

MAGNOLIA Messenger

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

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

March 11-15, 2018

**3rd Annual
Preachers' Retreat**
Kosciusko, Mississippi



THE BOOK OF HEBREWS
(See Page 19)

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Our Next

MM RV Rally

Lake Tiak-O-Khata
in Louisville

April 16-20, 2018

**you know that
I love you.
Jesus said,**

**"Feed my
sheep."**

John 21:17

The facilities of what was
MAGNOLIA BIBLE COLLEGE
are becoming the facilities of what is

Magnolia Bible
COLLEGE
1976-2009

MAGNOLIA BIBLE CENTER

Magnolia Bible
CENTER
2018

(God/Brethren Willing)

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Evangelism: Soul Saving Workshops • Youth Programs / Camps for Youth • Ministers' Meetings / Conferences
Marriage Enrichment Seminars • Area-wide Lectureships

School of Biblical Studies • **MBC Library Available**
(as interest develops) (35,000 Volumes)

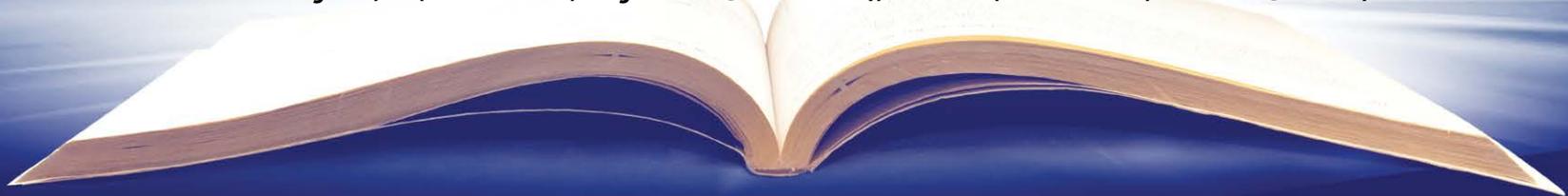
Private Retreats for Sister Churches
(Facilities available for area churches of Christ to use for individual needs)

Plus Your Suggestions

Please HOPE, PRAY and PLAN with/for us!

May God's Will be Done! • **May MBC Facilities be Used to His Glory!**

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

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Magnolia Bible Center in Central Mississippi (Kosciusko)
Was: **Magnolia Bible COLLEGE**; Now: **Magnolia Bible CENTER**

BIBLE

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

RESPONSE

Rejoice and Sympathize

If there are many infants and children in your congregational assembly, rejoice. The presence of young families with children is a mark of a healthy, growing church. Parents, usually mothers, are to be commended for attending the assembly and bringing their young children. Satan will assuredly test the parents, tempting them to use the children as an excuse for staying home. If children are a distraction to nearby worshipers, how much more are they to the parents? I have often felt a surge of sympathy as I saw parents trying to worship and having at the same time to keep children too busy to disturb others. Suggestions for doing a better job of it will follow, but *such parents deserve understanding and compliments rather than disapproval or censure.*

Any child can wait until the end of the service for a drink of water. It is a good practice to take small children to the bathroom right before the service begins. Certainly emergencies may occur, but when the same people—and it is not always children—leave the assembly every service, there is more going on than just a kidney problem.

Some preachers find crying babies especially annoying and may publicly ask an already embarrassed mother to take the child out. Remember, though, a lack of infants and children is likely a sign of a dying church. Obviously a child who is crying loudly for a long time is disruptive and needs removal until they learn not to disrupt. One Christian lady, now a grandmother, said she was carried out of the assembly by her mother so often she grew up thinking that being carried out and disciplined was the sixth item of worship! Children do need correction. Whatever form of discipline works, children need to learn that sitting and being quiet is preferable to being carried out.

What Are Parents To Do?

Parents should prepare ahead. For very young children, take items with which the child can learn to amuse himself. For children old enough to understand, talk to them about the need to be quiet. During the time our four children were growing from infancy through toddlers into elementary school, my wife sat with them while I preached. The following advice on helping children learn how to worship is based on what she did and how it

Small Children and Church Services

QUESTION:

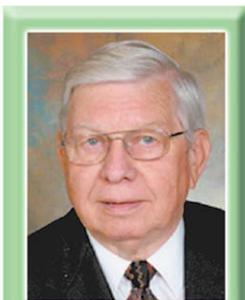
QUESTION: *We have a good many babies and small children in our church and the crying and other noise disturbs those of us who are trying to worship. Some have proposed a “children’s church” where children below a certain age are taken to another room during the service and are taught on their own level as in children’s Bible class or VBS, but others are strongly opposed. Mothers are often encouraged to briefly use a special nursery just off the auditorium until the child is quiet. One trouble is that three or four mothers with small children congregate in there and talk throughout the service. Is there a good scriptural solution to this problem? (A.E.C.)*

RESPONSE:

Since the Bible does not regulate or even discuss the matter of children in assembly, whatever I suggest on this subject will necessarily be a matter of judgment. Congregational autonomy requires that whatever a congregation, following its leadership, does about this problem is not subject to critique by anyone outside that congregation.

turned out. I saw it work. Children kept in the assembly with their parents can be taught from a very early age not only to behave in the assembly but also to participate in worship.

One of “the proverbs of Solomon” (Prov. 10:1) is, “Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it” (Prov. 22:6). Proverbs are not rules written in stone that never have exceptions. They are general principles that usually work. Because they usually work, they are well worth following. Attitudes and habits of conduct set early in life tend to last through adulthood into old age. It is good to start early.



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Obviously there is a time in infancy when keeping a child quiet and contentedly occupied is the best a parent can hope for. Bring something for the child to play with quietly, paper and pencil or crayons, for example, which the child can enjoy while the parents participate in worship as much as possible. That is the wis-

est course during that stage. However, too many parents prolong that stage beyond the time when it is profitable.

As soon as the children can learn to sing nursery rhymes, they should be encouraged to sing hymns. Open the song book and, with the child watching, move your finger along under the word being sung. One of our daughters recognized and pointed out the printed word “God” from the song book when she was three years old. Very early, children can be taught to bow their head during prayers and recognize they are talking to God. Similarly, when Scripture is read, they can be taught reverence by having their own Bible opened to where the word of God is being read. Since some preachers cite the same

verses multiple times over the course of a few weeks or months, with a little encouragement children can memorize some of those verses. This can work even before the child learns to read.

As soon as they can write, they should be encouraged to make notes on the sermon, writing down Scriptures cited, familiar Bible stories used and other items of interest. Elementary school children have been very pleased to show me outlines they made of my sermons that were often more detailed than the outline from which I was preaching!

Children wandering in and out of the assembly are a distraction. Any child can wait until the end of the service for a drink of water. It is a good practice to take small children to the bathroom right before the service begins. Certainly emergencies may occur, but when the same people—and it is not always children—leave the assembly every service, there is more going on than just a kidney problem.

Children who are old enough to go to school but who still spend the whole worship hour from before the announcements to after the benediction with coloring books or other distractions, and with no cognizance at all of what is taking place, are missing out on several blessings. Parents who encourage or allow that are losing valuable opportunities to begin their children’s growth toward spiritual maturity. It takes parents’ time, effort and attention to help children develop good worship practices, but the pay-off is worth the cost. Children taught to worship are

Parents, be sensitive to those around you and, if a child cries continually and loudly, take the child out of the auditorium, but be sure they are learning that it is more comfortable to be in the assembly quietly than to be taken out.

blessed by the experience. They also enjoy the feeling they are being treated as “grown-ups,” and they realize early on why Christians gather for worship.

Some diversion is necessary for the smallest children. Begin with a little participation and gradually encourage more as they grow. Children can learn to participate meaningfully in worship much sooner than many think. And the sooner the better, both for them, their parents and the worshipers around them.

Children’s Bible Hour

Many good, sound congregations, while adults are

Continued on page 16

God With Us In The Sunset Years

By John Gardner

The U.S. Census Bureau confirms in its well documented and often exhaustive reports that the population of America is getting older (www.census.gov). But that is *old* news (pun intended). The 65 and over age group in America is the fastest growing category in our nation's population. For some time now, we have heard about the Baby Boomer generation reaching 65 and the demands on Social Security and other support programs for that group. Besides the large birth rates of the Boomer cohort, vast improvements in health care and wellness programs have extended the numbers of older folks among us.

Churches are getting older, too. Demographic studies in major denominations indicate that the average age of those attending worship services is in the mid 50's. Anecdotally we see that many churches of Christ in America are getting older, too. A larger number of our members have crossed over into the "aged" category than in the past. Not all of our congregations experience this "graying of the church," but many of them do. The Lord's church has a tremendous opportunity to minister to and with our older members and to reach out to the aging population of our nation.

Our gracious God meets the needs of the aging as he does those of whatever age who seek him and obey the gospel of his Son. He not only meets their greatest need, salvation from sin and the hope of eternal life (Matthew 16:26; Romans 6:23), but through his Son, God also offers the aged abundant life now (John 10:10).

The Bible tells us clearly that our Father knows all about the life of the aged with its burdens as well as its joys. The Word of God deals with such explicit matters as the general disabilities of failing health of the aged (Ecclesiastes 12:1-7), the changing desires and limitations of those who are getting older (2 Samuel 19:3-40), as well as the blessings of growing older in the way of righteousness (Leviticus 19:32; Proverbs 16:31; 17:6; 20:29).

Studies of the elderly over the last 50 years have revealed several needs that are heightened as one gets older. God is more than willing to help the aged meet those needs in a way that really counts. Let us consider four of those needs.

(1) The need for a wholesome outlook on life that encompasses time and eternity.

The Bible answers the three major questions of life: *Where did man come from? Why is man on the earth? And where is man going?* Every man and woman is created by God in his image (Genesis 1:26) and exists for the pleasure and glory of God (Revelation 4:11; Romans 11:36). Every person's life is short against the backdrop of eternity (Psalms 90: 9,10,12; James 4:14). **Death is certain, but not final (Hebrews 9:27).** It leads to an eternal destiny with God in glory or away from him in destruction (Matthew 25:46). The older Christian who holds these and other insights can taste the benefits of wisdom and experience that age brings, let go of things of more youthful years



JOHN GARDNER

without too much regret, and look forward to a new realm of unending glory with the Father in eternity (2 Timothy 4:6-8).

(2) The need to deal adequately with

loneliness. At least two themes in the Scriptures bear strongly on the problem of loneliness. The first has to do with the nature of God.

Our God is omnipresent and available to his people no matter where they are (Psalm 139:7-12; Acts 17:27,28). He is "*a very present help in trouble*" (Psalm 46: 1) and is in close fellowship with those who love him and his Son and keep his word (John 14:23).

The second consideration is what the Bible says about the body of Christ, the church. As long as a Christian lives in fellowship with Christ and his people, he or she is family and has family (2 Corinthians 6:17,18). He or she is a part of the body where every member counts (1 Corinthians 12:26,27) not only as a member of Christ, but a member of other Christians (Romans 12:5). Sharing in the fellowship of God's wonderful people can alleviate much of the loneliness that can creep in to those who are older and isolated.

(3) The need to feel secure in a time of losses.

Old age often brings with it an array of losses that combine to test the sense of security many have in life. The loss of health and strength, the loss of income at the level it once was available, the loss of spouses and friends—these chip away at the feeling one can dwell securely in this world.

Jesus' command for all of his disciples to not worry about daily needs (Matthew 6:25-34), but to pray in faith for God's care (Matthew 7:7-11) is certainly applicable to his older saints. And the need for strength to deal with challenges of every kind in old age comes from God who comes through in the hour of weakness (2 Corinthians 12:9,10; Philippians 4:13).

Our Father will never forsake the older brother or sister who is faithful to him (Hebrews 13:5,6). He will abundantly supply the needs of all of his saints, including the elderly (Philippians 4:19).

(4) The need to feel continued usefulness.

It is easy for those who are older to think about all of the things they can no longer do—spend long hours in vigorous, demanding work, excel in certain services to the church and others on a regular basis, travel, evangelize,

etc. *Life is more restricted, but not over.*

Many aged Christians can continue to care for others via calls, cards, and, yes, even emails and text messages while they themselves are being cared for by others in the church family. They may be very limited in mobility, but they can pray in ways that influence heaven (Luke 2:36-38). In conversations they can train the younger

in the way they should go (Titus 2:2-5). Even their presence in the assemblies when they are able to attend is a boost and encouragement to the body. In the ways just mentioned and other ways, the elderly can still bear fruit in old age (Psalm 92:12-15).

God has a plan for older people for the rest of their lives. He wants them secure in Christ and in him (John

10:28,29). He wants to bless them with abundant life (John 10:10) on the way to that eternal home with him. We, as the church, need to be aware and alive to help our God accomplish his purpose toward the elderly.

John Gardner is an educator, gospel preacher and an elder of the church in Brandon, Mississippi.

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Studies of the elderly over the last 50 years have revealed several needs that are heightened as one gets older. God is more than willing to help the aged meet those needs in a way that really counts. Let us consider four of those needs.



The Lion & The Bear

By Paul G. Dixon

“Wouldn’t it be better for us to go back to Egypt?” What! Why had the Hebrews asked this question while hesitating at Kadesh (Numbers 14:3)? What had stopped them from conquering Canaan? They knew the mission of the twelve spies and God’s purpose. But had they forgotten God’s power? Here is an example where the overwhelming majority was impressively wrong!

Israel was defeated at Kadesh before a sword was ever pulled from its sheath or the cry to battle from the trumpet was ever



heard. If they had just remembered how the Lord delivered them from their Egyptian captivity, bringing them through the towering walls of water, escaping the relentless chase from Egypt’s

swiftest chariots and fearless militia and crashing the red sea back together again like two thunderbolts clapping hands. If they had just remembered. Then they might have believed the Lord could still deliver them from their giants. Fear kept them from progressing forward as God had intended. Their failure caused them to step back into the wilderness.

They were focused on the problem, not the progress... Today, because the Lord is with the faithful, we can remind ourselves often that, no matter the size of the problem, “We are more than conquerors through Him that loved us” (Romans 8:37).

