walk with Him in the "strait and narrow" Way, that will lead us to be with Him forever in "the Father's House."

This final question is vital: *What about those who "obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ?"* (See 1 Peter 4:17.) The Bible answer is clear: Jesus

"will come in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God and that **obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ** who shall be punished with everlasting destruction...." (2 Thess. 1:8,9)

Don't wait until it is too late! Can we help? Please feel free to call or write. (A. L. Franks; 601-668-3344 or email, franksmm@aol.com)

Comments
We Welcome



Bible Questions Answered

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE "ASSEMBLY"

(1) What does the Bible teach about our worship services? What can be done during them and what kind of otherwise O. K. things should not be?

(2) Why are some things all right after a closing prayer but wrong before it? (J. P.)

(3) Please comment on the practice of some congregations on Mother's/Father's Day having a special recognition of mothers/fathers during the worship service, e.g. having them stand and passing out tokens of appreciation to them. Is this an appropriate or acceptable time and place to honor parents? (Do not print my initials, please).

RESPONSE: Responding to these questions calls for a thorough look at the biblical teaching concerning "assembly." The Bible does not use the terminology "the worship service," but there is a biblical doctrine of congregational assembly.

Assembly

The basic meaning of *ekklesia*, the original word translated "church" in most of our English Bibles, is "assembly." It is translated that way three times in Acts 19:32, 39, and 41, and is best understood that way in I Corinthians 14:28, 33, 34, and 35). "But if there is no one to interpret, let each of them keep silent in assembly (*ekklesia*) and speak to himself and to God" (28). "As in all the assemblies (*ekklesiae*) of the saints, the women should keep silent in the assemblies (*ekklesiae*). For they are not permitted to speak, but should be in submission, as the Law also says. If there is anything they desire to learn, let them ask their husbands at home. For it is shameful for a woman to speak in assembly (*ekklesia*) (33, 34 and 35), [c.m.j.r translation].

The First Corinthian epistle has a lengthy discussion of assembly matters built off a discussion of problems in Corinth. 1 Corinthians 11:17 introduces the discussion with the phrase "when you come together" used there the first of many times in the following verses and chapters.

The first emphasis in 1 Corinthians is that the Lord's supper belongs in the assembly. Indeed, the Lord's supper is the purpose of coming together on

the first day of the week (I Corinthians 11:20; Acts 20:7). The first day of the week, which we call Sunday, is also called the Lord's day (Revelation 1:10). It is the day Christ was raised from the dead (Mark 16:9 and all three other gospels). It is important, many of us believe, to honor the connection between the Lord's day, the Lord's supper and the day of Christ's resurrection, with "no Lord's day without the Lord's supper and no Lord's supper without the Lord's day."

What Otherwise O. K. Things Are Not Allowed in Assembly?

One of the "otherwise O. K. things that should not be in the assembly" is noted in connection with the Lord's supper. The apostle says, "For in eating, each one goes ahead with his own meal. One goes hungry, another gets drunk. What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in?" (1 Corinthians 11:21-22).

Since the church often met in Christians' homes, it is not likely the Bible is saying meals should not be eaten in the same place the assembly is held. The likely meaning is that meals to assuage hunger, including what we call a fellowship meal, is not to be an assembly event.

Some are saying today that the Lord's supper should be taken as part of an ordinary meal, but this admonition seems specifically to forbid that.

Chapters 12-14 discuss charismatic spiritual gifts. Chapter 14 discusses the Corinthians' assemblies focusing on how those with miraculous gifts, including prophets and possessors of the gift of tongues, should conduct themselves in their assemblies.

Response by Cecil May, Jr.



Cecil May, Jr., Dean Emeritus
College of Biblical Studies
Faulkner University
5345 Atlanta Highway
Montgomery, AL 36109
334-386-7154
cmay@faulkner.edu

Paul again uses assembly language to introduce his point: when "the whole church comes together" (verse 23) and "when you come together" (verse 26).

In this chapter he notes two other things that are "otherwise O. K. that should not take place in the assembly."

First, he mentions speaking in tongues, which is using the miraculous ability to speak in otherwise unlearned languages, which is forbidden in the assembly except under stated circumstances: "If any speak in a tongue, let there be only two or at most three, and each in turn, and let someone interpret. But if there is no one to interpret, let each of them keep silent in church and speak to himself and to God" (1 Corinthians 14:27-28).

Second, women are not to speak out publicly during the assembly. "As in all the churches of the saints, the women should keep silent in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak, but should be in submission, as the Law also says. If there is anything they desire to learn, let them ask their husbands at home. For it is shameful for a woman to speak in church" (I Corinthians 14:33b-35).

Women in Bible Study Outside the Assembly

Another, different passage defines women's role in prayer and biblical teaching in places outside the assembly. In 1 Timothy 2:8-15 Paul contrasts men's and women's roles "in every place," which I understand

to include small group meetings, Bible classes and similar situations when "the whole church" is not "come together," in other words, when the church is not in assembly. The admonition in that case is not on "silence" *per se*, but opposes authority and leadership over men.

Men (Greek *aner*, meaning men not women) are to be holy and pray (8). Women are to be modest, adorned with good works (9-10), quiet and submissive (11). Then Paul says, "I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet" (12).

What Scripture is not permitting here is the exercise of authority, or as we might say of leadership, over men. Certainly women are not forbidden from all teaching here and then commanded to teach the young women in Titus 2:3-4. "Men" is the object of both "teach" and "exercise authority over."

"Remain quiet" (verse 12) does not mean "be silent" but is the same "quiet" used earlier in the same chapter, "First of all, then, I urge that... prayers... be made for... all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way" (1 Timothy 2:1-2).

So we urge silence in the assembly except for such obvious exceptions as singing, congregational "amens" and commanded confessions (1 Corinthians 14:33-35). But in Bible classes and other worship and Bible teaching situations outside of congregational assemblies involving both men and women, we urge men to teach the classes and lead the prayers and the singing. Women, however, may respond to questions, ask questions (which is specifically forbidden in the assembly, (1 Corinthians 14:35) and make biblical comments. By such comments they may teach somebody, even some men, something, but not authoritatively. They should not be in charge of the class. "Teacher" in a class is an authoritative position (*cf.* Titus 2:15).

The reasons Paul gives for this prohibition of leadership over men are not related to local culture.

The reasons are universal as to time and place, grounded in creation as well as the first sin. The reasons are, "For Adam was formed first, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor (1 Timothy 2:13-14).

Nothing in the Bible prohibits a woman from gently and respectfully (as all teaching by everyone should be done anyway) teaching a man privately. I have been taught many important truths by women in their homes over coffee and sometimes quietly and respectfully in the foyers of church buildings. Priscilla assisted her

husband in the private correction of Apollos. I suspect there are many more preachers who need to be shown the way of the Lord more completely than there are godly Christian women prepared to help their husbands help them see things better.

The Church Universal

Ekklesia is the word Jesus chose to use for all of His redeemed people considered in the aggregate. "On this rock I will build my church (*ekklesia*), and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18). The church that He has built and is building is the one to which He adds all of the saved (Acts 2:47 ff.). It is the one over which He is the head (Ephesians 1:22).

"Assembly" is still the basic meaning of *ekklesia*. All the redeemed have been called into His *ekklesia*, and we are His assembly, even when we are not assembled. After the death of Steven, Saul, the Pharisee, took charge of the persecution of the church. "Entering house after house, he dragged off men and women and committed them to prison" and in doing that "Saul was ravaging the church" (Acts 8:3). The people he was persecuting as he went after them "from house after house" were Christ's church, Christ's "assembly," even when they were not assembled.

Everett Ferguson astutely observes, "The designation

What is narrow or sectarian about recognizing that all saved persons are in the church because God both saved them and added them?

Dreamers Who Reject Authority

John Gardner

The bumper sticker declared, "Authority is not a four-letter word, but it ought to be." Those who know the connotation of the term "four-letter word" know that the creator of the bumper sticker, and presumably the one displaying it, holds authority in contempt. It is considered in such a case on the same level as an obscenity.

We live in a society where authority of all types is despised by a growing multitude of people. Respect for basic authority in the home, school, workplace and society in general is vanishing at a remarkable rate.

We seem to be moving with increasing rapidity toward a state of affairs like that portrayed in 2 Peter 2 and the short Epistle of Jude. While Peter and Jude were writing about the devastation of faith and morality in the churches near

the end of the first century, what they reveal about such degradation can be applied to our society which once exhibited a strong Judo-Christian moral and religious basis. The forces that brought destruction into churches of Christ only a few decades removed from the church's beginning (Acts 2) are the same kinds of forces that are stripping our nation of its moral and spiritual fiber and finding their way into the body of Christ today.

At play in some of the churches and in the larger society were false teachers who taught heresies to the point of even denying the Lord who bought them (2 Peter 2: 1 NKJV). They caused the truth to be blasphemed (V. 2) and exploited those brought under their power (V. 3). Peter sums up a lot in a few words when he describes them as "those who walk according to the flesh in the lust of uncleanness and despise authority. They are presumptuous, self-willed. They are not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries" (2 Peter 2: 10). Notice that they "despise authority."

Jude speaks in a similar vein as Peter. Having referenced the Old Testament accounts of Israel's fall in the wilderness, the fall of angels, and the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, Jude



John Gardner

says, "Likewise also these dreamers defile the flesh, reject authority, and speak evil of dignitaries" (Jude 8).

Jude describes those leading the charge of corrupting change among the brethren as those listening to themselves, not God. They rejected the authority of God Himself, His Word, and those using the authority of Scripture.

Not even God was going to tell them what they could do or not do. After all, they had their dreams, their visions, and their human wisdom to guide them.

Had they not found a new "freedom" from rules and regulations (2 Peter 2: 19 ESV)? With "great swelling words, flattering people to gain advantage" (Jude 16b) they led the unsuspecting astray. They were worldly people who caused division in the body of Christ (Jude 19). Such men's destruction had been prophesied and was set in place as Peter and Jude wrote their respective letters (2 Peter 2: 3; Jude 4, 14, 15).

Today with the rampant rejection of the authority of God and His Word, we should not be surprised at the rapid departure from God's standards on every level. We see our society descending toward a moral abyss as immoral behaviors once a shame to discuss (Ephesians 5: 12) are broadcast, streamed, and texted around the world on a daily basis with growing approval of

the populace. Lying is endemic, and one who will tell the truth or keep his word and suffer for it is counted a fool. Cheating on one's spouse or cheating on a rigorous test are judged only by the consequences, not by the moral failure of such a betrayal of trust.

In churches of Christ we have seen the arrival of "dreamers" who count themselves visionaries destined to lead the rest of us away from what they count as restrictive obedience to the authority of Scripture. Their Post-modern philosophies and visions of an ecumenical church without distinctive biblical doctrines (except for a few of their choosing) means attempting to tear down our stand for "the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 3).

They feel free to blast our stand on biblical authority for taking the Lord's Supper each first day of the week, for having only male leadership in the church, for teaching that baptism is essential for salvation, and for using only a cappella music in worship. They allege respect for the authority of God's Word, but their rejection of the doctrines just mentioned belies their claim. In the end, the dreamers combine selected Scriptures and their new found philosophies to create a new authority that looks remarkably like those who crafted it.

Let us not be deceived, but remember the solid basis of the Scriptures and the authority God has put in them (2 Peter 1: 16 – 21). Let us remind one another,

as Peter did his generation, of "the present truth" which we know and in which we are established (2 Peter 1: 12). That does not mean we should ignore deeper and richer studies of God's Word, but it does mean we should not abandon the solid foundation of faith built on the authority of Scriptures for some dreamer's latest vision.

John Gardner
P. O. Box 251
Brandon, MS 39043
gardner.john43@gmail.com

John Gardner
P. O. Box 251
Brandon, MS 39043
gardner.john43@gmail.com

"Let us consider one another to provoke unto LOVE and GOOD Works." (Heb. 10:24)

SAVE THE DATE!

January 25, 2014

Delta Enrichment Seminar
"Practical Christianity" (Studies in James)

Church of Christ
212 Ronaldman Road
Cleveland, Mississippi

Topics & Speakers:

"Overcoming Trials" – Mark Shiers

(West President Street Church of Christ, Greenwood, MS)

"The Fiery Tongue" – Danny Holman

(South Main Street Church of Christ, Greenville, MS)

"Friend of the World or Friend of God" – Michael Bates

(Batesville Church of Christ, Batesville, MS)

"Effective, Fervent Prayer" – Tony Brown

(Zion Rest Church of Christ, Marietta, MS)

Information submitted to MM by
Tim McCarter, preacher at Cleveland



SHERMAN

Celebrated 50 Years!

The Sherman Church of Christ had their 50th year Homecoming and Gospel Meeting in September, 2013. **Gary Barnes** was the guest speaker.

RIPLEY

Donnie DeBord is the preacher for the Ripley Church of Christ, Ripley, Mississippi. Brother Donnie has been preaching for the Ripley congregation nearly three years. A visit from the MM is long overdue.

MM ADDRESSES

Changes & Additions

Contact

Glenda Franks

glendafranks@yahoo.com

662-792-2800

P. O. Box 1578

Kosciusko, MS 39090

THANK YOU

Another Good Sign



(As Seen on Highway 471, near Brandon, MS)

"Speaking the Truth in Love"

A Continuing Challenge for the Church

A Reader Writes & Reports

Brother Franks,

As a board member at HCU we have had special prayers for MBC and its students since the closing. We have been glad to have some of the students express an interest in HCU although we realize where their love lies and where they would rather be. I was glad to read about your offering the MBC buildings up for use and pray that they can be used to help the local community.

Last night as I was reading the MM and enjoying the updates on churches in North MS, I also read the article on Church Growth and the question, "What are you (and I) doing to help the church grow?" and realized I needed to be sending the results of the campaigns Cox Blvd have been conducting to encourage other congregations to be more evangelistic. I thought about the seven Back to the Bible Campaigns we have conducted at the Cox Blvd church of Christ, Sheffield, AL where Larry Kilpatrick is our evangelist. We have been leading these campaigns since 2007 and work with congregations who are not only seeking but also wanting to teach the lost the Gospel.

A Report

7th Annual Back to the Bible Campaign Results Cox Blvd - Sheffield, AL

Cox Blvd recently finished their 7th annual *Back to the Bible* Campaign in Monteagle-Tracy City, TN, 13-19 July. There were over 4000 doors knocked and 68 Bible Studies set up. Thirty-one were taught that week with 11 baptisms and two restorations. Twenty-four were left to be taught; Since then, the congregations have baptized five more and restored one. The real results will not be known as we walk this earth but we will be rejoicing with them in Heaven.

The campaign energized the congregations, restored members' love for sharing the Gospel and **increased** attendance and participation. The local leaders were **Paul Title** and **Jim Hardison**, Monteagle and **Creg Kimbro**, Tracy City. We could not have done the campaign without their leadership which inspired other congregations on the South Cumberland to participate.

Elders of Cox Blvd provide this outreach evangelism as part of the ministry of the church. Among several congregations who have contacted Cox Blvd about a campaign in the future, is Danny Rogers with the Highway 15 South Church of Christ in Pontotoc, MS. Danny will be knocking doors with Cox Blvd on 12 October to learn how to reach out to the lost. We look forward to working with them.

At *Polishing the Pulpit* there was a presentation about why door knocking *does not work* (?). The bottom line was -- *it doesn't work if you don't do it!* My wife and I have been on annual door knocking campaigns since 1976 when we worshipped at the NW congregation in Lawton, OK. They recently completed their 38th *Back to the Bible* campaign using the Safety Chain Open Bible Study Method. Cox Blvd completed its 7th and the 8th

Campaign is scheduled at the Decatur Highway Church of Christ, Gardendale, AL July 18-25, 2014.

The elders at Cox Blvd are very interested in sharing this method with any congregation looking for ways to reach into their community. We teach the congregations how to mark their Bibles and teach a Bible Study using the *Safety Chain Open Bible Study Method*. It is amazing how many members of the Lord's Church not only do not have a method to lead someone to Christ, but have never taught anyone about Christ.

We are willing to help any congregation reach and teach the lost. If interested, please contact **Russell R Blackwell**, deacon; Cox Blvd Church of Christ; Sheffield, AL 35660. Cellular Telephone: 256.366.4226. Email: judrus@gmail.com.

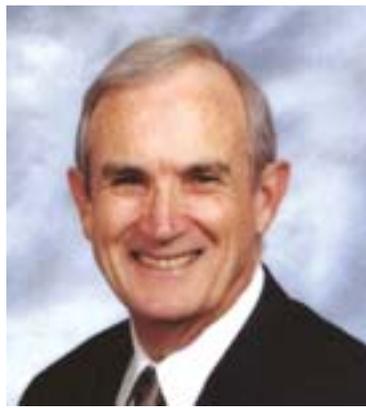
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Curtis Cates
At Three Score and Two Years
Makes His Departure

Curtis Cates of Memphis, Tennessee, a gospel preacher and educator, departed this life at the "young" age of 72 on October 25, 2013. Brother Cates preached the Gospel for over 60 years, and served as director and faculty member of Memphis School of Preaching for over 25 years. He is survived by his wife of 53 years, Annette Cates, by his sons Andy (Michelle) Cates, and Dan (Shelly) Cates.

Gladye Derryberry
Age 101
Died October 31, 2013



Picture taken by MM editor at a Monday night church service during a gospel meeting in Clinton, Mississippi. She had already passed her 100th birthday at the time the picture was taken.

