

Mississippi's "GOOD NEWS" magazine for churches of Christ.



THE MAGNOLIA

# Messenger

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# Angels



*The Administering*  
**SERVANTS of GOD**



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

*(Hebrews 10:24)*

# In this issue from Dennis



n a recent Sunday morning, one of our sweet, older ladies came up to me and grabbed both my arms. For several minutes, she told me about her family and church history and let me know she had been receiving *the Magnolia Messenger* for many years.

While firmly grasping my arms, she said that some years back, she had been giving her neighbor an extra copy of *The Messenger*, a copy she would pick up at church. Her neighbor began filling in the Question Box on the back and sending in her answers. After some time doing this, her neighbor obeyed the Gospel.

Still holding tight to my arms, this wonderful Christian lady looked up at me through her horn-rimmed glasses and remarked, "What you are doing is making a difference!"

I greatly appreciated the sincerity of her words. Yes, this publication is making a difference in the Lord's Kingdom.

It is making a difference through articles written by knowledgeable and talented writers. It is making a difference for prisoners who are converted while behind bars (I know this happens, as I regularly receive letters from them). It is making a difference by helping raise money for mission work and by helping churches find preachers and preachers find churches. It is making a difference by advertising and reporting on wonderful activities across our brotherhood. For forty-seven years, it has provoked one another "unto love and good works."

If you are supporting this publication, know this: By your support, you are making a difference in the Lord's Kingdom! -dd



Church of Christ - Kosciusko, MS

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(Dennis Doughty, Editor)

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"Topic for our next issue:"

*the*  
(Continuing)

# Restoration Movement...

HOLY BIBLE

WHAT WAS THE  
"Restoration Movement"  
and  
Are churches today upholding the principals of the movement?

# THE ANGELS

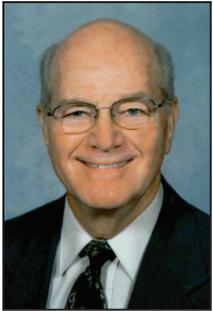
## Michael & Gabriel

by C. Philip Slate, Memphis, TN

*The information in Scripture about angels and the “heavenly hosts” occupies considerable space in both Old and New Testaments, from Genesis to Revelation. The purpose of this article is to discuss the material recorded about the only angels whose names are reported in Scripture, Michael and Gabriel. Their identity and work are best understood in a broader study of the invisible, spiritual realm, but that is not the focus of this article.*

### Michael

In Scripture, Michael is the name of ten humans and one archangel (Jude 9). The name Michael means “who is like God?” and the angel of that name is mentioned in the Old Testament only in the book of Daniel. There he is referred to as “one of the chief princes” (10:1) who contends against the prince of Persia (v.



C. Philip Slate

21). Further, in 12:1 he is described as “the great prince who has charge of” the Jews. Some biblical scholars hold each nation had an angel that functioned under the authority of God. Angels, whether called “heavenly hosts” (Luke 2:13), “spirits” (Hebrews 1:14) or other terms, are part of a vast sphere of existence that we earth-bound humans cannot perceive fully. Paul, for example, mentions in several places the

rulers, authorities, cosmic powers, and spiritual forces for both good and evil (Colossians 1:16; Ephesians 2:2; 3:10; 6:12). God himself mentioned that the “sons of God”, one way of referring to angels, were present at the creation and “shouted for joy” (Job 38:1-7). In that realm of existence, Michael, as stated in the book of Daniel, served to give messages and carry out functions that God wanted done.

In the Jewish writings during the time between Malachi and the coming of John the Baptist, Michael is mentioned many times. This Jewish literature is often called the “apocryphal” books, such as Enoch, Tobit, Ascension of Isaiah, Testimony of the Twelve Patriarchs, and others (they can be read online). In the New Testament, however, Michael is designated as an “archangel” who disputed with the devil about the body of Moses (Jude 9), an event about which we know nothing else with certainty, though details were given in prominent Jewish traditions. The unnamed “archangel” whose voice will accompany the final appearing of Christ may be Michael (1 Thessalonians 4:16), but this is uncertain. In the book of Revelation, however, Michael is mentioned by name as fighting, along with his angels, against and defeating the dragon and his enemies (Revelation 12:7-9). Thus, he is once again mentioned as serving God’s purposes.

### Gabriel

Gabriel, whose name means “man of God”, appears in both Old and New Testaments. In the book of Daniel, he reveals the message to Daniel that the vision he had seen “is for the time of the end” (8:16-17). Later, he appeared to Daniel while he was praying for Israel, giving him “insight and understanding” (9:20-23). In that text he is referred to as “the man Gabriel” (v. 21). Elsewhere in Scripture angels adopt an appearance of men (Ezekiel 9:2; Genesis 18:2, 16; Mark 16:5; Luke. 24:4). Gabriel is also mentioned several times in the Jewish apocryphal literature as an archangel and one of four chief angels (Book of Enoch, chapter 9, 20, 40). That status is not mentioned in the biblical books.

In the NT, Gabriel’s name appears only in the Gospel of Luke. He appeared as “an angel of the Lord” to the priest Zechariah during his priestly service. John was terrified at his presence. Gabriel gave Zechariah the message that Elizabeth, his barren wife, would bear him a son. The angel identifies himself as Gabriel, “who stands in the presence of God” (Luke 1:19). Historically, Gabriel is called an archangel, but he is never specifically so called in Scripture. Gabriel also appeared to the virgin Mary, informing her that she will conceive and bear a son who will be named Jesus (Luke 1:26-31). In both cases he is performing the message-bearing function of angels. A single, unnamed angel announced to the shepherds at night that a Savior is born, “who is Christ the Lord”. Suddenly, that angel was joined by “a multitude of heavenly hosts”, together praising God. Then the angels went away (v. 15). They had completed their immediate missions of giving a message of great joy and praising God.

As Christians, we would like to know how the angels ministered to Jesus during His temptations (Matthew 4:11) and “strengthened” Him in Gethsemane (Luke 22:43). We want to know what the “ministering spirits” (angels) do when they are “sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation” (Hebrews 1:14); but we will do well to let God do what He wills for us through His angels, confident that our Heavenly Father supplies helps to those who seek to serve Him faithfully. Michael and Gabriel provide two illustrations of the kind of thing God does through His angels. **MM**

# Q&A

HOLY BIBLE

*"What Does  
the Bible Say?"*



Send your Questions  
to Dan Winkler  
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THE "BADDEST" OF ALL THE

# BAD ANGELS

## YOUR WONDERFUL QUESTION:

Brother Dan, I have two questions about the devil that sorta go together. First of all, is Satan a fallen angel and, if he isn't, where did he come from? I'd also like to know your thoughts about the war Satan fought with Michael (the one recorded in Revelation 12). Did that really happen or is it symbolic for something else?

## MY THOUGHTS:

Whew, you really know how to make a person think and study harder. Thank you for helping me with these extra challenging questions. For the sake of space, let's dive right in.

### A "WICKED" ONE

Satan is frequently called "the evil one" (Matthew 13:19, 38; John 17:15; 2 Thessalonians 3:3; Ephesians. 6:16; 1 John 2:13-14; 3:12; 5:18-19, ESV) and a study of his origin proves why. For that origin, we might remember the letters A, B, and C. They can really simplify the matter.

**A stands for the word Angels.** Angels are a created race of beings (Psalm 148:1-2, 5). In fact, they are a created race of spirit beings (Hebrews 1:7, NKJV). That's why you and I have been made "a little lower than the angels" (Hebrews. 2:6). They are spirit beings without flesh and bones (Luke 24:39). We are spirit beings living inside bodies of flesh and bones (2 Corinthians 4:16-18).

**B stands for the word Bad as in Bad Angels.** Like us, angels have the power of choice. Some have chosen to respect the authority of God which was delegated to Jesus (1 Peter 3:22; cf. Ephesians 1:20). Others have chosen to violate the authority of God, sin, rebel against their designated positions, and be condemned to an isolation from Heaven (2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6). As one condemned for being puffed up with conceit, Satan is among the later (1 Timothy 3:6).

**C stands for the word Chieftain.** Remember Jesus' reference to "the devil and his angels" (Matthew 25:41)? All of the other bad angels make up a spiritual force of evil that Satan employs to tempt

mankind (Ephesians 6:11-12). He's the tempter (1 Corinthians 7:5) and he dispatches his angels into the unseen realm of providence to craft circumstances that seduce men and women away from God. That's why he's called "the prince of demons" (Matthew 12:24-26). We might think of him as the "baddest" of all the bad angels. So, yes, it's my belief that Satan is a fallen angel.

### A "WAR" WITH WICKED ONES

Now to your second question about the war mentioned in Revelation 12. Take pause and read the chapter again. Reference is made to: (a) a woman, (b) a child, (c) a dragon, and (d) a war with someone called Michael.

Unfortunately, interpretations for these symbols are about as plentiful as the number of authors writing about them. Personally, I like to place Revelation onto the canvas of its cultural background and understand its symbols with that in mind. What was going on at the time Revelation was penned? And what did the symbolic pictures of the book speak to all that was going on? So, here are a few introductory thoughts to keep in mind.

- Revelation was a "prophecy" (Revelation 1:3; 10:11; 11:3, 6; 19:10; 22:7, 10, 18-19).
- Revelation was written to "bless" (Revelation. 1:3; 14:13; 16:15; 19:9; 20:6; 22:7, 14).
- Revelation was written to encourage or "bless" Christians who were in a severe conflict with Babylon, a cryptic reference to the Romans Empire (Revelation 14:8; 16:19; 17:5; 18:2, 10, 21). That's why we frequently read through its pages and find words like fight, fought, battle, war (Revelation 2:16; 9:7, 9; 11:7; 12:7, 17; 13:4, 7; 16:14; 17:14; 19:19; 20:8) and overcome, prevailed, conquer or victory (Revelation. 2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21; 5:5; 6:2; 11:17; 12:11; 13:7; 15:2; 17:14; 21:7).

If we sift Revelation's symbols through the filter of this background, the war in Revelation 12 makes a lot more sense. That said, let's turn to the key players in chapter 12.

The woman in Revelation 12, is clothed with celestial bod-

ies—sun, moon, and stars—to indicate her significance (Revelation 12:1). Compare that to the glorious description given to the New Testament church, God’s people today (1 Peter 2:9-10). This woman also wore a crown (a *stephanos*, or “crown of victory”) like faithful members of the church in Philadelphia (Revelation 12:1; cf. 2:10; 3:11). Still further, it should not go unnoticed that this woman was the recipient of God’s care in a wilderness, reminding us of the care God gave His people in Old Testament times (Revelation 12:6; cf. Exodus 16:5; Numbers 11:1-31; Deuteronomy 29:5). She was also “nourished” by God which compares to the Lord nourishing and cherishing His spiritual bride, the church. All of these comparisons encourage me to identify this woman as the faithful members of God’s New Testament church when John was inspired to write Revelation.

The child in Revelation 12, was born “to rule all nations with a rod,” the very promise Jesus made to those who remained faithful despite temptations to compromise in the heat their conflicts (Revelation 12:5; cf. 2:26-29). This child was also “caught up to God and his throne” which is what happened to those martyred because they would not compromise (Revelation 12:5; cf. 7:4, 9, 14-15). It is also significant to see that the woman who gave birth to this child was still around to be persecuted, but the child was not. Why? The child represented the martyrs who had already died for their faith because they “loved not their lives to the death” (Revelation 12:11). And here’s one more note of interest. This child was identified with “the rest” of the woman’s offspring “who keep the commandments of God” (Revelation 12:17). That’s why we find it best to think of this child as a symbolic reference to converts of the New Testament church who gave up their lives rather than give up their convictions when persecuted.

The dragon in Revelation 12, is a creature of note. To begin, the term translated dragon is believed to have been derived from a root word that meant “to see” or “to stare.” In this context, it portrayed a giant and powerful serpent with keen vision, an appropriate symbol for those trying to locate and root out Christians. The dragon is “red,” symbolic of the bloodshed for which it was responsible (Revelation 12:3; cf. 6:3-4; 2 Kings 3:20-24). It also had seven heads which are later identified as “seven mountains” [i.e. the seven mountains of Rome: Capital, Palatine, Aventine, Caelian, Esquiline, Viminal, and Quirinal] (Revelation 12:3 cf. 17:9). Accordingly, like the “dragon” that symbolized the enemy of Old Testament Israel (Isaiah 51:9), we believe this dragon typified the enemy of John and the New Testament church in his day, the Roman Empire.

The war in Revelation 12 had two combatants. First, there was Michael, a name that means “one who is like God.” That means John looked up into the sky and saw someone who looked like God coming to the aid of the New Testament church. Later, we learn that this was Jesus (Revelation 17:14). The second combatant was the aforementioned dragon and he’s symbolically called “Satan” [literally, “adversary”] (12:9). Now, who was the most formidable “adversary” of John and the church in his day? It was the Roman Empire. Since the empire was so large and cosmopolitan, it allowed its citizens to believe whatever they wished as long

as their belief system didn’t disrupt the Pax Romana, i.e. peace of Rome. And that’s why they placed variant religions into one of two groups: (a) the *licitae* (“licensed”) who did not threaten peace and (b) the *illicitae* (“unlicensed”) who were perceived as a threat to peace. Christianity was deemed an *illicitae*. That said, I’m comfortable thinking of this war as a symbolic reference to the conflict between Christians and Rome, a conflict Jesus was going to help them ultimately win.

So, you asked for my thoughts and here they are. The New Testament church was converting their peers to the Lord. Those converts were being persecuted and executed by their government in a conflict that Jesus was going to help the church ultimately win. In my opinion, that’s what the war in Revelation 12 is all about. It is a not an actual war that was waged on some cosmic or geopolitical horizon.

## CONCLUSION

Thankfully, the forces that pit themselves against John and the church of his day “did not prevail” (Revelation 12:8). Literally, they “did not have enough force to succeed.” Instead, they were “cast” or “thrown” out of the sky, a figurative point that is emphatically made five times in this reading (Revelation 12:9, 10, 13). John saw a vision that proved that the Roman Empire was not going to succeed in rooting out the church. To the contrary, it was the church that was to succeed and—praise be to our God—exist forever (cf. Daniel 2:44). It is, after all, an “everlasting kingdom” (Psalm 145:13).