Israel hesitated too long! What happened at Kadesh Barnea could happen to any person, group or church. Every church should be prepared, while waiting at Kadesh, when it must decide to go forward or retreat. Forgetting that the Lord is in control can stop any progress!

When Paul told the brethren to forget those things of the past, he didn’t have in mind to forget all of the success that the Lord had accomplished in their lives. Remember what Jesus said, when confronting

a misunderstanding with his disciples. He asked, “Do ye not yet understand, neither remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? Neither the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? (Matthew 16:9,10). The Lord calls

Every church should be prepared while waiting at Kadesh, when it must decide to GO FORWARD OR RETREAT. Forgetting that the Lord is in control can stop any progress!

on his disciples to remember how God had helped them just days before. When we are able to do this, it helps push us forward, to climb the next mountain, swim the next stream and to conquer the next battle with temptation.

No one had more experience with battles than did David. About to stand before his biggest opponent, Goliath, David had remembered something and rehearsed it before King Saul. “And David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father’s sheep, and there came a lion and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock. And I went out after him and smote him and delivered it out of his mouth, and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard and smote him and slew him. Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear, and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God. David said moreover, The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine” (1 Samuel 17:34-37).

The fear of giants had caused the Israelites not to advance. They were focused on the problem, not the progress. It gave David confidence to remember how he could succeed when the Lord was on his side. No doubt, this helped him as he literally ran to fight his battle. Today, because the Lord is with the faithful, we can remind ourselves often that -- no matter the size of the problem, “we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us” (Romans 8:37).

Paul G. Dixon is an elder of the Northport church in Northport, Alabama. He may be reached by calling 205-799-4748 or e-mailing: gregory2006usa@bellsouth.net

CONSIDER THIS! the topic of **BAPTISM**

Jesus did it!

Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him.

Matthew 3:13

Jesus commanded it!

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, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.

Matthew 28:19

Peter taught it!

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.

Acts 2:38

Philip preached it!

So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him.

Acts 8:38

But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized.

Acts 8:12

Paul believed and was baptized!

Immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales, and he received his sight at once; and he arose and was baptized.

Acts 9:18

Peter taught the Gentiles baptism!

“Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?” And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then they asked him to stay a few days.

Acts 10:47

Peter's thoughts on Baptism!

There is also an antitype which now saves us—baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,

1 Peter 3:21

IF JESUS DID IT, COMMANDED IT, TOLD HIS DISCIPLES TO PREACH IT,

WHY QUESTION BAPTISM?



House to House Heart to Heart

will now be a **monthly** publication!

2018 TOPICS

MARCH • The Great Invitation:

The Spirit and the Bride Say Come

APRIL • Forgiven to Forgive

MAY • I Don't Want You to Join My Church

JUNE • The "Weaknesses" of Almighty God

JULY • Five Views of Baptism from Mark 16:16

AUGUST • How to Face Your Golgotha

SEPTEMBER • The First Christian in Europe

OCTOBER • Salvation Is Free, but It Is Not Cheap

NOVEMBER • Is Christianity the Problem?

DECEMBER • Finding God's Treasure

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HUNTSVILLE Ladies' Day

Report by Judy Lollar

The ladies of Huntsville church of Christ, French Camp, MS, hosted Ladies' Day September 16, 2017. Our theme for the day was "Growing in Christ's Image!"

It was a wonderful day beginning with a light breakfast, followed by our Ladies' Day program, and ending with lunch; both meals were prepared by ladies from the church. Our keynote speaker was Betty Choate, missionary and co-founder of World Evangelism with her late husband J. C. Choate.

Our program consisted of a welcome and welcome poem presented by Judy Lollar and Olivia Surette; singing led by Chellie Surette; Scripture reading by Emma Wright; opening prayer offered by Holly Wright; introduction of the speaker given by Olene Boggan; program presentations by Betty Choate; a skit presented by Rachel Tharp, Barbara Wright, Judy Tharp, Chloe Tharp, and Emma Wright; prizes and gifts presented by Judy Tharp, Jamie Cagle, and Barbara Wright; closing prayer and thanksgiving offered by Chris Jennings; registration by Janelle Hopkins and Melba Braswell.

Betty chose the following scripture which illustrated the theme:

"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." 2 Corinthians 3:18

Betty's presentation included three main points from studying the Scriptures.

The first point was that we can know the mind of God. Man is able to know the true and living God through His Word, that is, the Bible. The Bible reveals God's character, His thinking, His attitude, and His plan for mankind. It is through reading His Word that we come to a knowledge of the righteousness of God and that which He requires of us. 1 Corinthians 2:16 says, "We have the mind of Christ." In addition, John 15:15 says, "... my Father I have made known unto you." In John 14:7, Jesus said, "If ye had known me,

ye should have known my Father also."

The second point from studying the Scriptures was that we see order and purpose in God's way. 1 Corinthians 14:33, and 40 say, "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints." "Let all things be done decently and in order." We can see order in all of His creation, and the Christian's life should include the order of God's way. Many people struggle to find the meaning of life. They wonder what life is about and why they are living. The Christian has the answers to those questions. He knows that he is to be living his life for God. Ecclesiastes 12:13 reveals that one is to "Fear God and keep His commandments, For this is man's all." A person can only find true fulfillment and have genuine success in life by seeking God and the will of God.

The third and final point from studying the Scriptures was that we learn that it is God who has the authority in all things especially the church (Given to Jesus then given to the apostles)! We learn from the Scriptures 1 Corinthians 15:37, "The things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord." The authority that we should follow at all times is only found in the written Word of God. From Ephesians 1:19-23, we understand from Paul that it is Christ who has the mighty power, who was raised from the dead, who has been set at the right hand of God, above everything and everyone. Jesus Christ is head over all things to the church. All authority concerning the church of Christ is Christ's; the church of Christ is not under human jurisdiction.

SPECIAL NOTE: Betty Burton Choate is from Winona, MS. After her marriage to J. C. Choate, gospel preacher and as missionaries, they moved first to Karachi, Pakistan, then to Colombo, Sri Lanka, beginning the Lord's church in those Muslim and Buddhist nations respectively. Their next move was to India, establishing the Lord's church in that Hindu country.

Their work in India extended for the past forty years with the development of radio/TV/literature and mass media programs. They extended much of this and similar work into Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Philippines, and Myanmar. For their mission work, Betty and her husband have printed much literature for Stateside use and for shipment overseas. The

Voice of Truth International, a quarterly magazine, has been printed since 1993. Each quarter, 62,000 copies are printed in six languages. Of these, 45,000 copies are sent free of charge to 80 countries. Seven issues of Global Harvest, a mission news magazine, have been printed, published twice annually.

Betty has written numerous books, one of which she used as the basis for our Ladies' Day program entitled "Growing in the Image of Christ." Betty enjoys teaching in special ladies' programs. When time permits (which is not often), she enjoys many hobbies such as painting, gardening, sewing, quilting, and reading. She and her late husband have three children by birth, one by adoption, and seven grandchildren.



**Betty Choate at Huntsville
Ladies' Day Speaker**

ON OUR LADIES' DAY

*The ladies of Huntsville were truly blessed,
By not only our speaker but also
members and guests.*

*Our speaker's words certainly urged
us to know*

*The theme for the day,
"In Christ's Image We Must Grow!"
The skit "Are We There Yet"
was a wonderful hit;*

*It surely taught us that to God's Word
we must submit!*

*We were very uplifted by the prayers,
lesson, food, and songs;*

*Our speaker's original lyrics
made our ending very strong.*

*"Thou Shalt Call and I Will Answer"
was its commanding title;*

*With its words taken from Job 14,
we continued to study the Bible.*

*Can we truly say that our
Ladies' Day was a success?*

*Only if God's will found in the Bible,
we daily, continually possess.*

By: Judy Lollar E-mail: lollarjudy@hotmail.com

“What Does The Lord Require?”

The Old Testament contains many profitable lessons, as we are told in Romans 15:4 and 1 Corinthians 10:11. An examination of Micah 6:8 shows that God required some things of the Israelites, “He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?”

God has always required something of man. God required lambs and other sacrifices. He required the best, the unblemished of the flock. God required those who served him under the Old Covenant to be faithful to the law. God required of Abraham that he offer his son upon the altar, to test the fullness of his faith.

In our day, many ignore what God wants from us. Does His requirements really matter? They certainly do! Ignoring God’s requirements brings certain consequences. Jesus said, “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 7:21). The apostle Peter wrote, “For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?” (I Peter 4:17).



What then does God require of us today?

First: God requires from us a willing mind. The Christian life is one of service to God and our fellow man. And, it is to be a hearty service. “And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto me” (Col. 3:23). God does not “twist our arm” to get us to serve Him. He invites us to serve. In Matthew 11:28-30, Jesus invited, “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” God has always wanted a willing mind from all who would serve Him.

Here are some examples. Concerning the contribution for the Tabernacle, in Exodus 25:2 we read: “Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering: of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart ye shall take my offering.” Concerning rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, we are told, “For the people had a mind to work” (Nehemiah 4:6). In Christian giving, 2 Corinthians 8:5,12 states, “And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God... For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.”

Second: God requires obedience from His people. This is a fact we cannot deny. Israel was commanded to obey Him (Numbers 15:37-41). Christians are to obey God rather than men (Acts 5:29; Gal. 1:10). Our freedom from sin is conditioned upon obedience (Romans 6:17-18). Christ is the author of eternal salvation to those who are obedient (Hebrews 5:8-9). Only those who are obedient will enjoy the glory of heaven (Revelation 22:14). The one who is obedient serves God, not man. If deprived of earthly

glory for our service, sadly, many would quit serving. Who will we please, God or man?

Third: God requires us to preach and teach the gospel message. For those who preach, Paul wrote in 2 Timothy 2:2, “And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.” Also, in 2 Timothy 4:2, “Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine.” One of the main qualifications for elders is that they are to be “apt [able] to teach” (1 Timothy 3:2). Concerning individual Christians, we are told, “For when

is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.” Sadly, many in the church are content to do nothing. They believe they have done their duty when they attend one sixty minute service on the Lord’s day. Some are even inconsistent in this! It is wrong for us to be indifferent or “lukewarm” as the Laodiceans were (Revelation 3:15). Every one of us has a part in edifying the church (Ephesians



for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat” (Hebrews 5:12). And, concerning the Lord’s church, the church is to be obedient in carrying the message to the lost, supporting preachers and conducting strong teaching programs.

Fourth: God requires us to grow spiritually. Peter, by inspiration, wrote the following: “And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowl-

“He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?” (Micah 6:8)

edge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things

4:15-16). The goal of Christian development is to make us more Christ-like.

Fifth and Lastly: God requires reverence for Him. Worship should be orderly (I Corinthians 14:40), yet not formal and ritualistic. God has always required reverence and respect. He is pleased we show reverence toward Him and it shows others that we respect the God of heaven. Consider. People are usually respectful at funerals and weddings. Why can’t we be respectful where it really counts? God created us, helps us and loves us! Should we not show God the respect that is due to Him? God is infinitely good (Matthew 19:17). He is all powerful; He is the Creator of all. It is His name that is to be revered and not man’s (Psalm 111:9). Sadly, so many people disrespect God by flippantly joking about Him and His word, by using His name in vain, or by failure to obey His word. Jesus said in Luke 6:46, “And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?”

Why not start doing what is required of us? If not doing so already, we need to begin today -- “while it is called today!” Surely we want to be found pleasing in His sight.

(Russ preaches for the Hillcrest congregation in Baldwin, MS. His email address: hillcrestchurcho@bellsouth.net)

Some Thoughts On Church Discipline

By Ken Joines

First, please understand that I believe disciplinary action by a church is sometimes called for—even mandatory. Second Thessalonians 3:6-15 makes this abundantly clear. Simply stated, there are times when a church member's very life is such an embarrassment to the church that the congregation cannot, by its silence, appear to condone it. And not just the general public, but our children must not grow up in a church where no such corrections are made, or they will believe this to be the norm. Another factor is the new Christian who is sure to be confused in such a situation; he needs and deserves clear signals.

The entire 5th chapter of I Corinthians is given to God's law concerning this matter. What precipitated apostle Paul's outrage was the man who was living with his father's wife, presumably his step-mother! He said not even the pagans would do such a thing (v.1) and that the church should expel this person from its fellowship (v.13).

The first part of the chapter makes the point that the purpose of such a disciplinary measure is to destroy his



Withdrawal action should be a process, not a sudden-death announcement... But let's make certain we have exhausted every possible approach in love. Again, this is what shepherding looks like. KNOW your sheep and tend them! This is a FAMILY, not a corporation!

sinful nature and save the guilty person's spirit (v.5). I have no problem with this because I believe the Bible is God's revealed will. For the record, the church where I was preaching 40 years ago withdrew its fellowship from a brother who had taken up with another woman and left his wife for no legitimate reason. I had hunted with this man and had enjoyed his fellowship and friendship until that time. So painful was the lack of fellowship of long-time friends and fellow Christians that within a year he sought and obtained his wife's forgiveness and that of the church and enjoyed this reinstatement for the rest of his life. This is as it should be. So I have no problem with such action, properly taken.

But I am troubled when I see this matter misused and abused as is sometimes the case. For example, I have known of at least two churches where over-zealous preachers convinced the elders that they needed to—as they put it—“clean up the church membership rolls and purify the congregation.” They proceeded to withdraw fellowship from all those who were no longer attending. At the time I thought, “what?!!” If the people had already left, there was no fellowship to withdraw! Those “withdrawn” from would not miss the fellowship because that had been destroyed long ago! The result in both those cases was that this foolish action virtually destroyed congregations and the preachers soon packed up and moved

because there was not enough left to even supply their needs. That is the predictable result when disciplinary action is mishandled.

Just a few years ago I sat in the audience and listened as the preacher strongly made his point that “anyone who chooses not to attend on Sunday night or Wednesday night is in disobedience to our elders; he is guilty of sin”, he said. Again, I want my readers to know that I think Sunday night and Wednesday night services are good. I always try to be present. I wish all the members would be there. But when he finished his message, I thought, “really?”