A brief note from Robert Shelton of Clinton, Mississippi, stated:

Brother Al,

"Just a note to let you know that my mother-in-law, Gladye Derryberry, passed away last Friday, Oct. 31. Her funeral was this past Sunday in Selmer, TN."

Response:

My June and I are grateful that we were blessed to know sister Derryberry. We were encouraged to see, first hand, her love for the Lord and His church. Even after she passed 100 years of earthly life, she continued to faithfully attend **all** services of the church in Clinton. Among her survivors is a daughter, Ann, who is married to Robert Shelton, a preacher and an elder of the church in Clinton. May God richly bless. (alf)

Now You
Take It From There....

- by -

John Simpson
4073 Stillwood Dr
Memphis, TN 38128-3056
j38128sim@yahoo.com



Knowledge

The human mind is God's inherent gift comprising the faculty of knowing, and the seat of understanding; the learning process adequately applied produces knowledge. God intends for every person to use this faculty to attain the level of knowledge commensurate with his or her ability.

Alexander Pope, the 18th century English poet wrote: *"A little learning is a dangerous thing, drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring; there shallow draughts intoxicate the brain, and drinking largely sobers us again"*. Boiling this down to accommodate the average pew-dweller, an anonymous sage wrote it this way: *"I've learned that you can get by on charm for about fifteen minutes. After that you'd better know something!"*

Hosea, God's 8th century B.C. prophet wrote: *My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge...Since you have forgotten the law of your God, I will also forget your children"* (Hosea 4:6).

A lack of Biblical knowledge has stifled God's people in every generation since Creation. Ancient Israel was scorned with the epitaph: *...And there arose another generation after them who did not know the Lord, nor yet the work which He had done for Israel"* (Judges 2:10). Some 1st century Christians were censured for their ignorance of Scripture: *"...By this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God"* (Heb. 5:12).

A vital ingredient for Christian growth is a knowledge of Scripture and the practical application of it (II Pet. 1:5-10). Part of the training for Timothy to reach maturity was: *"Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth"* (II Tim. 2:15).

The Church at Rome is described as an acceptable body of believers: *"And concerning you, my brethren, I myself am also convinced that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able to admonish one another"* (Rom. 15:14).

The Apostle Peter sets our standard for excellence in knowledge of Scripture: *"But sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence"* (I Pet. 3:15).

Now, you take it from there!

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is also profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete...." 2 Tim. 3:16,17

Magnolia Messenger

Appreciates

Comments and Suggestions

P. O. Box 1578; Kosciusko, MS 39090
franksmm@aol.com

Long Time Mississippi Gospel Preacher William S. (Bill) Huggins Has Made His Departure

Mississippi Churches
Served Included
Natchez & Booneville

10/21/1926 -- 9/9/2013

- Dan Huggins -

I knew when I started preaching that I would be the one to preach my dad's funeral and that this would be a day I both looked forward to (for the opportunity to honor my dad) and dreaded at the same time because this would mean he was gone

The dichotomy of feelings; so happy and we celebrate for my dad Bill Huggins; we do not mourn for him. Bill Huggins lived his whole life for this day -- when he would get to go and be with His Savior.

What a blessing it has been for my family to have my mom and dad live in the same town with us for the past 5½ years. I'm so grateful that my children were able to know their Paw Paw -- to get to hear his wisdom, see his love and mercy, and to see for themselves someone who has a passion for Jesus and His church that is rarely seen today. And did Daddy ever have a passion for the Lord and His Church! He studied, he prayed, he worked in the kingdom with a work ethic I have never seen or witnessed in any other minister.

When I started preaching and someone would say, "You've got some big shoes to fill...." my response -- then and now is... "impossible!"

I asked my dad the week before he passed, "Won't it be cool to see all those people that you have led to Jesus who have already gone to heaven when you get there?" He paused and tried to get enough breath to say "It will be neat".

Daddy had qualities that I both admired and envied at the same time. #1. He was smart. #2. He knew what he was talking about. #3. He could discuss an issue -- even controversial ones, without getting upset or losing his cool. He had memorized so much scripture over the years. "A walking Bible."

Daddy was dripping and overflowing with the fruits of the Spirit. He was the definition of **meek**. He was loved by most all who knew him. There were times when Daddy was treated badly by those who didn't understand Christian relationships and how to treat other people. But in spite of the fact that it cost my dad and his family money and health, he would never retaliate, seek revenge, speak ill of, or hold a grudge.

About 4 days before he passed, he must have overheard Loretta and I talking and misunderstood something we said. He got a scowl on his face and said, "Church family, church family... never speak bad of your church family." We both



Bill Huggins
Died at age 86

looked at one another... like... What? Where did that come from? Daddy loved the bride of Christ and gave himself up for her in so many ways over the years.

Daddy's heart was pure gold. Before mom and dad got married, daddy would travel from Montgomery to Troy, Alabama to visit mom and mom's mother, *Maxie Campbell*, who had cancer. Daddy would sit with her, read to her and give her the shots she was taking. Eventually Daddy was able to baptize my grandmother into Christ. Her health was so bad she died only 2 months after mom and dad married. Mother had a little sister, Sarah, who was only 5 and Daddy took her to raise as his own.

Daddy was an awesome father. He did his job and met his responsibility of teaching and training his children to know God and develop their own faith. "Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord." Daddy took that command seriously. The last thing daddy did was exasperate us. He may not have always allowed us to do just what we wanted to do, but he wasn't unreasonable.

If you were going to get a whooping by Bill Huggins, one thing was certain -- you were also going to get a sermon as to why you were getting a whooping. He would sit you down and the sermon would begin... and trust me... your guilt level would begin to rise quickly... you would deeply regret your disobedience. And it got to the point you would be begging daddy to stop preaching and start whooping... "please just whoop me daddy... please whoop me!"

Three days before daddy passed, my brother in law, Jerry, handed me the Bible opened to John 14. As I began to read I could see his facial expressions and lips moving. When I got to verse 9 and read ... "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father?'" Daddy began to mumble, "...If

you've seen me you've seen the Father...." I know what he was saying and thinking; but, I was thinking something else. And I told him.. "Daddy you have shown us the Father... you have shown us the Father."

Anyone who knew Bill Huggins and was around him for any time at all, couldn't help but to see The Lord. My image and understanding of God and Jesus and the Spirit are shaped greatly by my dad's life. He was the most gracious, merciful, humble, loving man that I've ever known. I'm so grateful that my children were able to know him and see God lived out in his life and to experience God and Jesus and the Spirit through Daddy's life.

As a husband I told daddy on numerous occasions ... "Daddy, you showed me how to love a woman." Bill Huggins took seriously his responsibility as a husband. He loved my momma, and he showed his children how a woman, a wife, is to be treated. I can honestly say that in all my years as their son, I have never heard my parents raise their voices to one another. My dad may not have been able to give my mom all the material things and finer fancy stuff, but he gave her so much more than the majority of men don't give their wives today -- genuine agape love.

If ever there was a man who fulfilled Eph. 5:25 it was my dad, and **he knew it by heart!** On Wednesday, before he got completely confined to the bed, I asked him "Daddy what does Ephesians 5:25 say?" He quoted it perfectly, "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her." My sisters and I, along with the rest of our families, were eye-witnesses to my dad's love for my mom. For 64 and 1/2 years he loved her in the truest sense.

I may not have grown up a rich kid, but I grew up as a kid who never worried about my parents' love for one another or whether or not they would get a divorce. It wasn't in their vocabulary. Their marriage was Christ honoring and an example for all who saw them and knew them.

Daddy never stopped learning or growing in his faith. Most times I would go over to their house, he would be reading, or studying, or writing articles -- always growing. He and I would have mini debates over things; several things he changed his mind on over the years.

I guess what I will miss the most are those times when this *green horn* would crawl up at the feet of the *old wise one*. Tell him of my struggles, of my troubles, of my dilemmas -- either with my church

See HUGGINS on Page 16

The Delhi church in northeast Louisiana is capably served by Otis L. Bowman -- a "bi-vocational preacher." Otis, a graduate of MBC, preaches regularly for the church in addition to his full-time secular job.

Many smaller churches are finding that men, who are willing to "make tents like Paul" also make valuable ministers of local congregations. Our most recent Bible winner is a member where Otis preaches.



Serving the church in Delhi, Louisiana
Otis and Sandra Bowman

Wonder Why These Records Were Written

**People DISOBEYED;
People DESTROYED!**

Nadad & Abihu

(Leviticus 10:1-2)

Disobeyed: "...offered strange fire before the Lord which he commanded them not."

Destroyed: "And there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord."

Korah

(Numbers 16: 31-33)

Disobeyed: Led a rebellion against the authority of God and Moses. (Num. 16:1-22)

Destroyed: "...and the earth opened her mouth and swallowed them up... went down alive into the pit and the earth closed upon them: and they perished from among the congregation." (Num. 16:32,33)

Uzzah

(2 Samuel 6: 6-9)

Disobeyed: "Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God and took hold of it..." (verse 6)

Destroyed: "...and God smote him there for his error and he died by the ark of God." (verse 7)

Examples: Book of Jude

(a) Israelites

Disobeyed: "They believed not." (verse 5)

Destroyed: "... The Lord having saved the people out of the land of Egypt afterward destroyed them...." (verse 5)

(b) Angels

Disobeyed: "...kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation...." (verse 6)

Destroyed: "...reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgement of the great day." (verse 6)

(c) Sodom & Gomorrha

Disobeyed: "...giving themselves over to fornication and going after strange flesh...." (verse 7)

Destroyed: "...suffering the vengeance of eternal fire." (verse 7)

Consider the disobedience and destruction detailed in the book of Jude and ask, **Why were they written?**

INSPIRED ANSWER: "Set forth for an example." (vs. 7)

Consider the above and other Old Testament records of disobedience and destruction and ask, **Why Were They Written?**

THE INSPIRED ANSWER: I Cor. 10:6 -- "Now these things were **our examples**, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted... Now all these things happened unto them for **ensamples** and **they are written for our admonition** upon whom the ends of the world are come."

Yes, God is good. God is love. But, sin is terrible. Sin brings suffering and, **if not repented of**, sin brings **destruction**.

Jesus warned, "**...and fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in Hell.**" (Matthew 10:28)

Be not deceived. Heaven is wonderful but hell is horrible!

"Behold therefore the **goodness and the severity of God....**" (Romans 11:22)
(Compiled by alf)

Inscriptions

The "Big Bang"

By
Dennis Doughty



Let me try to simply state the "Big Bang" theory (an effort to explain the beginning of our universe). 13.7 Billion years ago there was this "black hole" in space. At the bottom of this hole was an area of "intense gravitational pressure" scientists call a Singularity.

What is a "Singularity" and where does it come from? Well, these scientists do not know for sure. Singularities are zones, which defy the current understanding of physics. According to the theory, the "black hole" drew matter into it where it was squished into intense density, heated up and then expanded (the big bang) in this singularity and then cooled to the size and temperature of our current universe. (Yea, kind'a complicated and farfetched isn't it!)

According to the "All about Science" web page, they do not know where the matter came from that was sucked into these black holes, or, where the black hole came from, and "to be honest", they report, these theories "defy our current understanding of physics."

The list of well known scientists who reject this Big Bang stuff is a long one. Dr. Gentry, a noted physicist, claims that the standard Big Bang model is founded upon a faulty paradigm (the Friedmann-lemaitre expanding-space time paradigm) which he claims is inconsistent with the empirical data. Other high-profile dissenters include Nobel laureate Dr. Hannes Alfvén, Professor Geoffrey Burbidge, Dr. Halton Arp, and the renowned British astronomer Sir Fred Hoyle.

These and others have many differing views regarding creation. The "Big Bang Theory" just happens to be the one the media and many university professors have bought into and promote. However, it is a difficult concept to defend or even explain.

All agree that *Creation* had a beginning and was a supernatural event and took place outside of the natural realm. Is there a master Architect out there? We think so. "He spoke, and it was

done; He commanded, and it stood fast" (Psalms 33:9). The opening verse of Genesis contains all the vital elements of creation. "In the beginning (*time*) God (*force*) created (*power*) the heavens and the earth" (*matter*). We have a biblical account that is totally accurate in every detail regarding the 4,000 years of man's history that it covers. It is accurate even in scientific areas. Why do we think it would be totally wrong in detailing the events of creation?

Scientists are correct however in talking about a "big bang." They just have it at the wrong place in history -- it was not at the beginning of the universe, but **will be at the end!** "The sun will be darkened, the stars will fall from the sky" and "they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory" (Mt. 25:29-31). "The day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat and the earth and its works will be burned up" (2 Peter 3:10).

Our scientists say the earth was created by an intense heat, which goes against science. (A house is not created by a house fire.) God's word says the earth will be destroyed by an intense heat -- which goes along with science (intense heat destroys the house).

We should not be so concerned about the beginning of the universe, as we are in preparing for its end. The earth is here- it declares the glory of it's Creator (Psalm 14:1). Let us enjoy the beautiful world we have, and prepare for the next one.

by
Dennis Doughty

The "New Birth"

A week ago I stood at the foot of my daughter's hospital bed as she prepared to give birth to our new granddaughter. As the time neared and the doctor arrived, I went to the lobby to wait. A short time later I was called back and there held our beautiful baby "Sophia." My son-in-law was beaming, telling how he cut the cord himself, and what a great trooper my daughter was. Ah, the joy of a new birth!

Jesus told Nicodemus, that "unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." Nicodemus was confused, "How can an old man be born again? He cannot go back into his mother's womb and be born, can he?" Jesus answered, saying that one must be "born of water and the Spirit," and then stated, "Do not be amazed that I said to you 'you must be born again.'" (John. 3:1-8)

As we enter this world by a physical "birth," so we enter the kingdom of God with a spiritual birth. *Do not be amazed that you must be born again!* It is a birth of the Spirit in the waters of baptism. As Philip traveled with a man he "preached Jesus to him." A short time later the man said, "Look! Water!" They both "went down into the water" and Philip baptized him. The man then went on his way rejoicing. (Acts 8:34-39). Ah, the joy of a new birth!

Dennis Doughty
901-267-3100

Dennis1848@bellsouth.net

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Clinton Church Stresses Cuban Missions on Sunday October 6, 2013



Robert Shelton and Tony Fernandez

Editor's Note: My June and I were privileged to visit the Clinton, Mississippi congregation on Sunday, October 6, 2013. During the morning worship services, special emphasis was given to their long-time mission efforts in the country of Cuba.

The guest speaker for the day was **Tony Fernandez** from Matanzas, Cuba. Translating for brother Tony was **Chase Turner** from Monroe, Louisiana.

It was a very encouraging day as we learned of the hundreds of Cubans who have become Christians over the past two decades, largely through the efforts of those associated with the Clinton church.

I asked **Robert Shelton**, long time preacher/elder with the Clinton congregation to write a report for the "Messenger" on their involvement in the Cuban mission work. The following is his report.

Cuban Mission Report - Robert Shelton -

When Fidel Castro became president of Cuba in 1959 Christianity was banned and atheism became the national religion. The Christians had to worship secretly, and if they were caught they could be put in jail, lose their jobs or punished in other ways. In 1993 this ban was lifted. In April/May of that year the first religious campaign by any religious group from the United States took place. This campaign was conducted by members of the church of Christ, and consisted of 12 Americans and 5 Jamaicans. I was on that first campaign and have been to Cuba at least once every year since.

Upon arriving in Cuba we were divided into groups of 2 or 3 and

sent into different locations. **Brad Blair** of Chattanooga, TN and I were sent to the city of Matanzas. Antonio "Chano" Fernandez, the preacher, was in the hospital following surgery. Matanzas had been an after-thought and no campaign plans had been made. We did not know what to expect. By the end of our two week campaign there had been 22 baptisms in Matanzas! We



Chase Turner

did not know how the Cubans would accept us Americans. We found the friendliest, most loving, most accepting people that you could find anywhere. The campaign team as a whole baptized 93 souls.

On that first trip the church was only 6 months old and met in the preacher's living room. It was not long until it outgrew this space. They needed a larger space to meet in. At that time it was against the law to build a church building in Cuba, but you could build a house for the preacher and make it large enough for the church to meet in.

The church in Clinton raised the money and a piece of land was purchased and a building was built. A large covered patio big enough to seat 400 people was built on the back of the house. Because of the climate they do not need heat. There is an eight foot fence around the property so there is no outside interference. You must have permission from the U. S. government to go to Cuba. You must have a visa from the Cuban government to get into Cuba. There are two kinds of Cuban visas: a tourist visa and a religious visa. With a tourist visa you cannot do any religious work, you can only visit. You cannot stay in a private home, only a hotel.

"The president (Fidel Castro) has had some good things to say about you folks". I asked, "Do you mean about the church of Christ?" He replied, "Yes".

Turn to CUBAN Missions, pg 8

Thyatira Church of Christ

"Mississippi's Oldest"

170th

**Anniversary
Celebrated 10-6-13**

- Report by Paul Franks -

Glenda and I traveled to north Mississippi on Sunday morning October 6. After about two hours, we arrived at the meeting house of the Thyatira Church of Christ, eleven miles east of Senatobia. As we approached the building, we saw several young men at the door helping to bring food inside the building.

As we walked through the door it was apparent that a lot of work had been done and was being done to prepare for this very special day. The first person we saw was Tim West, a graduate of MBC who



Tim West
14 years at Thyatira

has been the preacher for this congregation for the past 14 years. Tim took us to a special display that had been prepared for the celebration day which showed the first minutes of the Thyatira congregation written in 1843.

