



Magnolia Messenger

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

Volume 36; Number 4; WINTER, 2014

Magnolia Messenger
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Beautiful Fruit Display: A Reminder of Bible Teachings

- 1. Beginning:** Fruit in the garden (Gen. 2:9; 3:2,3)
- 2. Church:** Disciples to bear fruit (John 15:8,16)
- 3. Spirit:** Fruit is love, joy, peace, etc (Eph. 5:22,23)
- 4. Eternity:** Fruits from the “tree of life” (Rev. 22:2)

(Picture by MM editor who is fascinated by fruit, earthly and spiritual!)

A Reader Asks:

QUESTION: Which came first, the Bible or the church? Obviously the church produced the Bible, not the other way around, as is generally supposed. (A.B.)

May's **RESPONSE** on Page 3

ARK & GOPHER WOOD

“This ancient illustration has been ridiculed as “old hat” and “backneyed, but no one yet has shown that Noah would have obeyed God if he had made an ark of pine or oak.”

(See also Page 3)

562 Names on Page 23
Sent in Answers



Looks a lot like winter. But, it isn't!
It's a July scene in the beautiful Swiss Alps
Created by Almighty God, our Heavenly Father
This is the **Winter Issue** of the MM
Scriptural Teaching and Encouraging News

“Mississippi's **GOOD NEWS** Newspaper” ----- Serving Mississippi, Louisiana and Adjoining States

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Hattiesburg, MS 39401

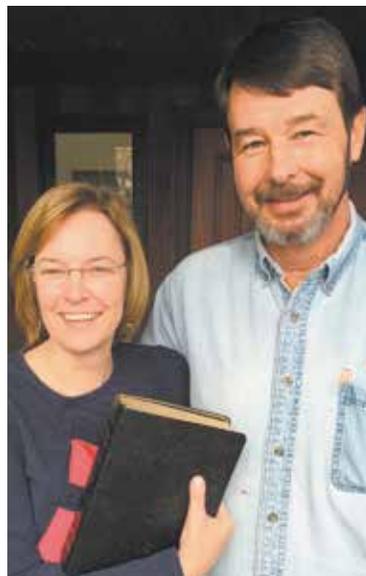
Mark Your Calendars

2015		APRIL							2015	
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT				
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5	6	7	8	9	10	11				
12	13	14	15	16	17	18				
19	20	21	22	23	24	25				
26	27	28	29	30						

2015		NOVEMBER							2015	
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29	30									

17th Annual
Magnolia Messenger
RV Rally
April 20-24, 2015
Lake Tiak-O'Khata
Louisville, Mississippi

NEW
1st Annual
AL-MS-TN
MM RV Rally
November 4-7, 2015
J. P. Coleman State Park
Iuka, Mississippi
(Details on Page 19)



New Bible Winner(s)
Kathie & Danny Stacks
(See Pages 23, 24)

Be Not Anxious

Yes, the Lord was saying to me (you):
“Take no thought; Do not be anxious. Do not worry!”

Consider Christ's Challenge
(See Page 2)

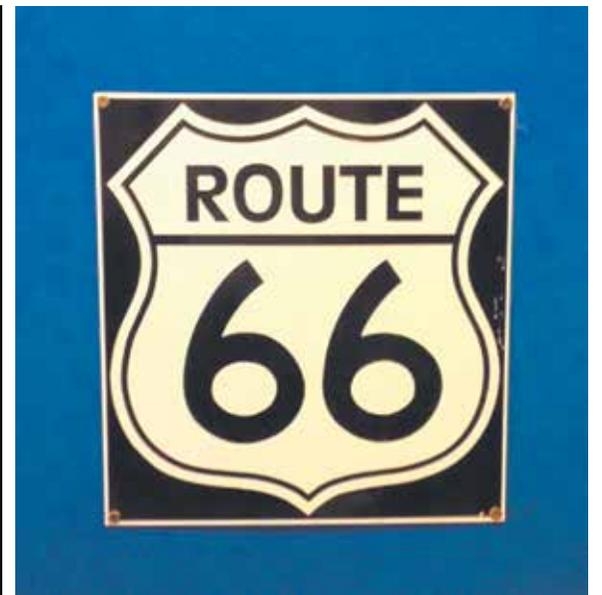
WHO'S WHO Among Leaders In Churches of Christ? An Award Program (Details on Page 9)