Let's take his reasoning to its logical conclusion. (1) One who is disobedient to his overseers is most surely “walking disorderly”. (2) Since scripture requires that we expel the disorderly from our fellowship, then (3) we have no choice but to withdraw from every single one of them. That preacher does not advocate that step—not yet at least—but his reasoning will eventually drive him to it. I don't think any reasonable person would agree with such a conclusion; it simply was not the intended purpose of disciplinary action.

What then shall we say of those who are weak and not as active as we would like them to be? Is there room in God's family for the weak as well as the strong? Permit me to illustrate. Take a piece of paper and draw a circle the size of a softball (label this circle #3). Now, inside this circle draw a circle the size of a tennis ball and label it #2, and inside this one, yet another circle the size of a golf ball. This will be #1.

Let #1 represent the strongest, most active and best informed members of the congregation, for example your elders, deacons, teachers and other more mature people. Inside circle #2 are those good people who attend most of the time, but are not quite as strong as those in the smaller circle. Circle #3 contains those who are very weak, not very active or involved. They never show up for an evening hour of worship or study. Maybe their language and attendance are not what we know they should be, but they're certainly not bad people. You get the picture.

This is a picture of every congregation among us. And the ideal situation is where through constant nurturing, teaching, encouraging and mentoring we are slowly, but constantly, helping people move from circle 3 to circle 2 and from circle 2 to circle 1. It should be the mission of everyone in circle 1 to help with this movement, but is the prime responsibility of the responsibility of elders; this is where shepherding is seen in its purist form. With few exceptions, church growth follows this route. If the stronger—including elders—would function in this manner there would seldom be the need of even having to mention disciplinary action.

To repeat, the purpose of public withdrawal of the church's fellowship is clear: when a church member's public conduct is so wicked that it runs counter to what we believe and preach, while still appearing to be a member in good standing. (Compare the Corinthian case, chapter five, first Corinthians. This person must be expelled from our number.)

Rather, what we have too often seen is a church expel one from their number who may not be in regular attendance or let's say, his language may not be as clean as it

ought, or who is known to indulge in alcohol. The pinch comes when at the very same time we knowingly look right past one among us who is greedy or a slanderer (and this might even be the preacher himself!), or is just one of the “good ole boys” who pulls shady business deals, or the prim and proper woman who is known as the town gossip. But oh! These people are regular in their attendance and are generous givers on Sunday!

Make no mistake about it, when we exercise this kind of selective discipline, the townspeople are watching, and can see straight through our hypocrisy. In such cases, withdrawal will accomplish little more than to permanently embitter that person and his family and friends and drive them away. It will also erode the credibility of preachers and elders who lead or are party to such a charade. The congregation will be made weaker, not stronger.

There's another issue that needs to be addressed just here, and it is a case where the entire congregation has not been prepared for this action. Here's a typical case sce-

The pinch comes when at the very same time we knowingly look right past one among us who is greedy or a slanderer (and this might even be the preacher himself!), or is just one of the “good ole boys” who pulls shady business deals, or the prim and proper woman who is known as the town gossip. But oh! These people are regular in their attendance and are generous givers on Sunday!

nario: The elders and deacons meet to discuss withdrawal action and the deacons are told what is in the works. The congregation is not informed and given opportunity to take ownership of this action. Following this limited amount of attention, they go before the congregation the very next Sunday and spring this on an unsuspecting assembly, to the consternation of nearly everybody. They announce the name(s) and tell the people what is expected of them. Is it too much to ask that elders be wise enough to know that this will not automatically ensure the support of the church? I think not.

Withdrawal action should be a process, not a sudden-death announcement. A true shepherd will approach the person and, if this fails, he will take another elder along with him. If this fails, then look out among the congregation and find someone who has a known relationship with the individual, and ask him or her to plead with him to make needed correction. But let's make certain we have exhausted every possible approach in love. Again, this is what shepherding looks like. KNOW your sheep and tend them! This is a FAMILY, not a corporation!

A plea to elders and church leaders: Be slow and deliberate about taking withdrawal action except in the most extreme cases. Make certain that every option has been explored and that such action has the support of the congregation. Otherwise, we shoot ourselves in the foot.

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Kjoines35@hotmail.com

Report and Request

Mexico Missions Year Ending

By Les Ferguson, Sr.

As 2017 comes to a close we will have been in Mexico 16 years, focusing primarily on the State of Guanajuato in the central part of the country. Our emphasis has not been on buying property and building church buildings. It has been on evangelism and planting churches where there were none.

God has blessed our work. And, so have many of you who read this report/request. Over these 16 years, eleven (11) churches of Christ have been planted in cities with populations of 50,000 to 1 million. In the first church, planted in 2002 in the city of San Miguel de Allende, we also established a branch School of Preaching. Six of the planted churches that came out of the San Miguel School have also established branch schools and are training church members in teaching and preaching the word. All 11 planted churches are very evangelistic and have, on their own, planted 5 churches in smaller communities in the state. *Two of those church plants took place this year.* We give thanks to God for His blessings in the work of expanding the borders of the Kingdom in Guanajuato, Mexico.

John Pigg and I went to Mexico on November 7 and returned home on November 21 of this year. Even though John has been with us on several mission trips to Mexico,



(Left): Les Ferguson, Sr. & John Pigg (right) With a new sister in Celaya, Mexico

this trip was to formally introduce him as the **new** Director of *Mission GTO* in Guanajuato. He was well received and, in every situation, he was afforded the opportunity to talk to the preachers, to teach classes and to preach. My role as the current Director will continue, Lord willing, through April, 2018. At that time John will take on those responsibilities. Also, at the beginning of 2018 the elders of the Lake Harbour church in Ridgeland, MS will assume the oversight of this mission effort. I will continue to be available to assist John and to make a trip to Mexico once a year.

All the above was the report, *now the request*. I really need your help to be able to finish out the year in the black. We were in the red about \$500 in November. It looks like it could be a little more than that as we get into December and look forward to the close of the year. Help us to finish strong and

be able to hand over to Lake Harbour this ministry completely *debt free*. You may send your contribution to **Church of Christ or Mexico Missions, P.O. Box 1399, Kosciusko, MS 39090**. You have blessed me and this work a number of times in the past and I am so very grateful. May our God continue to bless you in every endeavor to His honor and glory!

Les Ferguson, Sr.
Director, Mexico Missions



Daniel Kirkendall Family
New Youth Minister at Forsythe

Forsythe Ave Church Monroe, LA

John Dobbs, who preaches for the Forsythe Ave church of Christ in Monroe, LA, recently sent word to us that they had hired Daniel Kirkendall and his wife, Brooke, to work with their congregation. Daniel's parents are Gary and Donna Kirkendall who have a long history in Mississippi and particularly in Kosciusko. John and Gary both graduated from Magnolia Bible College in 1985. Daniel and Brooke have two children, Hadie Beth and Walker. He will be serving as an associate minister with an emphasis on youth.

2018 Faulkner Lectures

GOD IS



March 4-8, 2018

KEYNOTE AND CHURCH LAW SESSIONS 2018 FAULKNER LECTURES

EVENING KEYNOTES

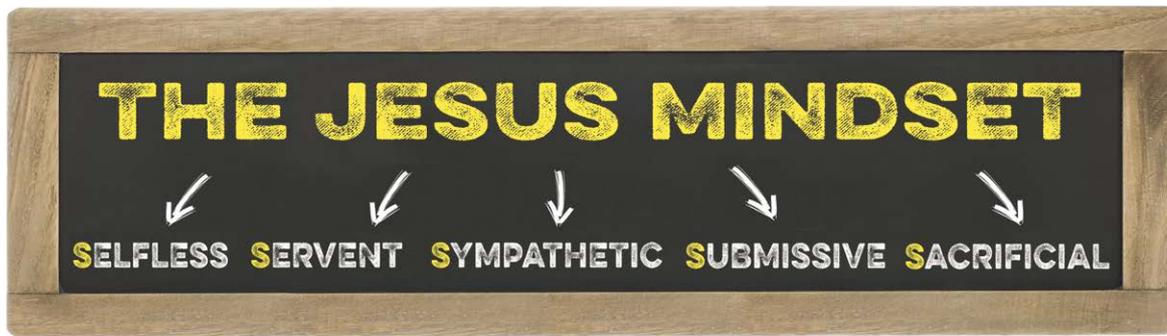
- Sunday, March 4
Lonnie Jones
"God Is"
- Monday, March 5
Bill Davis
"God Is Love?"
- Tuesday, March 6
Billy Lambert
"God Is Hate?"
- Wednesday, March 7
Wissam al-Aethawi
"God Is Near?"

CHAPEL KEYNOTES

- Monday, March 5
Lonnie Jones
"Is God Dead?"
- Tuesday, March 6
Andrew Itson
"Is God Tolerant?"
- Wednesday, March 7
Wissam al-Aethawi
"Is God One?"
- Thursday, March 8
Phillip Hines
"Is God Relative?"

CHURCH AND LAW SEMINAR Thursday, March 8

- 9:00 AM
Melvin L. Otey
"Safety, Security, and Guns in Churches"
- 11:00 AM
Gerald Jones
"Update on LGBTQ Issues for Churches"
- 1:30 PM
John Kachelman
"Pitfalls of Copyright Laws for Churches"
- 2:30 PM
Layne Keele
"Legal Challenges for Christian Education"
- 3:30 PM
Rob McFarland
"Safety, Security, and Best Practices in Children's Ministries"



By John Pigg

A stranger was traveling through a town in Mississippi from Florida and stopped at a service station for gas. Observing an old man sitting on a bench nearby, he asked, "Are the people friendly here?" The old man retorted, "Were they friendly where you came from?" The stranger exclaimed, "Not at all! The people there are the most unfriendly I've ever seen and that is the why I left." Old man wisely replied, "The people here are just the same way." The moral of this story is the way a person looks at life is important because the difference is not in one's position but disposition. Attitude controls action, disposition determines direction, and thinking makes a difference



in the way we deal with life. Change your frame of mind and you can alter your life! Prov. 23:7 teaches "As a man thinks in his heart so is he."

No wonder Paul uses the word "mind" in his letter to the Philippians twelve times. Four times in four verses (2:2-5) the apostle encourages "all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi" (1:1) to be "like-minded" and "of one mind," and to treat one another "in lowliness of mind." The real challenge is "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." Christians must learn to develop the mind of Christ in life! Christians should possess the attitude or disposition of Jesus! What kind of mindset did Jesus have? Five "S" words describe the mindset of Jesus that we, as Christians, should manifest in our lives.

(1) A Selfless Mind.

Jesus was "equal" with God, but he "emptied himself." He was willing to lay aside his heavenly privileges and prerogatives. The beautiful hymn of Henry Barraclough says it best: "Out of the ivory places, into a world of woe, only his great eternal love, made my Savior go." Jesus did not grasp this high position and hold on to it, but lovingly gave it up for our spiritual benefit. In his humanity, there was no conceit, vainglory, or selfishness. Instead of being self-absorbed, he abandoned a "me, myself and I" attitude and manifested a selfless mindset. If we want to be like Jesus we will not be all wrapped up in ourselves, but show a like-minded, selfless mindset.

(2) A Servant Mind.

Jesus took on the form of a "bondservant." His divine "Sonship" was united with his human "servantship!" He clearly saw his purpose in life as not to be served, but to serve (cf. Mt. 20:28). He demonstrated it in washing his disciple's feet and giving them an example of the servant mind (cf. Jn. 13). We need to follow the example of Jesus' servant

mind that did not focus on his heavenly blessings but on our earthly needs.

(3) A Sympathetic Mind.

The "encouragement" (1:1) we receive in Jesus concerns his "sympathies and compassion" as he was made in the "likeness of men" and was "found in fashion as a man." Jesus identifies with us and understands our human needs, feelings, desires, etc. The Son of God became the Son of Man in order to relate to people. He walked in our shoes and lived in our skin! (cf. Heb. 2:14-18, 4:14-16). We need to develop a deeper sense of sympathy and compassion if we want to display the mindset of Jesus.

(4) A Submissive Mind.

Jesus was "obedient" from childhood (cf. Lk. 2:51-52). Children today may be smarter than their parents but they must still be submissive! Jesus set us the perfect example in childhood, but in manhood he did much more! John's gospel often repeats Jesus saying, "I came down not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me" (Jn. 5:30; cf. Mt. 26:39; Heb. 10:7, 9). Never in the history of mankind or in the church, have we needed to be more submissive to the will of God for our lives! If Jesus had a submissive mind, how much more should we!

(5) A Sacrificial Mind.

Jesus "became obedient unto the death, even the death of the cross." He humbled himself and voluntarily, vicariously and victoriously submitted to the suffering of Calvary's cross on our behalf in order to become the Savior of the world (cf. Heb. 5:8-9). We need to deny self and take up the cross daily in following Christ (Lk. 9:23, 14:27). If Jesus willingly and sacrificially laid down his life for us, we ought to be willing to do the same for one another (cf. 1 Jn. 3:16). We need to show a sacrificial mindset in our time, talent and treasure in every area of life.

If you want to act like Jesus, live like Jesus, and be like Jesus you must develop the mindset of Jesus! A family was leaving worship one Sunday and their little girl asked, "The preacher said Jesus lives in us, is that true?" Her mom replied, "Yes, darling." Again the daughter asked, "The preacher also said Jesus is bigger than us, is that true?" Once again, the mother answered, "Yes." In a child-like mindset, the little daughter finally inquired, "If Jesus lives in us and is bigger than us, why doesn't he show through?" She was thinking literally, but spiritually, the question every Christian needs to ask is this: "If Jesus lives in us and is bigger than us, why doesn't he show through?" When you and I have the selfless, servant, sympathetic, submissive and sacrificial mindset of Jesus, then he will show through in every facet of our lives and God will be glorified!

(John is a gospel preacher and missionary to Mexico. His email address is: jpigg1@comcast.net)

Delta Enrichment Series

February 3 - 4, 2018

Cleveland Church of Christ

212 Ronaldman Rd. • Cleveland, MS 38732

(662) 843-3911

clevechurch@cableone.net • www.clevelandcofc.org

THEME

Raising Faithful Families in a Faithless World

WITH

Jim & Donna Faughn

Jim and Donna Faughn have been married for 40 years and have two children who are both graduates of Freed-Hardeman University. Their daughter, Amber, is married to Jeremiah Tatum who preaches at the Willow Avenue church of Christ in Cookeville, Tennessee. Their son, Adam and his wife Leah live in Nashville, Tennessee where Adam is the pulpit minister for the Lebanon Road church of Christ. Jim and Donna also have five grandchildren.