The crochet table cloth was made by one of the members, Judy Williams who is a descendent of one of the original members. Not only Judy, but many of the current members can trace their ancestors back to the original members.

Both of the two preachers who were asked to speak at the anniversary celebration have family connections to this congregation; Derek Williams who preaches for the Bartlett Woods congregation in Memphis and Adam Richardson who has recently moved to the Florence, Alabama area. Adam's mother, Carla Meredith Richardson, works for Freed-Hardeman University in Henderson, Tennessee. One of the highlights of the day was listening to the FHU Chorale group.

Derek's father, Paul Williams attends the Thyatira congregation. Mark, who led the singing, lives in Grenada, Mississippi where he attends the Southside congregation. Greg Williams, another brother, who read the scripture, is a member at Thyatira.

After great lessons, wonderful



fellowship, a meal with brothers and sisters from area congregations and also hearing the young people from FHU sing, we concluded the activities of the day which had taken about six hours.

It was a wonderful 170th anniversary. Just as we were leaving, I recognized a familiar face, **Gene Cooper**. Gene was on the board at Sardis Lake Christian Camp with me many years ago. He is the preacher for the other Thyatira congregation.

Most of the 321 who attended the

morning and afternoon anniversary services at Thyatira could trace their ancestry back to those who were among the founding members of this great and old congregation in north MS.



Willing Workers
(From Left: Andrew Garay, Logan Smothers, Shane West, Jonathan Pugh and Charles Martin IV.)

CUBAN MISSIONS

(Continued from Page 7)

I found that out the hard way when the officials came and told me to get out of the private home I was staying in and go to a hotel or there would be a hefty fine. With a religious visa you can do religious work and stay in a private home. The government nearly always issues me a religious visa.

I became friends with the Cuban Consul in Jamaica who is a good friend of Castro. One day he said to me, "The president (Fidel Castro) has had some good things to say about you folks". I asked, "Do you mean about the church of Christ?" He replied, "Yes".

The church had sent more than 20 forty foot containers of medical supplies to Cuba. When these supplies arrived in Cuba they were divided up between the hospitals in several different towns. When they were delivered to a hospital one of the Cuban preachers for the church was always there to present these supplies to the hospital. It is my guess that this was why Castro had some good things to say about us.

The Matanzas church in the past 5 years has started 35 other congregations in the province of Matanzas. Very few people in Cuba have cars so they need a congregation close enough for them to walk to worship. When I was there in April a lady invited some friends to her house to have a Bible study with me. From that study 3 or 4 people were baptized. As a result, a congregation was started in her house. Within 2 or 3 months 27 other people were baptized for the remission of their sins.

I have now made 30 mission trips to Cuba. There have been 900 baptisms on the campaigns I have conducted in Matanzas. In addition to those baptisms the Christians there baptize people on a weekly basis.

Robert Shelton
C/o Church of Christ
155 Broadway
Clinton, MS 39056

"Go ye therefore and teach all nations... Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature..." WORDS OF JESUS

Starkville, MS Church Celebrated Seventy-Five Years



Starkville Church Building Also Houses Student Center

Sunday, September 22, 2013, the Starkville church of Christ celebrated their 75th anniversary with a special service.

John T. Smithson, (the preacher for the Starkville congregation from 1978-2006) was the guest speaker. During the Bible class he talked about the past accomplishments of this congregation.

His first key word for his presentation was **PEOPLE** with names like **Allen, Littlejohn, Burks, Smith, etc.**

One phrase that was used in the early days of the congregation, when they were looking for support, was this is "no ordinary opportunity." "This congregation in Starkville has always understood it has a unique opportunity because of the proximity to the Mississippi Agricultural and Mechanical College."

Other key words of his lesson were **partnership, possibilities, positive, participation, preaching and persistence.**

Andy Miller, who has been the preacher

since 2006, preached during the worship hour concerning the future of the church. After this service a delicious meal was served for all who attended, followed by an afternoon singing.

In Andy's lesson he stressed that this church is not interested in "sitting on the edge or staying in place" but continues to build a vision for Christ's church in Starkville, Mississippi.



John T. Smithson
(Local Preacher: 1978-2006)
75th Anniversary Speaker

Perry Jinkerson has

been the campus minister since 1984 and **Wesley Thompson** has been the youth minister since 2002. The church is overseen by six elders. They are: Bascom Allen, Bailey Howell, Johnnie Jenkins, Roger King, Dean Stewart and David Shaw.

(Report By Paul Franks)



Among Earliest Members at Starkville
Faye Weiniing and Nell Egli

VERONA

The Verona Church of Christ is planning a Gospel Meeting for January 17-19, 2014. **Michael Bates** is scheduled to be the speaker.

FULTON

Jimmy Moffett from Memphis was the speaker at the Homecoming service on November 3, 2013 for the Fulton Church of Christ.

BELMONT

Wayne and Catherine Mitchell were honored on September 29, 2013, for 61 years of his preaching the gospel. The special event was held at the Liberty Church of Christ in the fellowship building. Congratulations to Wayne and Catherine on their many years of service and may God bless them with many more.

Why ME? WHY Me?

Why Me?

WHY Me? Why ME?

1. Physically disabled.
 - a. Unable to walk upright
 - b. Constant nerve pain
 - c. Unable to work
2. Son Killed in car wreck
3. Divorced from wife

Rick Asked,
"Why Me?"A Personal Story
and
Lessons Learned

by Rick Benson

In 1997 I became physically disabled from a neurological movement disorder called Dystonia. This disease progressed quickly over a few months, until I could no longer walk upright and suffered with constant nerve pain.

I was forced to quit my sales management job. My wife, Karen, became our sole bread winner and worked hard to keep the bills paid. In the fall of 1998, I decided to attend Magnolia Bible College in Kosciusko, Mississippi, just to take some General Education classes.

In February, 2000, our oldest son, Ricky was killed in a car accident. This proved to be a great strain on our marriage and also on our other children, Brandon and Katharyn. To try and work things out, Karen and I decided to separate; but reconciliation failed. In the fall of 2000 we were divorced.

It was soon after our divorce that I finally obeyed the gospel after two years of Bible Study with **Howard Cox**, who was one of my college professors.

After being separated and divorced for a year and a half, Karen and I realized we still loved each other and were remarried. God is serious about marriage and He is capable of leading us through reconciliation -- if we let him. We should never put a period where God has placed a comma. Sometimes God requires us to wait and be patient.

After we were remarried in the fall of 2001, I had the opportunity to preach in Union, Mississippi. After preaching in Union for two years, a position opened in the MSU Extension office in Philadelphia, Mississippi. My wife applied for it. It was also at this time we put our house up for sale. It sold in less than 2 weeks! We

realized that God was serious about us moving to Union and having me work full time as a Gospel Preacher.

I had continued receiving treatment for my Dystonia and a Baclofen pump was placed inside of me in 2000. For several years there seemed to be no change in my physical condition. In the spring of 2006, for some "unknown" reason, I was able to walk upright! The "miracle" that I had prayed for -- over a period of nine years -- had arrived. I realized that God had healed me in more ways than just physically.

From the beginning of becoming disabled I prayed for healing; I begged God to put me back the way I was! Over the course of nine years I learned a great lesson about healing. God can and will heal us, but it will be according to His timing and His will. By the time I could walk upright again, I was a "new man," living for Him.

Here are 3 things I learned during my journey of physical pain and suffering and healing:

I. BE JOYFUL! (James 1:2-4) Where is the joy in losing your job, your health, your son and your marriage? I was not even looking for the joy. I just wanted to be healed and have my life put back the way it was.

We must realize that "perfection" in the Bible does not mean without error or flaw; but represents maturity and completeness. The "perfect" person has reached his intended maturity.

Our endurance produces joy because it shapes us into the image of Christ. This perfection is not the result of our own efforts, but comes through the "works of righteousness."

I was blind sided by all the turmoil because I was ignorant of the Bible, even though I had attended church all my life. "God's people are destroyed because of their ignorance."



Rick and Karen Benson

Have you ever felt so hopeless that you had no one else to turn to but God? That was where I was and found that it was a good place to let God begin rebuilding my life. It was the start of an amazing spiritual journey that I have been on for the last decade.

II. BE PRAYERFUL (James 1:5,6) We can pray with confidence that God's will may be done and that it is God's will that will give us more wisdom. The greatest subject one can ever know is God's perfect will. The only way we can learn His will is to be taught. Psalms 143:10 states, "Teach me to do Thy will; for Thou art my God..."

It took several years for me to finally realize that God could use me -- as broken as I was -- physically and emotionally. As I gained knowledge of His word, I grew spiritually. Spiritual growth is essential for learning God's perfect will for our lives.

Do you know what His will is for you? It is not as hard to learn as you may think. But it cannot be revealed without obedience.

III. BE OBEDIENT (James 1:7,8). We cannot be double-minded or look back at the past. It is this doubt that causes us to fail to receive God's blessings. A person with weak faith is not consistent in His walk with Christ. To overcome this we should obey Him.

For 40 years I had attended a denominational church. Even as I began to attend the Bible College, I remained in that church. But one day I met a crisis in my heart.

Was I saved or was I lost? The Book of Doctrine used by "my church" said I was saved because I was baptized as an infant and

See WHY ME? on page 18

Hollandale: Reunion and Lectureship

Report by Bruce Pate -
(former preacher for the Hollandale church)

On September 2-4, 2013, former members and friends of the Hollandale church of Christ met for the 2nd time at Leroy Percy State Park for a reunion and lectureship. The park is in southwest Washington County, about five miles west of Hollandale, Mississippi. The three day event was planned by **Robert Rawson**, preacher for the Crockett, Mississippi church and myself.

I served twice as preacher for the Hollandale church. We first moved to Hollandale in November of 1967 and worked until 1970. We came back to Hollandale in April of 1974 and left in 1975. Our son, **Charles**, came to live with us in 1968. Our daughter, **Patti Gail Pate**, was born January 18, 1970. In Hollandale, my wife and I met some of the most wonderful people ever, who will always have a very special place in our hearts.

Al Franks spoke the first night of the lectureship. He talked about Jesus' promise to establish His church (Matt. 16:13-19). Then he talked about the early history of the Hollandale church which was planted while he was preaching for the church in Rolling Fork -- about 20 miles away. He drove to and from Hollandale and preached for the new congregation that started meeting in the Municipal Building. In 1964, a permanent meeting house was built at the corner of Mercer and Thomas streets. Also that year, **Ray Hawk** came to Hollandale to be first full-time minister for the church. Over the years, other ministers to serve the church included **Roy Vaughn, Bruce Pate** and **Earl Butterworth**.

At the most recent reunion and lectureship (September 2-4, 2013), **Dan Beardain** spoke to us on the subject, "Calling on the Name of the Lord". He said it was more than saying "Lord, Lord" (Matt. 7:21; Acts 22:16). Every scripture brother Beardain used, he quoted. He had a Bible in his hand; but, not one time did he open it. The same thing was true of brother Franks. Brother Beardain had previously held three gospel meetings at Hollandale. Over the years, brother Franks had held at least two or three also.

On Wednesday evening, September 4, 2013, Robert Rawson and I went to the old Hollandale church building (now used by a denominational group) to preach one more gospel sermon. Several former members of Hollandale were there along with other people who attended there, including my son's first grade teacher. I preached on the subject, "The Identity of the Lord's church."

Several former members of the Hollandale church are now members of the South Main church in Greenville. The number includes **Wilmar & Charles Berry, Connie Tice, Lizzie May Baugh** (92 years old), **Carl & Shirley Dewitt** and **Margie Wilson**. My wife, Dale, and I love these people. We love the great Mississippi delta. Thanks for the wonderful memories. *Bruce Pate; 4633 Long Branch; Antioch, Tennessee 37013*

*"The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine..."*16th Annual
Mississippi
MM RV
RallyApril
23-26, 2014Lake
Tiak-O-Khata
Louisville, MSKeynoter
Joe Ed Furr

The Furr's: Joe Ed and Thana

Make plans to attend the 16th Annual Magnolia Messenger RV Rally April 23-26, 2014 (Wednesday through Saturday) at Lake-Tiak-O'-Khata, Louisville, Mississippi. Keynote Speaker, with emphasis on Singing, Joe Ed Furr. **Please NOTE: This resort has a beautiful lodge and cabins for anyone to rent. You don't have to have an RV to attend this rally. We would love for you to make plans to attend. Call me at 662-792-2700 if you have any questions. Paul Franks. (More info later!)**

Are You Looking for a Whipping or a Harvest?

- Mike Benson -

Over 30+ years of ministry I've occasionally heard various church members say, "Preacher, I think we need a sermon on _____."

The subject suggestions have been as diverse as those who offered them. Frequently, but not always, the proposals leaned towards moral issues like modesty, sex, or beverage alcohol. Sometimes they gravitated more towards specific doctrinal treatises on issues like marriage and divorce, giving, or the oneness of the church.

I've always been curious as to what really prompts people to offer sermon suggestions in the first place. Sometimes I've been courageous enough to inquire as to why they think a particular message needs to be addressed.

What I've discovered from listening is that some brethren request specific sermons because they've got a burr in their saddle. They're aggravated with a fellow church member who doesn't meet their own personal—dare I say it—Pharisaic expectations, and so sermon suggestions are tendered as a means of fixing folks. "So-and-so is doing this..." and so you need to preach a good sermon on this..."—whatever this may be.

I call these, "whippin'

**"Preacher,
I think we need a
sermon on"**



Mike Benson

sermons". Whippin' sermons are where I'm urged to preach on pet subjects and verbally whip a church member or members into submission. In essence, Mike needs to tell off weak members via the pulpit in one glorious fire and brimstone message; he needs to correct folks

Do I covet sermon suggestions? Absolutely! Do I intend to preach "one hit wonders" so that somebody can vicariously get at somebody else in the assembly? Not for a minute.

and one whippin' sermon will do the trick.

I've never been able to find quick-fix, duct-tape, whippin' sermons in the Bible. I do find occasions where some preached with improper motives (cf. Philippians 1:15-16), but even they didn't reap immediate, instantaneous results.

What I do find in the Scriptures is where prophets and preachers did a lot of seed planting (Luke 8:4-8; 11-15). They scattered the seed-Word, cultivated it, fertilized it, and watered it in anticipation of an eventual God-given harvest (1 Corinthians 3:6).

Strange as it may sound, it is not a preacher's job to fix anybody. Correct (2 Timothy 3:16-4:3), yes; fix, no. It's not his job to tomahawk members of the body of Christ into compliance.

It IS his God-given responsibility is to scatter the precious Word - seed on different soils and then let God do His part (Isaiah 55:10-11).

A preacher knows the seed is good. He knows some soil is good. He also knows some soil will soften over time given the right conditions.

Have you ever heard of a person who listened to just one whippin' sermon and obeyed in totality? More likely what you've witnessed is that over time, with repetitive, consistent, loving seed-planting and instruction, as well as godly influence and patience (1 Peter 3:1-4), a person eventually came to the truth and made a successive, gradual change.

If either a preacher or a farmer forces seed on blacktop you can be certain there won't be any growth or legitimate conversion. That's true in the field as well as in the pew.

Do I covet sermon suggestions? Absolutely! Do I intend to preach "one hit wonders" so that somebody can vicariously get at somebody else in the assembly? Not for a minute.

Give that a thought the next time you find yourself saying, "Preacher, I think we need a sermon on" The person who may really need a whippin' won't be the "weak" brother, but you.

(Mike preaches for the Lord's church in Hattiesburg, MS. His email: mbensonkw@att.net)

BLUE SPRINGS 100 Years

The Antioch church of Christ celebrated their 100th anniversary as a congregation on Sunday December 1, 2013.

The Knock at the Door

Sitting here on that Saturday morn,
Like many times done before;
Just leaned back in my easy chair,
Then a knock at the door so easy and fair.

I opened the door and what do I see,
But two people standing before me;
I said hello how do you do,
Then I ask, how can I help you?

They said, we're not here to ask your help,
As we stand here on your door step;
We're from the Church across the way,
And we knock on doors each Saturday.

We've come to visit and maybe pray,
In hopes you'll visit us someday;
We sing and praise God's Holy name,
Would you like to join us and do the same?

I said, I used to go way back when,
I still read my Bible now and then;
I think many times I need to pray,
As I lay down at the end of the day.

I sure do thank you for stopping by,
As for the visit, well I'll try;
It was good to meet you two I say,
Thank you so much and have a good day.

That little story happens sometimes,
To the ones that you're sure to find;
That knock the doors spreading the news,
Hoping to add to the chosen few.

Taking time from their everyday deeds,
To help a stranger with spiritual needs;
For days and days they walk the streets,
Never knowing who or what they will meet.

Although there are some that live with much pain,
Every year they sign up to go on campaign;
They walk the streets with a smile on their face,
Teaching and sharing God's amazing grace.

From youth to seniors and some in between,
They have a good time yes indeed;
When the trip is over one thing is true,
From everyone here we all say thank you.

(Poem sent to us by Russell Blackwell of Florence, Alabama, who said it was written by a member of the Cox Blvd church.)