In making broad application of all these thoughts, we should be encouraged to fight our own battles of temptation and “resist the devil” (James 4:7). “Be sober, be vigilant,” we are told, “your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith” (1 Peter 5:8-9). As our faithful and merciful High Priest, Jesus is there to help us (Hebrews 2:17-18) just like He helped the contemporaries of John. So, here’s a great note with which to close.

***“Blessed is the man who  
endures temptation; for  
when he has been approved,  
he will receive the crown  
of life which the Lord has  
promised to those  
who love Him”***

*(James 1:12).*



# ANGELS & PRAYER

by Dennis Doughty, editor

Stop for a moment and think about how many prayers God receives every day around His throne. How does God handle such an overwhelming task of running the universe and answering all these prayers?

Perhaps the answer is: one, because He is the Almighty God, and two, He has thousands upon thousands of angels to help Him. Let us look at an interesting event in Daniel chapter ten. This chapter reveals much to us about the angels.

When you begin to read the chapter, you find that Daniel had received a message via a vision of a great conflict that was about to take place. For three weeks, he fasted and prayed about the coming conflict. Remember the three weeks.

While meditating out by the riverside, with some of his staff with him (Daniel was an official of King Cyrus), he looks up and sees “A certain man,” but unlike any man he had ever seen. “His body was like beryl, his face had the appearance of lightning, his eyes were like flaming torches, his arms and feet like the gleam of polished bronze, and the sound of his words like the sound of a tumult” (vs. 6)

Only Daniel could see the image, while those with him could not. However, the very presence of this terrifying figure, while not seen by the others, was felt, so much so that “great dread fell on them, and they ran away to hide themselves” (vs.7).

As Daniel stood trembling, the angel explained to him that from the first day of his prayer before God, “your words were heard, and I have come in response to your words” (vs 12).

This “messenger” sent from God explained why he had not appeared sooner. He had met resistance from the “prince of the Kingdom of Persia,” who withstood him for twenty-one days! (Remember the three weeks?) So, almost immediately after Daniel had prayed, an angel was sent in answer to that prayer, but a demonic force in the spiritual realms stood in his way for those three weeks.

Then the great archangel, Michael, “one of the chief princes,”

came to the rescue, engaging the demonic force, freeing up the angel to complete his journey in answer to Daniel's prayer. The angel gave Daniel the answer he was to give regarding the great conflict. The angel assured Daniel that “no one stands firmly with me against these forces except Michael, your prince,” and then left to “return to the fight against the prince of Persia” (vs. 20-21).

Wow! What a fantastic story. What can we take from it? First, that angels are “messengers” sent from God to answer prayers.

In the very hours that the church was praying for Peter's life, when he was arrested and imprisoned, an angel was sent. “and a light shone in the cell, and he struck Peter's side and woke him up.” As the chains fell off his hands, Peter was told to wrap his cloak around him, as the angel led him out into the night.

Peter went and knocked on the door where the church had gathered to pray. After some disbelief, they let him in, amazed by the swift answer to their prayers. In the morning, “there was no small disturbance among the soldiers as to what could have become of Peter” (Acts 12:1-18). They were unaware of the power of prayer and the work of angels. Aren't we all sometimes?

When we pray, we enter the spiritual world. We are asking God and the angels to respond to our pleas. In that process, there is a constant struggle going on, “not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the power, against the world of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.” By putting on the “full armor of God,” we enter this struggle, placing our prayers in the middle of this spiritual arena. With a strong faith and the angels' help, God answers our prayers and gives us the power to defeat Satan and to change the world. (Ephesians 6:10-13).

So, say your prayers, and when they are answered, did you feel the breeze of angel wings? If you asked and did receive, was there a moment of angelic amazement? If you knocked and the door was opened, did you stop to thank God and Michael? **MM**

*“His body was like beryl, his face had the appearance of lightning, his eyes were like flaming torches, his arms and feet like the gleam of polished bronze, and the sound of his words like the sound of a tumult”*

# You're support keeps the "GOOD NEWS" coming!

Dear Brethren,

Have you enjoyed receiving *The Magnolia Messenger* this year? Have some of the articles been helpful to your spiritual growth? Have some of the news articles been informative and encouraging? Has the quality and layout of each issue been attractive and pleasing? Would you like to see the magazine continue to grow across our brotherhood?

If the answer to any or all of these questions is "Yes, yes, and YES!" Then, let me ask: Have you sent in a donation this year to support this publication?

*The Magnolia Messenger* has always, and will always, depend on your donations to keep it going. So please consider sending in your donation today.

If your congregation has been supporting this good work monthly, please keep us in your budget for 2026, and consider increasing it a little. Our mailing and printing costs are increasing with each issue, so a little extra would be appreciated.

We have a small, hard-working staff. We have a growing pool of great writers. We have an increasing number of ads and articles about mission work, preacher training, and brotherhood ministries.

Pray for us and keep supporting the "Good News magazine for churches of Christ." **MM**

Dennis Doughty, editor

# GOD'S MESSENGERS

In the Bible, two specific types of celestial beings, **cherubim** and **seraphim**, are explicitly described as having wings. Other angels, who appear as humanlike messengers, are generally not described as having wings in biblical narratives.

## ■ Winged Beings

**Seraphim:** Described in the book of Isaiah (Isaiah 6:1-3), these beings attend God in His heavenly throne room. Each has six wings: with two they cover their face (out of reverence for God's glory), with two they cover their feet, and with two they fly.

**Cherubim:** These beings are mentioned frequently, first as the guardians of the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:24). Detailed descriptions in the book of Ezekiel (Ezekiel 1 and 10) and Revelation (Revelation 4) describe them as having four wings and, in some visions, four different faces (man, lion, ox/cherub, and eagle). Physical representations, such as those on the Ark of the Covenant, also featured outstretched wings (Exodus 25:20).



## ■ Angels Without Wings

Angels that appear to humans as messengers from God in various biblical stories often look like ordinary men and are not described with wings. For example:

1. The angels who visited Abraham and Lot in Genesis appeared as travelers, and the people did not initially realize they were angels (Hebrews 13:2 references this).
2. The angel at Jesus' tomb in Matthew 28:3 had an appearance like lightning and clothing as white as snow, but is not described as having wings.
3. The angel Gabriel, when he appeared to Mary in the book of Luke, presented as a man.

The traditional image of angels as humanlike figures with large, feathered wings is largely a result of classical art and cultural depictions, rather than a universal biblical description. The biblical texts portray a variety of different heavenly beings with distinct, and sometimes complex or startling, appearances. **MM**

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# Two Great Friendships comes to an end!

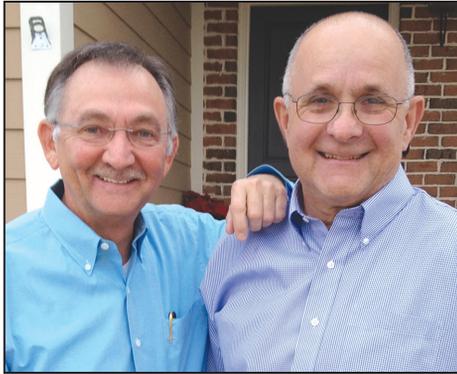
**Steven Ray Watson**

March 28, 1948 - October 13, 2025

by **Dennis Doughty**, editor

We met at Freed-Hardeman College in the Summer of 1967. We were destined to become close friends. We were both Florida boys at the time. We both got our first preaching jobs at little country churches outside of Henderson, we both had cars, which was something back then, and we both roomed on the second floor of Paul Grey Hall. It is no surprise that a great friendship would be formed.

While we went our separate ways after F-HU, the bond we had already formed kept us in touch. Not long after he married, I asked him to be the best man at my wedding. As our families grew, and children came along, so did our friendship. Our time together, preaching and seeking adventure, ran from Tennessee to Virginia,



from London to Israel, from Fiji to Rome and Ephesus, and many points in between. We played golf, skied in the Rockies, floated in the Dead Sea, and went for many long walks. In recent years, he would call just to thank me for being his friend, and I would return the compliment, ending with laughter over some event long ago.

Now, 58 years later, Steve is gone. With his health failing, a stroke took him in the night. The memories of our many adventures together are now left only to me to recall. Precious memories. Wat, I will see you on the other side. dd

### **A Part of Steve's Obituary;**

In 1969, Steve married his college sweetheart, Jane Walker, in her hometown of Tusculumbia, Alabama. Together they shared 56 wonderful years of marriage, raising two daughters and two sons. They would be blessed with 14 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren

A lifelong servant of God and faithful shepherd to many, Steve dedicated his life to proclaiming the Gospel—both as a preacher and as a missionary—sharing the message of hope and salvation across the United States and around the world. With a heart for reaching anyone willing to listen, he faithfully testified about his Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. **MM**

### **ATRIBUTE TO**

# **ALAN E. HIGHERS**

(1937 - 2025)

by **Hugh Fulford**.

There is an African proverb that says, "When an old man dies, a library burns to the ground." On Wednesday, August 27, 2025, a big fire occurred in Henderson, TN, and a vast library burned to the ground with the death of Alan Highers. With his passing I lost one of the best friends I have ever had. I was honored to have a part in his funeral and to speak of our long friendship.

Alan and I first met in the spring of 1955 at the Mid-South High School Speech and Debate Tournament in Memphis. We were high school seniors, he at Harding Academy in Searcy, AR, and I at Mars Hill Bible School in Florence, AL. The following September we both enrolled at Freed-Hardeman College in Henderson, TN. A long friendship started that stretched to seventy years and ended only with his passing.

Our second year at Freed-Hardeman, Alan and his roommate Clyde Woods (who would later serve for over fifty years on the Bible faculty at FHC), along with my roommate Wayne Emmons and I, shared rooms in a private residence in Henderson. While Clyde would be in the library hitting the books, Alan, Wayne, and I would be at Bell's Drive-In, an iconic restaurant in Henderson,

where Alan would be teasing and flirting with the waitress!

Alan was a man of keen intellect, with many interests and many talents. He loved Bluegrass music and the old time country musicians. Alan obtained a pilot's license, an auctioneer's license, an amateur radio operator's license, and a law degree from the University of Memphis. Many of these accomplishments were made while serving as minister of the Getwell church in Memphis where he preached for ten years.

Alan was an outstanding debater and met many proponents of religious error, but the truth never suffered at Alan's hands; he was always prepared. I attended the first two nights of the first public debate Alan ever had when he was barely twenty years old. It was in Carroll County, TN, with a veteran Baptist preacher and debater three or four decades older than Alan. Throughout the debate, his opponent kept referring to Alan as the Campbellite kid! But what a whipping the older gentleman received at the hands of a kid!

For thirty-six years Alan served as editor of *The Spiritual Sword* and gave me the privilege of writing for that journal. In

2014, at the Spiritual Sword Lectureship in Memphis, he was honored for his then twenty-five years as editor of *The Spiritual Sword*. Jan and I attended and I had the privilege of being one of the speakers at the luncheon in his honor.

For many years – stretching into decades – Alan and I were in regular contact with each other several times a week and often daily. We talked about whatever was on our minds. He was kind enough to ask for my suggestions and thoughts



Alan Highers and Hugh Fulford at PTP in 2023

on themes for *The Spiritual Sword*, what topics to discuss, and which writers would be best for each topic. We shared family matters. We discussed politics, country music

stars and entertainers (we were always saddened when one of them passed away), old friends and former schoolmates, preachers we had known and respected, along with a host of other things. We both spoke at Polishing the Pulpit in Sevierville. For two years, we shared tales and told stories about old preachers we had known and loved. “Preacher Tales” we called them.

And so it was for seventy years – a friendship of fun, laughter, speaking on some of the same lectureships, visiting with each other whenever possible, sharing meals, swapping stories, giggling and poking one another, and enjoying being together.

He fought the good fight, he kept the faith, and he has now finished his course. I knew him long, I knew him well, I loved him much, and he will be sorely missed. Things will not be the same not having him to email with, to talk with on the phone, and to visit whenever it was possible for us to do so.

As Alexander Campbell quaintly said of a faithful preacher and close friend who had died, “Through the eye of faith, methinks I see him in Abraham’s bosom.”

Rest well, old friend. **MM**

# God's Plan for Salvation

*From the beginning with Adam and Eve, God has desired obedience from man.*

*"...as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice" 1 Sam. 15:22*

## HEAR

# 1

■ **Acts 4:4:** "However, many of those who **heard** the word believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand."

■ **Romans 10:17:** "So then faith comes by **hearing**, and hearing by the word of God."

■ **Ephesians 1:13:** "In Him you also trusted, after you **heard** the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise,"

*"And Noah did according to all that the Lord commanded him."  
Genesis 7:5*

## BELIEVE

# 2

■ **Acts 8:13:** "Then Simon himself also **believed**; and when he was baptized he continued with Philip"

■ **Acts 16:31:** "So they said, "**Believe** on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household."

■ **Romans 1:16:** "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who **believes**,"

■ **Hebrews 11:6:** "But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must **believe** that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him."

*"And the children of Israel did according to all that the Lord had commanded Moses; so they did."  
Exodus 39:32*

## CONFESS

# 3

■ **Romans 10:9:** "that if you **confess** with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved."

■ **1 Timothy 6:12:** "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have **confessed** the good confession in the presence of many witnesses."

■ **1 John 1:9:** "If we **confess** our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

*"So he went down and dipped seven times in the Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God;"  
2 Kings 5*

## REPENT

# 4

■ **Acts 2:38:** "Then Peter said to them, "**Repent**, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins;"

■ **Acts 3:19:** "**Repent** therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord,"

■ **Acts 17:30:** "Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to **repent**,"

■ **2 Corinthians 7:10:** "For godly sorrow produces **repentance** leading to salvation,"

*"Thus Moses did; according to all that the Lord had commanded him, so he did."  
Exodus 40:16*

## BAPTISM

# 5

■ **Matthew 28:19:** "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, **baptizing** them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,"

■ **Romans 6:3:** "Or do you not know that as many of us as were **baptized** into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?"

■ **Acts 2:38:** "Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be **baptized** in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

■ **1 Corinthians 12:13:** "For by one Spirit we were all **baptized** into one body"

*"Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea,"  
1 Corinthians 10:1-3*

# 6

## REMAIN FAITHFUL

■ **Colossians 1:23:** "if indeed you **continue in the faith**, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard"

■ **Revelation 2:10:** "Be **faithful until death**, and I will give you the crown of life."