Saturday, February 3, 2018

Registration (coffee & donuts) 9:00 a.m.

First Session (men and women combined) 9:30-10:10 a.m.

Second Session (Jim to men; Donna to ladies) 10:20-11:00

Third Session (combined) 11:10-11:50 a.m.

Lunch (provided by the Cleveland church)..... Noon

Sunday, February 4, 2018

Bible Class (Speaker: Jim Faughn) 9:45 a.m.

Worship (Speaker: Jim Faughn)..... 10:30 a.m.

Lunch (potluck provided by church) ..11:45 a.m.

Worship (Speaker: Jim Faughn)..... 12:45 p.m.

Who's Who Among Servant Leaders in Churches of Christ?



Hoyt Wade, pictured with his wife, Joan, was nominated "Who's Who Among Servant Leaders." Hoyt is described as a "very serious and faithful servant" of the Jacinto church near Booneville, Mississippi. "...He can teach, lead singing and is always there. He has been an elder; he is a wonderful family man...."



Betty Choate (on left) was also nominated "Who's Who Among Servant Leaders in the Church." Betty and her husband, J. C. Choate (now deceased), are widely known and respected for their dedicated mission work in India, spanning more than forty years. Pictured above with Betty is Shane Meredith who serves as a preacher for the Winaona church of Christ where Betty is a member.

the JOURNEYS of PAUL

Mission Uganda

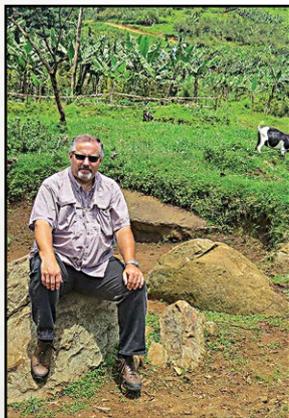
Three Weeks in a Different World

(Report by Paul Franks)

I began to notice. On FACEBOOK, Paul Coffman would post pictures of his mission trips to Uganda. He also said that he wanted someone to go with him. The pictures were intriguing and the thought of going to Africa was appealing to me, especially if I could be of help. After discussing this with Paul and thinking about it for a couple of years, I finally made the decision to purchase my ticket to go with him to Uganda in central Africa.

After taking some shots and pills, (thanks to Dr.

Jack Huffman and David and April Dabbs of Dabbs Pharmacy of Eupora, MS), in October of 2017, I was able to fly to Uganda. Flying time on three different flights from Memphis, Tennessee to Entebbe, Uganda totaled about twenty hours. Arriving at the only international airport in the country, we still had to travel several hours before getting to the town where we were going. We were tired and we headed to a hotel.



"Life-Changing Experience"
For missionary Paul Franks

The next morning we got up early and headed to our first stop on our three week mission trip. It was to visit a church where Paul Coffman had been sending money to help with the construction of their building. The top of the church building was covered with just a tarp. After we both had preached and everyone had eaten, it started to rain. A man, who was not a member of the church and who had a house next to the church building, invited all of us to cram into his house where we had an enjoyable time. On that day, we also participated in our first baptism.

We had 20 baptisms and 4 restorations during this most recent trip. Since last year, the work in which Paul Coffman has been involved, there have been 200 baptisms with over 180 still faithful! After our first encouraging day, we finally made it to our hotel in Kasese, Uganda, which is in the western part of the country. Over 43 million people live in Uganda, a country which is about twice the size of Mississippi with less than 3 million people.

The next day we left early, went up on a mountain and visited a school Paul had been supporting. We had purchased some beans and rice, especially for a group of widows on the mountain. When we got to the school, we were greeted by a great crowd of children. We went to the area where they were waiting for us. We watched a performance by the children and afterward enjoyed a meal. This was my first time ever to sit in a mud hut and have food brought to me, however, I really enjoyed the meal.

If Uganda were your home instead of the United States, you would die 25 years sooner. You would be 10 times more likely to die in infancy. You would be 12 times more likely to have HIV/AIDS. You would make 97% less money. You would spend 99% less on health care. You would use 99.5% less electricity and 99.15% less oil. And you would have 3.3 times more babies.

The Director of the school was asked what his major need was. He answered, "Water". Each day he had the children go some distance, get water and bring it back to the school so they would have something to drink. Two days later, the director came to our hotel and visited. Our conversation about their need for water, encouraged me to communicate with my brother, Stephen Franks (through Messenger on FACEBOOK). He agreed to cover the expense to purchase a special tank into which rainwater could run from the tin roofs into that tank.

Every day, after that, except for two days, we went to schools, churches and the school of preaching where we taught the Bible. We also preached on the local radio stations. We were blessed to work with 20 churches during our mission trip. Paul Coffman and those supporting his efforts, have been able to help with some of the needs of all the churches.

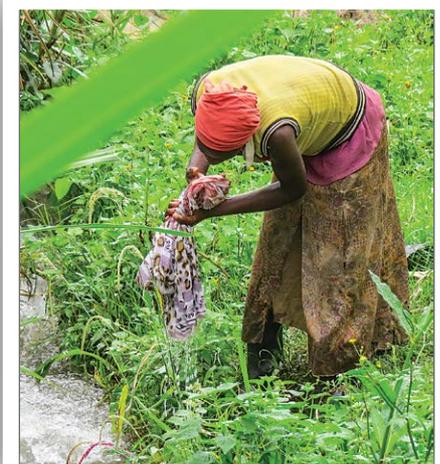
One of the churches visited was the Isengera Church of Christ, a church of 300 with elders. Their church building was made of mud. Thanks to Paul Coffman their building is now bigger with windows and doors. While with the church, we were blessed to distribute used eye



glasses provided by the Lions Club in Kosciusko.

One of the most exciting times in our mission trip was a special Sunday singing. Last year about 200 were present. This year, however, we had over 600 people in attendance. Yes, there were some politicians present. I spent some time with one of the politicians and asked him if the people of Uganda had any hope. His sobering answer was, "***Other than Jesus, the people of Uganda have no hope.***"

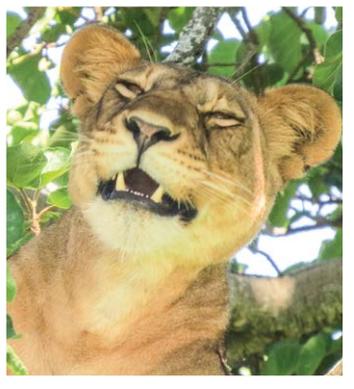
In closing this report, I ask you to think about these startling figures: If Uganda were your home instead of the United States, you would die 25 years sooner. You would be 10 times more likely to die in infancy. You would be 12 times more likely to have HIV/AIDS. You would make 97% less money. You would spend 99% less on health care. You would use 99.5% less electricity and 99.15% less oil. And you would have 3.3 times more babies.



Woman Washing clothes in a stream
No electricity, no running water, no bathrooms



Used glasses provided to several in Uganda. The Lions Club in Kosciusko, where Paul Franks is a member, donated them.



Uganda in Africa
Home to many wild animals And millions of souls who know not Jesus



Special Sunday Singing Attended by Over 600



Larger, much nicer church building with funds from American Christians



Next door neighbor invited Church to cram into his house



*New water tank brought excitement
(Tank provided by caring Christians in America)*



Enjoying hospitality (home cooked meal) in a typical mud house with no electricity and no running water.



Jeremiah and Ezekial: Two of several native preachers



Church Building Covered only with a Tarp



School Children shown greeting American Missionaries



Uganda Mission Work

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A Report from Iuka, MS

Magnolia Messenger RV Rally

Our Third Annual MS/AL/TN RV rally was held at J.P. Coleman State Park (Iuka, MS) on November 8-11, 2017. We are thankful that attendance increased this year over the first two years. All who were blessed to attend enjoyed the wonderful meals and warm fellowship.

We are grateful for the very practical lessons/sermons presented by **Tony Brown** and **Rodney Livingston**. We deeply appreciate Ronnie and Cathy Livingston, along with Carl and Cathy Powell, who once again served as rally masters.

The rally, coming in the first half of November, provided some beautiful sights with fall foliage throughout the park, situated on the banks of the Tennessee River.

Without a doubt, the J. P. Coleman park is one of, if not the prettiest park, in all of Mississippi. We would like for you to join us next year, God willing. Please make plans to be a part of the soul strengthening and mind relaxing rally next year. The dates are November 7-10, 2018. No RV? No problem. Cabins/rooms available. (For more information, give me a call. Paul Franks: 662-792-2700.)



Tony Brown, Rally Speaker Long time preacher at Zion Rest Church of Christ



Ronnie presents award to Aundrea, the mother of Emma Rae Blythe, chosen "Camper of the Week."

Rodney Livingston, Rally Speaker (Surrounded by his sweet children)



Spending "Time with Tony" as rally attendees listen to Tony Brown's lesson

PATIENCE

*God is so merciful;
He gives us everything we need.
Some are really grateful;
And some are never pleased.*

*We don't always get what we want,
In a month or a week or a day.
God wants us to be patient,
Even when we don't get our way.*

*We need to put our faith in Him;
He is the One we need to trust.
There is nothing we truly deserve,
But He will always love us.*

*If we will be patient,
We can see God's love all around.
Everyday there are many blessings,
Just waiting to be found.*



Nina F. Thorn

Nina F. Thorn and her husband, Billy, are members of the Nile Church of Christ near Kosciusko, MS.

AFTER 24 YEARS

Russ Crosswhite Moves from Fulton

Russ and Linda Crosswhite, after 24 years preaching at Fulton, MS, will be moving to Murray, KY where he will be the preacher for the New Concord Church of Christ located in the Murray area. They will certainly be missed here in Mississippi. The church in Fulton, MS will be looking for a new minister.

Corinth area churches interested in Uganda

Terry Smith and Jay "Bubba" Jackson recently spent two weeks in Uganda, Africa. Terry, who has been many times to Uganda, works with the Strickland congregation near Corinth, as their youth minister and Jay works with the Acton, TN church as a youth intern.

Several years ago, Terry helped Foote Street in Corinth start a preaching school in northern Uganda. One of the graduates, Jeremiah (pictured on bike) became a friend of mine on my recent trip to Uganda. Jeremiah receives support from the West Corinth church in Corinth, MS, enabling him to travel around the country preaching the gospel.



Terry Smith & Bubba Jackson (Two weeks in Uganda)

(Right) Jeremiah shared his motorcycle with Paul Franks in Uganda





The Value of A Friend

By **Dennis Doughty**

The very popular sitcom “Friends” aired on NBC from 1994 to 2004. The series revolved around a group of friends in Manhattan (although it was all filmed in Burbank, California). The popularity of the program emphasized the desire we all have for a special group of friends in our lives. We all need people we feel comfortable being with and who we can share life’s daily ups and downs with. We need friends that will be honest with us, and loyal to us. “A friend loves at all times” (Proverbs 17:17).

It is interesting that when we hear of some great tragedy or crime that often the person responsible is described as “a loner.” Man is at his worse when he has no friends. Living in a lonely world can be emotionally destructive. Robinson Crusoe’s lonely world changed when his man “Friday” came onto the scene. The need for a friend is well illustrated by Tom Hanks in the movie “Castaway,” His contrived soccer ball friend “Wilson” helped him keep some sanity. These friendships gave hope to these men as they tried to survive their lonely world. (The scene of Wilson floating away in the end still brings a tear to my eye!)



Dennis Doughty

When Job was suffering his three friends came “to sympathize with him and comfort him” (Job 2:11). Three times Hushai is called King David’s friend, and his loyalty helped overthrow Absalom’s rebellion (2 Samuel 17). Jesus was known as a man who loved people and developed many friendships. His detractors criticized his friendly nature, calling him a “gluttonous man and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!” (Luke 7:34). Jesus also had a special friendship with Lazarus and his family (John 11).

Developing friendships takes an effort. Sometimes we fail to make that effort. Friendships are not born, they are made. To have friends you must be a friend. As the saying goes, “People who like people are people that people like.”

Solomon wrote long ago “There is a friend that

is closer than a brother.” Friendship is, in many ways, like a marriage: it takes commitment and effort. But its rewards, like a marriage, are great. I have been blessed with a fifty year friendship that started back in college. As I look back on that friendship I realize that I would not have done all that I have done, I would not have enjoyed life as much as I have enjoyed it, had he and I not become friends. I

Man is at his worse when he has no friends...

Friendships are not born, they are made. To have friends you must be a friend. As the saying goes, “People who like people are people that people like.”

thank God that I have been blessed to have experienced something that many never experience: a truly deep, and, as of this year, a fifty year friendship.

I have been blessed by over 45 years of friendship with the editor of this paper. We have shared many a moment sitting side by side in the cockpit, and around a table in study and prayer. What a blessing!

The famous golfer Tiger Woods was asked in a recent interview, “Do you have any friends?” He thought a moment and answered, “I have acquaintances.” Sad. Don’t be a loner! Rather, develop friendships, make time for friends, and be a good friend yourself. It will bless, and change your life forever. If you have such a friend; call them, get together, plan a trip, have lunch. If you have to drive a hundred miles or fly a thousand, do it. Your life will be the better for it.

*Dennis preaches for the church of Christ in Tunica, MS.
His email address:dennis1848@bellsouth.net)*

**UP COMING
EVENTS:**

MAGNOLIA
MM
MESSENGER

SAVE THE DATE

March 11-15, 2018

3rd Annual

Preachers' Retreat

Kosciusko, Mississippi



AN INVITATION

**Join Senior Members of
The Lake Harbour Church of Christ
For Their Bus Trip to
Ark Encounter & Creation Museum
April 30 - May 5, 2018**

The date will be April 30 - May 5, Monday-Saturday of 2018. The price is \$530.00 per person, based on double occupancy. For single occupancy the price will be \$710.00; triple occupancy is \$495.00. The only other cost will be for lunches and other dinners while we travel, or whatever you wish to spend on other things.