**Read Campaign Report
From Cox Blvd Church on Page 5**

Readers' Response

I recently got my hands on a Magnolia Messenger for the Fall of 2013. I really enjoyed it very much and would like you to put me on your mailing list to receive the Magnolia Messenger. If it is possible I would really like you to send me a couple of back issues. I would like to say thank you for doing such a good job with your Messenger. I am currently in Rankin County Jail awaiting trial... Thank you for such a wonderful paper!! (Charles Dukes, Brandon, MS)

I appreciate so much the good work you do. Always so glad to get the paper. Bless you in this good work. In Christian Love, (Virginia Young, Muscle Shoals, AL)

We enjoy your paper. The best conservative (truth) paper today. Thanks!! Keep it up. (Bruce Clark, Rockwall, TX)

Thanks For Reading and Responding

Free 24 Page Fully Illustrated Booklet for Evangelism

It's the perfect book to reach your family members who are not New Testament Christians. Use it to reach friends or use for Prison work, for churches who want their members to get involved in outreach in a non-threatening way. The book has 24 pages involving a Christian teaching a husband and wife in a home Bible study. It's all illustrated in color using a method the writer and illustrator has used successfully for years. Please feel free to order but use what you order, because the books are limited. Pay only the shipping, make a contribution or pay nothing.

Southern Hills Church of Christ
9080 Southwood Drive • Shreveport, LA 71118 • Phone 686-2190

Visiting Among Churches in North Mississippi

Report by Eddie Lewis

Editor's Note: In this issue, we are pleased to continue the reports by Eddie Lewis concerning his visits among churches of Christ in the Magnolia state. Brother Eddie has chosen, in his "retirement", to serve as a "**Barnabas**" (an *encourager*) to Mississippi churches of Christ, especially in the northern part of the state. Eddie provides these reports without charge to the Messenger so we can share them with all who read the MM. Thanks, brother Eddie! (alf)



- Eddie Lewis -

It has been a great joy for me to visit with 11 churches in north Mississippi during the months of July through September. It was very encouraging to me to see so many wonderful works being done to further the Kingdom of God. Two Sundays I attended services at Germantown. I preached one Sunday and attended their 65th Anniversary Celebration. The following is a report of my visits.

Batesville:

July 7. I visited the Batesville church of Christ. **Michael Bates** is the minister there. He served as a youth minister with **Robert Rawson** until Robert retired and Michael became the pulpit minister 6 years ago. **Josh James** is the present



Josh James & Michael Bates

youth minister. They have around 200 in attendance.

They are served by four elders: **Jim Dickerson, Danny Walker, Bubba Farrish, and Melvin Traywick.** They had just returned from their session at Sardis Lake Christian Camp. Also, two of their teens had been on the mission trip to Panama with other area churches.

Danny Jones, the SLCC caretaker, taught the auditorium Bible class. They used the Winkler Study Guide for James. They were

in chapter 4. **Michael** preached a lesson from Matthew 16: 24-26, "My Life or His?" He considered three questions to see if I am committing my life to Christ: *What am I doing? What am I thinking? And what is my motivation?* It was a good lesson.



Jimmy Stewart & Danny Jones

Central Academy

July 14: I visited with the Central Academy church of Christ. **Ed Casteel** is the minister there. He has worked with the church for two years. They have no elders. Ed has a radio program each week with **Hal Johnson**, the minister at Sardis. Their attendance is around 50 on Sunday morning. It was great to see Ed again and meet the brethren at Central Academy.



Iris & Ed Casteel

Ed taught both the Bible class and preached the sermon. The Bible class was taken from Titus 2:11f, "Concepts of Grace." God's grace is for all men. He mentioned verse 12 that lists the things we must deny and the things we must do to be righteous in God's sight.

His sermon was from Philippians 2:5-8, "The Spirit of Christ." We are to have the mind of Christ. The Spirit of Christ in us involves love, sacrifice, trust and a spirit of evangelism.

Oxford

July 21: I visited with the Oxford church of Christ. **Lendy Bartlett** is the preaching minister there. He is



Casey Coston & Lendy Bartlett



John Supple, Lawrence Chandler and Doug Shields

a graduate of HST and has been at Oxford for several years. He served as youth minister when **Bob Brewer** was the preacher. Bob has retired. **Casey Coston** is the campus minister, **Chad Chapman** is the youth minister, **Meagan Bartlett** is the children's education minister, and **Jessi Berger** is the counseling minister.

The congregation is served by six elders. They have 275 in attendance in the summer and 320 during the school year. One of their Bible classes is for international students. I was impressed that they had several students in the class. On Sunday night they have classes for all ages. The church sponsors the Christian Student Center on the Ole Miss campus.

I attended a class taught by **Lawrence Chandler** and **John Supple.** They were studying a series on "Restoring the Word." They looked at the book of Romans.

Lendy preached on "The Lord of Rest" (Lk. 6:1-11). He asked the question, "Why do we do what we do in the name of Jesus?" He also asked are there practices in the church, or traditions in the church, that are under the judgment of God just like this tradition of the Pharisee he discussed in Luke 6.

Ashland

July 28: I visited with the Ashland church of Christ. **Daniel Fowler** is the preacher there. He has been there a year and a half. He has his master's degree in counseling and is working on getting his License as a



Kody Joyner & Daniel Fowler

Professional Counselor. **Kody Joyner** is their youth minister and is working on his bachelor's degree. The church has no elders and their attendance is around 64. They support several works and have an active youth program. **Calvin Ursery**, one of their former elders and a senior member, took me out to lunch.

Daniel taught the adult class. They studied Revelation 2—the seven churches of Asia. He made some important applications for us.

In Daniel's sermon he talked about believing others. His point was we don't need to be putting people in a box, but try to help them. He used several biblical examples.

It was great to meet Daniel and the brethren at Ashland.

Germantown

August 4: I had the opportunity to preach at Germantown. **Dave Phillips** was away on a mission trip. I appreciate the opportunity to speak at Germantown and the wonderful support and encouragement of the brethren there.



Harold Russell, Bill Frohn and J. L. Eaton
Elders at New Albany

Potts Camp

August 11: I visited with the Potts Camp church of Christ. **Jerry Coats** is the preacher there. He has been at the church for three years. They have no elders and their attendance is around 50. They are in the process of buying new songbooks.



Jerry Coats

Jerry taught the adult Bible Class. His theme was "Establishing Bible Authority." He emphasized the importance of church members knowing the scriptures. In September they will begin using the Gospel Advocate Foundations Series.

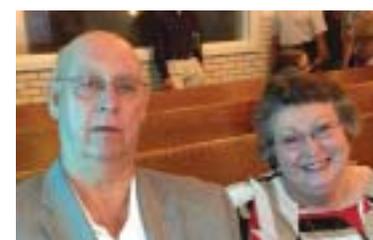
Jerry's sermon was entitled, "Can You Recommend Your Religion in Light of the Scriptures." He asked two questions: Can you prove your religion? Does God approve of your system of belief and practice? Your salvation depends on how you answer these questions.

New Albany

August 18: I visited with the New Albany church of Christ. **Mike King** is the preacher there. They have two



Mike King



Jerry & Eleta Grimmert

elders. Their attendance is around 155. They are involved in several works. I enjoyed my visit. It was good to see some old friends from the Mississippi Delta—**Jerry and Eleta Grimmert.**

I attended an adult Bible Class taught by **Harold Russell.** They are following the GA Foundations Series. The study was about Esther and Mordecai. It was about how Esther saved her people from annihilation. It was an interesting study and lots of good discussion.

Mike King preached in the worship. His lesson was on "God's Fiery Nature" (Deut. 4:23-26). He talked about how fire depicts the consuming nature of God. He said that God's word has power to refine and destroy. It can make us what we should be or condemn us if you do not follow it. It was a good lesson.

Beech Hill

August 25: I visited with the Beech Hill church of Christ. **King McCarver** has been the preacher there for 21 years. I remember conducting a meeting at Beech Hill his first year there. **James Horton** is an associate minister. They have 225 in attendance. They have an active Lads to Leaders program directed by James. They have three elders.

King taught the adult Bible class. They are studying the book of James. The lesson was from chapter 4. He summed up the book by telling some of the major themes presented by James.

King preached in the worship. His lesson came from Luke 6:6-11. He used this story to illustrate the question: "Why do you go to Church?" Both lessons were very good. It was a pleasure to see King again.



King McCarver

Marlow

September 1: I visited with the Marlow church of Christ. **Rodney**

LA/TX RV Rally Produces Precious Memories

Combining Fellowship and Challenging Bible Lessons

Report by
Betty Harris & June Franks

The Louisiana-Texas RV Rally, held October 16-20, 2013 in Grapeland, Texas, is now history but the memories made will last for a lifetime.

The RV Rally actually began on Wednesday night; however, many arrived early to enjoy the "togetherness" and to enjoy the special food that was "in the making" for Monday and Tuesday nights.

Monday night featured a Hobo Stew, followed by the traditional seafood dinner with all the trimmings on Tuesday night. A special thanks to **David and Judy McGee** from Wesson, Mississippi who have provided the fresh shrimp every year. They in turn with the help of others, prepare and cook it for everyone to enjoy. There is never a shortage of food at the rally -- especially desserts. Everyone does their part in contributing to the pot lucks.

About fifteen campers who had arrived early for the rally attended services at the Grapeland Church of Christ on Sunday. It was encouraging to the Grapeland congregation as well as to those who attended.

Following a delicious "pot luck" on Wednesday night, it was time for the official beginning of the rally. **John Pigg** spoke on "Weak Men Look For Opportunities, Strong Men Create Them." John lives in Ridgeland, Mississippi where he has served 13 years as preacher for the Lake Harbour church.

After services on Wednesday night, homemade ice cream was enjoyed by all followed by entertainment provided by **Morris Tirpitz** from Shreveport, Louisiana.

Brother Morris is 87 years young. He was given a plaque at the rally acknowledging his faithful entertaining at the rallies through all these years. Congratulations brother Morris! We enjoy so much you singing for us especially the



Morris Tirpitz
Special Man with Special Cap
Sings Special Song

song, "When The Wagon Was New."

Separate classes were conducted for men and women on Thursday morning. **Donna Manuel** from Many, Louisiana spoke for the ladies and her husband, **Danny Manuel** spoke at the men's session. Their subject was, "Forgiveness is Our Door Prize."

The evening speaker on Thursday night was **Bill Collins**, preacher for the DeQuincy Church of Christ. His topic was "God Closes Doors When We Fail To Walk Through them."

A fish fry was enjoyed by all on Friday afternoon. **Glen Franks** furnished the fish and cooked it with the help of many others.

A Patriotic Program was on Friday night followed by a lesson from **Dan Manuel**, preacher for the Crockett Road church in Palestine, Texas. Dan's subject was, "God Has Opened a Door to America" and "Americana- A Picture Of A People Proud and Free." Entertainment was provided by **Todd Allen Herendeen**. Todd Allen has the number one patriotic hit in the Country, "My Name Is America."

Breakfast was served on Saturday morning with Gospel Sing-

ing following.

Sunday morning services were held at the Crockett Road Church of Christ in Palestine. **Ray Franks** from Dequincy, Louisiana spoke on "What Lies Behind The Door Of The Celestial City?" **Dan Manuel**, preacher for the Crockett Road congregation preached on "Listen For The Knock On Your Door." The noon meal on Sunday was provided by the Crockett Road Church.

Ray and Donna Franks are to be commended for their many years of conducting the Louisiana/Texas Rallies. **Glen and Ena Franks** from Lake Charles also assisted in conducting this year's rally.

Congratulations to **Sandra Oliver** from Brandon, Mississippi. Sandra was given an award in recognition of her Christian service. We are thankful for Sandra and her spirit of wanting to be of service to others.

The lessons were truly uplifting and created a desire in our heart



Sandra Oliver Given Award by Glen Franks

to be more productive in making sure that we could see the "Open Doors of Opportunity!"

Everyone did a good job in presenting their lessons. One quote from one of the lessons stood out to me, "When one door closes another door opens; but we so often look so long and so regretfully upon the closed door, that we do not see the ones which open for us." (Alexander Graham Bell)

Since the rally closed, we are saddened to learn of the death of **Jerry Nisbett** from Lewisville, Texas, one of our fellow RVer's. We extend our deepest sympathy to his wife, **Virginia**, and to other family members.

Even though Jerry was very ill he still attended the RV Rally at Grapeland. Jerry and Virginia both were an inspiration to each of us who were at the rally. We will certainly miss Jerry at future rallies.

The RV Rally is just not for those who have campers but for anyone who would like to attend. Several come and stay in cabins. It is a time for a spiritual renewal and a time for making lasting memories.

Lord willing, we hope to see YOU at the rally next year!

Magnolia Messenger

Memorials & Tributes

The person whose name is in **CAPS** is memorialized or honored by the person(s) whose name is in lower case letters. **THANK YOU.** God bless!

In Memory Of

ROY & BLANCHE MEEKS
DOYLE MEEKS
David & Linda Cook
(Ripley, MS)

JACKY COGGINS
LARRY ATKINS
VERNA RICKMAN
Hazel Cook
(Columbus, MS)

BRUCE D. NICHOLS
Pamela Nichols
(Haughton, LA)

MR. THOMAS J. MURRAY, SR.
MR. SAMUEL J. DUVALL
MRS. SADIE D. DUVALL
Lynell D. Murray
(Ellisville, MS)

DORIS MEARS
VELMA FLEMING
Therman & Sadie Hodge
(Meridian, MS)

BARBARA JEAN TEER
Dale Teer
(Baton Rouge, LA)

JAMES ELLIS "DOC" FULGHAM
Bonnie Strickland
(Brandon, MS)

EARL "CHUNKY" WILLIAMS
Mary Malone
(Kosciusko, MS)

JOHN LOTT
Chestley & Helen Nash
(Vicksburg, MS)

JOE A. JOHNSON
Donald H. Johnson
(Springfield, MO)

MR. GERALD LAMBERT
MR. ROBERT BROWN
MR. JOHN NICHOLS
MR. ELDON "BUDDY" PERKINS
MS. RACHEL A. BURNETT
Jess & Cindi Franks
(DeQuincy, LA)

VELMA FLEMING
PETE VINES
JAMES CROSBY
Ralph & Teresa Anderson
(Philadelphia, MS)

MATTIE LOU MONROE
Garnett & Betty Harris
(Brandon, MS)

LAHOMA ADAMS BUFORD
Barry & Rosemary Buford
(Pike Road, AL)

JERRY NISBETT
Carole Milner
(Brandon, MS)
Garnett & Betty Harris
(Brandon, MS)

In Honor Of

ANDERSON & EDEN THOMPSON
David & Linda Cook
(Ripley, MS)

Suggestions for Contributors

In addition to the name of the person being memorialized or honored, please include your name and address and the address of a family member to whom a written acknowledgment may be sent. **THANK YOU** for caring for others and the Magnolia Messenger.

Please: Send Your Gifts To:

Magnolia Messenger
P. O. Box 1578
Kosciusko, MS 39090

Thank You

For Remembering the MM
As You Remember and/or Honor Your Loved Ones

Enclosed you will find a check for _____ to the Magnolia Messenger. Use it as you have need. We at the Caledonia congregation appreciate all the good work for the cause of Christ that the Messenger does in Mississippi and the surrounding area. May the Lord richly bless you as you seek to further His

cause. In Christian love (**Grady Scott, minister, Caledonia Church of Christ, Caledonia, MS**)

...I so enjoy reading this paper! Thanks for all of your work in publishing this wonderful paper!. In Christian Love, (**Marsha Kessell, Vidor, Tx**)



The Journeys of Paul, a Messenger



Paul & Glenda Franks
*"You Never Know When/
 Where They May Show Up"*

Glenda and I traveled down the Natchez Trace from Kosciusko to Natchez, Mississippi. We always enjoy the trace and that day was no exception. We then took Hwy 61 South that took us in the direction of Woodville, MS.

As we got within about 10 miles of Woodville, we came to a large sign telling us to turn to go to the *Corinth Church of Christ*. We turned on Buffalo Road, which is by the Buffalo river, and proceeded a couple of miles and saw a beautiful building with lovely live oak trees around the building.

We immediately realized that there was a beehive of activity around the building with the preparation for the 100th celebration of this congregation on Saturday, November 9, 2013.

One of the first people that I saw was **Wade Hammack** who is from the I-20 congregation in Vicksburg where he serves as one of the elders of the I-20 Church. Wade informed me that he and his family were from this community and you could tell that he was proud of that fact. I later learned that Wade was one of the direct descendents of **David and Elizabeth Carter**. The Carters were involved in giving the land where the building is today.

Later that evening, we went to the home of **Bernard and Silvia Waites**. Brother Waites has been the preacher for this congregation for **over one half of its existence**. We knocked on the door and we were invited in. Sister Waites quickly informed us that she had some spaghetti and would be glad to share it with us. We visited for a while and then she served the best spaghetti I had eaten in a long time. It was so good that Glenda asked for the recipe and got it. If you would like for Glenda to send it to you, just let her know.

The Anniversary celebration got started at 10:30 AM with a welcome from **Holmes**

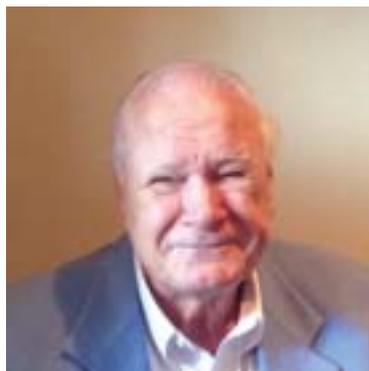
Woodville, MS

Corinth Church Celebrates 100th Anniversary



After Morning Worship, Lunch Together Under the Live Oaks

Sturgeon and an opening prayer by **Sam Blackmon**. Brother Waites spoke for a few minutes about the history of the church.