*"But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin  
1 John 1:7"*

The Plan was illustrated by inspired men with the authority given by Jesus! Matthew 28:18-20

**The Eunuch: Acts 8:27** ■ **Saul: Acts 9:18** ■ **Cornelius: Acts 10:1** ■ **The Jailer: Acts 16:33**

*The Gospel re-enacted through Baptism and the encouragement and warning to remain Faithful until death, on the next page*

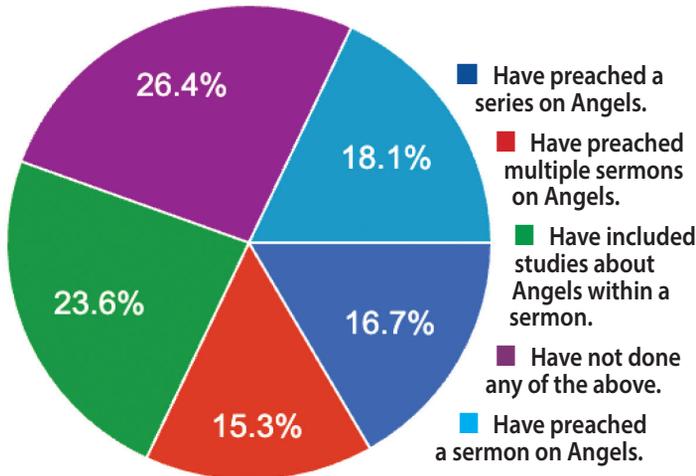
# The Preacher's Page

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Angels are not to be worshiped—but they are real, they are active, and they stand ready to do the will of God... Angels execute the divine will in realms seen and unseen. They are ministers, not objects of devotion.

Rex Turner, Sr.



## RESOURCES YOU CAN USE: ANGELS

- Heaven a Christian's Journey Into Eternity; Dennis Doughty
- A Study of Angels Paperback, Dr. Edward P. Myers
- The Angels of God – Ancil Jenkins – Gospel Advocate
- Angels and God's Ministering Spirits – Rex Turner Sr. – Southern Christian University Press

## God's Mighty Messengers

Most people think of angels as beings dressed in white robes with wings, flying from cloud to cloud and playing harps in Heaven. Others think of those cute, cherubic ceramic figures that people place on their fireplace mantle. The problem is that neither of these represents the Bible's image of angels.

Two thoughts about angels stand out in Scripture. First, angels are God's messengers. Both the Hebrew and the Greek words translated as 'angel' mean 'messenger'. In the OT, an angel delivered a message from God to Daniel. On another occasion, an angel brought God's Word of comfort and guidance to Elijah. In the NT, the angel Gabriel appeared to Zechariah to announce the birth of John the Baptist and later to Mary to announce the birth of Jesus. Angels sang and announced the birth of Jesus to the shepherds. Angels also warned Mary and Joseph to flee to Egypt to escape King Herod's plot to kill the Babe of Bethlehem.

The second clear characteristic of angels in Scripture is that they are mighty. 2 Kings 19:36 tells us that the angel of the Lord slew 185,000 Assyrian soldiers in one night. Numbers 22:22-23 also mentions the angel of the Lord. It describes how he stopped Balaam on his way with the Moabite princes to curse the Israelites. 2 Thessalonians 1:7 describes the end of time, when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels. Finally, Revelation 12:7-9 tells of how the angels of God defeat Satan and his angels.

One closing thought about angels in Scripture is that they are gathered around the throne of God, worshiping God and the Lamb. (Revelation 4,5)



# "LOVE DOES NO HARM TO ITS NEIGHBOR"

by **Danny Dodd, Minister**  
*Levy church of Christ*  
*North Little Rock, AR*

The apostle Paul penned these words toward the end of his letter to the church in Rome (13:10). They were needed words spoken divinely into that context. The "godlessness and wickedness" that characterized the Roman culture (see 1:18-32) had seeped into this infant church, resulting in "trouble and distress." They turned on each other, hypocritically accusing and judging one another, disqualifying themselves from sharing any Christ-witness to their world (read chapter two). They were too compromised by the "senseless, faithless, heartless, ruthless" (1:31) culture that God called them from. This, then, is what the book of Romans is about—Paul setting out to correct this untenable situation. And we are left with an amazing text, rich in reasoned theology, addressing the specifics of this Jew/Gentile split within that church. Included are some of the most incredible instructions within all of the New Testament.

And then it gets practical. Beginning in chapter twelve, Paul shifts gears to apply this rich teaching. He speaks first of transformation, that is, to allow the Spirit of God to bring about genuine change reflecting the will of God. No longer are Christ-followers to be conformed to the godless culture. Christian character and behavior must evolve out from the harsh approach of the world into the gentleness of God's grace. Self is no longer to be served. Others are, and love is the avenue for this to occur. "Love must be sincere." Paul knew this was the only way the Romans could reverse their course. He added, "Be devoted to one another in brotherly love" (see 12:9-10). Only in this way would the anger, the finger-pointing, the critical judgments, and the accusations stop.

He would conclude this emphasis by linking it to the greatest commands. "Let no debt remain outstanding," he pointedly stated,



**Danny Dodd**

"except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellowman had fulfilled the law." The entirety of God's will flows from this—loving our neighbor as ourselves. If this is not our practice, none of our other practices matter (1 Corinthians 13:1-3). "Love does no harm to its neighbor" (read 13:8-10). It does not seek to slander, accuse, humiliate, injure, curse, or seek revenge on them (12:19), nor does it harbor hatred for them, regardless. Regardless of how they act, what they say, whether they disagree, belong to another race, culture, or a different political party, or even if they are the enemy. We are to love them too (Matthew 5:44). This is, most certainly, what transformation looks like.

As we read this long-ago text, are there takeaways for us now? Certainly! In our current super-charged, divided cultural climate, where hate (1 John 3:15) and its partner, accusation (Revelation 12:10), are continually on display, destroying character, reputation, and ruining lives, Christ-followers are to counter that by aggressively loving one another and by doing absolutely no harm with our words or deeds to those around us, even when tempted. "Do not repay anyone evil for evil," Paul was careful to add (12:17).

Think about this: the next time a tragic or contrived event triggers a cultural outrage and social media erupts in full force, spinning off in all directions, let's not allow that spin to disorient us. Instead, let's look for ways in that storm to "Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody" for the purpose of giving witness to the "pleasing and perfect will" of God. "Let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light" (13:12). And let us always remember, no matter what: "Love does no harm to its neighbor." **MM**

*(Note: Danny has again given us a thoughtful article. We appreciate his faithful support of this publication and the good work he does in the Kingdom.- dd)*

*[Highlight: "Christian character and behavior must evolve out from the harsh approach of the world into the gentleness of God's grace.]*

# Reader's Comments:

I wanted to thank you for the opportunity to advertise my Buggies and Battles Tour in the *Magnolia Messenger* magazine a few months ago. I had two couples on the tour that told me they heard about the trip from MM, so that was wonderful! One of the couples was from all the way in Wyoming!

*Teresa Castleman, editor  
Abundant Living Magazine*

I want to thank you for running "An Epochal Event..." in the *Magnolia Messenger*. I especially want to thank you for the thoughtful editing you provided. I hope someday I can submit another article that might be of interest again. Until that time, I continue to admire all that you are accomplishing with the *Magnolia Messenger*.

*Rod Atkinson, Hanford, CA*

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And He said to them,  
"Go into all the world and preach the  
gospel to every creature.

*Mark 16:15*

# Somewhere in Honduras!

"See, here is water.  
What hinders me from  
being baptized?"

*Acts 8:36*

# In The SPOTLIGHT

## CHARLIE SMITH

There are some men you feel fortunate to have met in life. Charlie Smith is such a man. He was a scholarship basketball player at Freed-Hardeman College in Henderson, Tennessee, in the late 60s, the same year I was there. I remember his six-foot-six presence vaguely. Charlie went on to play at Oklahoma Christian and later returned to Freed-Hardeman to coach their basketball and Volleyball teams and head their athletic programs.

I would next see Charlie as he showed up unannounced at our worship service in Tunica, Mississippi. His coaching days over, he had been serving as an elder at the Henderson church for several years. The eldership was interested in supporting a local mission point, and I was looking for much-needed support. From that day forward the Henderson church has supported the work in Tunica with Charlie serving as the elder overseeing that support.

Early on, Charlie asked me what I needed at Tunica. I told him I needed a good whiteboard and a new sign in front of our building. I also mentioned that a better desk for my office would be nice. Within a few weeks, we had our whiteboard and a nice new sign out front. Then one day, Charlie drove up with a nice desk in the back of his pickup truck. Charlie is a man who gets things done.

As an elder, Charlie is involved in the congregation's mission work, at home and abroad. He continues to support the Tunica work by his many visits, bringing song leaders, youth groups and preachers with him. He is a good neighbor in the biblical sense as he helps anyone he finds in need, from mowing yards to visiting the sick. He dedicates much time to the elders' meetings and the many activities of the congregation.

He is loved by everyone who knows him, especially by those he has coached, as reflected in the following quote:

"If you are blessed to know this man, then you know what a treasure he is. I played volleyball at Freed-Hardeman University for Coach Charlie Smith. Since then, he has kept up with me throughout my life. He reached out when he knew I was hurting, celebrated my happiness, and for the second time in 2 years, he drove 4 hours to see a group of us who played for him at the Madison Academy volleyball games. What a blessing to have had a college coach who invested in us then and continues to do so now. He and his sweet wife, Nancy, were such an important part of my life at Freed. They opened their home any time we wanted to swing by and visit. I want everyone to have this kind of coach. Thanks Coach Smith from all of us! Love you!" **MM**

*-Misty Canerday Persall*

*"Take a moment, my friend, and enjoy these few minutes "In the Spotlight." It is well deserved." - the Editor*



Charlie and Nancy with grandchildren

## BIBLE STUDY - 2

# JUDGED

by the WORDS OF CHRIST

“He that rejected me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the WORD that I have SPOKEN, the Same shall JUDGE him in the last day.” (John 12:48)

### 1. JUDGE

(II Corinthians 5:10; Romans 14:10-12)

**Righteous JUDGE** (II Timothy 4:8)

**Righteous JUDGMENT** (Acts 17:31)

### 2. WORD

**New Testament** (Matthew 26:28; Hebrews 9:15)

**New Covenant** (Jeremiah 31:31; Hebrews 8:8)

**New Law** (James 1:25)

### 3. SPOKEN

(Hebrews 1:1-2; Matthew 17:1-5)

### 4. FROM SPOKEN TO WRITTEN

**God gave the word** to Christ (John 17:8)

**Christ gave the word** to His apostles

(John 17:8,14; John 14:26; 15:26; 16:13; Acts 2)

**The church** continued in that word (Acts 2:42)

**The Holy Spirit** inspired men to write the word

(II Peter 1:20-21; II Timothy 3:16-17)

Christians have the responsibility of **teaching the word**

(Matthew 28:18-20)

**Go, TEACH, BAPTIZE and TEACH**

### 5. DON'T TAMPER WITH THE WORD

(Galatians 1:6-9; Revelation 22:18,19)

Revelation 20:12

# GUARD, GUIDE, & DIRECT US

by *Dan Williams*  
*Franklin, Tennessee*

The year was 1978. I had preached a weekend meeting in Henderson, North Carolina, and was headed home, driving north on Interstate 85. It was late on a Sunday night, I was tired, and to make matters worse, shortly after crossing the Virginia state line I ran into a thick fog. I had just begun to slow down because of the limited visibility, when suddenly I saw two flashing lights directly ahead. I peered intently into the mist, trying to identify what they were. The lights were too high and too far apart to be the tail lights of any vehicle I could imagine, and were red and blue, so they were not the customary yellow highway caution lights, either.



Dan Williams

As I puzzled over this strange phenomenon the flashing lights abruptly veered to the right in the fog. My vehicle sped past, and I glanced to the right, where to my surprise I caught a glimpse of an airplane, slowly rolling to a stop up an exit ramp. It was not until I watched the news the next day that I learned the pilot had been following I-85 north when his aircraft suddenly lost power. His only hope was to drop through the fog and land the crippled plane on the interstate, praying all the way that he didn't crash into one of the vehicles below. That's when it hit me – if I had been just a few seconds farther along the road, my young wife would have become a widow that night.

The year was 1992. I had been on an evangelistic campaign in the former Soviet Union and was headed home. As the Lufthansa jumbo jet made its descent into the Atlanta airport, I looked out my window and saw that we were so close to the ground, I could clearly make out the shadow of the plane's wheels on the tarmac below.

Suddenly the plane began to shudder violently, seemed to hang suspended for a split second, then slowly began to rise as the jet's massive engines labored at full throttle to lift the huge aircraft back into the sky. Once we reached cruising altitude and were circling Atlanta, the pilot came on the intercom to explain he had spotted another jet at the end of our runway coming toward us. What he didn't say, but what was obvious to the shaken passengers, was that we had been just a few seconds away from a fiery death: if the wheels had touched down, the plane would have been committed to landing and a crash would have been unavoidable.

The year was 1998. I had been to Monroe, Louisiana, and was

headed home in a rain storm, driving west on Highway 2. Just outside of Farmerville I passed a high clay bank on my right. A line of telephone poles was planted along the top of the bank. To this day I cannot explain what compelled me to pay attention to those poles (how often do you stare at utility poles by the side of the road?), but I'm thankful I did, because as I looked, suddenly the saturated soil under one gave way and it toppled over. I stomped on my brake pedal and my truck skidded to a stop. There, directly in front of my windshield, hanging suspended over my lane, was the pole. If I had been just a few seconds farther down the road, I would have driven face first into my demise. Three reflections:

First, after reading the previous stories, it will probably not surprise you to learn Gina and I never set out on a trip without first pausing in our driveway to pray for God's providential protection.

Second, when the devil tempted Jesus, the second temptation was for Jesus to throw Himself down from the highest point of the temple. The devil even quoted scripture: "He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone." Satan is evil, but he's not stupid. That is a direct quotation from Psalm 91:11-12, and it would not have been a temptation unless Jesus realized He could expect angelic protection. However, don't forget the response of our Lord. In Matthew 4:7, Jesus replies, "It is also written: do not put the Lord your God to the test." I do not believe God will protect presumptuous people from foolish actions or reckless decisions.