The **WAY**
to our
eternal
Home

The
WORD
of
God

66
Books

Revealing
CHRIST
and
His Church



“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”
(2 Tim. 3:16,17)

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“Put them in mind to be ready unto every **GOOD WORK.**” (Titus 3:1)

Readers' Response

Comments & Suggestions Invited
Criticisms Considered

"I have enjoyed the Magnolia Messenger so much and me and my sister work the Question Box on back together. I pray that you continue the Lord's work that you do and that you are blessed for the good job..." (Brenda in Water Valley, Mississippi)

Brother Franks,

I'm a subscriber of the Magnolia Messenger, and appreciate much the work you do. I was wondering if it would be possible for you to send me the full article about elders by Norman Maranto that was recently published. I seem to have misplaced part 1, and would like to have both parts. If you can email them to me, that would be great. (Jon Mitchell; Duncan, SC)

Thanks, and thank you again for the great job you're doing with the newspaper.

Keep preaching the truth! (Howard G. Pipes, Clovis, NM)

Always enjoy receiving Magnolia Messenger. So many interesting articles to read and learn. (Howard Risley, Sullivan, IL)

"I am not sure why Florida, but they were calling."

"The ad you ran for me concerning the song books was a "home run". I had over 20 different ones calling requesting those books. In the end we sent those original books to two different congregations and then we bought a brand new set of books for another one. We had calls from Mississippi, Louisiana and surprisingly had several from Florida. I am not sure why Florida but they were calling. (Ray Franks; DeQuincy, LA) [Editor's note: 602 copies of the MM are mailed into Florida each issue.]

We did the Question Box in our Teenage Bible Class. We made copies to have enough. Hope that is ok. Thanks, (Danny Meeks, Tiplersville, MS) (Sure Danny that is ok. We wish more congregations would do the Question Box as a class.mjf)

Thank you for sending me the Magnolia Messenger. After I read it I can always pass it on to someone else. (Donna Rhodes, Florence, AL)

We thank God for all who Read and Respond to the MM

Magnolia Messenger

Church of Christ - Kosciusko, MS

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

Contributions from churches and individuals make possible the circulation of about 27,000 copies of each issue of the "Magnolia Messenger". Your prayers and support are requested, needed and appreciated!

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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)

E-Mail: franksmm@aol.com

"Be Not Anxious"

Taking It Personally

I confess to you; I might as well. "Truth is truth." In my experience as a disciple of Christ, one of the most difficult commands ever given by our Master is "**Be Not Anxious**" (Matt. 6:31). The truth is that, day in and day out, I find the command to "**Be Not Anxious**" difficult for me to obey. Do you?

Among the clearest of New Testament teachings about the SIN OF WORRY are the words of Jesus in His "Sermon on the Mount" (recorded in Matthew chapter six.) This is where Jesus said, "**Take no thought [be not anxious; do not worry] saying, What shall we eat? or What shall we drink? or Wherewithal shall we be clothed?**" (verse 31).

When Jesus gave this "difficult" command, He was speaking to present AND to future disciples -- including *me!* I need to take His commandment *personally*. Yes, the Lord was saying to *me*, "**Al Franks: Take no thought; Do not be anxious. Do not worry!**"

In the context of our Lord's teachings on the problem (SIN) of worry, He spoke about this present world. He charged, "**Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth...**" Jesus added, "**But lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven...**" Obedience to these simple commands assists greatly in our efforts to not worry. I need such reminders, including the words of an old song often sung about this earth not being our home and which proclaims, "**Heaven Holds All to Me.**"

Earthly treasures can quickly be taken away from us; heavenly treasures cannot be taken. Jesus added, "**Where your treasure is, there will be your heart also**" (Matthew 6:19-21). If my emphasizes in earthly life is upon heavenly treasures and my heart is where my treasures are (heaven), then, I have no reason to worry. Neither do you!