Bernard Waites

It was interesting to me, that since Brother Waites has had surgery on his knees, that the church has provided two stools for him. One in the back so he can greet people as they come and go from the building and a stool on the podium where he can sit while he is preaching.

After speeches from **A.D. Carter, Pernel Flowers, Hunter Howell** and **Edward Smith** we had a closing song and prayer. Then the church had prepared to feed the 250 + that came to this event with tents and tables under the trees. The Lord provided a beautiful day with just the right temperature. The meal and fellowship was wonderful.

The next day, Brother Waites had invited me to preach and so at 7:45 AM, I traveled with him to the Perrytown congregation which is about 20 miles away. We had Bible classes there with a wonderful group of about 50 to 60. The assembly included several children and it was a delight to see so many young people walking to their classrooms to study the Bible.

I was invited to preach at Perrytown and then we traveled back to the Corinth church where I was able to preach to that congregation. (Attendance runs between 100 to 120) Brother Waites has been doing this now for 52+ years and also goes back to Perrytown on Tuesday nights to teach a Bible Class at their midweek service and then on Wednesday night each week teaches a Bible Class at the Corinth congregation. We enjoyed our visit with these two congregations in South Mississippi and look forward to returning soon to visit again.



Home of Perrytown Church

*Dear June and Al,
 ...Each issue of the Magnolia Messenger is packed with uplifting articles. The "Journeys of Paul" add extra interest. With love and admiration, (Mary Warren, Memphis, TN)*

MM ADDRESSES

Changes & Additions

Contact

Glenda Franks

glendafranks@yahoo.com

662-792-2800

P. O. Box 1578

Kosciusko, MS 39090

THANK YOU

"Drop In Visit"

University Church in Shreveport, LA

Glenda and I arrived at the building of the University church which meets on East 70th Street in Shreveport. The church has an early service at 8:30, Bible classes at 9:30 and a worship service at 10:30 A.M. every Sunday.

As we walked in the door we were greeted by a tall man and his lovely wife, **Eddie and LaJuan Dunn Sr**. He noticed I was a visitor and immediately made me feel welcome. He told me that he was teaching a class, but he suggested I go over to the next building and be a part of the preacher's class.

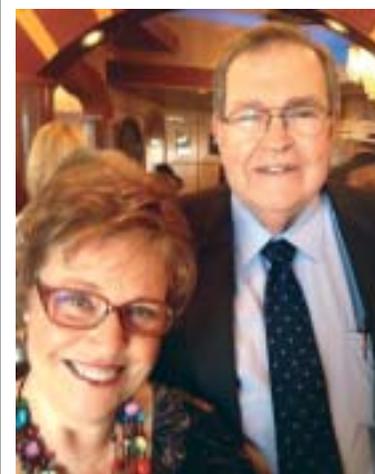
The preacher is **Jerry Hodge**. Thirty-six years ago, before I married, Jerry's dad, **Charlie Hodge**, came to Mississippi to speak. It was my job to pick him up at the airport and bring him to Kosciusko. Ever



Hodges: Hailey, Lori and Jerry

since that time, I have been a fan of Charlie Hodge. Charlie gave Glenda one of his books on Angels and wrote in the front of it, "To Paul's angel". Anyway, I was excited to visit with Jerry Hodge.

The class was large and friendly. Donuts and coffee were available; no one seemed to be in a hurry to start the class. We saw several people that we knew; when the class got started, Jerry gave me the microphone and let me talk about our work with the Magnolia Messenger. We had several to give us their addresses to be added to the mailing list.



Glenda & Warren Williams

After class we walked into the auditorium and were introduced to **Glenda and Warren Williams**. The Williams attended the Enterprise Blvd congregation many years ago before I

became their preacher. They invited us to sit with them and took us to lunch after the services.

We were part of an inspiring service with good singing and a wonderful lesson from Jerry Hodge. He talked about how that Christians are *salt and light* and that we are to make a difference in our world. Jerry also introduced us to the congregation and informed the church about the mission of the "Magnolia Messenger".

This church has over 400 members and is served by 7 elders, 26 deacons and 4 staff ministers.

As we were leaving the building, a gentleman walked up to our motorhome and told us he was the "candy man" for this congregation. He informed us he was retired and spends a lot of his free time making homemade candy. The candy man was the "icing on the cake" for a delightful and encouraging day -- visiting the Lord's church identified as the University church in Shreveport, Louisiana. We look forward to going back for another visit soon. (Report by Paul Franks)

Where Will Our Next "Drop-in Visit" Be? Keep Reading the MM!

“Church Development Stages”

Models in the Development Stages

- (1) “Iconium”
- (2) “Antioch”
- (3) “Jerusalem or Ephesus”

- Claude Thompson -

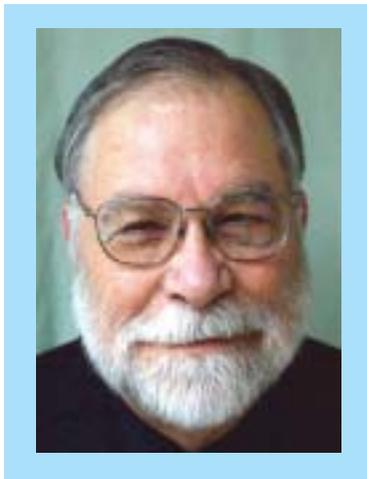
The human growth process, through several distinct stages of development, is well recognized. As God intended, we are born and spend infancy largely helpless and dependant on others, then we mature physically, intellectually and socially through childhood, into adult independence and reproduction, and finally our faculties decline and we ultimately die, again helpless. But this general “model” for human development is not experienced exactly alike by all human beings: some die young, while others never mature beyond childhood; adulthood is long and productive for some but short or deteriorated for others.

The church of Christ is pictured in the Bible as the spiritual “body of Christ” (1 Corinthians 12:27), and develops through similar growth stages as does the physical human body. The churches in

Jerusalem and Ephesus are often cited as the “model” for church development:

large and fully mature, led by strong local elders, and even reproducing other congregations – spiritual adulthood. But a review of Luke’s history of the early church reveals that not all of those congregations achieved maturity, and the book of Acts describes churches in various stages of development: from birth as evangelistic missions; some growing and maturing, while other remain immature or decline. Unfortunately, it is obvious that not all church bodies in America reflect the ideal pattern either. Some remain in infancy needing outside nourishment, while others have matured into adult independence, but few have propagated offspring through their own mission efforts.

Just as He created the first humans, God Himself conceived and birthed the first church in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost in 33AD, directing men by His Holy Spirit. But after this miraculous beginning, future churches were started naturally by mature Christians responding to our Lord’s “Great Commission” (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 8:4). These initial Christians likely thought of themselves as part of the universal church more than as independent congregations, and with limited local knowledge and leadership they



Claude Thompson

required continuing teaching and encouragement from outsiders (1 Timothy 1:3). This might be called the “Mission Stage” or “Iconium Model” of church development (Acts 14:1-7, 21-22 & 15:36). Too many modern congregations are similar, struggling in infancy for years, much as when they were established by some mission campaign or individual. Congregations who stay at this stage, with no growth and maturity, ultimately die (Revelation 3:1-3).

As they grew “in grace and knowledge” (2 Peter 3:18), members in some early congregations became able to care for the spiritual (Acts 18:24-26; Romans 15:14) and physical (Acts 2:44-47) needs of others – the basic task of all Christians. These churches gradually weaned themselves of outside support, and accepted more responsibility for

their own operations (1 Corinthians 16:15-16; Titus 1:5). This stage of development might be called the “Antioch Model” (Acts 13:1-2), and reflects most US churches today.

Finally, fully-grown congregations became autonomous and self-supporting. They produced mature local leadership to teach and serve (Acts 20:17&18; Philippians 1:1; Ephesians 4:11-13). These congregations not only grew through local conversions, but also sent missionaries to plant and encourage churches in other areas (Acts 11:22-26). This is God’s true pattern for the church, the “Jerusalem” or “Ephesus Model”, but far too few modern congregations ever achieve this maturity.

The Bible makes it clear that God wants all Christians (2 Peter 3:18; Hebrews 5:12) and every congregation of His church (2 Timothy 3:16-4:2) to grow to full maturity (Hebrews 6:1). However, differing stages of spiritual development is just as valid as are such stages of human development, and we should not be too hasty to judge others for what appears to be subnormal spiritual growth (James 4:12). Unless we know their hearts and circumstances, we cannot judge their efforts or results.

At what stage are you and your congregation – and what are your plans for growth?

— — — — —
Claude Thompson grew up in Vicksburg, MS, but now worships with the White Rock Church of Christ, 9220 Ferguson Rd, Dallas, TX 75228. E-mail: claudethompson67@yahoo.com
 — — — — —

THANK YOU for Receiving, Reading and Responding to the MM

MM ADDRESSES

Changes & Additions

Contact

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glendafranks@yahoo.com

662-792-2800

P. O. Box 1578

Kosciusko, MS 39090

THANK YOU

For Sale: Church Pews

26 pews; 20 feet long. Can be converted to 13 feet in length.

\$100.00 per pew. *For more information, contact*

Vernon Church of Christ
 Vernon, Alabama

Eddie Finch, minister
 eddie@vernonchurchofchrist.org

205-695-9755

The Saviour’s Plan for Salvation (1)

HEAR the Gospel

“How shall they *believe* in him of whom they have not *heard?*” “So then *faith* cometh by *hearing* and *hearing* by the word of God.” (Romans 10:14-17)

Before faith, one must hear;

He must hear the word of God.

BUT THERE IS MORE!

(Turn to Page 15)

Final For 2013 MEXICO MISSION REPORT

- Les Ferguson, Sr. -

My wife, Margie and I returned on October 31, after a 24 day trip to work with our brethren in Mexico. For the first two weeks of this trip we were pleased to be accompanied by **Don and Lynn Roberson** of Coffeeville, Mississippi. Don is the preacher for the church in Coffeeville. This was their second trip.

The Coffeeville church is one of our partners in this work. And they also made it possible for Don and Lynn to join us. For much of the two weeks that they were with us we worked together. But several times the scheduling required that we go in different directions to teach or preach in accordance with the requests received from the preachers.

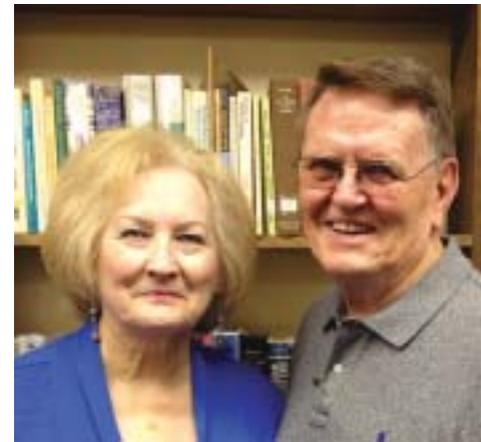
Don is very capable of teaching and preaching on his own in Mexico. Of course, both of us have to have an interpreter and when it works out that we can have two, it allows us to go in different directions and that is a blessing for the local churches.

Over the last ten years we have been blessed to plant nine churches in this part of Mexico. Since then, the oversight of two of those churches have been taken on by two good churches here in the States, one in Nashville and one in Statesville, NC. So that leaves seven for which we are directly responsible.

Visits were made to all seven and in four of them we were able to do some teaching and preaching. The other three were just visits with the preacher and his family. Those three will get an emphasis on the next trip which will involve a Wednesday night or Sunday visit. At this point all seven are doing well. The word is being taught and the churches are growing.

Special activities this trip included a “Marriage and Family Seminar” with the church at Comonfort October 10-12. That was a Thursday night through Saturday night, from 5:00 to 8:00 P.M. Margie and I were back with this church family on Sunday, October 13. The preacher asked me to preach on “Salvation.” He said there would be some people present who had been thinking of obeying the gospel.

Well, I was happy to do that and we had three baptisms, a married couple and another older lady. And another neat thing about that is I had the opportunity to do the baptizing. Over the years I have witnessed a number of baptisms, but this was the first time that I actually did the baptizing. I was



Margie and Les Ferguson, Sr.

humbled by all of that. It was a great several days with this church.

Another special activity was in the teaching of a seminar on Revelation at the San Miguel church. There were 60 plus people present. We started at 9:30 sharp on a Saturday morning and finished at 6:45 P.M. It was a very long day, but a good one.

We had the opportunity to investigate three locations for consideration of planting churches in the near future. Two of them would be in big cities of over 100,000 people. We will be working on trying to accomplish that in the next two years.

The other place is a bit different to say the least. It is a much smaller community called La Campana. It is out in the country about 45 minutes from San Miguel. Already there are 11 adult Christians there. Most of them were taught and baptized by the ministry of the San Miguel church. In addition to the adults, there are at least 11 children/teens to make a total of 22 people who are ready to start meeting in La Campana.

I, along with **Fernando Arroyo**, the preacher at San Miguel, interviewed a prospective preacher about the possibility of him working with this group at La Campana. His wife was in on the interview and they both are greatly interested in taking on this responsibility. They have four children also. We asked him and his wife to pray about this, talk it over with the family and, if interested, be ready to sign a contract by December 1, 2013.

Right now we are focusing on starting this new church plant in January 2014, Lord willing. From our interview we came away with them saying that this is what they want to do. We will know for sure by December 1. Your prayers for this possibility will be much appreciated.

We were able to do a number of other things that relate to helping the kingdom grow while on this trip. But what I have written gives

Read MEXICO MISSIONS, pg 16

Count On It... Your Sin Will Find You Out!

- Ken Joines -

From childhood I vividly recall hearing the great revival preachers tell their listeners: "Be sure your sin will find you out." (Numbers 32:23). That's how the King James Version reads and that's how the English Standard Version renders it. This is one of the great truths of the Bible, and when I heard it quoted, it struck fear in my heart.

However, there's a problem with the way I interpreted the verse. My take on this verse went something like this: "Listen here, Jack, if you think you can do bad things in secret and get away with it, you'd better think again, because the Bible says, 'your sin will find you out.' " Then I'd take it a step further and what it said to me was something like: "You may think you have your secret sins hidden, but one of these days, somebody is going to find out, and they'll tell, and then your whole family and all your friends will know and you will be held up to public ridicule and it will be really painful. Satan will embarrass you publicly in the presence of everyone who knows you."

There is of course some truth in this view, because Satan is the essence of Evil and he likes nothing better than to lure us into a trap, let the hammer fall, then hold us up to public ridicule and shame. This has happened too many times to doubt it.

As I grew older, the thing that puzzled me was that I personally knew so many people who had spent their lives doing little else but evil, and who seemed to never get caught. Instead, they made plenty of money and enjoyed good health. In too many cases their sin did NOT find them out. It was at this point that I decided I must have missed something in my application of Numbers 32:23. And here's what it is.

Sin does the most serious damage to the sinner himself or herself. Here's how that works. I do something wrong, sinful. No one knows but God and me. I soon reach the point where I am repeatedly and knowingly violating God's Holy Word and since no one knows, the Evil One has me believing I've gotten away with it.

While others are unaware, I mistakenly think I can continue living with selfish, foolhardy disregard for God's will and no one will get hurt. But whoa! What I failed to factor in was that the memory of all these sins keeps accumulating in my subconscious. And that somewhere down the road this memory bank would get full and I would then have to live with these awful memories. This is called guilt. Behavioral science tells us that one of the most destructive of all emotions is guilt. Unresolved guilt keeps bubbling to the surface and eventually destroys the person. What is happening in this case is precisely what Numbers 32:23 says. Your sin has found you out. Your sin has tracked you down, dogged you unmercifully by means of a guilty conscience, and can eventually result in the total disintegration of your very personality. Your friends may never know, but you know. Your



Ken Joines

family may never know, but you know. And God knows.

Few people have faced worse consequences for sin than did David. Lust, adultery, lying, and then murder to cover it up. David finally faced his sin and returned to God. And the Father receives the penitent prodigal. But still later he put his feelings in writing. In Psalm 51 he pulls back the curtain and permits a look into his heart. I think I can hear him saying, "O God, my God, my Dear God, my Redeemer and Friend. I have

gone so far and fallen so low. I know you have forgiven my sins, but please Dear God, would you also take away the guilt as well. You forgave me, but I still suffer the sting of my own guilt." He wrote, "My sin is ever before me." (51:3). It was eating him alive! His sin had found him out! Yes, others knew about it, but the punishment of the guilt he was personally experiencing far outweighed the shame and embarrassment. And he begged God, "restore unto me the joy of my salvation." (51:12) He knew what he had lost and he desperately wanted it back. He was a pitiful, broken man and was ripe for God's reclamation project called forgiveness.

Yes, your sin will find YOU out. Read the verse again. It does not say that your friends will find out about it. It does not say you will be arrested and charged. I doesn't say the church will find out. What it says is that your sin will find you out. Such is the plight of one who tramples under foot the law of the Mighty God. Put another way, we may not break God's law, but God's law can and will break us!