Third, some people believe in the existence of "guardian angels," citing such scriptures as Matthew 18:10. While I cannot prove we are each assigned full-time angelic bodyguards, I can testify from personal experience there have been many occasions when it certainly seemed there was someone up there looking after me. If God could use angels to protect His Son, why could He not use angels to protect us, also? After all, Hebrews 1:14 clearly says "Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?"

When I was growing up, one of the stock phrases in congregational prayers was "Guard, guide, and protect us." I heard it hundreds of times, and used it myself. Yet it was not until I was grown that it occurred to me to ask HOW does the Father guard us, and it was even later that I recognized one obvious scriptural answer is through angels! I don't know any Christian who would deny that Satan is actively working against us (1 Peter 5:8). If so, is it not reasonable that God can use His supernatural servants to work for us? **MM**

# God's Ministering SERVANTS

by Gary C. Hampton, Minister  
Siwell Road Church of Christ  
Jackson, Mississippi

Many are curious about angels, but few know anything about them. We need to first realize that angels were created by God. Nehemiah wrote, "You alone are the Lord; You have made heaven, The heaven of heavens, with all their host, The earth and everything on it, The seas and all that is in them, And You preserve them all. The host of heaven worships You" (Nehemiah 9:6). Paul confirmed that the things in Heaven, like angels, were created by the Lord (Colossians 1:16-17).



Gary Hampton

There are vast numbers of angels. Daniel heard, "A thousand thousands ministered to Him; Ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The court was seated, And the books were opened" (Daniel 7:10). Hebrew Christians also learned this truth (Hebrews 12:22). Jesus said He could call more than twelve legions of angels, with a Roman legion being about 6,000 strong (Matthew 26:53). But human beings, unaided, cannot see them. Balaam's donkey saw the Angel of the Lord and he did not (Numbers 22:22-31). Elisha's servant had to have his eyes opened to see the host surrounding them (2 Kings 6:15-17). When angels are visible, they appear in a form suited to God's purpose (2 Kings 6:17; Mark 16:5; Acts 1:9-10).

There are some things angels cannot do. Jesus said they do not marry (Matthew 22:30). They cannot serve as mediators, since Paul said, "For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 2:5). Though they helped deliver God's message in the Old Testament, they could not look into the mystery and understand God's plan to save all of mankind through Jesus (1 Peter 1:12). John learned they cannot receive worship (Revelation 19:10; 22:8-9).

There are things we know angels do. They give glory to God, as can be seen when Jesus was born (Luke 2:14). John described what he saw in the vision he had on the Lord's Day. "Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne,

the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice: 'Worthy is the Lamb who was slain To receive power and riches and wisdom, And strength and honor and glory and blessing!'" (Revelation 5:11-12). They are seen playing a similar role in Revelation 7:9-12.

The inspired penman explained one work of angels with a question. He said, "Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?" (Hebrews 1:14). One of their tasks in regard to the faithful is bearing their souls to paradise (Luke 16:22). The singers of Israel depicted angels as protecting the righteous (Psalm 91:11-12; 34:7). God used angels to defeat Sennacherib's army (2 Kings 19:35). Herod spoke to the people of Tyre and Sidon. Luke reports, "And the people kept shouting, 'The voice of a god and not of a man!' Then immediately an angel of the Lord struck him, because he did not give glory to God. And he was eaten by worms and died (Acts 12:20-23).

Angels are also assigned to watch over babes in Christ. Our Lord warned, "Take heed that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that in heaven their angels always see the face of My Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 18:10). He had already identified the "little ones" as new converts when he said, "But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea" (Matthew 18:6).

Angels will be involved in judgment (Matthew 13:36-43). Paul comforted the saints in Thessalonica by describing the day the Lord will come to claim his own. "And to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power" (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9). Rebellious angels have a place in eternity (Matthew 25:41).

These few Biblical facts satisfy our curiosity. They also give rise to many more questions. I, for one, do not know all the answers to those questions. **MM**

*"I say to you that  
in heaven their angels  
always see the  
face of My Father  
who is in heaven"*

(Matthew 18:10)



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# ETERNITY IN OUR HEARTS

by *Jeremy Folder, minister*  
*Enterprise Boulevard Church of Christ*  
*Lake Charles, Louisiana*

Ecclesiastes 3:10-14: "I have seen the task which God has given the sons of men with which to occupy themselves. He has made everything appropriate in its time. He has also set eternity in their heart, yet so that man will not find out the work which God has done from the beginning even to the end. I know that there is nothing better for them than to rejoice and to do good in one's lifetime; moreover, that every man who eats and drinks sees good in all his labor—it is the gift of God. I know that everything God does will remain forever; there is nothing to add to it and there is nothing to take from it, for God has so worked that men should fear Him."

Up to this point the preacher, Solomon (Ecclesiastes 1:1), has led us down a path of experimentation that has left him feeling desolate and hating his life. He now begins to show us what the other side of the argument looks like. This world and everything in it is not the final authority.

Without adding God to the equation, the preacher had lived a life full of ugliness because he had missed out on the beauty that was there the whole time. He missed these things because he had not considered that God has put eternity into man's heart. This is not natural law; this is a supernatural law that has been imprinted on the hearts of all men.

Because God has put this into the hearts of men, we are then left with a choice. We can choose to deny that this supernatural law exists – the preacher has done this, and it left him hating his life. To leave God out of the equation leads to eternal desolation. The implication then is that when God is added to the equation this leads to eternal fulfillment. **MM**

[www.blvdchurchofchrist.org](http://www.blvdchurchofchrist.org)

*(Note: I have not heard Jeremy preach, but I do appreciate him as a writer. I am pleased to have the state of Louisiana represented by Jeremy's work. The Enterprise Boulevard congregation has been a long-time friend of the Franks, and a supporter of this publication for many years. -dd)*



# Mission Reports

## MISSION GTO MEXICO 2025

by John Pigg, Director  
Ridgeland, Mississippi

Daniel 12:3 declares, "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." Twenty-three years ago, Marlin and Nelma Ivey, members of the South Huntington Street church of Christ in Kosciusko, MS, wisely decided to start the Lord's church in San Miguel de Allende, Guanajuato, Mexico. They began supporting the missionary family of Fernando and Toni Arroyo and their children, Esteban and Marifer. Soon the elders of the Kosciusko church took the oversight of Mexican Missions and began planting additional churches across GTO with Les Ferguson, Sr., as the Director. A Biblical Institute was begun under the leadership of Fernando to train future preachers.

Nine years ago, the elders of the Lake Harbour Drive church in Ridgeland, MS, assumed the oversight of Mission GTO Mexico and asked their retired preacher, John Pigg, to become Director. Fernando was made assistant Director in GTO. Under their dual leadership, Mission GTO has advanced beyond expectations. During the 23 years of operation there have been 33 churches planted throughout GTO. Over 30 churches of Christ in MS, LA, TX, AR, TN, and AL, as well as many individual Christians, now cooperate with the Lake Harbour Drive church to support 13 Mexican missionaries in 23 mission churches. There have been hundreds of lost souls taught the Gospel of Christ and baptized for the remission of sins. Twelve churches are now self-supporting. One congregation has elders and deacons. Four have their own

buildings with one under construction and paid for by their own money. Most congregations meet in two-story houses with the missionary family living upstairs, and they share the rent and utilities.

Each year John Pigg organizes and makes one-to-two-week mission trips to GTO, often taking preachers from partner congregations to conduct evangelistic



campaigns, training seminars, spiritual workshops, and motivational meetings with all the missionary families. In the last couple of years special events have brought together Christians from all over GTO with as many as nearly 500 in attendance. Three years ago, an annual summer youth camp was started under the direction of Fernando from the San Miguel church and Dustin Abbott from the Lake Harbour Drive church. Over 100 teens from mission churches throughout GTO and beyond have attended all three summers. All the preachers and wives of Mission GTO serve as counselors, Bible teachers, and cooks. This camp is spiritually maturing young people in all the mission churches and preparing them as future leaders.

Les Ferguson, Sr., and I just returned from GTO, working on a two-week mission trip in which 11 were baptized. Les taught a two-day seminar on Christian Evidence, and he and John traveled to several mission churches, teaching and preaching, and strengthening the great host of new converts that have been baptized in 2025.



**“And they that  
be wise shall shine as the  
brightness of the  
firmament; and they that  
turn many to righteousness as  
the stars for ever and ever.”**

*Daniel 12:3*

# GSM Lexington Report

*Note: In the last issue we highlighted Gospel Sharing Ministries, “a ministry designed to help churches learn to approach people with the Gospel.” I was impressed with this program and how they work with congregations. Here is a report on their recent campaign in Lexington, Mississippi. I appreciate them working with this congregation, which has a special place in my heart as I preached for this church in the mid 1970’s.-dd*

**by Bill Hardy, Outreach Campaign Director, Gospel Sharing Ministries**

“The GSM campaign at Lexington, Mississippi, was a tremendous success. This was the first time that we conducted a community outreach campaign in a remote location where a congregation had previously closed its doors, and a larger distant congregation invited GSM to help revitalize it. The Lexington congregation is currently being supported by the Hanging Moss congregation from Jackson, Mississippi, from some sixty-five miles away and under the guidance of Brother Curtis Pittman, Minister of the Church of Christ that meets at Hanging Moss.

Nonetheless, leaders and hard-working, faith-filled members from Hanging Moss journeyed daily to serve in various capacities to support this mission. It was truly remarkable. Only one aged and ailing couple, the McDougald’s, from the original Lexington congregation, still lives in Lexington. Given the fact that our brotherhood has witnessed over 700 congregations close their doors permanently in the past decade, the efforts of the Hanging Moss congregation should be considered a pattern for other larger congregations to redirect their resources and efforts toward domestic mis-

sion fields right here in the United States.

God blessed us to knock over 310 doors and found over 160 people at home. By God’s grace we taught 48 people and eleven of them have obeyed the Gospel so far. We led 59 people in prayer and created 50 opportunities for callbacks to be followed up with. To God be all the glory! Based on these facts, we found someone home at approximately one out of every two doors that we knocked on. One out of every three of the people that we found home allowed us to give them a Gospel presentation and one of every five presentations resulted in a soul deciding to obey the Gospel of Jesus Christ!

We, at GSM, are looking forward to continuing a working partnership with the Hanging Moss congregation in order to help strengthen other congregations in their community outreach efforts to spread the Gospel. We always welcome spiritually-mature members of The Lord’s Church that have a passion for sharing their faith,

who are willing to be trained to follow our simple but highly successful friendship/prayer evangelistic method of

sharing the Gospel, and who love to travel, to come go with us to revitalize other dead or dying congregations. We certainly appreciate your help in sounding the alarm and alerting “evangelistic first responders” to help save lost and dying souls. For so many congregations, the call is desperate. The warning signs are flashing, but the alarm bells from those within are silent and sirens from evangelistic first responders are not being heard. **MM**

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[Gospelsharingministries.com](http://Gospelsharingministries.com)



They conducted a preacher and wives’ personal soul-winning workshop with 45 in attendance. Great plans are being made already for another exciting year in 2026 of spiritual and numerical growth in Mission GTO. A Spanish version of *House to House* is going to be distributed every two months in all the cities where missionaries are located. A benevolent ministry called Buckets of Blessings is being used to create contacts among the poor and to open doors for future home Bible studies. Fernando teaches online Bible classes every Tuesday and Friday nights with over 50 students.

As the Word of God continues to be faithfully planted and watered in the good and honest hearts of the over six million lost souls of Guanajuato, MX, the Lord of harvest continues to give the increase and is glorified. However, the progress of Mission GTO Mexico could not be possible without the generous financial support of many congregations and Christians, and by their joining hands and hearts and prayers to help it move forward. The Lord Jesus Christ is never more pleased than when his church is zealously and urgently carrying out the great commission!

May God grant us all the eagerness and willingness to reach out into the entire world with the Gospel of Christ and the to realize what can be accomplished in foreign mission fields when “we are laborers together with the Lord” (1 Corinthians 3:6; 2 Corinthians 6:1). **MM**

John Pigg <[johnpigg51@yahoo.com](mailto:johnpigg51@yahoo.com)>

# “Living Out of Sight”

by *Tim Hall, minister, Central Church of Christ  
Johnson City, Tennessee,*

Trail cameras have become popular for revealing wildlife that may live closer than we realize. Our son in Colorado has spotted a variety of animals in his yard, especially after dark: mule deer, turkeys, bobcats, racoons, skunks, a mountain lion, and even a bear or two. These were nearby all along, but out of sight before he installed the trail camera.

Researchers from the University of Florida recently placed 39 cameras in 33 different underground locations, in stormwater sewers along the streets of Gainesville. In 60 days they had 3,800 sightings of 35 species of animals. Fifty of those sightings were of alligators, sometimes using the sewers as shortcuts between ponds, and at other times hunting for fish that were trapped in the sewers.

Other animals sighted were bats, armadillos, and 12 species of



Tim Hall

birds. The most frequent visitors, however, were racoons, spotted more than 1,800 times. One researcher said this in the United Press International story: “The abundance of animals down there was surprising.”

It would surprise us even more if we could use cameras

to capture life in the spiritual realm. The spiritual realm? We’re referring now to spirit beings such as angels and demons. While many would laugh at such an outlandish suggestion, the Bible is completely serious when it directs our attention to this realm. It may be out of sight to physical eyes, but there are such beings.

In 2 Kings 6, we read of a time when Elisha and his young servant were staying in a city. The servant awoke to see an enemy army surrounding the city, and cried out in fear. Elisha, however, calmly offered this prayer to God: “O LORD, please open his eyes that he may see.’ So the LORD opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw, and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha” (2 Kings 6:17). Though the young man had not seen them, God’s help was present.

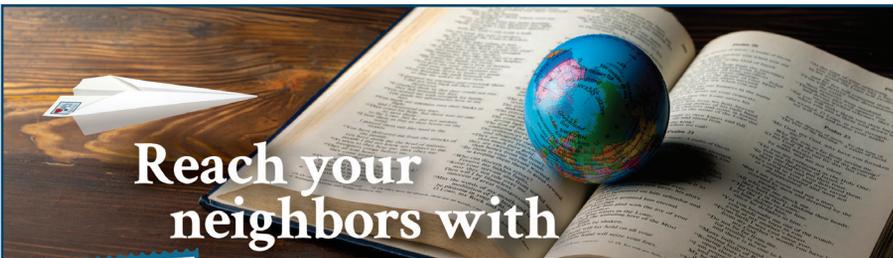
Hebrews 1:14 speaks of angels and their role in our world: “Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?” That tells me that angels are sometimes used by God to assist His people. I am a follower of

Christ, so should I expect angels to be occasionally dispatched to help me? That’s how I understand that passage.