The trip is planned with Diamond Tours on their motor coach which will accommodate 52 passengers. A restroom is on the tour bus; periodic stops will be made when necessary. Bottled ice water will be provided on the bus which will be leaving from Ridgeland, Mississippi. The deadline for a \$75.00 deposit is 12/31/17. Full reimbursements for all individual cancellations will be made and honored up to two weeks prior to departure (provided the total remains at 30 paying participants).

*For more information,
Contact John Pigg of the Lake Harbour Church.
His email: jpigg1@comcast.net*

Bible Questions & Answers

Continued from page 3

worshiping, have a separate class for young children in which they learn Bible stories, the books of the Bible, the chronology of the Bible stories with which they are familiar, the twelve apostles, etc. That does provide quiet for the adults as they worship and is more profitable for the children than sleeping or coloring through the preacher's sermon. As indicated above, active participation in worship with the help of parents is a more profitable choice.

Some count such a separate class for children "when you come together as a church" (1 Corinthians 11:18) to be contrary to Scripture and evidence of apostasy, of "a liberal church." That is based on a supposed rule against "dividing the assembly." However, many things accepted and practiced by the same brothers and sisters who oppose children's Bible hour on scriptural grounds constitute dividing the assembly. When a congregation outgrows its facilities and turns to two services on Sunday to solve the space issue without doing additional building, that is dividing the assembly, though some do not call it that and do not oppose it on those grounds. Children taken out of the assembly does not divide the assembly because children are not part of the assembly (the ecclesia, "the church"). If it is objected that the adults who conduct the children's hour "divide the assembly," then the same objection applies equally to the nursery situation

practiced and approved by almost all.

The fact that it is practiced does not necessarily prove it is right, but it does show that it is simply arbitrary to define children's Bible hour as "dividing the assembly," when other ways of doing so receive no objection.

Remember, though, a thing does not have to be practiced, just because it is not a sin to do so. While it is understandable why some object to or are uncomfortable with it, that is not enough to charge a congregation with sinful activity.

Conclusion

Worshippers, try to be more understanding and patient with parents who have the difficult job of keeping their young children quiet and teaching them as they grow to genuinely worship. Be thankful for the children; for if there are none, the church faces extinction.

Parents, be sensitive to those around you and, if a child cries continually and loudly, take the child out of the auditorium, but be sure they are learning that it is more comfortable to be in the assembly quietly than to be taken out.

Parents, as the children grow, take the time and effort to teach them to participate, to sing, to pray and to listen to the sermon or lesson. All of this can be done earlier than many parents think. Everyone benefits. It is a win, win, win situation.



Robert and Courtney Tipps
Robert is the Preacher at Kensington

Kensington Woods Church Hattiesburg, MS

Robert Tipps serves as preacher for the Kensington Woods Church of Christ. One Sunday evening, a few weeks ago, Glenda and I stopped by for a visit with the congregation. We especially want to thank Robert and his wife, Courtney, both of whom were very encouraging to us. Robert encouraged me to get up before he preached and tell the church about the Magnolia Messenger. He publicly encouraged support for our ministry. We are grateful. We were very impressed with the efforts Robert and Courtney are making to make everyone feel welcome at Kensington Woods, including visitors.

Shawn Weaver & Mark Neaves Publish Their First Book

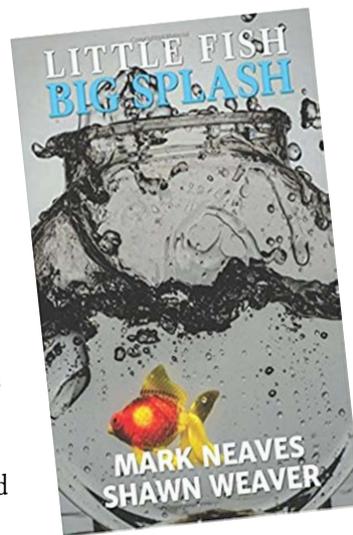
Shawn Weaver, the pulpit minister at Acton Church of Christ located in Michie TN, and Mark Neaves, the pulpit minister at Pine Grove Church of Christ in Fulton, MS, are proud authors of their first book, "Little Fish-Big Splash". The book, published by the Jenkins Institute, is available online at www.thejenkinsinstitute.com/shop/, also at amazon.com, and barnesandnoble.com.

The book is based on a study of 13 minor Biblical characters, some of whom the Bible doesn't even name. However, some of the names are very familiar. For instance, most children can tell you that Zacchaeus was short, he climbed a tree, and he went to eat with Christ, but do they know how his encounter with Christ changed his life?

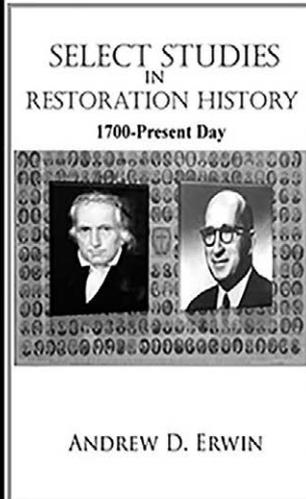
Famous, but overlooked are the earthly parents of Jesus, Joseph and Mary. Out of all the people who lived on the earth at that time, God picked these two to raise his son. What qualities and traits did they possess that made them so special?

"Little Fish-Big Splash" consists of 13 overall lessons, which are broken down further into six individual lessons. This is to encourage the reader to devote time daily to Bible study and not just one night a week. Not only does the subject matter differ from many Sunday school books, but also the way it was written.

The book can either be used in a Bible school setting or for individual study. It can be purchased for \$11.99, plus shipping in some cases.



KNOW YOUR HISTORY!



The most up-to-date Restoration Movement History Book Available!

210 pages

\$12.95

13 Lessons on the men, doctrines, events, and clashes of the Restoration, and the lessons we can learn from them to make the church grow again today!

Andy Erwin, 7 Brown Creek Dr.,
Fayetteville, TN 37334
andyerwin@gospelgleaner.com

"Old Songs" and "New Songs"

By Cecil May, Jr.

Perhaps it is my "balance" syndrome at work, but I oppose a blanket rejection of either "old songs" or "new songs."

Some older songs contain false teaching ("I once was lost in sin ... but just a little talk with Jesus made it right," "Pass me not, oh gentle Savior"). Others have figures meaningless to many ("Night with ebony pinion," "Here I raise my Ebenezer," "Let the lower lights be burning"). Others' lyrics are more doggerel than poetry and sometimes the music is unsuited to the words.

While many of the newer songs are "praise" songs, older songs are often more suited for "teaching and admonishing one another" (Col. 3:16). Many cherished hymns are sublime in words and music. ("When I Survey the Wondrous Cross," "More Holiness Give Me," "It Is Well with My Soul.")

Some new songs deserve the appellation, **7-11 songs**: "seven words repeated 11 times." Others have uneven rhythms and unconventional note patterns that are difficult to learn and to sing. However, many teach relevant, Biblical truths beautifully (e.g., "In Christ Alone," "Ancient Words," "The Greatest Command"). Often they are Biblical passages set to suitable music ("Great Is Thy Faithfulness," "I Am Crucified with Christ," "They That Wait upon the Lord").

Rather than choose between "new" or "old," choose the best of both. Seek a carefully thought out balance of good songs, both old and new.

(Copied from "Preacher Talk")

The “Gladys Dunn” Story

The following short story came to us by email from a friend and brother we have come to really appreciate. He is Edgar C. Beard who preaches for the Lord’s church in Sylvia, Tennessee. Brother Beard, no doubt, picked up the little story from someone else. We pass it along to you asking you to consider the observations which follow. (Editor)

There was this lady who was visiting a church one Sunday. The sermon seemed to go on forever, and many in the congregation were dozing off.

After the service, she walked up to a very sleepy-looking gentleman, extended her hand in greeting, and said, “Hello, I’m Gladys Dunn.”

And the gentleman replied, “You’re not the only one, ma’am, I’m glad it’s done too!”

Sermons can be too long. Boring too! They can be of little or no real value. Yes, time is precious. We should all use time wisely. This certainly includes preachers. Those of us who preach should respect the time of our listeners and remember to “KIS”; that is, “Keep It Simple” and “Keep It Scriptural.” Preachers should never forget the true saying, “For a sermon to be of lasting value, it doesn’t have to go on forever.” Someone has wisely advised preachers to remember the 3 “ups”; which are, “Get up; Speak up and Shut up.”

Many good sermons may, for some, seem too long and/or boring? However, the problem could be with the listener. Does it always have to be the fault of the preacher? A person who is sick, who has lost his appetite, will not find even a beautifully prepared table, covered with delicious food, very appealing. The Bible speaks of some church members who are “weak and sickly” (I Cor. 11:20). Did not Jesus say, “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled”? (Matt. 5:6).

Why is it that so many who would complain about a 30 minute sermon get excited about a two or three hour movie, concert and/or ball game? Could it be a sign of spiritual illness? The spiritually weak and sickly often have little or no appetite for spiritual nourishment; therefore to them, just about any sermon that teaches God’s truth and calls for obedience will likely seem long and boring. **Our challenge to listeners:** *Develop your appetite. Crave spiritual food.* **Our challenge to preachers:** Read again the paragraph following the short story. Heed the advice. Ask God to help you make your sermons informative, instructive and interesting! (alf)

Youth Training: “A Vital Work”

(So Believes the Church in Vidor, Texas)

As my June and I were returning to our stationary home in Kosciusko from the annual LA-TX RV Rally, held in Palestine, Texas, we *detoured* through Vidor, Texas. Here we were blessed, not only to visit my *one and only sister* (Ina Jay Sadler), but also to visit her church family (the Vidor Church of Christ).

We visited both morning and evening services on Sunday, October 22, 2017, where we received a very warm welcome. During the A.M. Bible study hour we enjoyed sitting at the feet of Gage Coldwater (Vidor’s missionary); afterward we were privileged to hear their local preacher, Jim Nash, deliver the morning sermon. Making the service even more memorable that Sunday morning was the need to gather together in their large fellowship room where we depended upon a generator for limited lighting. (Electrical service was out!)

The P.M. service on the Sunday of our visit was largely devoted to Youth Training which, based on what we saw and heard, is considered a vital work by the Vidor church. Most of the younger folks sat up front in the auditorium. Several of the young men took turns leading the worship service. One of the young men, Caleb Nash, did an excellent job preaching. Afterwards Caleb’s father, Jim Nash, presented a lesson designed to build faith in God and His word for the benefit of both younger and older.

It was a good day with the church. So thankful that the Vidor church, along with many, many other congregations of God’s people show by their actions that they believe “Youth Training is a Vital Work.” It was also a good two days with my precious sister. We were blessed and are thankful we could take that special detour in our movable home (RV) as we traveled back to our stationary home in central Mississippi. (Al Franks)



Ina Jay Sadler
“One and only sister”



Caleb Nash
(Young Preacher in Vidor)

1ST CENTURY Macedonia’s Berea

Paul (Study Acts 17)

21ST CENTURY Mississippi’s Berea

Paul (Read Report)



Home of Mississippi’s Berea Church of Christ

On Sunday morning, November 12, Glenda and I were richly blessed to visit with our brethren who are known as the Berea Church of Christ near Burnsville, MS. Chad Bowen serves as the bi-vocational preacher. We stopped by for worship services on our way back to Kosciusko from our third MM RV Rally held at J. P. Coleman State Park, near Iuka, MS.

The brethren received us warmly. I was given the opportunity to teach the adult Bible class that morning which I really enjoyed. Chad preached a great lesson on the problem of procrastination! Randy Hickox did a great job leading the congregational singing.

In addition to his work as a preacher for the Berea church, Chad also works at a printing business in Boonville with Tony Brown, another gospel preacher who serves the Zion Rest church. Tony was one of the speakers at our RV rally.

After the morning services, we were invited to join the congregation for a delicious fellowship meal. Needless to say, we really enjoyed our visit with this good church and look forward to a future visit, the sooner the better! (Paul Franks)



(Among Berea Church Leaders)
Chad Bowen, Rick Wixon, Randy Hickox and James Lovelace

from a Woman's Viewpoint

let my little LIGHT SHINE



By June Franks

As we approach this holiday season, many of us begin to think about decorating with lights. The more lights we have, the better, the more beautiful! Some travel long distances just to see “Christmas lights.” Without doubt, lights can be very pretty. Lights are also very important to have, especially in the dark of night. Our “Christian lights” are very important too. We are living in a time when we, as Christians, especially need to let our lights shine in a very dark world.

The Bible admonishes us to “...be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world, holding forth the Word of life, that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither labored in vain” (Philippians 2:15,16).

The Bible also declares, “Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candle stick, and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” (Matthew 5:14-16)

The above scripture verses are very familiar; yet, it is needful to be reminded of them. Sometimes, we may yield to the temptation to let our light go out or to allow our light to become very dim. According to God’s word, the way that we let our light shine is by doing good works. Matthew’s account teaches us to let our lights shine so that men may see our good works, not that we should get credit or praise, but that we may glorify our Father in heaven.

Most of us know the children’s song “*This little light of mine.*” Maybe it would be good if we, as adults, would think more about the words of this little song. The song tells us to let our light shine *all around the neighborhood.* We are *not to hide our light under a bushel* and another verse says *don’t let Satan blow it out.* The words of this little song are good words of advice for all of us to obey.

The Bible gives many examples of those who were letting their light shine. The Bible tells about Priscilla who, along with her husband Aquila, took Apollos aside and explained the way of the Lord more perfectly to him. Priscilla is a good example of someone who was willing to help teach a sincere soul who was wrong in his teachings. When she saw someone in error she did what she could to help teach him. Congregations often have trouble getting capable teachers to teach the children in Sunday School. The Educational Director or elders can make an announce-

ment or

plea for those who are willing to teach to *sign up*; often very few will volunteer!

Dorcas or Tabitha is referred to in Scripture as a woman *full of good works and alms deeds* (Acts 9:36-43). Dorcas was letting her light shine around where she lived. The Bible says all the widows stood by him (Peter) weeping and shewing the coats and garments which Dorcas made while she was with them.

There is a story told of a woman who saw a little boy who had on tattered and worn clothes. The lady took the little boy and bought him some new clothes. As they were leaving the store, the little boy looked up to the sweet lady and said, “Mam, Are you God’s wife?” We just need to take advantage of every opportunity to help someone that may be in need. Little children always touch our heart.