God has mercifully and graciously provided a way for the Christian to deal with his guilt. It is called repentance. And prayer. There is no sin so bad that God can't forgive if we humble ourselves before him and do his will. You can't sink so low that you are beyond the reach of his grace. And you cannot live so well that you are not in need of his grace. So dear brother or sister, if there is unresolved sin in your life that only you and God are aware of, it is not necessary for you to walk down in front of the church and reveal all this to people, some of whom may have trouble accepting you. No. You take it before the Lord God through your mediator—Jesus Christ—and he will abundantly forgive and restore. He will forgive you, accept you, and yes, even USE you to help spread this good news to all who are bowed low under the weight of their sins. There is power in the blood of Jesus. The gospel is the "power of God for salvation." (Romans 1:16)

Ken Joines

7154 Golden Oaks E
Southaven, MS 38671
(901-212-1601)
kjoines35@hotmail.com

"For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matt. 16:26)

God's Plan Is to Save All of Mankind

- Seth Sullivan -

Before the foundations of the world God planned to send His Son to die for the sins of the world (I Pet. 1:20; Eph. 1:4). Since the Fall of Man in the Garden of Eden mankind has needed salvation. Even though man is not worthy of such redemption, God in His infinite wisdom chose to offer man a second chance through His Son. The Apostle John wrote, "For God SO LOVED the world that He gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16; emphasis mine).

To the contradiction of Deism's belief, God has done His part for man. He did not simply create the universe and then abandon mankind. Rather, He designed the plan which Jesus Christ would fulfill. The Apostle Paul told the Colossian brethren that Christ "has delivered us from the power of darkness, and has translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins" (Col. 1:13, 14).

What a remarkable feat! God and the Son have done what is necessary for all of mankind to have redemption! How



Seth Sullivan

unfortunate and sad it truly is when man will not listen or obey God's blessed commands. Many are like Demas who "love the present world" and abandon all of the eternal spiritual matters (II Tim. 4:10).

Through the Holy Spirit, holy men of God wrote the Scriptures informing man of God's plan (II Tim. 3:16, 17; I Pet. 1:20, 21). Consider the Gospel's power to save! Be proud to wear the name of Christ! Paul said that he was not ashamed of the Word (Rom. 1:16).

Accept Christ's precious blood! Come to God and He will give you rest (Matt. 11:28-30)!

P. O. Box 94
Waynesboro, MS 39367
601-735-4086
sethka63@hotmail.com

The Saviour's Plan for Salvation (2)

BELIEVE in Jesus

"...for if you believe not that I am He, you shall die in your sins." (John 8:24)

"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is..."

(Heb. 11:6)

BUT THERE IS MORE!

(Turn to Page 16)

Watch DIRECTV®

"Getting To Know Your Bible"

Monday - Friday
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Billy Lambert
Speaker



Assembly

(Continued from page 3)

ekklesia calls attention to the importance of meeting together for the nature of the church... the church, by definition, is an assembly. It is a people who meet together on a regular basis. The word *ekklesia* identifies the people of God as assembled. The church exemplifies that it is indeed the church when it comes together (1 Cor. 11:18)" (Everett Ferguson. *The Church of Christ*, Eerdman's 1996, p. 133). "In assembly, the church becomes itself" (Ferguson, p. 235). No wonder the writer of Hebrews, dealing with some who were in danger of apostasy urged, "And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some" (Hebrews 10:24-25).

Church and Salvation

It is eminently correct to say, "The church does not save; Christ saves," but that does not mean the church has nothing to do with salvation. It is equally true that "Christ saves the church." "Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior" (Ephesians 5:23).

The biblical definition of Christ's church is "the saved," "the redeemed." Every saved person, every one born of water and Spirit (John 3:5), is a citizen of His kingdom, is added to His church, is a member of His body. If we used the phrase "church of Christ" exclusively with that biblical meaning we would clear up a lot of confusion, both in the religious world and in our own thinking. What is narrow or sectarian about recognizing that all saved persons are in the church because God both saved them and added them?

The Church Local

Ekklesia is also used for a local group of the redeemed, meeting and working in a particular locality. God desires that His redeemed people assemble. The word "church" ("assembly," *ekklesia*) is used most often in the Bible in a local sense, indicating the redeemed in a particular locale who assemble together for mutual encouragement, edification and praise and worship of God. For example, "The church of God which is at Corinth" (1 Corinthians 1:2; 2 Corinthians 1:1); "the churches of Galatia" (1 Corinthians 16:1), Galatia being a province in which there were several cities each

with a local church; "the churches of Christ" (Romans 16:16), speaking of several congregations in the area around Corinth and Achaia.

Please note that "church" in its local sense is synonymous with "congregation." "Congregations of the churches of Christ" is either unnecessarily redundant or denominational in its intent. A congregation is a local church.

Local churches, when they follow apostolic teaching, will be led by elders and served by deacons and will not be subject to outside ecclesiastical authority. They will assemble on the Lord's day to encourage one another, to break the bread, give of their means and praise and worship God.

As noted above, 1 Corinthians, chapters 11 through 16, includes apostolic teaching concerning the assembly. We have seen some things the apostle said should not be in the assembly. Note now, some things that are to be a assembly activities.

1 Corinthians 11:17-26 shows the Lord's Supper is an assembly activity. From 1 Corinthians 14 and following, other things expected during the assembly (skipping the exercise of miraculous gifts) include "teaching" (14:6), "pray" and "sing" (14:15), "give thanks" (14:16), "instruction" (14:19), "a hymn, a lesson" (14:26), and giving (16:1-2).

People often speak of "five items of worship." They are usually delineated as the Lord's supper, teaching or preaching, singing, praying and giving. All five are specifically mentioned as being in the assembly in this section of 1 Corinthians.

The list has been a subject of humor. One Christian woman whose parents had disciplined her as a child to keep her still and quiet in the assembly said, "I was taken out and spanked so often I thought it was the sixth item of worship."

These items do not have to be designated by those specific terms. In the Corinthian church assembly they gave thanks (14:16) which, of course, could be included in either singing or prayer. We praise God in worship. "Praise" is basically a synonym for "worship"

and also would be done in prayer or song or preaching that glorifies God. In spite of all the ridicule heard about "the five items of worship," no one to my knowledge has come up with anything to be added to the list.

Any addition would need to be something God has asked us to do as worship or at least has indicated He would approve.

What Else in Assembly?

There seems to be a feeling among some congregations that nothing should be done in assembly except those "authorized items of worship."

One questioner asks, "Why are some things all right after a closing prayer but wrong before it?" Since some "otherwise O. K. things" are not permitted in the assembly, then obviously some way of indicating when the assembly has begun and when it has ended is necessary. That may be a closing prayer, a closing

song or just an announcement, "We are dismissed."

However, worship of God is not the only purpose of the assembly. Assemblies

are also for us to encourage, teach, exhort and edify one another. The Hebrews writer says we are not to neglect the assemblies but to be "encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near" (Hebrews 10:25). Whether "the Day" is the day of judgment (as in 2 Timothy 1:12) or the Destruction of Jerusalem which loomed large at that time, the admonition is to assemble in order to encourage one another in the assembly toward that day which is to come. A criteria used in 1 Corinthians 14 to determine whether a given activity is appropriate in the assembly is, "Does it edify, does it build each other up?" (1 Corinthians 14: 12, 17).

Many of us frequently speak as if our singing was always "singing praise to God," but much of it is doing what the apostle tells us to do, "addressing one

another," "teaching and admonishing one another" (Ephesians 5 : 19 ; Colossians 3:16). That also fits, as we have seen, a purpose of our assemblies.

Some congregations seem to be very scrupulous in attempting to do nothing in their assemblies except authorized items of worship. They make announcements after the closing prayer or "before we begin the worship." If they are welcoming a new member, or recognizing a faithful family on their last assembly before moving away, they are careful to do it outside of the assembly.

It is a mistake, however, to insist that everything done in the assembly must be worship. Within the section talking about the body and the assembly, 1 Corinthians 14:26 instructs, "If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together." Announcements concerning the sick and the bereaved, along with those concerning weddings, births, promotions, etc., appropriately obey that commandment.

The Bible also instructs, "Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed" (Romans 13:7). Paying honor to deserving individuals or groups and rejoicing with members in their joys and accomplishments is also appropriate in the assembly.

Honoring mothers on mother's day and fathers on father's day (perhaps even grandparents on grandparents' day!) fits well with encouraging one another and building one another up.

Conclusion

Obviously a major focus of the assembly is and ought to be

glorifying and honoring God. Nothing else should be given so much emphasis and time that it eclipses the praise due to God, but others can be honored in the assembly without violating that priority.

Worship to God from the heart in ways pleasing to Him, when accompanied by a life of faithfulness, is itself edifying and encouraging, but we miss some of the benefits of assembly that God intended if we do not also encourage, honor and build each other up when we come together.

MEXICO MISSIONS

(Cont. from page 14)

you the "gist" of what was accomplished. Lots of lessons and sermons were taught/preached because of the extended stay.

As I transition out of the pulpit responsibilities at the South Huntington church here in Kosciusko, we will be planning for some additional extended trips to Mexico. Your support is vital to our success in planting churches in the State of Guanajuato and in helping those already planted to grow. If you have any questions concerning this work, or if I can be of service to you, please do not hesitate to call me.

Les Ferguson, Sr
Mexico Missions Director
P.O. Box 1399
Kosciusko, MS 39090
601-562-4226

HUGGINS

(Continued from page 6)

family, or my physical family, and listen and absorb the wisdom in the gentleness with which he spoke.

I know that as Bill Huggins joined the Great Multitude on the Shores of Heaven, his perfect voice that he had as a younger man, but had lost because of time, was made perfect once more! And he sings the **New Song** with that Great Multitude now. I know he's loving it, and awaiting the rest of his family. It won't be long. It won't be long.

The Saviour's Plan for Salvation (3)

REPENT of Sins

Jesus said, "...except you **repent**, you shall all likewise perish." (Luke 13:3)

God, "...commandeth all men everywhere to **repent**...." (Acts 17:31)

BUT THERE IS MORE!

(Turn to Page 18)



Somewhere in Tennessee



Small Signs Seen Scattered Over Parking Area for TN Church

Somerville, TN Church Conducts Effective Jail Ministry

Carl Trimm of Somerville, Tennessee has, for several years, been involved in Bible Correspondence Courses. With the encouragement of the Lord's church in Somerville, Carl started a BCC program in the local jail in February of 2009.



Happy Carl Trimm

the local jail they have baptized 42 people. Ten members from the congregation take turns studying the Bible each Sunday at the jail, one on one, with the inmates. Carl told me they start with the World Bible Study Course. In addition they offer six more

Carl told me the project has boomed with over 800 people signing up for the courses. What started at the local jail has grown to nine different locations and also goes to two state prisons. Just in

Bible courses. 22 local church members grade and help with these courses. For more information, Carl would be glad to hear from you. His address is P. O. Box 360 Fern Rd. Somerville, TN 38068

Abortion

Most abortions are a result of an unwanted pregnancy caused by sex outside of marriage!

- Paul Franks -

Last week I was traveling north of Meridian, Mississippi and ran a stop sign. It was a mistake. I didn't mean to run that stop sign. What if a child had been walking across that road at the time I ran the stop sign and, by my action, I killed that child? Probably terrible consequence would come from breaking such a *minor law* as running a stop sign.

If someone chooses to have sex outside of marriage and that results in an unwanted pregnancy; that act, according to the Bible, is **wrong**. (See I Cor. 6:9-11; Col. 3:5). Many may consider sex outside of marriage a minor violation of God's plan, but sometimes traumatic consequences come from such actions.

I can only imagine the emotions that I would have gone through if I had killed a child that day by my failure to stop at a stop sign. I would want compassion from the courts and compassion from everyone else, including the family of the child that I killed. I can only imagine the fear, guilt, grief, anxiety, and pain when a mother and a father decide to end the life of their unborn child.



What can be done? In society we realize that laws are for our protection and safety. It seems that many people today consider the rules in the Bible as being too restrictive and therefore are disregarded.



Baby -- Born or Unborn -- Precious!

We still need to teach what the Bible teaches about sex and challenge our young people to obey our Creator. If a mistake is made then we, as God's people, need to encourage and support a couple as they strive to obey what the Bible teaches.

We are living in a time where selfishness is king! The Bible warns us of the very time we are living in today (2 Timothy 3:1-5). We can make a difference in our culture. We need to never forget the power of one individual living for God and modeling the principles of the Bible in his/her life. We need to look for ways to help young mothers who are considering abortion and give them options that are in accordance with God's plan.

Paul Franks; 662-792-2700
apaulfranks@gmail.com

MM Welcomes Comments



FIFTY YEARS MARRIED

Charlotte and Sonny Hill
(MM Editor Conducted Marriage Ceremony 50 Years Ago!)
Our Congratulations!

Charlotte and Sonny Hill are members of the Midway Church of Christ, near Vickburg, Mississippi. My June and I are thankful we could be with them, their family and many friends for the very special **50th Anniversary** celebration -- just a few weeks ago..



Walker with his Walker

A few weeks ago, my June and I visited with W. H. ("Doc") Walker who, nearly 95, is content in his new home at the VA Center in Jackson, Mississippi. Brother Walker is a long time member of the Lord's church in Yazoo City, Mississippi.

Brother Walker expressed thanks for all of God's blessings and told us he was looking forward to the greatest blessing of all -- **eternal life** in heaven -- where no one will ever grow old!



Ruby Karnes (left) and Erin Allan of the Clinton Church of Christ prepared attractive display using information compiled by other Christians.

A Powerful Message Proclaimed Effectively
TEN BIBLICAL REASONS FOR
REGULARLY ATTENDING BIBLE CLASSES

I ATTEND REGULARLY BECAUSE...

1. I love the Lord
2. I love the truth
3. I want to be a good example
4. I want to obey all scriptural commands
5. I want to be like the early Christians
6. I love the fellowship of my brethren
7. I want to be doing good works
8. I want to maintain a good influence
9. I want to stay at the right spiritual temperature
10. I want to keep my priorities in the right order.

Searching for Preachers

Notice: We are pleased to run ads for congregations seeking to find preachers to work with them. The inclusion of a congregation and/or preacher on this page or anywhere else in the MM is not be understood as an endorsement. Please check out!

We will plan to run each ad not more than one or two times unless a specific request for extension is received from the congregation looking for a preacher. There is no charge for this service. Thank you for asking!
Editor

Bartlett, TN (Ellendale)

We at Ellendale are in search of a minister of the Gospel who is enthusiastic and eager to work for the Lord's church, one who is sound in the faith and willing to be the motivator for this group of people who are striving to please God in everything we do.

We believe there is an exhorter of people, like Barnabas, who will be willing to work with the church at Ellendale so we can grow in number and in spirit, spreading the Word of God -- first in the church, then in the community around us. We are a sound congregation, with good people who want to see many people in this area be obedient to Christ.

Salary and large 3 bedroom home provided.

Ellendale Church of Christ
7365 U.S.Hwy.70
Bartlett, TN 38133
(901) 386-5008

Madison, MS (Jackson Area)

The Madison Church of Christ is seeking a full-time pulpit minister. We are dedicated to serving our community and spreading the Gospel of Christ. The 125 member congregation is served by two elders and three deacons. We moved into our new building last year. Please contact us at

Madison Church of Christ
Minister Search
483 Reunion Parkway
Madison, MS 39110
Telephone: 601-853-9558

South Sulphur, LA Seeks Full-time Minister

The South Sulphur Church of Christ of Sulphur Louisiana is seeking a full time, mainline, conservative minister. We are a very small congregation with excellent debt-free facilities located just off interstate 10 on Highway 27 south.

This is a high growth, low unemployment area, with good church growth potential. Compensation package of \$48,000 includes \$1,000.00 a month housing allowance.

Candidates should be:

1. Effective gospel preacher / teacher.
2. Lover of the lost.
3. Willing to work / self-starter.

Of less importance:

1. Marital status
2. Education
3. Age.

Call for more information, or send resume -- please include CD's etc. to:

Ray Hyatt
P O Box 417
DeQuincy, La. 70633
Email:
rayhyatt@yahoo.com
Phone:
Home: 377-786-2083
Cell: 377-513-8423

Scriptures Still Say "Preach the Word"

MM ADDRESSES
Changes & Additions
Contact
Glenda Franks
glendafranks@yahoo.com
662-792-2800
P. O. Box 1578
Kosciusko, MS 39090
THANK YOU

Booneville, ARK

The Heritage Addition Church of Christ in Booneville, Arkansas is seeking a full time pulpit minister beginning June 1. We are a 'mainline', conservative congregation with Sunday AM attendance of approximately 100.

A successful candidate will be competent in the pulpit and have a passion for lost souls. You may visit www.booneville.com for general area information. For more information, or to submit an application, please contact:

**Heritage Addition
Church of Christ
PO Box 155
Booneville, AR. 72927**

E-mail or call:
thedutchman@centurytel.net
or rscottbgcslc@magtel.com,
or Telephone: 479-675-3582

Preacher Available

Les Ferguson, Jr. of Vicksburg, Mississippi, requested that the MM make known his availability to serve churches that have a need for fill-in or interim work as a preacher. Call: 601-218-6950.

Demopolis, AL Searches for Preacher

The Canal Heights church of Christ in Demopolis, AL is seeking applicants for a full time gospel preacher/pulpit minister. We average 50 to 75 in attendance. We want Bible preaching not story telling.

We have two elders and two deacons. Preacher's home is provided. Experience and preaching education is a plus. **MUST BE SOUND IN DOCTRINE!**

If interested we would like resume and two sermons on CD, website, or link emailed to greg8297@gmail.com or mail to Church of Christ P.O. Box 100 Demopolis, AL 36732. For more information leave message at 334-289-3484 or call 334-212-9814.