Consider also Hebrews 12:22, where the writer tries to open our eyes to the realities around us: “But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering.” How many angels are there? That passage says they can’t be counted! We don’t see them with our physical eyes, but they are most certainly present.

We live in a material world, but the Bible says we also live in the midst of spiritual beings. Some of them are determined to harm us (see Ephesians 6:10-12), but a great many more are faithful servants of God, and their job is to assist us. Is this not a very encouraging fact to know? **MM**

*“Tim@GraceMine.org”*



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## House to House Heart to Heart

2026 Topics

The back page will feature an intriguing evangelistic article and is the first thing people see when they receive HTH.

<p><b>JANUARY</b> • What If I Am Lost? • Back Page: When Were You Saved?</p> <p><b>FEBRUARY</b> • Three Reasons I Want to Go to Heaven • Back Page: What Happens When We Die?</p> <p><b>MARCH</b> • God’s Invitation to an Honest Conversation • Back Page: The Bible Is the Answer to All of Your Problems</p> <p><b>APRIL</b> • I Want to Look upon His Face • Back Page: Are You Addicted?</p> <p><b>MAY</b> • Does the Bible Authorize Women to Preach Publicly? • Back Page: Are You Looking for a Church? We Are Looking for You</p> <p><b>SPECIAL ISSUE</b> • Is Jesus the Only Way?</p> <p><b>JUNE</b> • Three More Reasons I Want to Go to Heaven • Back Page: Will God Forgive Me? How Do I Forgive Myself?</p>	<p><b>JULY</b> • Do We Have to Join a Denomination? Why the First Century Church Is Better • Back Page: Don’t Join a Denomination</p> <p><b>AUGUST</b> • They Saw Jesus Alive • Back Page: You Can Live Forever</p> <p><b>SEPTEMBER</b> • God’s Secret to a Good Life • Back Page: How Do I Study the Bible?</p> <p><b>OCTOBER</b> • King Jesus’ Kingdom • Back Page: Is the Sinners’ Prayer in Romans 10:9–10?</p> <p><b>NOVEMBER</b> • How Many Churches Did Jesus Build? • Back Page: You Are Worthy</p> <p><b>DECEMBER</b> • Kingdom or Church • Back Page: This Is the Community You Need</p>
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\* The deadline to sign up for each issue is 45 days before. As an example, the deadline for the January issue is November 15.



# Satan & Demonic POSSESSION

by Sam Lawrence, missionary (Australia)

We don't have to look far to see that our culture today has a fascination with the devil and demonic possession. Horror movies and TV shows that depict this sort of thing are a dime a dozen. I myself used to be fascinated with these types of movies and shows. However, does Hollywood accurately portray demonic possession? Does what we see on the big screen actually happen in real life?



Sam Lawrence

Some of these movies claim to be based on a true story after all. To answer these questions, we will ask and address three important questions.

## ■ First, what is demonic possession?

Biblically, demonic possession was when an unclean spirit possessed a person to afflict them in some way. We see several examples of this in the New Testament, and we will look at one example in Matthew 12:22-30. Notice

here, Jesus casts out an unclean spirit in public, and it was witnessed by a multitude. This was not something done in a foreign country or in a dark corner, but right in front of His audience. This was so obvious that even Jesus' enemies couldn't deny it. In verse 24, they said Jesus casts out demons by Beelzebul, but they couldn't deny that He cast out demons. The point is this is in stark contrast to what we see today regarding supposed demonic possession and exorcisms. In this smartphone age we live in, where everything and anything is documented, why isn't there indisputable evidence of this if it still happens today? Just food for thought.

## ■ Second, why did it happen?

A question that is worthy of consideration is why don't we read much, if anything, about demonic possession in the Old Testament? Why does this only seem to be prominent during the times of Jesus and the apostles?

Asking and answering these questions will help us better understand the purpose of demonic possession. In Matthew 12:28-29, we see that Jesus casting out demons was not only proof that He was the Son of God and that He had power over the strong man, that is the devil, but also that the Kingdom of God was among

them. Just as Jesus calmed the wind and the sea in Matthew 8:27, demonstrating His power and authority over nature, so His casting out demons shows His power and authority over the devil and demons. Therefore, we see that demonic possession had served its purpose, that is, to demonstrate that (1) Jesus was the Son of God, (2) He had authority over the strong man, that is, the devil and demons, and (3) that the Kingdom of God had come among them.

## ■ Third, does it happen today?

Demonic possession was a part of the miraculous age and the purpose of miracles was to confirm the message and the messenger (cf. Hebrews 2:3-4). According to the Bible, the miraculous age has ceased. In 1 Corinthians 13:8-13, notice that Paul, speaking about miraculous gifts, said they would cease. He said that they would cease when the perfect or complete came. We then need to ask what is the complete being referred to? It is the complete and perfect revealed will of God (cf. James 1:25). Since the perfect or complete revealed will of God has come, and since the miraculous age was going to cease when that came, we can conclude that demonic possession no longer happens since it belonged to miraculous age. Another passage I recommend you read and consider is Zechariah 13:1-2. Here we see that the unclean spirit would depart from the land when the fountain was opened for sins. That fountain was the blood of Christ. When that fountain was opened, we then see that the unclean spirit was going to be made to depart the land. Therefore, demonic possession was no longer going to be a thing.

## Some concluding thoughts:

Demonic possession may not occur today, but the devil and his angels are still at work in the world (1 Peter 5:8, 1 Timothy 4:1). Our defense and armor against them is not miraculous but spiritual (Ephesians 6:10-18). We need to make sure that we are not led away by Hollywood or other sources, but that we check all things with God's word (1 Thessalonians 5:21, Acts 17:11). **MM**

*(I first met Sam at the Southeast School of Preaching in Knoxville. He is from Kosciusko, Mississippi, but wanted to go with some classmates to Australia when they graduated. This young man is now working for the church in that great country. I appreciate Sam's writing on this interesting article. - dd)*

# Shadow-Gifting

by *Cindy Dixon, Ph.D., M.A., M.A.*  
Northport, Alabama

Recently, I took a picture of my shadow as I watched the wind blow my loose clothing across my elongated frame. It made me pause and reflect on the significance of shadows. Shadows exist only because of light. In the beginning, God created light, and although I had never considered it, God also created shadows. Shadows cannot be touched, yet they exist. In many ways,



Cindy Dixon

shadows are proof of God's existence, His might, and His love. We cannot "touch" God, but we see signs of His presence—like the shadow.

Shadows silently move and change with the sun's position. They

are not definite or detailed, yet they are visible. Shadows offer respite on a hot day. A shadow is a great gift.

The creature is not greater than the Creator, and neither is a shadow greater than its source. Shadows are silent, yet they serve as a witness that light exists. As I focused on my shadow lengthening in the sunlight and reacting to the wind, I began to think of myself as its source—one who is created in the image of God. I thought of my purpose. Why do I exist? Do I cast a shadow that helps others? Am I a testimony of the light that should shine within me as a child of God? Do I reflect His love?

As time passed, I began to reflect on James 1:17: "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change." I thought back to my childhood when I entertained myself by chasing my shadow and trying to catch it in my hands. Such foolishness then, yet today, many of us

continue chasing shadows—ephemeral aspirations, material goods, and vain glory. We turn our backs on the source of light and look down on our dimensionless forms as if the shadow were a lasting entity.

Yes, shadows are temporary, yet they represent what they reflect, and the object remains physically solid. We who are children of God must remain solid as we bask in His light—but that is not enough. Just as God has given us every perfect gift, we must share His gifts. There can be no selfishness while being God's child. There can be no selfishness and cast a Godly shadow, because to do so would be in vain, just as my shadow chasing was as a child.

Giving of our means is commanded by God (1 Corinthians 16:1–4; 2 Corinthians 9:7), and many of us remember the significance of the widow who gave all she had (Luke 21:4). Her act was selfless and continues to be an example to us today. This widow cast a different type of shadow—one that all Christians should aspire to create: a Godly, lasting shadow that impacts others in the present and the future. Yes, shadows are temporary, but Christians can cast a shadow that reflects God's bounty. I call it "shadow-gifting."

Shadow-gifting is often small, but it can be large. Just as shadows are silent, the giver gives with no intent of recognition. Ephesians 5:1 commands us to "be imitators of God," and by doing so, we become His shadows as we reflect His light. Our shadow-gifting originates not from ourselves but from God's own goodness. When His light shines through our lives, it creates a shadow of His love and grace—a shadow that can be cast around the world.

When we pray for our brothers and sisters in other countries, for missionaries on foreign soil, for the sick, and for those in need, we are shadow-gifting.

Shadow-gifting takes many forms. It

could be listening to someone in crisis, comforting someone who has suffered loss, or holding the hand of someone who has received bad news. The gift may have only a momentary impact, or it may offer a long-lasting solution. While the giver displays God's goodness, the giver becomes God's shadow-emissary. Shadow-gifting is not like the Pharisees, who prayed to be seen by others. It is, instead, a way to give hope to others and glory to God.

Shadow-gifting may take a monetary form. Just as the Earth tilts away from the sun and the hours of visible sunlight change with the seasons, so too can our abilities to shadow-gift change. When we shadow-gift, we reflect the light that is greater than ourselves. We must be content with being flexible in our abilities and availability.

Couples whose children are independent often have more time to spend on personal enjoyment. This is also a time when a shadow-gifter can be more available to help others, spend time with those in need, and focus on God's purpose for His reflections. Those with small children or caring for infirm loved ones can still be shadow-gifters, though perhaps not to the same extent as before.

A shadow offers shade on a hot day, giving relief. Congregations around the world benefit from the generosity of shadow-gifters. I have been on mission trips to Tanzania, Africa, four times, and without the generous giving of others, it would have been difficult to go. God has blessed me with good health, and I am fortunate to serve others in Africa. I have met many missionaries who go to other countries to teach the lost. To be able to do this is a blessing to both the shadow-gifter and the recipient. Because this is done openly and with many people's knowledge, it is even more important that God receives the glory

from a  
**Woman's**  
**VIEWPOINT**

*"In Memory of Miss June"*

as we act as His shadows.

Another way to shadow-gift is by caring for widows and orphans (James 1:27). By doing so, we practice pure, undefiled religion. When congregations give to meet the needs of widows and orphans, the members are shadow-gifting through the church. If your congregation does not assist widows and orphans, you can still do so individually. The first step is to ask your local child protective services how you can help. Another way is to give to church relief efforts that feed children abroad.

The point of shadow-gifting is to glorify God and cast a long shadow that helps others. Others do not have to see your good works—they can be done privately. Just as the sun is sometimes hidden by clouds or rain, we all experience times when it is more difficult to shadow-gift. However, opportunities will come again. Galatians 6:9 reminds us not to grow weary in doing good.

Ultimately, giving begins and ends with God's presence. Psalm 91:1 says, "He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty." To give to others is to live within our Father's radiance—and it gives a glimpse of the Light that never fades. **MM**

*Cindy Dixon <ntjude2@gmail.com>  
 Cindy is the wife of Greg Dixon who is an elder of the Northport church of Christ. Both are very dedicated to the mission work in Tanzania, East Africa. They oversee God is Good Missions (GIGM) where they provide for the monthly needs of over 70 children. Cindy loves doing Ladies' Days, and she speaks nationally to women education groups.*

# The TRUE meaning of FORGIVENESS

by *Maci Hinson, Student  
 Kosciusko, MS*

Forgiveness can be defined as "the action or process of forgiving or being forgiven."

This is a general definition, and I'm sure you have forgiven people many times. However, there is an eternal forgiveness that is freely



**Maci Hinson**

given through Jesus Christ, the Son of God. This forgiveness had to come with a price, though, leading to Jesus' death and resurrection. Through His sacrifice we can come to the Father

and be seen as precious and pure. Before Jesus Christ came, though, many people came before Him. How were they forgiven? How do we know we have forgiveness through Christ? How does this forgiveness differ from simple forgiveness?

In the Old Testament, whenever someone sinned, a sacrifice had to be given to God for them to be forgiven. Lambs, other animals, and animal fat were used as sacrifices to please God after someone sinned. Ultimately, blood had to be shed. As you can imagine, sacrifices were a daily necessity since people were sinning every day. Were these people meant to sacrifice animals forever? Well, no, God had promised to send a Savior who would be the perfect sacrifice for all people. "But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons." (Galatians 4:4-5). God wants to have a relationship with His people, but God can never accept sin, so we needed a perfect Lamb to be the perfect sacrifice so that we might be forgiven from the deathly consequences of sin.

We know we have forgiveness through Christ because we have Biblical confirmation! In Matthew 26:28, Jesus says, "for this

is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."

In this passage, the Last Supper takes place, which is when Jesus Himself foretells His death to the Disciples. Jesus Himself tells us in this passage that He died for us so that we may be forgiven! "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9). When we realize we are sinners in need of a Savior, God is waiting with open arms to accept us into His eternal Kingdom.

This forgiveness is different from any other forgiveness, but how so? Well, I'm sure you have forgiven someone when they've wronged you before, but the difference in forgiveness and this forgiveness from God is that we are fully undeserving of God's forgiveness. There is nothing we did to deserve God's forgiveness, yet He so graciously gives it to us through Jesus Christ. God loves us so much that He sent His only Son to take on all of our sins so that we can be forgiven. That is TRUE forgiveness!

So, what are we to do with this information? Knowing this good news, we should accept Jesus Christ as our Savior and acknowledge that through Him, we have TRUE forgiveness! Not only should we accept it as truth, but we should share this good news with everyone! One last thing we should do is forgive others the way Christ graciously forgives us. In Matthew 18:22, Jesus says to forgive our brothers "seventy-seven times". Jesus means that we should always forgive people without counting. We should never not forgive people, because we do not deserve the gracious forgiveness of God. Therefore, we should accept, share, and reflect the TRUE meaning of forgiveness. **MM**

*(Maci is the 15-year-old granddaughter of Steven Franks in Kosciusko. She has written a wonderful article as a school paper, and we are happy to share it. Thank you, Maci, you are a good writer! -dd)*

# To know Him, meant what to Paul?

## "I want to know Christ

—yes, to know the **power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings**, becoming like him in his **death**, and so, somehow, **attaining to the resurrection** from the dead. Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but **I press on** to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: **Forgetting** what is behind and **straining toward** what is ahead, I **press on** toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.."