Lydia was known for her hospitality. She lodged Paul and Silas in her home (Acts 16:14). The Bible teaches that we are to show hospitality. “*Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality*” (Romans 12:13). Showing hospitality to others is a wonderful work. Being invited into someone’s home is usually far more meaningful and memorable than going out to eat. How many people have you had in your home this past year?

A widow lady who could be taken into the number supported by the church, was required to be *well reported of for her good works* (I Timothy 5:10). The passage says, “...*if she has brought up children, if she lodged strangers, if she hath washed the saints feet, if she relieved the afflicted and if she hath followed every good work.*” These are areas in which each of us can let our light

shine.

Phoebe, Mary and Priscilla and others are mentioned as being *helpers* in the Kingdom (Romans 16). Each of us can and should let our light shine by being helpers. Helpers are so important and greatly needed in the church. Each of us could be a helper. We are to be women *professing godliness with good works* (I Timothy 2:10). The Bible teaches that the way we profess our godliness is with our good works.

Jesus said, “*For I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger and ye took me not in, and ye clothed me not: sick and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered or athirst, or a stranger or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.*” (Matthew 25: 42-46)

These words of Jesus, recorded in Matthew 25, teaches right ways we are to let our lights shine forth. The last four verses in the chapter should make us all think. We definitely do not want to hear, “*And these shall go away into everlasting punishment.*” Are you letting your light shine? Our ultimate goal in working and/or serving should not be to get praise or to think we can work our way to heaven. Our true goal in *letting our little shine* should be to glorify our Father in heaven.

Mrs. A. L. Franks

P. O. Box 1578

Kosciusko, Mississippi 39090

franksmm@aol.com



JUNE FRANKS

There is a story told of a woman who saw a little boy who had on tattered and worn clothes. The lady took the little boy and bought him some new clothes. As they were leaving the store, the little boy looked up to the sweet lady and said, “Mam, Are you God’s wife?”

Magnolia Bible Center DAILY DEVOTIONAL

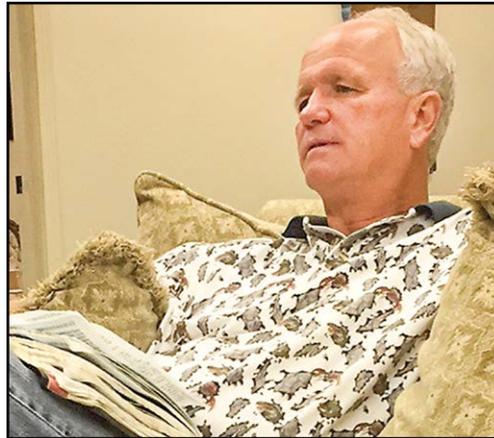
Seeking to more effectively utilize the facilities which once housed Magnolia Bible College, a daily devotional is conducted each morning at 11:00 A.M. in the Guant Library (Monday through Thursday). Everyone in the Kosciusko area is invited to attend.

From time to time we are blessed with special guests who are invited to lead in the study of God's word. Recently we had Keith Parker from Hendersonville, Tennessee and Vladimiras Rancevas from the country of Lithuania. Brother Keith was with us for three mornings while preaching in a meeting for the South Huntington Street church. Brother Vladimir spoke one morning while on a tour of churches in America that assist in his missionary efforts in Europe.

We are always pleased and thankful to have visitors, whether they speak or just listen. And, of course, the fellowship is always great!



Vladimiras Rancevas (Lithuania Missionary)
Spoke on "Why I Want To Go To Heaven."



Keith Parker (Tennessee Evangelist) Led a three morning study on the privilege of prayer.



IN MEMORY OF

TRAVIS MURRAY
JAMES BRADSHAW
ERNIE DUHON
ARVIS MIDKIFF
Reid & Freida
Thompson
(DeRidder, LA)

WANDA RONE
EMMER JEAN BLACK
Keith & Amanda Wilson
(Crystal Springs, MS)

JAMES BRADSHAW
Carole Milner
(Brandon, MS)

ED HENRY
Nelma Hazlip
(Natchez, MS)

GARY RUSH
Tony & Ginny Luther
(Columbia, MS)
Columbia Church of Christ
(Columbia, MS)

JAMES BRADSHAW
DALE LEDBETTER
DAN SPENCER
Carl & Vera Spencer
(Jackson, MS)

TRAVIS MURRAY
Ray Hyatt
(DeQuincy, LA)

DALE LEDBETTER
Betty Butler
(Florence, MS)
Steve & Erica Graham
(Brandon, MS)

VELMA DELANCEY
JAMES BRADSHAW
Wilburn DeLancey
(Delhi, LA)

SUE WHITE
DAVID SHIERS
MARY VIRGINIA SURRELL
Sandra & Wade Hart
Chamblee
(Duck Hill, MS)

TRAVIS MURRAY
John Eaves
(Merryville, LA)

FLOYD E. HUNT
Chuck & Carmen Moore
(Belleville, Ill)

HAROLD H. LONG
Mrs. Harold H. Long
(Old Hickory, TN)

WANDA RONE
Mary Ellen Albritton
(Crystal Springs, MS)

X. L. & MERTIE LOVE
Betty Love Pearson
(Winona, MS)

IN HONOR OF
VERNA ENFINGER
90th Birthday
Gary Wolfe
(Lillian, AL)

Thank you for thinking about the work of the MM as you remember and/or honor loved ones/friends. (alf, editor)



Readers' Response

Reasons Why We Continue Publishing the Magnolia Messenger

Thank you for all your work put in the "Magnolia Messenger!" Here is a small donation to help with each publication. We look forward to the articles written in each printing and in a way keeping up with friends in the process. Our prayers are with you. Love in Christ **(Eudell & Della Rhodes)**

I would like very much to be able to receive the Magnolia Messenger. I really enjoy the QB and also look forward to reading the articles that are published... Thank you so much for the paper that you publish. God bless you and your ministry. Sincerely, Your brother in Christ **(William Hinton, Houston, MS)**

I enjoy reading from the newspaper, which gives me an opportunity to be a part of, while participating in the Question Box. Thank you for sharing your love for Christ. Be blessed. **(Elnorsh Duckworth, Wiggins, MS)**

...I just wanted to let you know how much I enjoy this magazine. I am so thankful for all of you that do such a good job writing the articles. Thank God for people like all of you. May God bless you all for this getting the Word out to everyone you can. In Christian Love, P.S. I wish we could receive it every month. **(Brenda Taylor, Booneville, MS)**

*June & Al,
...Glad you are able to continue with the good work you do with your "good news" gospel literature. May God keep you in His care and allow you to continue.* **(Patty Henson, Kilmichael, MS)**

Enjoy the Newspaper. **(Charlotte Gann, Farmington, AR)**

To: Whom it may concern (Magnolia Messenger)

Thank you for the beautiful Bible. I really enjoy reading the magazine. I learn so much about the scripture that are in the Question Box Section. Some questions I know and some I have to really stop and think about before I answer. Please keep the Magnolia Messenger Magazine out in the public because so many need to study the Bible and this is a blessed way to introduce the Word of God to so many. Here is a little token of love to help reach people through the magazine. May God bless each of you for that you do. A Job well done. Thanks **(Linda & Sylvester Burton, Union Point, GA)**

I appreciate every issue of the Magnolia Messenger. Sincerely, **(Jo Carolyn Potts)**

The issues of the Question Box help me search the scriptures more and, as I do so, I learn more about God and His son Jesus and how I can be a better child of His. In Acts 17:11, those people searched the scriptures daily and that is what your Question Box does for me. I enjoy it so much. In Christian love, **(Bonnie Lipsey, Selma, AL)**

The (?) Box. I enjoy the challenge in each publication. Please keep on keeping on for Jesus. Your Friend, **(Paul Pounds, Columbus, MS)**



(Instructors) Dan Winkler, Kirk Brothers, Jody Apple and Gary Hampton

3RD ANNUAL PREACHERS' RETREAT

Kosciusko, Mississippi

March 11 - 15, 2018

(Sunday evening - Thursday morning)

The Book of Hebrews

Lodging and Meals Provided (MBC Facilities) Fee: \$100.00

For more information and/or to make reservation, please call or email

Les Ferguson, Sr. (601-562-4226; lfergusonmm@hotmail.com)

Al Franks (601-668-3344; franksmm@aol.com)

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Visiting among Churches in north Mississippi

By Eddie Lewis
 Missionary to North Mississippi,
 9423 Laurel Hill,
 Olive Branch, MS 38654.
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EDDIE LEWIS

It was a great joy for me to visit among the churches. This quarter I was able to visit with several churches and preach at just a few. The following is my report as I visited among the churches.

■ By Eddie Lewis

In July, my sweetheart, Judy Lewis, passed away after six years of battling dementia. I thank all of you for remembering me during that time. Your prayers, cards, and words of encouragement meant the world to me. Judy and I were high school sweethearts. We've been married 52 years. I will certainly miss her, but I know she has reached her goal and is with our Lord. She helped many people during her 20+ years of counseling. Many of you expressed your appreciation for her help during a time of crisis in your life. That's what Judy loved to do. Help people. Help them draw closer to God and gain strength to overcome. She was a blessing to so many.

It's been a great help to me to visit among the churches. You have been an encouragement to me and I appreciate so much your prayers.

During this quarter I have preached four times for the Antioch church of Christ in Independence, MS. I enjoyed my visits with the folks there. They are a wonderful group of Christians. We have about 40 in attendance. In Bible class we were studying the fruit of the Spirit. I've looked at gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, and meekness. All are important attributes for the Christian. In worship I have presented a series of lessons on "Your Mind—The Seat of Positive Christian Living." It's very important that we remember that God wants us to fill our mind with spiritual things. Our world tries very hard to lead us down the path of sin by filling our mind with all kinds of evil things. But, if we work at putting good into our minds, we will get good things out.



Howard Scruggs
 Antioch Song Leader

■ July 16: (Potts Camp)

I was invited to be part of the annual Gospel meeting at the Potts Camp church of Christ. Jerry Coats is the minister there. I appreciate his invitation to be part of this special day. They normally have around 45 in attendance, but on this Sunday, 105 gathered together to worship God. It was a special day with many visitors from several congregations in the area. Tony Farese, an attorney from Ashland, was the key speaker that morning. I taught in the Bible class and spoke at the 2 pm service. Each night during the week they had different speakers from the area. We enjoyed a wonderful fellowship meal after the service. It was good to be with the brethren at Potts Camp.

In the worship Tony preached about the example of Naaman in 2 Kings 5. He brought to our attention the things we can learn from Naaman's response to the prophet Elisha and the



Jerry Coats, Eddie Lewis, Tony Farese

greed of Elisha's servant Gehazi. It was a great lesson. I appreciated his insights into the story. In Bible class I presented a lesson "Wisdom from Above" based on James 3:13-18. We looked at the contrast of worldly wisdom and God's wisdom. We spent most of

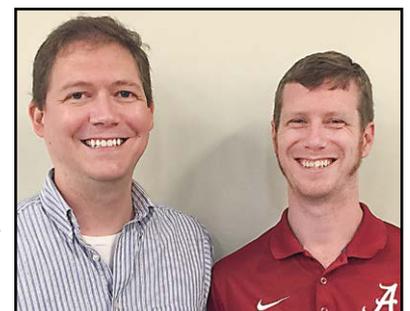
our time considering the seven characteristics of the person who practices true wisdom. At the 2 pm service I preached on "Wired for Connection" based on Philippians 1:3-11. It's a study of the true meaning of spiritual fellowship.

■ Wednesday, July 19: (Batesville)

I was invited to speak at the Summer Series in Batesville, MS. Michael Bates is the minister there. He was away leading a session of camp at Sardis Lake Christian Camp. Several from the congregation were attending camp, so the crowd was slim. They have three elders and about 195 in attendance. In the summer series they looked at the book of Acts. My theme for the evening was Paul's defense before the Jews in Jerusalem in Acts 22. I tried to point out nine lessons we can learn from Paul about how to defend our faith. I pray it was a blessing to those present. I enjoyed my visit.

■ July 23: (Olive Branch)

I visited with the Friendship church of Christ in Olive Branch, MS. Adam Mayfield is the minister there. He is a graduate of HST and has worked with the congregation for a couple of years. They have three elders and about 150 in attendance. It was good to see some old friends and renew my friendship with others. They had a mission team returning from Honduras that night. They showed some pictures of a work day at the building they had on Saturday.



Adam Mayfield and
 Matthew Vanhorn

Matthew Vanhorn, their song leader, taught the auditorium Bible class. He was looking at stories in the life of David. They were in 2 Samuel 6, the story about David moving the Ark to Jerusalem. They discussed the death of Uzzah. Also, they discussed the joy David expressed when the ark was finally carried to Jerusalem. It was a good lesson. Adam preached in the worship. His lesson was taken from 2 Corinthians 14, Paul's instructions about spiritual gifts and the worship. He mentioned that all spiritual gifts were to help the person grow spiritually and help us help others. In Corinth the gifts were not the problem, selfishness was. The assembly was for the purpose of edification of all the saints. It was a good lesson.

■ July 30: (Burnsville)

I visited with the Berea church of Christ near Burnsville, MS. Chad Bowen is the bi-vocational minister there. He and his wife Peggy have worked with the church for two years. During that time the church has doubled in attendance to around 50. Last year they had 13 baptisms. Last week they had a meeting and had 65 in attendance on Sunday morning. They have a good mix of ages. They have an active Lads to Leaders program. The children wanted me to take their picture for the Messenger. They also have an active prison ministry. I enjoyed meeting Chad and visiting with the congregation. He is doing a good work there.

In Bible class, Chad's lesson was from John 15:15f. His lesson was the importance of us loving and forgiving each other if we are to be the disciples of Christ. Christ loves us and we are to love each other. He did talk about the trials we will face as Christians. In the worship service his lesson was "Behold the Lamb of God that Takes Away the Sins of



Kids at Berea

the World” based on John 1:29. He looked at several passages in the Old Testament about the sacrifice of the lamb. He applied them to Christ and His sacrifice for us. It was a good lesson.