Natchitoches, LA Full-time Preaching Minister Needed

The Grand Ecore Road Church of Christ in Natchitoches, Louisiana, is seeking applications for a minister to work with their congregation of about 70 to 90 (Sunday morning attendance).

Comfortable salary and home provided with three bedrooms, two baths, living room, den, etc. This is a university community and a desire to work with this age is a plus.

Interested candidates should send a resume to: **Tim Page**, Search Committee Chair, grandecorecoc@gmail.com

"Lads to Leaders" Celebrates 45 Years of Excellence

Fall 2013 Marks 45 Years of L2L

In the fall of 1968, Jack Zorn envisioned a program that would help develop children and teenagers into leaders in the Lord's church. Lads to Leaders was born, and in the 45 years that have passed, hundreds of thousands of lives have been changed! L2L will be celebrating the milestone from this fall through the 2014 convention. Look for special anniversary touches throughout L2L materials and information!

WHY ME?

(Continued from page 9)

later prayed a prayer and "accepted Jesus into my heart." Folks, this teaching is not biblical. The New Testament teaches that Jesus saves you when you, through faith in Him, as God's Son, are obedient to the Gospel. This response to the Saviour includes the necessary steps of repentance and baptism. (See Mark 16:16 and Acts 2:38). Jesus accepts you when you obey His gospel.

Karen and I have now been serving the church of Christ in Union, Mississippi for over 11 years. The church has been growing both physically and spiritually. And, although I experience daily pain, I am still able to thank God for my disease because I cannot imagine where I would be if I had remained

physically healthy.

Instead of asking God, "Why me," with a *doubting* mind, I can now wonder "Why me," as I *count all my blessings* in life! You can be sure that whatever circumstances you find yourself in God has a way to bless you!

richardbenson@bellsouth.net

MM Welcomes Bible Teaching Articles

Challenge to Parents

Encourage Your
Talented Son To
Dedicate His Life to
Preaching the Word

**Readers' Response
Wanted and Welcomed**
(see page 3)

South Germantown Road (Memphis, TN)

The South Germantown Road Church of Christ in Memphis, TN, is seeking an experienced minister/evangelist to help fulfill our mission of "Glorifying God as disciples of His Son: Anchoring, converting and teaching souls in our community and abroad."

We are a very loving congregation of 210 individuals, located in southeast Memphis. There's much to be excited about at South Germantown Road, including the recent opening of our Activity Center building, designed to enhance our very active Outreach Ministry.

We are an actively growing church, seeking a spiritual and dynamic leader to serve with our three elders, four deacons and five ministry leaders.

The ideal candidate:

- * Loves the Lord
- * Is well-grounded in scripture and sound in doctrine—has a minimum of three years of experience, five-plus years preferred preaching and leading a congregation
- * Has a servant's attitude
- * Has a true heart for outreach and evangelism
- * Has a wife and family who interact well with the congregation
- * Leads his own house well
- * Has a deep sense of responsibility
- * Is organized and demonstrates strong administrative skills
- * Is hospitable and friendly
- * Loves people

Preference: Bachelor or masters degree in Bible/ministerial studies

**South Germantown Road
Church of Christ**
3825 S. Germantown Rd
Memphis, TN 38125
901-309-9809

The Saviour's Plan for Salvation (4) CONFESS Faith in Christ

"... with the mouth **confession** is made unto salvation" (Rom. 10:10). Before being baptized, the eunuch **CONFESSED**, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God" (Acts 8:37).

BUT THERE IS MORE!

(Turn to Page 21)

The Power of the Printed Page

- Paul Franks -

I picked up the *Christian Chronicle* recently and read the article about the financial crisis at Southwestern Christian College in Terrell, Texas. Not long afterwards, Glenda and I were traveling back to Mississippi from visiting our granddaughters. We found ourselves going through Terrell. I had never been to

Southwestern so we decided to stop and visit this college.

We went into the administration building and walked to the end of the hall. A sign on the President's door said



Jack Evans

"You don't have to knock, come on in." Glenda and I got to meet Jack Evans, who has been the president of this college since 1967. We talked about the college's financial crisis that came about due to the government cutting some of the funds that the college would normally receive. He told me



Douglas McDuffie

when I walked in that he was responding to someone from Nashville who had seen the article in the *Chronicle* about the financial crisis at Southwestern and had sent the college a check for \$25,000!

Brother Evans was very friendly to us and, after a time of questions and discussion, we left his office and walked around the campus. The first person we saw was Douglas McDuffie. He is one of the coaches and a

Professor of Psychology. He took us to the cafeteria where we enjoyed a delicious meal and had the opportunity to visit with Mary McCoy. Mary works with the college in various capacities and is also the Managing editor of the *Christian Echo*.

Southwestern Christian College is historically a black college that is associated with churches of Christ. On average, they have between 200 to 250 students. We enjoyed our short visit and plan to return in the future. One of the yearly events that draw in the thousands is the annual lectureship that is held during the week of Thanksgiving on their campus in Terrell, Texas.

Every day we are reminded, in some fashion, the power of the printed page. These reminders mean much as we continue the work of publishing the *Magnolia Messenger*. We truly appreciate all who help us to produce and distribute the MM and provided much needed assistance in our mission work of encouraging and "provoking each other to more love and good works."



Mary McCoy

Works with the School Also serves as Managing Editor of the *Christian Echo*.



"Somewhere in Alabama"



"All in a day's mail"

1. Encouragement
2. Answers to "QB"
3. Contributions
4. Questions Asked
5. Suggestions

WE ARE THANKFUL!

A Mississippi City's Motto



Right Living will bless any community and/or nation.

The Bible says,

"Righteousness exhalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people." (Prov. 14:34)

An Offer From



John Pigg

As soon as we conclude our work with the Lake Harbour church, I will be available to fill-in and to do interim or part-time preaching on Sunday's. If I can help your congregation in this way, please call or write me.

601-842-7801
jpigg1@comcast.net
297 Woodrun Drive
Ridgeland, MS, 39157

Lake Harbour Church Announces The Retirement of John Pigg

The Lake Harbour Church of Christ, Ridgeland, Mississippi announces the retirement of long time minister John Pigg from full-time pulpit ministry. For the past thirteen years, John and Beth have served this church family with devotion, sacrifice and love, just as they have done for other congregations over the past 45 years.

When preachers retire, they often use the words "labor of love". In this case the Lake Harbour church will use these words because we can stand, as so many others, as witness to the focused and consistent determination of this man of God as he far exceeded the singular call of "preaching".

With no earthly record to confirm, we can attest to the fact that John brought more souls to Christ during his weekly labors, than he ever did from the confines of a pulpit. However, this is not to say that the Lord didn't give John the oratory gift of verbalizing the Holy Word, He most certainly did!

With a commanding voice, extensive recall of both verse and word, and his presence and passion in presentation, John consistently wove an intensely prepared lesson with impromptu perfection to captivate the hearts of all who would hear. John will be the first to say, however, that his work was never done alone.

Beth Johnson Pigg has been John's anchor, encouragement, solace, and love for forty seven years. Many a man of God can truly say their wife was God's primary instrument used in turning them from a "sow's ear to a silk purse". However, few have had to take the name of Pigg in saying that. She is a woman with all the devotion, sacrifice and love of her husband, who has applied all she possesses to the church families they have served so well.

We never know how important a single Christian soul can be to God's purpose. Beth, as a young woman, led John Pigg to Christ, and she has worked side by side with him throughout their entire ministry. What a team they have made.

A man of God never really retires, he simply moves to a different focus of labor. John is leaving full-time ministry as a pulpit minister, but he can never and will not be leaving the ministry work given to him by God. He and Beth will remain at Lake Harbour as active members of our church family. John will

continue to preach and teach the word through gospel meetings, interim work, and conference presentations. He and Beth will spend a portion of their retirement time visiting their children and grandchildren, enjoying their love of camping, and working for the kingdom on a daily basis.

Today we rejoice in the fact our lives have been enriched by this man and woman. We thank God for their service, their friendship and their love. And, we thank God that He will continue to use them both to plant and water the fields so white unto harvest, as He adds to His Church.

Saturday, Feb. 8, 2014

A Day To Honor The Piggs 45 Years of Service

The Lake Harbour Drive Church of Christ in Ridgeland, MS, will honor the service and devotion of John and Beth Pigg as John retires from full-time preaching effective January 1, 2014. The Lake Harbour Drive Church invites all who have been touched by John to join us as we celebrate this remarkable career of service. The recognition celebration will take place Saturday, February 8, 2014, at 2:00 P.M. at the Lake Harbour Drive Church building and will be followed with a reception.

If John and Beth have ever been a blessing to your life, we invite you to join us. All friends, family and church members, both current and those during the last four decades, are invited to be a part of the celebration. In appreciation of their years of service and devotion to our God, a gift fund will be collected and presented to them at this celebration. If you have been touched by this couple and would like to contribute to this fund, you may mail your contribution to:

Lake Harbour Church of Christ
Attn: Church Treasurer
338 Lake Harbour Drive
Ridgeland, Mississippi 39157
(Please make check payable to Lake Harbour Drive church of Christ noted for Pigg Gift Fund)

For more information, please contact the church office:
601-856-2165
secretary@lakeharbourcoc.org

More

Encouragement

I received a copy of your paper and enjoyed reading it very much. I really like *The Question Box*. I would love to get a subscription to your paper. Thank you, (Margaret Mahnke, Kosciusko, MS)

Eddie's Travels in North MS

(Continued from page 11)



Mendy & Rodney Hilliard

Hilliard is the minister there. He is a native son that has come back to preach for his home church. They have no elders. Their attendance is around 50. Last week they had a meeting with **Ben Flatt** and had 74 in attendance. The congregation is a good mix of senior couples and young people.

Rodney taught the Bible class. They are using the GA Foundations series. This quarter they will look at Corinthians. The first lesson was on Paul's greeting and plea for the church. He talked about unity.

Rodney's sermon was, "Why Do We Study the Bible?" He considered six illustrations that help us understand why we need to study the Bible. Study is like planting seed in the soil. Study is like taking food in our body. Study is like turning a light on when darkness comes. Study is like kindling a fire to keep us warm from the cold. Study is like taking medicine. Study is like looking at the pictures in a picture album. It was a good lesson. I enjoyed my visit.

Walnut

September 8: I visited with the Walnut church of Christ. **Kenny James** has been the preacher there for 35+ years. He retired from teaching school last year. Also he served as an assistant principal and coach at the high school. His wife, **Sheron**, also retired from teaching. The church has no elders and their attendance is around 30. Recently, three families moved away and really hurt their attendance. Kenny is praying for growth and new opportunities.



Kenny & Sheron James

Kenny is a cousin to Rodney Hilliard at Marlow. He encouraged Rodney to get into the ministry.

Kenny taught the Bible class. He considered Joshua 16 and 17. He brought several lessons on how Joshua divided the territory for

the sons of Joseph—Ephraim and Manasseh. Good lesson.

Kenny asked me to preach, so I presented a lesson on the love of God from Luke 7. They expressed their appreciation for the lesson and Kenny enjoyed his time off.

I enjoyed my visit with the church.

Tiptersville

September 15: I visited with the Tiptersville church of Christ. **Garry Martin** is the preacher there. He has served the congregation for 10 years. He is a graduate of Harding University. They have two elders and have around 50 in attendance. Garry was out of town for a funeral and **Bill Barkley**, one of their members, preached in his place. Bill is a Memphis School Of Preaching graduate.

In Bible class they are studying the GA Foundations Series. The lesson was on 1 Cor. 5:1-13, "A



Donnie Greene and Bill Barkley

Matter of Discipline." Paul confronts the church about a man and his immoral relationship with his father's wife. This sin is the only sin in the letter where Paul calls for discipline.

Bill's sermon was from Isaiah 53, "The Atoned." He said the word atonement is defined as "the means by which God shows mercy to sinners." He mentioned two facts: (1. Man has a problem and (2. God has the solution.

I enjoyed meeting the brethren in Tiptersville. I hope to get back to meet Garry.

Germantown 65th Anniversary

September 22: I attended the 65th Anniversary celebration at the Germantown church. It was a wonderful occasion. **Howard Norton** was the guest speaker for the occasion. I appreciate his wonderful lessons on some timely themes. It was good to see so many wonderful friends at Germantown. I love and appreciate their support of my mission work in north Mississippi.

Ripley

September 29: I visited with the Ripley church of Christ. **Donnie DeBord** is the minister there. He has worked with the church for 3 years. He has his Master's degree from Freed Hardeman University. The church is served by four elders. They have around 300 in attendance. They have a very active Lads to Leaders program and they



Donnie DeBord, preacher & James Nunnally, an elder

attend the Memphis convention. **They are planning to celebrate their 90th Anniversary and Homecoming in December 2013.** They also have an active preschool program for the community. Rainbow Kids Preschool has existed since 1988. The Sunday I attended was their fifth Sunday potluck, so I enjoyed a fellowship meal with the brethren.

Donnie's Bible class was on 1 Thess. 5—The Day of the Lord and Christian Conduct. He made some good points. His sermon was on Rom. 5:1-11—"Now That I'm Free." He asked the question: "What does it mean to be a saved person?" He answered it by saying: (1. We rejoice in God's grace (v.2); (2. We rejoice in our suffering (v. 3); (3. We rejoice in hope (v. 5); and (4. We rejoice in our reconciliation (v. 6-11). It was a good lesson.

I appreciate so much the opportunity to go and visit with the brethren in North Mississippi. I look forward to meeting with many more brethren in the coming weeks.

Blessings,
Eddie Lewis
9423 Laurel Hill
Olive Branch, MS 38654
lewis7946@gmail.com

**YOUR News & Announcements
WELCOMED**

Reader Reggie Responds

Tallulah, LA Prison Ministry

"Still in Progress"

I am responding to the article on page 2 of the recent issue of the Magnolia Messenger, concerning the work I was involved in at the Madison Parish Detention Center at Tallulah, LA and the inquiry about the work. Yes, the work is still in progress.

Brother Wade Hammack and Brother Stan Woodson of the Vicksburg Church took over that work after I left in 2011. The phone number is 601-636-4801.

Now I will bring you up to date on the present:

In 2011 we moved up close to the Memphis, TN area, where our son Reggie Wayne and Susan had bought a farm and home, and asked us to move into it, to

be closer to them, and our son Tony and his wife, Marilyn...

...I am involved in the Somerville, Tennessee jail ministry, where I hold Bible studies weekly. We also attend the Somerville church, where brother Chris Coil is minister. I also teach the Wednesday night adult class. The people here are very friendly and have made us feel at home...."

J. Reggie Crawford; 890 Pulliam Road; Williston, TN 38076

EDITOR'S NOTE: This response was set up to run in the MM issue before this one. Sorry for the delay. Appreciate the prison ministry.

Another Departure

Johnny Miller Dies in Auto Accident

We were saddened to learn about the accidental death of **Johnny Miller** of Saltillo, Mississippi. He was fatally injured in an auto accident about the middle of October, 2013. He served as preacher for the Hill's Chapel Church of Christ near Booneville, Mississippi. His son, Adam Miller, is the youth minister for the Mayfield congregation in Saltillo, Mississippi.

We extend our deepest sympathy to the Miller family as well as



Johnny Miller (55)

the churches in Northeast Mississippi who are directly touched by brother Johnny's passing.

The picture of our preaching brother which accompanies this report was taken at a Wednesday night service with the Hills Chapel church on December 19, 2010. My June and I had

"dropped in" for a very pleasant midweek service/visit with our Hillcrest brethren. We really enjoyed the short time we visited personally with brother Johnny.

MBC Alumni/Staff & Friends Reunion Held in October



Many of those who came together on Thursday evening and Friday morning for the MBC Reunion. It was truly an enjoyable time of visiting, eating and reminiscing about the 33 years of spiritual service rendered by Magnolia Bible College in Kosciusko, Mississippi (1976 - 2009). Cecil May, Jr. led in the replication of a chapel service on Friday morning.

North Mississippi Annual Ladies' Retreat Held at Tishomingo State Park in October

- Report by Al P. Cotton -

Seven ladies from Tipton Street Church of Christ and one from South Huntington Street Church of Christ boarded the Tipton Street church van and headed north to be with sisters from Mississippi, Alabama and Tennessee at the Tishomingo State Park.

Using the theme from Isaiah 40:31, "They that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary; and they shall walk and not faint", ladies from the Hillcrest Church of Christ at Baldwin in North Mississippi held an enjoyable and informative Ladies' Retreat on October 25 and 26, 2013.

Ladies have converged for this retreat at the end of October for about 10 or more years. The assemblies just keep getting better and better.

Meeting sisters of a common faith, year after year, is both wonderful and spiritually uplifting, but the fact that powerful Christian speakers are brought in to share with attendees some of their experiences and information on Christian living is indeed encouraging.

This year's speaker was **Cindy Colley** from West Huntsville Church of Christ who, in three speaking sessions, dealt with the theme, **Lifted Up on Wings of Eagles** in sub-sections: 1. *Lifted Up in Learning to Wait*, 2. *Lifted Up in Learning Renewal*, and 3. *Lifted Up in Learning to Run*. Cindy's knowledge of the scripture is amazing. She is able to quote from memory lots of verses -- similar to the way some of the older generation of preachers did. One of her lessons dealt expressly with learning memory verses because, as she puts it, "One cannot do or

teach what one does not know".