*Philippians 3:10-14 (NIV)*

## Meigg Street Church of Christ's New Minister

Bradley C. Pettis is the new minister for the Meigg Street church in Corinth, Mississippi. A native of Memphis, TN. Brother Pettis is a graduate of Rust College (2003). After graduating from Rust College, he eventually attained his first Master's degree in Ministerial Leadership from Amridge University in Montgomery, AL (2012). In 2017, he attained his second Master's degree in Educational Leadership from Grand Canyon University in Phoenix, AZ. Bro. Pettis is currently in his 22nd year as a classroom teacher, and he works for the Memphis-Shelby County Schools system in Memphis, TN. His wife, Stacey, is also an educator. They are immensely enthusiastic about the opportunity to serve the Lord and the members of the Meigg St. Church of Christ. The service times are Sunday School every Sunday at 9:30 am, worship and praise every Sunday at 10:30 am, and Bro. Pettis teaches a Tuesday evening Bible Study from 7:30 pm until 8:00 pm via Facebook at MeiggStCoc.



# Dennis Doughty "INSCRIPTIONS"

## Atonement

Jesus came to this earth, "born of a woman" (Galatians 4:4). But why did the "Word become flesh" (John 1:14) and live among us? God must have had a reason to give up "His only begotten Son" (John 3:16). The reason was that man had sinned.

This sin had offended God, and justice was required to reverse the consequences of the sin. When the angels sinned, they were cast into eternal darkness (Jude 6). But God "so loved" us that a plan was made to save us: Atonement. This plan was carried out in stages as the prophets pondered and the angels watched from above (1 Peter 1:10-12). The Law of Moses put sin on full display. It defined sin and urged the restraint of sin, but its sacrifices could not forgive sin (Hebrews 10:4). So, for a time, God, in His lovingkindness, passed over these sins (Romans 3:25).

But in "the fullness of time," God gave us His Son, and His Son willingly left Heaven and came to earth. He died on the cross and made an atonement for the sins of the world, "A propitiation in His blood through faith" (Romans 3:25). God accepted the offering as being fully adequate to satisfy all the demands of His justice and then raised His Son from the dead to glory. Sin, the most significant problem mankind had faced, had found atonement.

## Resurrection and Communion

As we partake of the Lord's Supper and remember His sufferings on the cross, let us not forget His resurrection. Jesus spoke of these events in this way, "the Son of Man will be delivered to the chief priests and scribes," he said, "they will condemn Him and will hand Him over to the Gentiles. They will mock Him and spit on Him, and scourge Him and Kill Him, and three days later He will rise again" (Mark 10:33,34). Anytime Jesus spoke of His death, He often included His resurrection (see also Matthew 20:19, Luke 18:33).

Jesus' death would lack its great benefit to us if our sins were forgiven in this life, but nothing more. It is because of His resurrection that we return each Lord's Day to break the bread and drink the cup, for, "If Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless" (1 Corinthians 15:17).

When the angels spoke to the women at the grave, they reminded them that Jesus said He would "be crucified, and the third day rise again. And they remembered His words" (Luke 24:7-8). Around the Lord's table we need to remember His words as well. We remember His death, as Paul said, "until He comes." He is returning because He is alive, He overcame death for us by His own resurrection. Each Lord's Day as we gather to remember the cross, let us not forget the empty tomb.

-Dennis Doughty

# “ON THE ROAD” with the Editor

## Freed-Hardeman University

I enjoyed a beautiful fall afternoon on campus at Freed-Hardeman University in Henderson, Tennessee. Doug Burleson, director of the Bible lectureship, invited me to lunch with him and Dr. Rodgers, the head of the Bible department.

I have worked with brother Doug over the years, running ads for the well-known Bible lectureship and arranging our yearly Magnolia Messenger luncheons. I appreciate the excellent job he does in directing the lectureship program.

It was good to meet Dr. Justin Rodgers and to get a tour of some of the exciting things going on at the University. I attended Chapel in the updated Auditorium, which still has some construction underway. Afterwards, we visited the improved library building. I especially enjoyed the remarkable collection of manuscripts, scrolls, and ancient Bible translations there. The first floor serves as a nice student center, which was in full use by the students.

We had lunch together in the new lunchroom. I was impressed by the great layout and improvements over the old facility. They now have Chick-fil-A in the cafeteria, which is a favorite of the students.

I left feeling optimistic about my old school and its Bible department. They currently have 138 Bible majors and seventy-nine men enrolled in their graduate program. The refurbished campus has created a beautiful and practical university setting, and it remains an excellent place for young men who want to preach.



### Freed-Hardeman University Announces a New President

Henderson, Tennessee — (Oct. 31, 2025) — Following an extensive search, the Freed-Hardeman University Board of Trustees has chosen Dr. Keith Harris, of Lewisville, Texas, as the next president of FHU. Harris will succeed David R. Shannon when he steps down in 2026. Shannon has served in this position since 2017.



A handwritten Torah scroll



Lloyd Auditorium still has some construction underway

### Ripley, MS Visit

I was invited to visit with the Ripley congregation on a recent Wednesday night. They have a beautiful new fellowship hall and youth room that they make good use of, serving a meal every Wednesday night before their Bible study hour. This congregation, one of the oldest in the state, is a long-time supporter of the *Magnolia Messenger*. It was good to report on the growth and progress the magazine has experienced in recent years, and to hear from many faithful readers.

My thanks to Donnie DeBord, their minister, and David Cook, one of their elders, for the invitation to come and update the congregation on the great work *The Messenger* is doing across our brotherhood. -dd



Ripley's new Fellowship Hall.

### Brookhaven, MS Visit

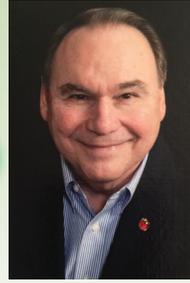
My wife and I took a few days off and attended the Fall Festival in Brookhaven, Mississippi. Brookhaven is a wonderful town in southern Mississippi, boasting a beautiful main street. That Lord's Day we attended the Mt. Zion church and met their new Preacher and

his family. Zach Fleming had been serving as the youth minister for a nearby congregation before being asked to become the full-time minister at Mt. Zion earlier in the year. **MM**



Zach and Abbey Fleming with their three children, Maddie, Gabby and Ford.

# Visiting among CHURCHES in north Mississippi



Sunday afternoon we meet with the elders of the Siwell Road church of Christ in Jackson. They have supported the work at the CSC for many years. Corey Ramsey gave a report to the elders about the work at the student center last year. We appreciate so much their love and support of the CSC.

**August 31:** I was invited to preach at the Central Academy church of Christ near Batesville, Mississippi. They continue to search for a full-time minister. The congregation has around 8 in attendance. Two students from the MSOP come each week to preach for them on Sunday morning. I go once a month to preach and encourage them and give the students a break. It's always good to see the folks there. They are wanting to keep the doors of the church open if they can.. Please pray for them.

**September 7:** Madolyn and I visited with the Houston church of Christ. Willie Hamblen is the minister there. He and Betty have worked with the congregation for over three years. The congregation has no elders and around 60 in attendance. The congregation was called the South Jackson church of Christ, but when the North Jackson church closed, there was some confusion about the name between the two remaining churches: South Side and South Jackson. South Jackson chose their historic name, Houston church of Christ. We enjoyed meeting Willie and Betty and the congregation. We got to eat lunch with the Hamblen's and learn about them. The congregation has a good cross section of ages. They are trying to reach out into the community. We hope you will be praying for them. Willie's lesson in Bible Class was on chapter one of 1 Corinthians. His sermon was "Unlikely Searcher/Reluctant Teacher" based on Acts 10. Both were good lessons.

**September 14:** Madolyn and I visited with the Prattville church of Christ in Prattville, Alabama.

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

## August through October 2025

by Eddie Lewis

We appreciate so much the opportunity to inform you about our mission work among the churches in North Mississippi and the ministry at the Christian Student Center at Mississippi Delta Community College in Moorhead, Mississippi. We appreciate the Germantown church of Christ sponsoring us in our North Mississippi ministry. Several churches and individuals support the work at the CSC. This report covers the months of May through July 2025.

**August 3:** Madolyn and I went to Nashville for a gender revile party for my grandson and his wife, Nolan and Talley Week. The baby is due in January 2026. I am happy to report that they will be having a boy. This is my first great grandson. Sunday, we visited with the Brentwood Hills church of Christ. Walt Leaver has been their minister for 30 years. He is retiring and they are looking for a pulpit minister. We enjoyed our visit with the family and church.

**August 10:** Madolyn and I were visiting Madolyn's granddaughter and her family in Andover, Kansas. Sunday, we attended the East Point church of Christ. Michael Jones is the minister there. They have 10 elders and over 400 in attendance. They have many youth activities and mission works. They were celebrating Mission Sunday. I understand this is a monthly event since they support several mission works. This Sunday they were talking about their children's home in Africa. One of their deacons spoke, Rion Curtis, about "Why Good People Suffer." The church is very friendly, and we enjoyed our visit with the brethren there.

**August 17:** Madolyn and I attended Mission Sunday at Germantown church of Christ. It was

wonderful getting to visit with our church family. We heard reports from all the mission works supported by the Germantown church. Video reports were given by the Maliuga's on their work in Ukraine, and the Zike's on their work in Greece. Corey Ramsey gave his report on the work at the CSC this past year. Leslie Williams preached in the morning worship service. In the evening worship service, I gave a report about our work in north Mississippi and Dave Phillips and Sundar Maddala talked about their plans for their work in India and their upcoming trip in February 2026. It was a blessed day.

**August 24:** Madolyn and I visited with the Oak Grove church of Christ in Harmontown, Mississippi. Stefin Dickerson is the bi-vocational minister there. The church has shown some remarkable growth over the last couple of years. They have no elders but have grown from 20 in attendance to over 50. The congregation is very diverse with several young couples and young single

adults. The worship service was special with different men from the congregation leading songs and prayers. Some read scriptures and three men gave short lessons. Stefin ended the service with a short lesson about the importance of baptism. That afternoon four people were baptized in one of the brethren's swimming pools. It was a special day.



Mary Helen and Stefin Dickerson



Betty and Willie Hamblen

Brent Missildine is the minister there. They are supporters of the ministry at the CSC and we were visiting with them so that Corey Ramsey could meet them and give a report about the work at the CSC this past year. It was good to see some old friends and enjoy a time of worship with them.

**September 21:** Madolyn and I were on vacation in Sandestin, Florida. We visited with the South Walton church of Christ in Santa Rosa, Florida. The speaker that Sunday was Stephen Ledford, one of six men who rotate speaking for the congregation. Stephen is the CEO of a Tech company locally. They had around 70 in attendance that day.

They have a core group of 40 members that keeps the congregation going. Stephen's lesson was, "Be Not Deceived" based on Colossians 2. He did a great job. We enjoyed our visit with the welcoming brethren there.



Janet and Stephen Ledford

**October 5:** I was invited to preach for the Cleveland church of Christ. Tim McCarter is the long-time preacher there. They have no elders and around 30 in attendance. It was good to see some old friends and get to visit. We appreciate Charlie and Frances Garner taking us out for lunch and visiting. Corey, Mary Ashley, and the kids came over to Cleveland to visit with us and support our ministry there. I talked about Prayer, Jesus and his obedience, and Christian Love. It was a good day, and we enjoyed seeing everyone.

**October 11:** Saturday, morning I conducted the graveside funeral for Moses Vernon, a former member at Cleveland and Germantown. I have known Moses for several years and when he found out he was losing his battle with cancer he asked me to do his funeral. It was an honor for me to remember my old friend. Saturday afternoon, Nolan and Talley had a baby shower at his parent's home. Several ladies from our family, our church family, and the community attended. We are thankful for such a

wonderful show of support for our family.

**October 19:** Madolyn and I attended a family wedding at Amelia Island, Florida. We attended worship services at the Fernandina Beach church of Christ in Fernandina Beach, Florida. The minister there is Bryan Jarvis. He has an interesting story about his conversion to Christ. The church has two elders and about 100 in attendance.



Madolyn and I with Bryan Jarvis

They have all ages that attend and we enjoyed meeting the brethren there. One of the elders, John Wright, is the former minister there and was at Harding University the same years I was there. Bryan's lesson was "Insurmountable Opportunities" taken from Romans 8:28. It was a very good positive lesson about facing trials in our lives.

**Update CSC:** The CSC began its Wednesday Night Bible Studies on August 20th. They have been averaging around 29 each night this semester. The theme for the semester is "Miraculous." They are using Jesus' miracles as a



WNBS



Football coaches dinner

guidepost to the ministry of Jesus. On August 26, they hosted a dinner for the Football coaches. They had a good response from them about Corey having some devotionals with the team. You may have noticed in the news that one of the football players died after a football game with Hinds Community College. The college has called on Corey and other counselors on campus to counsel with the players and other students as they deal with this tragedy. Please remember the college and the CSC in your prayers.

They hosted a second Coach Strategy Dinner for the softball, baseball, and men and women's basketball coaches and assistant coaches. It was a wonderful evening, full of productive conversation and connections. Almost all the coaches are new this year, so the coach dinners were an essential event as most of our students are athletes. Coach support goes a very long way towards Bible study attendance.

They visited and presented at two of our donor congregations September, specifically the Prattville and Indianola churches of Christ. Corey also preached his first ever sermon at Indianola. On top of everything else, Corey has started teaching his course at the Greenville campus of MDCC, providing a meaningful opportunity to build relationships with high school students before they become MDCC college students and solidifying his reputation on campus. We have several exciting new projects in the works, especially a couple of things geared towards the young ladies who attend our studies. As we move into the heart of the fall semester, please be praying for us to continue to deepen our relationships with the students and to maximize the time we get with these young adults. If this semester has taught us anything, it's that you never know how much time you're going to get. Thank you so much for your continued support. **MM**

# ANCHORED

## IN A

# Drifting World

Youth & Family

By Greg Ledbetter

The tide is stronger than ever with our young people. Every generation faces its own cultural storm, but this one feels different. Our young people are growing up in a world where truth is treated as optional, morality is mocked, and our feelings are exalted above faith. The digital world has given them unlimited access to information and, in most cases, no anchor for truth.