■ **August 13: (Independence)**

I visited with the Independence church of Christ. Dan Cates is the longtime preacher there. He is the Dean of Communications at MSOP. Jonathan Beavers, a student at the school, is their associate. They have two elders and around 40 in attendance. They support several mission works. It was good to see Dan again. I know several of the folks that attend there. My family roots are in Independence.



Jonathan Beavers and Dan Cates

Dan taught the adult class in the auditorium. They are studying 2 Peter 1:20f. He had an excellent lesson on the inspiration of Scripture. The prophets didn’t give their own private interpretation of what God said, they were inspired by the Holy Spirit. In the worship, Dan presented the lesson, “Be Thou Faithful,” based on Revelation 2:10. He mentioned four things concerning faithfulness. It’s required, it’s seen in many examples in scripture, it’s resented by the ungodly in the world, and it will be rewarded. It was a good lesson. I enjoyed my visit with the folks there.

■ **August 20: (Holly Springs)**

I visited with the Holly Springs church of Christ. Todd Sanderson and Kerry Reid are the bi-vocational ministers there. They have four elders including Todd and Kerry. It was good seeing all the folks there. They are involved in several ministries. One is the Living Branches of Christ ministry which deals with anger management and several addictions. On Saturday they meet for the Acts of Random Kindness ministry. It’s a good program and helps lots of folks.

Kerry taught the adult Bible class. His lesson was on “The Spirit in Acts.” It was a continuation of their study on the Holy Spirit in the Gospels. It was a good study. Todd



Todd Sanderson, Barry Burlison, Kerry Reid and Jerry Moore -- Elders

preached on the “Total Solar Eclipse.” He talked about things that we try to eclipse in our lives. It was a good lesson. I enjoyed visiting with the folks there.

■ **August 27: (Germantown)**

It was Mission Sunday at the Germantown church of Christ. Germantown is my sponsoring congregation, so I was asked to give a report on my ministry in north Mississippi for 2016-17 and preach in the worship service. It was good to hear the mission reports from other missionaries sponsored by Germantown. I’m thankful that the elders and the church are interested in missions around the world. I was glad to get the opportunity to speak to the congregation about my work in north Mississippi. It was a wonderful day of worship and fellowship.



Leslie Williams

Leslie Williams, our missionary to Canada, spoke first in the worship. He took his text from 1 Timothy 4:1-5. He talked about Paul’s emphasis on the battle we have as Christians with evil. It was a good lesson. I preached on the fruit of Gentleness. I tried to emphasize the important of us being gentle in our actions and words as we try to teach other about Christ. It was a blessed day.

■ **September 10 and 17: (Tiptersville)**

I was invited to preach at the Tiptersville church of Christ. They are in the process of searching for a new minister and asked me to help them during the interim. Myself and two other preachers from the area are helping them during this time. I’m glad that I can help. They have two elders and about 50 in attendance. It’s a good congregation full of wonderful folks. I hope you will pray for them as they search for the right family to work with them.



Randle Miskelly and Donnie Greene, elders at Tiptersville

In Bible class I looked at two of the fruit of the Spirit: Gentleness and Long-suffering. I believe it’s very important that we develop these attributes within our lives by the power of the Holy Spirit. God wants us to be people that practice patience and gentleness. In the worship services I did a study of four passages in Philippians. I talked about what it means to have a focused mind on Christ in chapter one. I considered what it means to have a submissive mind to the Father’s will in chapter two. I preached on having victory over worry by having peace in Christ and the secret of contentment in chapter four. I pray that all these lessons were a blessing to the Christians at Tiptersville as they go through this time of change.

■ **September 25: (Booneville)**

I visited the Campaign for Christ in Booneville, MS. The area churches in Alcorn and Prentiss counties host this area wide event. This year Jeff Jenkins was the speaker. It was great to see Jeff and get to visit with many of the area preachers. Also, I got to visit with lots of brethren that I’ve meet over the last four years visiting among the churches.



Jeff and Laura Jenkins

Jeff’s theme for the night was sanctification. He used Philippians 3:7-21 as his text. He said we must fulfill our purpose, forget our past, find the right perspective, and keep going to the end. It was a great lesson. I enjoyed being there.

Holy Lands Trip for 2018

(with Paul and Glenda Franks)

CANCELLED

PREACHER SEARCH



■ WYLIE, TEXAS

The Wylie, TX Church of Christ is looking for a full-time pulpit minister to replace our current minister that recently, after 14.5 years, announced his pending retirement. We are looking for a preacher that is sound in the gospel, responsive to congregational needs and active in the community. Our candidate should be capable of teaching both topical and textual lessons. He will be expected to preach most Sunday morning and evening services, teach bible classes and participate in congregational activities. We are looking for mature candidates with at least 12 years' experience in congregational ministry.

Our church is a conservative congregation with five elders, deacons, and part-time office staff/secretary. Our average Sunday morning attendance is 200; our generous and loving membership spans age and ethnic ranges. Our outreach programs support missions around the world as well as many local and regional benevolence opportunities.

Wylie is a fast growing, northeast Dallas suburb with a population of over 45,000. We request qualified candidates to submit a resume which includes personal contact information, family information, education, work history and references. We also request each candidate provide two recorded sermons. Please submit your information to the following email address: wcoc.preacher.srch@gmail.com. Candidates are evaluated by the elders. If you wish to speak with one, please contact Donny Moore at 214-797-6682.

■ AMORY, MS Christian Chapel Church

Christian Chapel Church of Christ, averaging 250 in attendance, located just outside of Amory, MS, in the community of Hatley with excellent school districts, is in search of a **youth minister** to direct our youth group of 20-30 teens and many more pre-teens.

Our preferred candidate will be married, have a Bachelor's degree in Youth Ministry, Bible, Education, Counseling, or related fields, with 3-5 years of experience in youth ministry. We are searching for a mature Christian, sound in doctrine, to direct the planning, organizing, scheduling, promoting, and implementing the activities of the youth of our congregation.

Compensation will be commensurate based on the individual's education, years of experience, and strengths. Interested candidates should forward a resume to:

Sam Carpenter at Carpentersam071@gmail.com

Alan Pearson at alanpearson33@gmail.com

ANOTHER "T SHIRT SERMON"

**Fight the good fight; Finish the race;
Keep the faith; Get the prize.**

(This "T Shirt Sermon" was taken from 2 Timothy 4:7,8.)

The young man (above) was listening to a sermon being preached from the pulpit in Clinton, Mississippi. So was I. However, his "T Shirt Sermon" also got my attention. I was blessed with both sermons that night. The one I heard from the pulpit and the one I saw on a "T" shirt.



Lennis Nowell of Corinth, MS

Gospel Preacher for Over 60 Years

Lennis Nowell has been preaching the gospel of Christ since the 1950's. His early schooling was at French Camp Academy, 20 miles north of Kosciusko. Brother Lennis said that, as he studied the Scriptures, he "read himself into the church." During the 50's, Lennis lived in Kosciusko, worked at Tabor Brothers Parts House and attended services at the Huntsville church of Christ. During this time Carlos Gunter, who worked with Superior Coach, served as Huntsville's preacher.



Lennis Nowell and his wife, Janice

Lennis was blessed to study the Bible at Freed-Hardeman College in Henderson, Tennessee. His preaching in Mississippi included Durant, Westpoint and Carthage. In Carthage he preached from 1965 until 1977. During this time, he and Al Franks (my Dad, who was preaching at Kosciusko) became friends and worked together in publishing a paper known as "Truth in Love" which was mailed up to as many as 25,000 homes in central Mississippi. After leaving Carthage, Lennis worked with the Foote Street congregation in Corinth, MS and, then in 1991, began preaching for the Northside congregation in Corinth, MS, where he continues to serve.

Lance Foster, who preaches for the Iuka congregation, near Corinth, called and asked me to visit Brother Nowell, stating that he considers Lennis Nowell as one of his "heroes of the faith." We also appreciate the steadfastness of Brother Lennis, who has now been preaching the gospel for **over sixty years**. Our prayer is that God will continue to give him good health so he may continue to preach for many more years to come. (Paul Franks)

The Huntsville church is located near French Camp, Mississippi where Nathan Wright serves as preacher. His dad, Jim Wright, a song leader and Bible teacher, was responsible for placing the message found on the sign during November, 2017. Sign Says,

Preach the Gospel

(If necessary, use words)

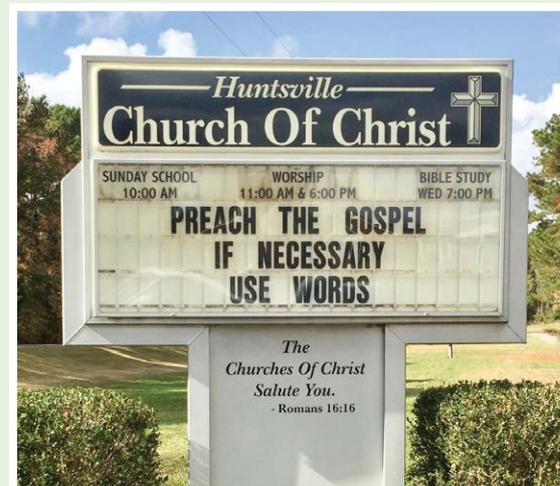
The sign, seen in front of a church meeting house, quotes Jesus who commanded, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15), and added, "If necessary, use words."

The sign indicates that "preaching the gospel" requires more than just words. Effective preaching and/or teaching needs strong backup. Needed is the backing of "godly living." As someone has wisely said, "Be careful how you live. You may be the only Bible some person ever reads."

Paul exhorted Timothy, "Let no man despise your youth, but **be an example** to the believers..." (I Tim. 4:12). He also admonished the young preacher to **first take heed** unto himself (his way of living). Then he followed with a **second** admonition for Timothy to **take heed** unto the doctrine (his teaching).

Of course, words are necessary in teaching the gospel. Cornelius was told to, "...call for Simon whose surname is Peter, who will tell you **words** whereby you and all your household will be saved" (Acts 11:13,14). Yes, in communicating the good news of salvation through Christ Jesus, words are needful. But, words that are not backed up by one's life are likely to fall on deaf ears.

So, as the sign says, "Preach the gospel." But do give careful attention to backing up the spoken message of the gospel with godly living. Unrighteous conduct can deafen the best of gospel teaching. Live right, first; teach right, second. This is the way Jesus did it. Luke said Jesus "began to **do**" (first) and "to **teach**" (second) (Acts 1:1) Use words as necessary, but back the words with your way of life. (Editor, alf)