Cindy has a long history of hard work for the Lord as she has labored with her husband, **Glenn**, in several countries as well as here in the states. They are often gone in separate directions as both of them tirelessly work to acquaint others with what God needs us as Christians to do for Him. Several books and other religious publications have been made by this God-fearing family because they feel the need to share what they have learned.

Other sessions in the program included such attendee-participation features as devotionals, pen-pal activities, skits, spirit-lifting song lyrics coupled with a search of purses for items that lift spirits, testimonies of how God lifts our lives, lifting our spirits through songs and prayers, and finally a singing session of spirit-lifting songs around a bonfire.

The park service provided bonfire wood and seating, places of abode, places for congregating, and three meals for a reasonable fee of \$35.00. Ladies from the Snowdown congregation provided all the snacks we could eat on Friday night and Saturday morning.

We'd be honored to have as many women as would, come and share this yearly spiritually uplifting event with us. For further information contact:

**North MS Ladies' Retreat
Hillcrest Church of Christ,
Baldwyn, Mississippi 38824**

(Information/report submitted by Al P. Cotton of Kosciusko)

**What IF
Today were your LAST day?
Where will you spend eternity?**

**JOIN US FOR
Polishing the Pulpit**

August 22-28, 2014

Held in Sevierville, Tennessee (Great Smoky Mountains), PTP is a gathering of more than 3,000 Christians for worship and spiritual renewal.



Sardis Lake Ladies' Retreat Brought Together 130+ (from 2 to 92)

-Report by Betty Moss

The Sardis Mississippi 18th Annual Ladies' Retreat was held September 27th and 28th 2013. In attendance were a hundred and thirty plus ladies, ages 2 to 92. Thirty-four churches of Christ from Mississippi, Alabama, Tennessee, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Missouri were represented.

You are never too young to know the Lord, and you never get too old to learn more to help you in living. This retreat dealt with "In Times like These" (Proverbs 3:5-6). Problems of today -- with you, your kids, your husband, friends, and the world -- all the answers come from the Bible. There have never been any problems, or situations, that couldn't be found in the Bible. Our problems today may seem just ours but, if you look and study, you will find out God's answers have always been there.

Barbara Cooper was our first speaker. She is married to Brother James Cooper, minister of the Church. They have been married 38 years. God blessed them with 9 children and 26 grandchildren.

Sister Barbara, even with her advanced education, never forgot her Bible. She has a workshop on living "As God would have women today live." She works with women of the church all across America. Her motto is "Not to only know, but to be an example." This motto not only enlightened our minds but it enlightened our souls. The ladies had their Bibles and notebooks ready. There was so much to be learned that we had to take notes. Everything she said was so uplifting and helpful.

Jane Maynard

Question & Answers

Years ago, sister Maynard started a session with questions and answers. We write the questions; she looks it up and answers from the Bible -- chapter, and verse. She explains so thoroughly, staying on one topic until the person that asked it, and the entire class completely understands it. You can ask anything -- even personal

questions, because it is all ladies' and you feel more open. Everything is discussed and talked over. It may take longer than some Bible lessons but when you leave, you have learned so much and you know where to find it in the Bible.

There were nine children, under the age of 16, attending and participating in class. After they had their study, the children made up a skit based on what they learned.

We had very good meals. Breakfast, lunch and supper were provided. Breakfast gave us a way to start the day off right. Everyone brought snacks and drinks. A few made homemade cookies, cakes, candy and bread which were very good. The food was there to fill our stomachs but the lessons were to feed our souls.

The singing was heartwarming and uplifting. These women not only sang with their voices, but with their heart, soul, and everything in them. You could see on their faces and in their actions that God was their Lord and they loved Him so much. We could sing one song and the next would somehow be more meaningful and heart-felt than the last.

Jane Snell came to the retreat from Ripley, TN. It was her first time coming to a retreat. She said she thoroughly enjoyed the fellowship with all the ladies and that she learned a lot from the female speakers. She also said the devotionals were uplifting. She loved the songs and the prayers we had and is looking forward to next year's retreat. She said that

she had met ladies she could call or write, and made more friends than she had before she went.

This was my fourth year and I'm hoping the Lord will see fit to let me make it to many more. These women can do nothing but inspire you to live by the Bible. I pray that you ladies will come next year. It will be the best two days of your life. *(Betty Moss is a member of the Kosciusko church and can be contacted in care of the MM.)*

**Thank you
for thinking of the
Magnolia Messenger
when you
remember and/or honor
Friends and Relatives
(See Page 12)**



"Somewhere in Louisiana"

**The Saviour's Plan for Salvation (5)
BE BAPTIZED into Christ**

"He commanded them to **be baptized** in the name of the Lord." (Acts 10:48)
"...arise and **be baptized** and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord." (Acts 22:16)

BUT THERE IS MORE!

(Turn to Page 22)

... From A Woman's Viewpoint ...

Joy To The World

- June Franks -

The lyrics of the old Christmas carol "Joy To The World" were written in 1719 by Isaac Watts (1674-1748). It is a beautiful song and is usually sung only around Christmas time.

Most Americans celebrate December 25th as the birth of Christ; however, it is important for us to note that the date of Jesus' birth is not given to us in the Bible. It is only through popular myths that Jesus' birth is celebrated on December 25th. According to history, what we now celebrate as "Christmas" was actually begun as a pagan holiday.

Even though we do not know the exact date of Jesus' birth, it is good that many seem to think more about Jesus during the "Christmas season" than at any other time. It is sad; however, that some who never attend church services of any church will probably "go to church" during the Christmas season.

You hear the expressions "Happy Birthday Jesus!" and "Jesus is the reason for the season!" Nativity scenes are very popular doing this time of the year as well as Christmas concerts and plays that tend to focus on December 25th as the birthday of Jesus. Many still view Jesus as a baby lying in a manger wrapped in swaddling clothes.

It is very meaningful to read the inspired scriptures of the Bible that tell of Jesus' birth. It certainly must have been a blessing to have been Mary and to have given birth to baby Jesus. (Matthew 1:18-25)

Mary had an important role in Jesus' birth and life but Jesus himself had this to say, "Then one said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee. But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother: and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold, my mother and my brethren! For *whosoever shall do the will of my Father* which is in heaven, *the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.*" (Matthew 12:46-50)

Jesus is saying to us that his earthly mother was not worthy to be worshipped more than anyone else. He further stated that those who do the Father's will are the same as his mother.

Jesus' birth should be very important to each of us. However, let us never be guilty of **leaving Jesus in the manger**. We should follow Jesus as He grew into a man and remember He was more than a man;



June Franks

He was/is the Son of God!

The Bible says, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. (Isaiah 8: 6)

That little baby born in Bethlehem is no longer a little baby. He is the Almighty One. He is the "way, truth and life." By His resurrection from the dead, he proved once and for all that He is the Son of God. As God's Son, His will in all matters should be heard, believed and obeyed.

Consider the teaching of Jesus about the subject of "hell." There are those who think a teacher or preacher should never preach or teach on Hell. All we need do is to read our Bible and ask ourselves, "Who in the Bible preached more about the subject of Hell than any other?" Of course, the answer is Jesus! Hell is not a pleasant subject but it should be taught in order that we should know how horrible it is and what we need to do to avoid eternity in Hell.

The song says, "Joy to the World, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King!" Jesus is King and He definitely should be King and Lord of our lives.

Jesus serves as an example in every aspect of our life. Jesus taught the marvelous sermon on the mount in Matthew 5,6 and 7. His teachings are to be obeyed. The miracles that Jesus performed were written in the scripture that we might believe and respect His teachings as the Son of God (John 20:30,31).

Jesus also serves as example to us in that He was tempted just as we are, but He had the power to resist temptations by quoting scripture. (Luke 4: 1-13) When we are tempted, Jesus has provided us a way of escape (I Corinthians 10:13).

In order to preach Jesus, one must do like Philip did when he taught the man from Ethiopia. After Philip preached Jesus to him, the eunuch said, "See here is water, what doth hinder me from being bap-

tized?" Philip said that the Ethiopian must believe in Jesus. After his confession of faith, the Bible says they both went down into the water, the man was baptized and both came up out of the water (Acts 8: 26-40).

Many of the teachers and preachers in today's world are misleading lost souls by saying that "There is nothing man can do to be saved; Jesus has done it all." Such teachers seem to conveniently overlook the plainly taught requirements specified by Jesus and His inspired first century disciples. Jesus required repentance and baptism of all who believed in Him as God's Son. (Luke 13:3; Mark 16:16). The apostle Peter responded to believers on Pentecost day, "...repent you and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins...." (Acts 2:38)

The Bible says, "And to you who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;" (II Thessalonians 1:7-9)

Let us continue to sing "Joy To The World!" It does bring joy to our hearts to know that our Saviour Jesus was born on this earth. For thirty-three years He lived as a sinless man, was crucified as an innocent man, but three days later He arose as the Son of Almighty God. Never to die again. Alive forever more! And, thank the Good Lord, in and through only Him, we can be saved from the past sinful life and have hope for all eternity.

We should celebrate Jesus' birth -- not just on December 25th; we should also recognize the importance of celebrating His life by obeying His commandments. Jesus says, "If you love me, keep my commandments." (John 14: 15)

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P O E M

By
Barbara

Barbara Cagle Ray
bcagleray@comcast.net



Transformation

*Summer has now crooned her farewell song;
The earth's colors are emerging bright and bold.
Autumn is mystically weaving the willows' hair
Into garlands of scarlet and burnished gold.*

*The sunrise kisses the flowers with dewdrops,
And enhances the bright chrysanthemums' hues.
Leaves begin to flicker like torches of fire;
The night sky dazzles in rose-pinks and blues.*

*Then comes a blast of chilly winter wind;
The snowflakes cascade like a waterfall.
They tip the bold autumn hues with white,
And cover the earth like a cotton lace shawl.*

*Winter's chill lingers for a brief while;
Then comes a grand and glorious awakening.
Like magic, the world is alive once more;
We witness the enchanting rebirth of spring.*

God Knows It All

*God is our Saviour;
He is our Friend.
He knows when we obey;
He knows when we sin.*

*He knows our thoughts and deeds,
Every moment of every day.
When we talk to Him in prayer,
He hears every word we say.*

*God knows when a sparrow falls,
He knows when the flowers need rain.
He knows when we have sorrow,
And when our life is full of pain.*

*If God didn't love us;
We wouldn't be standing here today.
The love He has for us,
None can ever take it away.*



Nina Thorn
1135 Ratliff Ferry Rd
Canton, MS 39046

The Saviour's Plan for Salvation (6) **BE FAITHFUL to the Lord**

"Well done, you good and faithful servant... enter into the joys of your lord." (Matt. 25:21)
"...be you faithful unto death, and I will give you a crown of life." (Rev. 2:10)

The Saviour's Plan for Salvation includes **hearing the gospel, believing in Jesus, repenting of sins, confessing faith, being baptized into Christ and remaining faithful to Him as Lord.**

(PLEA: Turn to the Lord Jesus Christ in obedient faith)

Call: 601-668-3344; E-mail: franksmm@aol.com

(See Question Box)

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(Turn to Page 24)

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(How about next time?)

NOTE: Lord willing, all answers received after 12-6-13, will be recognized in our next issue. Thanks for answering the "Question Box."

Thank the Good Lord! Magnolia Messenger IS GROWING

Circulation: 24,000+; Goal: 30,000

You Can Help. Your Help is Needed. Your Help is Requested!

“Use the Envelope”

(included in this issue)

___ (1) **Send us names and addresses of other members of your congregation, along with friends, neighbors and relatives who you believe could/would benefit from the Magnolia Messenger!** We strongly believe the best results are obtained when the paper is mailed directly to individual homes. The printed page is still a powerful tool to reach out with the gospel. (Please send addresses by email to glendafranks@yahoo.com or you can mail them in the envelope included in this issue of the MM.) We promise a diligent and prayerful effort to always present **the truth in love. (USE THE ENVELOPE)**

___ (2) **Pray for this ministry!** Not only do we publish a newspaper that encourages, informs and teaches thousands, but we are also personally involved in working with struggling churches and assisting congregations with special needs. We are living in difficult days (“perilous times”)! God, in answer to the fervent prayers of His people, has richly blessed the MM -- the paper and the people -- for more than 35 years. Together, with your fellowship, we have served and continue to serve the greatest Cause on earth -- the kingdom of God, the church of Jesus Christ. **(DO NOT USE ENVELOPE)**

___ (3) **Encourage others to answer the “Question Box” and send in their answers!** This is one great big way you can encourage this ministry. Hundreds of individuals and several churches, through their Bible classes, fill out the answers and benefit greatly from the study of God’s word. Send us **your answers. (USE THE ENVELOPE)**

___ (4) **Consider additional ways you can help.** An encouraging note. A suggestion or an idea to increase the effectiveness of our ministry. You may want to consider helping us financially. While this ministry is not about trying to raise money, we do need additional funds as we grow our mailing list from 24,000 to 30,000. **(USE THE ENVELOPE).** Your help is much appreciated. Thank you! (Al & June Franks; Paul & Glenda Franks)

**MM Welcomes
Your
Suggestions & Comments
We Really Do!**

**Our New Bible Winner
344. Brenda Harvill
(Jackson, Tennessee)
Congratulations!**



Recent Bible Winner (center) Carolyn Perry of Delhi, LA
Surrounding Carolyn are Candy and Michael Hony, Beth and John Pigg, Janie and Billy Tindall and June Franks. (Al Franks took picture.) We were all on our way to Grapeland, Texas for the LA/TX RV rally and stopped by Delhi for SN services and to deliver the Bible. Enjoyed!

Use **KJV** For
Wording & Spelling

The Question Box Dying To Self

Use **KJV** For
Wording & Spelling

Jesus is the greatest personality the world has ever known. You either must believe that He is who He claimed to be or you must believe that He is the greatest fraud the world has ever known. In the past, believing in Jesus, many times meant that you would have to die a physical death. Rome allowed the people they conquered to continue to practice their religion as long as they worshipped their Roman gods -- mainly their Caesars. This was a problem for Christians. Jesus said, “I am the _____, the _____ and the _____: No man cometh unto the Father, but by _____.” (John 14:6)

It doesn't matter if a pope or some famous preacher tells you otherwise, the only way to the true God is through faith in Jesus Christ. Most people in America (77%) claim to believe that Jesus is the son of God. We know the famous passage that says, “For God so loved the world...”

and we understand that God loves the world unconditionally. In other words, no matter whether I believe in Jesus or not, God still loves me. This wonderful passage of John 3:16 tells us that if we want everlasting life then we must _____ that Jesus is the Son of God. I would hope that the “77%” of Americans who claim faith in Jesus receive everlasting life. I would hope that most (or all?) of the 7 billion people on earth will have everlasting life, wouldn't you? But my hope doesn't make it true!

While Jesus was on earth, most didn't believe in Him. Only a few believed. Today, while many people say they believe Jesus to be the Son of God, this belief doesn't change their life. You may not have to die a physical death today because of your belief in Jesus, but a **saving faith** in Jesus has **conditions**, including, **you must die to self.**

Fill in the blanks and give location of passage

1. “I am _____ with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but _____ liveth in me: and the _____ which I now live in the _____ I live by the _____ of the Son of God, who _____ me, and gave himself for me.” (Galatians _____:20)
2. “And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him _____ himself, and take up his _____ daily, and _____ me.” (Luke 9: _____)
3. “And they that are Christ's have _____ the flesh with the _____ and lusts.” (Galatians 5: _____).
4. “For whosoever will save his life shall _____ it; but whosoever shall lose his _____ for my sake and the _____, the same shall save it.” (Mark _____:35)
5. “I protest by your _____ which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I _____ daily.” (I Corinthians 15: _____)
6. “Who his own self _____ our sins in his own _____ on the tree that we, being _____ to sins, should live unto _____: by whose _____ ye were healed.” (I Peter 2: _____)
7. “Therefore _____ any man be in Christ, he is a _____ creature: _____ things are passed away; behold, all _____ are become _____.” (2 Corinthians 5: _____)

How does one get into Christ?

8. “For as many of you as have been _____ into Christ have _____ on Christ.” (Gal. 3: _____)
9. “Therefore we are _____ with him by _____ into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father; even so we also should walk in newness of life.” (Romans 6: _____.)
10. Being willing to submit to the Lord by being baptized as He commanded doesn't mean that you are trying to work your way to heaven. Baptism is not your work; it is the work of God. “For by grace are ye saved through _____...” (Ephesians 2: 8) Baptism is evidence of faith in Jesus.

What happens next? (True or False)

- _____ 1. When you are saved, then the Lord adds you to His church. (Acts 2: 48)
- _____ 2. You can get into Christ before you are baptized. (See Gal. 3: 27; Rom. 6:3)
- _____ 3. You can be saved outside the body of Christ. (Eph. 1: 22-23; Acts 20:28; Heb 12: 22-23)
- _____ 4. As a member of Christ's church, you are to count others more significant (better) than yourself. (Philippians 2: 3,4)
- _____ 5. “Hypocrites in the church” is a good reason why you can explain to God that you didn't want any part of His church.
- _____ 6. As a member of the body of Christ, I should be able to get my way all of the time.
- _____ 7. If I die to myself, then I have earned my salvation.

Please Send Your Answers To Us

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State _____

Zip: _____ Phone: _____

Notice: Each person who sends in answers will be recognized in the next issue of the "MM" (see page 23). Also, by random drawing, the name of one student will be selected to receive a beautiful New Study Bible or A Bible Study CD Library. **You may be the one.** Send your answers to:

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