Studies show that the average teenager now spends more time looking at a screen than sleeping. Social media has become their classroom, influencers are their teachers, and algorithms are their ministers. The world is shaping its hearts faster than most churches are reaching its ears.

And yet, God's Word still stands as steady as ever. "Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle." (2 Thessalonians 2:15). The world may drift, but young people, you do not have to.



Greg Ledbetter

There is a massive battle for identity. The most pressing question in this generation is not "What do I believe?" but "Who am I?" The world answers with differing ideas: "You do you." "Follow your heart." "Be whoever you feel like today." But Scripture answers clearly and lovingly: "So God created man in His own image" (Genesis 1:27). That truth alone gives meaning, dignity, and stability.

When you don't know who you are, you will believe anything anyone tells you. We must be careful because culture is more than willing to define them. They do it by appearance, achievements, or social status. We as the church must speak louder than culture, reminding every teen and young adult that they are more than their reflection or reputation. They are image-bearers of a holy God, chosen and beloved (1 Peter 2:9). Identity grounded in Christ does not waver when opinions change. It stands firm because it is anchored in eternity.

We live in an age where silence has become awkward. If there is a spare minute, the phone comes out. If you do not believe me, teach your teen class one Sunday and end a few minutes early. The constant notifications, the endless scrolling, and digital noise have made reflection time almost impossible. We know that distraction is one of the devil's most effective weapons. If he cannot make a young person wicked, he will make them too busy to notice God.

Psalms 46:10 still calls out to this generation: "Be still, and know that I am God." Stillness is not weakness; it is strength. Young people,

you are desperate for peace, but you are looking in the wrong places. True rest does not come from escape, but from the presence of God. If you never learn to sit with Scripture, you will never stand against temptation.

The problem is we have tried to make Christianity comfortable, and it has cost us conviction. Our faith has become casual, and our attendance is optional. We have raised a generation that wants to be liked by the world rather than stand apart from it. But biblical faith has always required courage.

Daniel was a teenager when he "purposed in his heart" not to defile himself (Daniel 1:8).

David was a youth when he faced Goliath, not with confidence in himself, but in God. Timothy was young when Paul told him, "Let no one despise your youth, but be an example" (1 Timothy 4:12). We don't need a generation that just goes to church; we need one that is the church. One that knows what it believes, why it believes it, and who it serves. Conviction is created in Scripture and strengthened by mentors who walk the same narrow path.

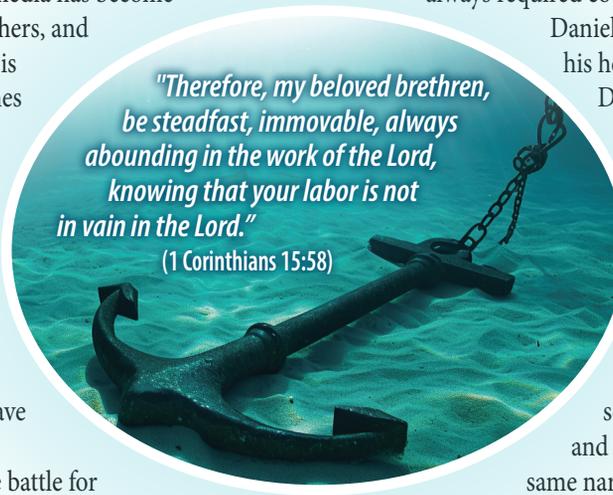
If we lose the next generation, it will not be because the Bible failed. It will be our fault because we failed to pass it down. The early church grew because every believer had a purpose. We must return to that pattern. We must give our young people meaningful roles. Let them serve, teach, lead, and participate. Let them see that the church is not a spectator event but a living body that needs every part (1 Corinthians 12:12-27). When older Christians live out their faith with joy, it gives young believers something real to imitate. The apostle Paul said, "Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ" (1 Corinthians 11:1). The church needs more men and women who can say the same.

It is easy to look at the state of the world with despair. But there are still teenagers reading their Bibles on buses. Still young adults standing for truth in classrooms. There are still youth groups serving their communities in quiet, powerful ways. Every significant change in history began when a few young hearts caught fire for God. It can happen again. We cannot reach this generation by lowering the standard. We reach them by lifting Christ higher (John 12:32).

The tide of culture may be strong, but the truth of Christ stands stronger. Let us not lose heart. Let us lead with heart. Let us raise a generation that does not drift with the current but stands anchored in the Word.

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." (1 Corinthians 15:58) **MM**

*"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."*  
(1 Corinthians 15:58)



# The MAGNOLIA MESSENGERS / PREACHER SEARCH

## ■ AIRPORT ROAD CHURCH OF CHRIST

Full-Time Youth & Family/Associate Minister - The Airport Road Church of Christ in Crestview, FL, is seeking a faithful brother to work in the capacity of Associate Minister with a special focus on our youth and their families. Applicants should email a cover letter, resume, list of recent references, and video/audio links of recent sermons or classes to: [am-search@airportrdcoc.org](mailto:am-search@airportrdcoc.org), or mail to Airport Rd. Church of Christ, 2845 Airport Rd, Crestview, FL 32539. For further information call (850) 682-4025 or email [randy@airportrdcoc.org](mailto:randy@airportrdcoc.org) OR [mark@airportrdcoc.org](mailto:mark@airportrdcoc.org)

## ■ OWINGSVILLE CHURCH OF CHRIST

The Owingsville Church is searching for a preacher. We have three elders. Our average attendance was 53 in 2024. We enjoy the spirit of unity and peace as we serve God in Bath County Kentucky. Please send a resume and videotape containing two sermons (or link) to Owingsville Church of Christ, PO Box 661, Owingsville, KY 40360. Contacts: Alton Norman 606-261-9263 [Arnorman64@gmail.com](mailto:Arnorman64@gmail.com)

## ■ EAST MAIN IN TUPELO MS

They are looking for a minister. He suggested: "Tupelo, MS, "The All-American City" - The East Main congregation averages around 130 people. We have 4 elders and 7 deacons. We support many various mission works. Ideally, the candidate will have a passion for youth and young adult outreach, with a strong desire to help grow and strengthen these vital areas of our congregation."

## ■ THE RUSTON CHURCH OF CHRIST

Associate Minister & Youth/College Minister Search (located 5 minutes from Louisiana Tech & 10 minutes from Grambling) is a vibrant congregation in North Central Louisiana with an average attendance of 130-160. Our mission is to preach the Word of God and help the Church grow throughout our area. We seek a passionate and energetic married individual to serve as our Associate Minister, with a primary focus on youth and college ministry. We offer a competitive salary and housing allowance, commensurate with experience. To apply, please submit your resume, cover letter, and references to [Rustonchurchofchrist@gmail.com](mailto:Rustonchurchofchrist@gmail.com).

## ■ POOLE CHURCH OF CHRIST

Is Searching for a Full-time Pulpit Minister. We are in north-western Kentucky in a small town but near larger urban areas for entertainment, dining, medical... etc. We are a very friendly and active congregation that is doing evangelism in the community and want to find a preacher who is also evangelistic and wants to be out in the neighborhood ready to spread His Word. We consider ourselves to be patterned after the church in the 1st century, but also use newer technology to study and spread the Gospel. We utilize house-to-house publications, have a weekly radio program. • 2 Elders • 2 Deacons • 35 members • Very comfortable Parsonage • Salary very competitive For more information Contact: Tim Cottingham, Elder [drtlc@bellsouth.net](mailto:drtlc@bellsouth.net) 812-431-2773 Greg Hobgood, Elder [ghobgood63@gmail.com](mailto:ghobgood63@gmail.com) 270-213-0099

## ■ MUNFORD CHURCH OF CHRIST

We are looking for a well-grounded, full-time pulpit preacher. Ideal, but not necessary: middle-aged married, energetic man wanting to spread the gospel in a small growing town in west Tennessee. We have about 75 good active members with 2 elders and 3 deacons. Salary is open to experience. Please send resume to Att. Elders, Munford Church of Christ, 435 S. Tipton Street, Munford, TN 38058, or e-mail to [rahwoodshoe@gmail.com](mailto:rahwoodshoe@gmail.com) or call: Bob Holland 901-331-2346

## ■ NEW HOPE ROAD CHURCH OF CHRIST

in Hendersonville, TN (suburb of Nashville), is in search of a full-time Minister. Our current minister will move to an associate's role. Our church size is approximately 60 to 75 members and an eldership is in place. Dedicated office hours are not required. This is a salaried position in mid \$50K range. Interested parties contact Brian at [carricobc@hotmail.com](mailto:carricobc@hotmail.com)

## ■ ROCKY CREEK CHURCH OF CHRIST

Youth Minister Search. Contact: Rocky creek church of Christ in George County. Stan James Email: [Stanjames-4him@gmail.com](mailto:Stanjames-4him@gmail.com)

## ■ GEORGETOWN (SC) CHURCH OF CHRIST

seeking experienced minister. 100-member congregation with elders. Send resume with references, including training with recent video sermons, by email or mail to Preacher Search Committee, Georgetown church of Christ, P.O. Box 250, Georgetown, SC 29442 Email: [Georgetown-CofCSearch@gmail.com](mailto:Georgetown-CofCSearch@gmail.com)

## ■ New life Behavioral instructional materials

"New Life Behavior" English Language curriculum is available to a congregation considering using this evangelistic material. NLB courses consist of 13 lessons and we have all 13 lessons. The lessons approximately 144 letter-size pages in length. Contact the University Church of Christ in Montgomery, Alabama at 334-386-7320 and it will be shipped to you at no cost."

## ■ CENTERVILLE CHURCH OF CHRIST

a small church in the middle of Alabama needs a working preacher to help grow a congregation now consisting of mostly of older Christians. Please send a short resume to the church at 824 Montevallo Road, Centreville, AL. 35042.

## ■ THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

In New Jersey is actively seeking a full-time minister. Approximately 125 diverse members led by elders and deacons. The primary responsibilities include preaching, teaching class, evangelizing in the community, and ministering to the family. The compensation includes housing. [tcocpreacher-search@gmail.com](mailto:tcocpreacher-search@gmail.com).

## ■ THE CHRISTOPHER CHURCH OF CHRIST

Is seeking a minister for a congregation of about 33 members, located in southern Illinois. Salary is \$36,000 per year. Please send resume to [jurbanmail@gmail.com](mailto:jurbanmail@gmail.com) or call George Marshall at (618) 218-1401.

## ■ CLARKE COUNTY CHURCH OF CHRIST

is seeking a minister in Athens, located 70 miles from Atlanta. For more information, visit [clarkecountycoc.org](http://clarkecountycoc.org).

## ■ NETTLETON CHURCH OF CHRIST

The Nettleton Church of Christ, located in Nettleton Ms, is seeking a new full time minister with a strong faith, who is doctrinally sound. We have around 30 members in attendance and a house is provided. Please contact Billy Pender @ 662-963-3695, Stephen Lochridge @ 662-963-3217 or Wade Williams @ 662-315-3418 or email [Rwwilliz2@me.com](mailto:Rwwilliz2@me.com)

## ■ THE EUPORA CHURCH OF CHRIST

Eupora, MS, is looking for a full-time preacher. We have approximately 42-51 that attend. We have a preacher's home. [huntpe@yahoo.com](mailto:huntpe@yahoo.com) or text/call Paul Hunt 662-634-1651. However, I do prefer text messages.

## ■ HOUSE of COMPASSION

The Hands of Compassion ministry in Rochester MN, is seeking Hospitality House Parents to support our guests that are visiting Mayo Clinic for medical care. We are looking for compassionate Christians who feel called to serve our house guests during their visits. Our ministry is expanding and we need you! If interested, please visit our website, email us or call our chaplain Phillip Quelle. We would love to hear from you! [www.hocrochester.com](http://www.hocrochester.com) [hocministry@gmail.com](mailto:hocministry@gmail.com) Chaplain # 507-216-8993

## ■ OXON HILL CHURCH OF CHRIST

is searching for a full-time minister. We have 50+ members. The position requires someone who is sound in biblical knowledge and has excellent communication and writing skills. Contact: [1oxonhillcoc@gmail.com](mailto:1oxonhillcoc@gmail.com), or mail to Oxon Hill Church of Christ at 4201 Brinkley Road, Temple Hills, MD 20748.

## ■ ACADIANA CHURCH OF CHRIST

Looking for a part-time preacher in Lafayette, LA. We are a congregation of around 50 members. If you are interested, contact us at [office@acadiana.church](mailto:office@acadiana.church). Roger G McCafferty Email: [grmccaf@cox.net](mailto:grmccaf@cox.net)

## ■ MANKATO CHURCH OF CHRIST

is seeking mission-minded Christians in Minnesota. At this time, we are seeking part-time preachers, teachers, and general volunteers as we work to build a vocational ministry, starting with the focus in the city of Mankato, MN. Mankato church of Christ <[mankatochurchofchrist@gmail.com](mailto:mankatochurchofchrist@gmail.com)>

## ■ THE CORNERSTONE CHURCH OF CHRIST

in Baton Rouge, LA, is looking to grow its Youth Ministry. If you are humble, spiritual, and scriptural, we may be a good fit. Please contact George Myer 225-229-5830

## ■ MERIDIAN CHURCH OF CHRIST

The Meridian church of Christ, located in Meridian, MS, is in search of a full-time minister. E-mail Andy Duncan (Elder), [hadunca62@gmail.com](mailto:hadunca62@gmail.com) Tom Fair(Elder), [htfair1@gmail.com](mailto:htfair1@gmail.com)

## ■ CHURCH OF CHRIST McKEESPORT, PA

We are searching for a minister. One who is willing to work with a congregation of mostly older brothers and sisters in Christ. We have on average about 35 to 40 attendance Sunday morning, about 10 to 15 Sunday evening and Wednesday evening. We have a 4 bedroom house right at the building that we pay for the main utilities. If interested contact Arnold Winter 412-225-5441

## ■ HAPPY HAVEN CHILDREN'S HOME

has immediate openings for: HOUSE PARENTS (wife is the salaried employee, with housing, utilities, van, & other benefits provided; the husband is free to find employment or to preach locally). Happy Haven exists to help young ladies in need of residential child care and is sponsored by churches of Christ & other interested individuals. Please print off applications, fill out and return: <http://www.happyhaven.org/documents/EmploymentApplication.pdf>.