520 Sent in Answers to the "Question Box" (See Page 24)

1. Linda Keirn
2. Sharon Dantzler
3. Evelyn Netterville
4. Kim Easterling
5. Doris Darnell
6. Mark Williams
7. Vera Spencer
8. Cheri Moore
9. Dorothy Brunson
10. James & Katie Houston
11. Larry Melton
12. Sherian Martin
13. Ray Parham
14. Zach & Amie Guttery
15. Shannon Fulwiley
16. Jaylen Brown
17. Marcus Nunnally II
18. Larry Bean, Jr
19. Justice Sessom
20. Tyler Willingham
21. Arvel Miles
22. Betty Miles
23. Floyd Goode
24. Velva Dykes
25. Deloris Detherage
26. Ruby McCrory
27. Barbara Baker
28. Janie Green
29. Louise Gaview
30. Lessie Tanson
31. Betty Standard
32. Gail Saxon
33. Jean Parson
34. Sarah Hill
35. Jean Lewis
36. Patrilla Maddox
37. Terry Miltner
38. Rhenda Miltner
39. Gwendolyn & Gary Bryant
40. Rosie Lee Odoms
41. Mary McDonald
42. Bonnie Dixon
43. Mary Brannan
44. Willie Stancel
45. Garfield Moss
46. Burlean Leatherwood
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50. Katheryn Lee
51. Cathy Brooks
52. Mary Jacobs
53. E. Jean Brown- Harmon
54. Sherry Ross
55. James Hudley
56. Donna Brewer
57. Dorothy Booker
58. Ida Wells
59. Mary Dennis
60. W C Cannon
61. Charles Coffey
62. John Gates, Jr.
63. Charlane Stanfield
64. Sherry Townsend
65. Clyde Ray Bradford
66. Betty Spears
67. Joyce Reich Gray
68. Ann Holeman
69. Karen Britt
70. Gracie Stroud
71. Michael Coleman
72. Michael Euer
73. Joe Holmes
74. Doris Townsend Britt
75. Clara Brooks
76. Claude Edwards
77. Ruby Wright
78. Paul & Elsie Bryson
79. Sherron Dixon
80. Charlene Jent
81. Martha Reed-Wallace
82. Caiden Holliday
83. Jamia Brandon
84. Karmen Paine
85. Sahaya Metcalfe
86. Kayla Paine
87. Joshua Williams
88. Alex Williams
89. Kalib Smith
90. Jaylen Johnson
91. Robyn Johnson
92. Joshua Metcalfe
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94. Darryl James Sterling
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101. Elnorsh Duckworth
102. Kenneth Murphy
103. Bernita Booker
104. Ruby Nell Parham
105. Joyce Morgan
106. Patsy Conquest
107. Lisa Dearman
108. James Willis
109. Wanda Robinson
110. Janice Griffin
111. Carol Bonner
112. Geraldine Hitt
113. Glenda Wooldrige
114. Mary Adams
115. Jimmie Brown
116. Clara Allen
117. Herschel Ford
118. Inez & Laura Brannon
119. Don Lee
120. Linda Bonner
121. Kathy Perry
122. Onngaleah Huff
123. Nadine Patton
124. Dianne Culley
125. Peggy Engel
126. Mr. & Mrs. Arthur Burnett
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128. Sarah Dantzler
129. Kathy Roberson
130. Rosie Felton
131. James & Judy Hill
132. Bobbie Loggins
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134. William Pyron
135. Bettye McCool
136. Carole Shelby
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138. Melba Ogg
139. Barbara White
140. Linda Cook
141. Nellie Lester
142. Brenda Burlison
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144. Sharon Rachels
145. Lois Nielson
146. Princess Watson
147. Dee Kepler
148. Ann Shelton
149. Bonnie Brown Glass
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155. Dannie Davis
156. Kerry Deaton
157. Mary Williams
158. Mary King
159. James King
160. Michelle Simpson\
161. Jean Girdner
162. Mack Moore
163. Jerry Fleming
164. Mary Jane Hollis
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166. Patricia Glover
167. Nancy Akers
168. Admiral & Ruth Tidwell
169. Fran Williford
170. Ima Jean Fogus
171. Foster Owens
172. Mattie Ann Owens
173. Brenda Green
174. Earlean Williams
175. Patsy Howard
176. James Jarrett
177. Wanda Cochran
178. Perkins Cochran
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180. Madonna Michael
181. Billye Wiygul
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185. Gay Null
186. Joyce Talbert
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197. Jeremiah Woodard, Jr.
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199. Ma'Nia & Bralan Womack
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202. Marcella Moore
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204. Glenda Cocke
205. Ken Harris
206. June Brents
207. Betty Skinner
208. Maggie Edmonds
209. Tom McLemore
210. Margie Andrews
211. Stan Neuenschwander
212. Faye Stanford
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214. Ann Whetstone
215. Judy Willis
216. Inez Carver
217. Dorothy Thompson White
218. Bet Tucker
219. Pearl Hurst
220. Amy Hutson
221. Carl Trimm
222. Carolyn Harvill
223. Pat Moore
224. Evelyn Laney
225. Meredith Peek
226. Melvin & Kay Linton
227. Carolyn Perry
228. Kay Shiers
229. Barbara Howard
230. Evelyn Baker
231. Sylvester & Linda Burton
232. Merlene Scott
233. Bill Moore
234. Margaret Freeman
235. Paul & Darlene McElroy
236. Margie McKinney
237. Pamela Luna
238. Ann Sims
239. Joyce King
240. Betty Van Buren
241. Alice Humphries
242. Rick Bishop
243. Jim Crownover
244. Gloria Wilborn
245. Dwight Hester
246. Steve & Lana Todd
247. Shellie Hancock
248. Michael Barnes
249. Janice Vaughan
250. Audrey Bowling
251. Peggy Hartman
252. Annie Mae Pipkin
253. Irene Rogers
254. Bonnie Lipsey
255. Ginny Luther
256. Roger King
257. Bertha Johnson
258. Sue Fisher
259. Rosa Sanders
260. Irene Wright
261. Olivia Wilson
262. Brantley Ford Hopper
263. Dale Stratton
264. Mary Katherine Stratton
265. Herrington
266. Idna Eddington
267. Willa Fox
268. Ann Kimble
269. LaVern Corley Becker
270. Masey Brown
271. Clifford Hampton
272. Dorothy Winslett
273. Mary Salinas
274. Wilda Pounds
275. Elledith Harris
276. Thomas Forrest, Sr.
277. Sharon Praytor
278. Margaret Parker
279. Frederick Alan Jones
280. Charlotte Rouchle
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283. Doris Fletcher
284. Glen Brady
285. Donna Gulley
286. Richard Odom
287. Billy Willingham
288. Wm & Atlean Snow
289. Beverly Miles
290. Jo Ann Mayer
291. Emma Beth Mayer
292. Cary Mayer
293. Jackson Mayer
294. Bobbie Sindle
295. Elizabeth Smith
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301. Della Rhodes
302. Velma Isom
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307. Beverly Armstrong
308. Bethany Stephens
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310. Janice Galloway
311. William Hinton
312. Brenda McDougal
313. John Ray
314. Loretha Widger
315. Bonnie Skates
316. Kavan Young
317. Steven Arthur Franklin
318. Rachel & Rebekah Gough
319. Elbert Lewis
320. Jimmie & Anita Taft
321. Curly Hay
322. Prince Lewis
323. Addie Brown
324. Mary Grigsby
325. Beulah Rupert
326. Jennifer Gray
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328. Bobby Lively
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330. Wanda Sproch
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333. Jim Vermillion
334. Eddie Vermillion
335. Charlotte Langley
336. James Hurlbut
337. Sandy Dean
338. Jimmy Coggins
339. Jane Barnett
340. Nettie Doss
341. Sharon Huckaba
342. Gary Wolfe
343. Lady Garth
344. Carla Owen
345. Ella Darnell
346. Elsie Brook
347. Geraldine Lagarde
348. Purnell Lagarde
349. Diane Dunaway
350. Sandra Morris
351. Wanda Orman
352. Jane Walker
353. Sidney Clemmer
354. Jean Clemmer
355. Judy Gurley
356. Mitchell Gurley
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358. Artis Hinton
359. Arva Fisher
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363. Gerald Worthey
364. Ella Gentry
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367. Lawrence Horn
368. James & Patricia Thornton
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370. Merle Johnston
371. Theresa Prentiss
372. Connie Fountain
373. Nan Conley
374. Elizabeth Dickerson
375. McArthur Williams
376. Geri Spears
377. Charlotte Ritter
378. Barbara Yates
379. Sandra Grisham
380. Reagan Hall
381. Lynn Grisham
382. Booker Williams III
383. Linda Shadrix
384. Elvis Dilmore
385. Irene Hall
386. Claude Williams
387. Willie Horton
388. Benjamin Pollock
389. Tommy Baragona
390. Tristan Pharr
391. Mackensy Floyd
392. Turner Foster
393. Patsy McClung
394. Mary Faulconer
395. Foy Cladien Smith
396. Kenneth Lee Harmon
397. Sue Foster
398. Stacey, Melinda & Gregory Hawkins
399. Lisa Dettor
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401. Shirley Bostick
402. James Backer
403. Keitha Hare
404. Johnnye Blackmon
405. Wes & Rhoda Jeans
406. Dorothy Franks
407. Earl Franks
408. Thelma Talbert
409. Bernice Richardson/ Shirley Ray
410. Scottie Dendy
411. Bonnie Howell
412. Frances Patti
413. Franks Patti
414. Roscoe Slate
415. Dora Adams
416. Madonna Langford
417. Joe Arnold
418. Paul Pounds
419. Kaye Wise
420. Alice Brown
421. Waymond Hales
422. Joseph Bolden
423. Tommy & Peggy Shull
424. Katie Barmer
425. Pierce Flatt
426. Roy Gambrell
427. Edmon Wheeler
428. Justin Rippee
429. Lane Lawler
430. Samuel Rippee
431. Cynthia Lawler
432. Daniel Thomas
433. Jane Phillips
434. Ina Sadler
435. Grace Childers
436. Wayne Phillips
437. Millie Goode
438. Michael Harvill
439. Betty Harris
440. Johnnie Mobley
441. Betty & Lyman York
442. Mary Prosser
443. Natalie Stewart
444. James Garner
445. Dorsey & Margie Burton
446. Julie Yager
447. Henrietta Johnson
448. Catherine Allen
449. Sue Mason
450. Floyd & Millie Goode
451. Martha Leggett
452. Carlos & LaShanda Stringfield
453. Kattie Edwards
454. Sue Glenn
455. Tommy & Nell Lawson
456. Patricia McClure
457. Charles Beal
458. Irma Lucas
459. Theresa Henderson
460. Wendy Roberson
461. Jeff Roberson
462. Bradley Childs
463. Evelyn Jamieson
464. Regina Coates
465. Laura Green
466. Tim Rogers
467. Charles Shelton
468. Billy Morton
469. Regina Morton
470. Donna Schmitz
471. Tommye Jane Walker
472. Bonnie Jordan
473. Lori Cagle
474. Rob Cagle
475. James Wilburn
476. Margorie Wilburn
477. Roger McAlister
478. Dean Caviness
479. Leslie Caviness
480. Emily Raines
481. John Raines
482. Chris Grisham
483. Jane Chapman
484. Ann Akins
485. Benny Akins
- 486. Ronald Chapman**
487. Summer Gibens
488. Bobbie Childs
489. Brenda Chapman
490. Wanda McCollum
491. Beverly Akins
492. Dorothy Austin
493. Brock Lindley
494. Benny Wallis
495. Libby Cloninger
496. Johnie Jumper
497. Anissa Yancey
498. Jimmy Muse
499. Liz Alsup
500. Lillie Jeter
501. Mike Bennett
502. Janet Bennett
503. Sherry Henderson
504. Mary Alice Cross
505. Jonathan Morrison
506. Lisa Morrison
507. Jessica Smith
508. Rob Smith
509. Betty Henry
510. Kathy Hill
511. Johna Hopper
512. Avis Moody
513. Peggy Wallis
514. Joyce Moore
515. Mary Pedigo
516. David Cook
517. Phil Peeler
518. Diane Peeler
519. Lynnette Johnston
520. Paul MacAluso

NOTE: If your answers were received by us after December 4, your name should be in our next issue. Thank you for your example in Bible study. God bless.

THE QUESTION BOX

The Gift of Jesus

Many people love the Christmas season. I certainly enjoy the food and our family traditions. I especially love the decorations my wife, Glenda, puts up around the house. We enjoy giving gifts to our children and grandchildren. We don't spend a lot of energy and or money getting gifts for each other; however, maybe we should!

In the thinking of many people, December 25th is the birthday of Jesus Christ. Students of God's book know, however, that the Bible doesn't tell us when Jesus was born. So we don't know! I do know, however, that Jesus was born and He was a gift from God to me and to the entire world. "For God so _____ the world that he gave his only begotten _____, that whosoever believeth in him _____ not perish, but have everlasting _____." John 3:_____.

(NOTE: Due to wording and spelling, it will be helpful for you to use the KJV to fill in the blanks. The information in this study was collected from sermon notes compiled from various sources. [Paul Franks])

True or False Statements

(Mark true or false and fill in missing words)

- _____ 1. Unlike the children of men who are begotten and conceived by earthly parents, Jesus, God's Son, did not have his beginning at the time he was conceived in Mary.
- _____ 2. Jesus is the "only begotten Son of God" in the sense that He and God the Father have the same essence, the same eternal life span, the same unending wisdom and the same unlimited power.
- _____ 3. Every quality we attribute to God, we can also attribute to Jesus. (John _____:9): "... he that hath seen _____ hath seen the _____..." (Hebrews 1: _____): "Who being the _____ of his glory, and the express image of his person, and _____ all things by the _____ of his _____." (See also Col. 1:15-20)
- _____ 4. Jesus wants us to know His Father. He also wants to help us. (Matt. _____:28-30): "Come unto me, all ye that _____ and are _____ laden, and I will give you _____. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find _____ unto your souls. For my yoke is _____ and my burden is _____."
- _____ 5. "I don't need God to give anyone for me. I've led a good life. I've held a good job. People respect me. My wife and children love me. I don't need God to give his son for me."
- _____ 6. Our problem and our need all begins in the heart. (Jeremiah 17: _____): "The _____ is deceitful above all things, and desperately _____: who can know it?" (See also Mk. 7:21-22; Rom. 3:23)
- _____ 7. There are some people who do not have a problem with sin. (I John 1: _____): "If we say that we have no _____, we _____ ourselves and the _____ is not in us."
- _____ 8. Jesus is sinless, the one and only Son of God, who traded places with us. (I Corinthians 5: _____): "For he hath made him to be _____ for us, who knew no _____; that we might be made the _____ of God in him." (Read also Gal. 3:13, I Cor. 15:3; Isaiah 53:5-6)
- _____ 9. When Jesus died for us, we weren't even his friends. (Romans _____: 7-8) "For scarcely for a _____ man will one die: yet peradventure for a _____ man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his _____ toward us, in that, while we were yet _____, Christ died for us."
- _____ 10. God wants us to offer our lives to Him in response to the life of His Son which He offered for us. (2 Corinthians 5: _____): "For the _____ of Christ constraineth us; because we thus _____, that if one _____ for all, then were all _____: And that he died for _____, that they which _____ should not henceforth live unto _____, but unto him which _____ for them, and rose again."
- _____ 11. We need to receive with gratitude the gift of Jesus and then demonstrate how much He and His sacrifice mean to us by living our lives for Him.

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 23). ALSO, by random drawing, the name of ONE student will be selected to receive a beautiful New Study Bible or a Bible Study CD Library. You may be the one! Send your answers to:

"The Question Box"

P. O. Box 1578
Kosciusko, MS 39090



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(Summer issue of MM)

Linda & Sylvester Burton

(Union Point, Georgia)

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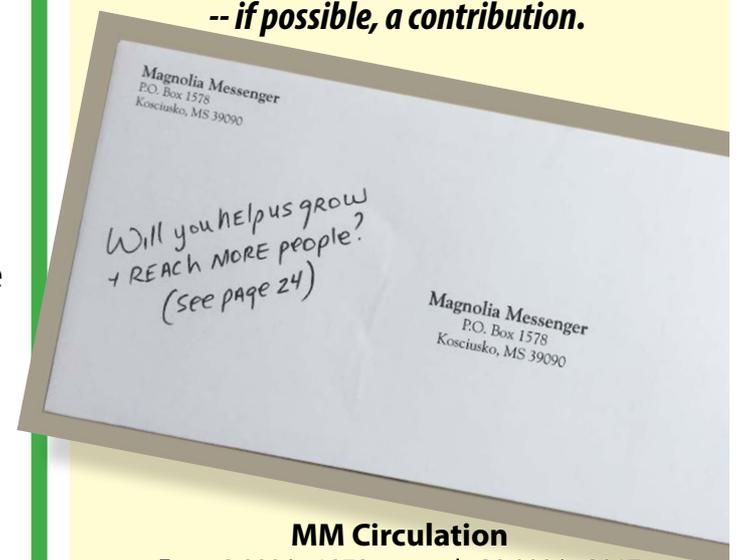
Ronald Chapman

(Ripley, Mississippi)

Congratulations!

**Look for an envelope
inside this issue**

**Please return to us with addresses,
answers, suggestions, ideas, and
-- if possible, a contribution.**



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We thank the Lord and readers of the MM.

The MM Goes into every state in the USA.
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Special emphasis to adjoining states.

**YOUR HELP IS
NEEDED AND REQUESTED**

Please return the enclosed envelope

Include:

- 1. Names and addresses**
(friends, family, neighbors)
- 2. Answers to "The Question Box"**
- 3. Suggestions, Ideas and Comments**
"Always Welcomed!"
- 4. If possible; A contribution.**
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