## ■ HILLCREST CHURCH OF CHRIST

Hillcrest church of Christ in Baldwin, MS is seeking a full-time preacher, who is doctrinally sound. Please send a resume to: Hillcrest Church of Christ-956 South Second Street-Baldwin, MS 38824 Office: 931-526-2052 Fax: 931-372-8837 [happyhaven@frontiernet.net](mailto:happyhaven@frontiernet.net). Houston Bynum, Administrator.

## ■ GOODWILL CHURCH OF CHRIST

Seeking a full-time minister for a congregation of 45 plus members serving West Carroll Parish, Louisiana. We have a parsonage next to the church building. Please contact Fred Nerio @ 318-282-6377 or Lloyd Swain @ 318-355-4089. Resumes to Lloyd Swain 10890 Nolan Road Oak Ridge, LA 71264

*455 sent in answers to  
The Question Box. (see page 31).  
Is your name there?*

## NOTICE

### NEW PREACHER SEARCH FORMAT

**CHURCH NAME:** Main Street Church of Christ  
**LOCATION:** City, State **CHURCH SIZE:** 45 members  
**CONTACT INFO:** Phone, E-mail, Address, Person

### SAMPLE

■ **THE CORNERSTONE CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
Position needed • Baton Rouge, LA, • 45 Members  
Elders and Deacons • Contact Person • Phone Number  
Email address • Text message.



# Memorial & Honor Giving

Honor the life and/or memory of a loved one by giving to the Magnolia Messenger.

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Send Acknowledgment to:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

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Congregation \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

## THE MAGNOLIA MESSENGER ADDRESSES

CHANGES OR ADDITIONS:

Send info to:

[glendafranks@yahoo.com](mailto:glendafranks@yahoo.com)

# Precious Memories

## IN HONOR OF

**EVIE G. SMITH**  
Rhenda & Terry Miltner  
(Coldwater, MS)

**ALL OUR PREACHERS**  
Rita Smith  
(Utica, MS)

**JOE & BARBARA REEVES**  
Frederick Alan Jones  
(Jackson, TN)

**KATHY & DOUG FERRELL**  
Brenda Weeks  
(Thaxton, MS)

**BOB & GLENDA SINGLETON**  
Bobby & Lila Schmitz  
(Water Valley, MS)

## IN MEMORY OF

**WAYNE TITTLE**  
Lola Tittle  
(Lynn, AL)

**BONNIE SKATES**  
Alice Humphries  
(Natchez, MS)

**RANDY BARKS**  
RHONDA PATTERSON  
ROXANNE LEBLANC  
DUSTIN DICKERSON  
DEWITT GREEN  
Cindi Franks & Family  
(DeQuincy, LA)

**HULON PARRETT**  
Annette Parrett  
(Brookhaven, MS)

**CECIL MAY, JR.**  
Billie Wiygul  
(Fulton, MS)  
Erma Izard  
(Lexington, SC)

**FOSTER C. OWENS**  
Mattie Ann Owens  
(Ringgold, GA)

**JUDY WALKER**  
JOEL COLLINS  
W.E Walker  
(Clinton, MS)

**FRED WESSON**  
Goodman Oaks Church of Christ  
(Southaven, MS)

**BETTY BISHOP**  
ROY & DAISY KING  
Rick Bishop  
(Columbus, MS)

**MILDRED HARRIS**  
Gary Harris  
(Clinton, AR)

**DELBERT TURNER, JR.**  
GORDON HOGAN  
CECIL MAY  
Mary Ann Turner  
(Searcy, AR)

**BILL MEARS**  
JERRY MITCHELL  
Steve & Van Cornelson  
(Bulter, AL)

**B.H. DARBY, JR**  
Janet Darby  
(Como, MS)

**JOYCE YARBOURGH**  
Jim & Eddie Vermillion  
(Johnsburg, IL)

**CHERIE MCCULLOUGH**  
Bobby & Denise Harris  
(Baton Rouge, LA)

**MARY HOLCOMB**  
EDDIE HOLCOMB  
HARRY LOGAN  
EMMA BENSON  
Dorothy Mister  
(Batesville, MS)

**DOUG BURCHELL**  
Don Tays  
(Killen, AL)

**FAYE MOORE**  
Barbara Hammer  
(Corinth, MS)

**BENNIE RATLIFF**  
Margaret Ratliff  
(Toccopola, MS)

**HENRY EDGAR TRAXLER, JR.**  
Quincy Allen  
(Archibald, LA)

**LEO & SHIRLEY ELY**  
Elaine Ely  
(Johnson City, TN)

**TOMMY SWINDOLL**  
Pat Swindoll  
(Robinsonville, MS)

**PATTY HENSON**  
BARRY EMBREY  
Ann Embrey  
(Senatobia, MS)

**CHARLOTTE VINES**  
Phillip & Joan Young  
(Corinth, MS)

**BILL & BONNIE HANKS**  
Rita Smith  
(Utica, MS)

**DON ADAMS**  
Carolyn Stanford  
(Byhalia, MS)

**SHELIA YOUNG**  
Tony Young  
(Rogers, AR)

**BARBARA PARKS**  
Mary Balentine  
(Waterloo, AL)

**TOM GORDON**  
Elizabeth Gordon  
(Senatobia, MS)

**ERNIE WALLACE**  
Robert & Denise Harris  
(Baton Rouge, LA)

## These Sent In Answers to QB, Last Issue

1. Leona Fields
2. Sarah Morton
3. Russell Rogers
4. Sarah Greene
5. Karsyn Greene
6. Lilly Cash
7. Emma Cash
8. Brady Greene
9. Mary Mullins
10. Joyce Yarbrough
11. Dorsey & Margie Burton
12. Annette Parrett
13. Tisha Williams
14. Gayle Carlock
15. Becky Holley
16. Jim & Judy Hill
17. Rosie Felton
18. M/M Arthur Burnett
19. Janice Griffin
20. Cheri Moore
21. Ida Tuggle Walls
22. Peggy Crouch
23. Henry May
24. Brad Daley
25. Tommy Sullivan
26. Cason Berch
27. Evelyn Blurton
28. Lucca Duke
29. Tyler Berch
30. Chelacy Williams
31. Sheena Berch
32. Deborah Sullivan
33. Wilda Pounds
34. Mary Mann
35. Rick Bishop
36. Melissa Cummins
37. Claude Faught
38. Faye Stanford
39. Kenneth Harris
40. Emile & Peggy Rollins
41. Joyce King
42. Linda Carroll
43. Shirley Carroll
44. Joyce Hildenbrandt
45. Florin Riley
46. Ima Jean Fogus
47. Paul Rogers
48. Sue Fisher
49. Maggie Edmonds
50. Charlane Stanfield
51. Billy Alford
52. Tekita Shelton
53. ClaraneS Hathorn
54. Christene Holliday
55. Emma Graham Spiva
56. Danny & Glenda Wooldridge
57. Exie Motes
58. Nancy Floyd
59. Paul Black
60. Connie Cross
61. Linda Keirn
62. Jerry Fleming
63. Steve Moore
64. Wayne Rigdon
65. Brent Glover
66. Laura Brannon
67. Dennis & Kimmola McNairy
68. Ruby Nell Parham
69. Patsy Vining
70. Jean Lewis
71. Kimberly Easterling
72. Ora Gladney
73. Lillie Williams
74. Lee Ehret
75. Bonnie Howell
76. Sharon Dantzler
77. Sandy Rushing
78. Arvel Miles
79. BeSy Miles
80. Bobbie Loggins
81. Glenda Jefcoat
82. ScoSy Balen+ne
83. BeSy Bryant
84. Mary Dyer
85. Stan Neuenschwander
86. Garry Gooch
87. Millie Goode
88. William Pyron
89. MacArthur Mullins
90. Ella McElroy
91. Patricia Glover
92. Elizabeth Gordon
93. Rhenda Miltner
94. Terry Miltner
95. Admiral Tidwell
96. Trina Maddox
97. Kice Edwards
98. Stephanie Burleson
99. Sarah Dantzler
100. Georgia LedbeSer Taylor
101. Shelia Hall
102. Helen Downs
103. Roger King
104. Kathi Easley
105. Roger Easley
106. Beverly Armstrong
107. Byron Redd
108. Jesse Brent
109. Veartis Reed
110. Mary Adams
111. Linda Cook
112. Wanda Cochran
113. Perkins Cochran
114. Nellie Lester
115. CharoloSe RiSer
116. Carolyn Miller
117. Ann Gilliland
118. Sharon Huckaba
119. Bobbie Clayborn
120. Bernita Booker
121. Madonna Cook
122. Dorothy Brunson
123. Teresa S+el
124. Mary Lois Moore
125. Doyce BriS
126. Donna Steverson
127. Vickie Comer
128. Barbara Christian
129. Vera Spencer
130. Amy Hudson
131. Mary King
132. Sarah Hill
133. Mary Johnson
134. Paul Pounds
135. Marqupearl Banks
136. Roy Gambrell
137. Johnny & Linda Miller
138. BeSy Skinner
139. Catherine Archie
140. Vickie Hunter
141. Cameron McCarver
142. Camille McCarver
143. King McCarver
144. Mable Hodges
145. Karen BriS
146. Carla McKinney
147. Mary Whitehead
148. Lynn Grisham
149. Sandra Grisham
150. Brenda Taylor
151. Billye Wiygul
152. Johnnie Jumper
153. Mary Ann Wallace
154. Patricia Welch
155. Floyd Goode
156. Dale Heath
157. Barbara Burton
158. Phila Groce
159. Gloria Wilborn
160. Kathy Moore
161. Damen Cochran
162. Vera Winfrey
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164. Glenda PoSs
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172. Dan Daniels
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180. Brenda Green
181. Bill Moore
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184. Katie Burns
185. Franks Pac
186. Evelyn NeServil
187. Barry Cole
188. Brinley Mosely
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190. Bronlynn Nygard
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199. Jennifer Seal
200. Gail Saxon
201. Carrie McGrone
202. Fannie Johnson
203. Rita Smith
204. Linda Chipley
205. Randy Sartin
206. Sherian Martin
207. ronwen Pollard
208. Ann Jacobs
209. Charlene Jent
210. Juanita Andrews
211. Velma Isom
212. Tonya Poe
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216. Julius Lee Wales
217. Linda Gean
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230. Danny Stacks
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232. Shelia Williams
233. Erin Smithers
234. Lucy Rushing
235. Evelyn Rushing
236. Kelly Key
237. Lilli Davis
238. Michael Coleman
239. Doris Strickland
240. Mike Jones
241. CharloSe Langley
242. Lola TiSle
243. Tom McLemore
244. Steven & Joanne Franklin
245. April Nelson
246. Della Rhodes
247. Noah Crider
248. Judy Franks
249. Wilma Lakey
250. Everlean Myles
251. Artis Hinton
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253. Michelle Simpson
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276. Suzette Endris
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281. Steven Tutor
282. Anne Bacstelli
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286. Earleen Williams
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327. Mary Prosser
328. Barbara Shanklin
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330. Mary Baldwin
331. Oliva Jonson
332. Autumn Thornton
333. Seth BurneS
334. Levi BurneS
335. Jeremiah & Shelia Woodard
336. Jeremiah Woodard, Jr.
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338. Ma'Nia & Bralan Womack
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340. Mary Williams
341. James Thornton
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344. Averi McKinney
345. Carson Alexander
346. Carson Chandler
347. Elijah Tucker
348. Jon McKinney
349. Brandi McKinney
350. Ainsley McKinney
351. Charles Rutherford
352. Angelique Newson
353. Dilly Faircloth
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420. Mary Vandeford
421. Bertha King
422. Clara Allen
423. Jessie Allen
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439. Earl Franks
440. Johnnie Franks
441. Jayde Burnett
442. Chance Burnett
443. Cash Burnett
444. Jerry Redd
445. Beverly Howell
446. Cindy Allison
447. Clyde Ray Bradford, Jr.
448. Andrea May Lampport Riddle
449. Dr. Rhea Forum
450. Richard Peck
451. Rick Bishop
452. Bonnie Dixon
453. Melissa Tarver
454. Doris Jean Fletcher
455. Ann Rector
456. Jeston Savage

**BIBLE  
WINNER**  
**Judith  
Willis**  
*Delhi, LA*



## Question Box - December 2025

# Who Encountered An Angel in the Bible?

Match the following (These are only a few):

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. What kind of angelic beings did God place at the entrance to the Garden of Eden (*Genesis 3:24*)?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. The angel of the LORD appeared to Hagar and told her what to name her child.  
 What was the child's name to be (*Genesis 16:1-12*)?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. How many angels rescued Lot and his family from the doomed city of Sodom (*Genesis 19:1-22*)?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. What person did an angel prevent from sacrificing his child (*Genesis 22:11-18*)?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Jacob is the only known person to have wrestled with an angel. What kindness did the angel perform after the wrestling match (*Genesis 32:24-39*)?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. The prophet Balaam could not see the LORD's angel, but his talking donkey was able to see him.  
 What was it about the angel that made the donkey turn away (*Numbers 22: 22-35*)?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Who was commissioned by an angel to save Israel from the Midianites (*Judges 6:11-23*)?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Whose mother was visited by the angel of the LORD, was told she would have a son who would be dedicated as a Nazarite (*Judges 13:1-20*)?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Whose lips were touched by a live coal held by a seraph (*6:5-7 of the book he wrote*)?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. What angel helped Daniel to understand the future and also appeared to Mary and Zacharias (*Daniel 8:15-26; 9:21-27; Luke 1:5-38*)?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Who was carried by angels to Abraham's bosom (*Luke 16:22*)?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. The angel of the Lord instructed Philip to go to Gaza. Who did Philip meet there (*Acts 8:26-39*)?

- A. Abraham
- B. Samson
- C. Cherubim
- D. Isaiah
- E. A drawn sword
- F. Ethiopian Eunuch
- G. Gideon
- H. Two
- I. He blessed Jacob
- J. Ishmael
- k. Gabriel
- L. Lazarus

### QB Fall Issue Answers:

- |      |       |       |
|------|-------|-------|
| 1. J | 6. E  | 11. B |
| 2. M | 7. F  | 12. N |
| 3. O | 8. L  | 13. G |
| 4. A | 9. C  | 14. D |
| 5. H | 10. K | 15. I |

### Please Send Your Answers To Us

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

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

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



## "The Question Box"

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