Jesus warned me (you)

to not attempt the impossible. He said, "**No man can serve two masters...**" He explained, "**You cannot serve God and mammon** [earthly riches]" (verse 24). Our Lord clearly stated that I cannot serve **both** God and earthly wealth (mammon). He said it is impossible to

"In nothing be anxious; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." (Phil. 4:6)

serve both! So, trust Him. Serve Him. **Take it personally!** Worry is useless, needless and sinful.

In His instructions to me (you), Jesus continued by saying, "**Take no thought [be not anxious; do not worry] for your life... nor yet for your body...**" He specifically commanded me (you) to not be anxious or worried about what we may eat, drink or wear.

The Good Lord reminds us that the Almighty God who gave the greater (**life**) surely can/will provide food and drink (the lesser). He who also made the greater (**body**) can/will surely provide the clothing (the lesser). Jesus' teaching is clear. He said, "Don't worry. Don't be anxious." Yet, obedience is not always easy! At least, **not for me.**

Jesus also illustrated his powerful and practical lesson as He spoke about birds and flowers. He said, "**Behold the fowls of the air**" and "**Consider the lilies of the field.**" In these exhortations,

Jesus provides assistance to me (you) in our desire to obey His command to not be anxious. After He said, "**Behold the fowls of the air...**" He added, "**Your heavenly Father feeds them.**" It is **your** Father who feeds the birds! He also spoke of the lilies and the grass of the field which are here today and gone tomorrow. Jesus asked: "**Shall He [your Heavenly Father] not much more clothe you?**"

Then He added, "**O you of little faith**" (verses 26-30). This is a key phrase: "**Little faith.**" Why am I anxious? Why do I worry? Could it be that my (your) faith is far too "little." Let us pray as did Jesus' 1st century disciples, "**Lord, increase our faith**" (Luke 17:5). No doubt, increased faith results in decreased worries!

Remember the reassuring words of Jesus when He spoke about God recognizing our earthly/physical needs of food, drink and clothing. Jesus said, "**Your Heavenly Father knows that you have need of all these things**" (verse 32).

To assist us, in our efforts to **not be anxious**, Jesus gave a **command** and a **promise**. His command to me (you) is, "**Seek you first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.**" His command is followed by His promise, "**And all these things shall be added unto you**" (verse 33).

In closing, I am thankful to say that as my faith grows stronger, my worries become weaker. I know that if I truly seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, that my heavenly Father will supply all my needs.

So, I ask: "Why should I, or you, worry?" My daily prayer is, and may your prayer also be, "**Lord, increase my faith.**" I want to trust my Father with all of my heart -- for my good and for His glory. My prayer is, "O Lord, help me and help each MM reader to '**Be Not Anxious**'."

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A. L. Franks
(Editor)

Bible Questions Answered

by Cecil May, Jr.

QUESTION: Which came first, the Bible or the church? Obviously the church produced the Bible, not the other way around, as is generally supposed. (A.B.)

The early church could not have used the argument from silence the way we do because the 27 books of the New Testament were not declared canonical until the fourth century (B.S.)

RESPONSE: The church was in existence before any of the books of the Bible were written, but the message the Bible contains both preceded and produced the church.

The Apostles' Teaching

People were redeemed and became part of the church at its beginning by hearing and obeying apostolic teaching, and from the very first day of the church's existence, the members "devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers" (Acts 2:41-42).

Jesus had promised the apostles that the Holy Spirit would bring to their remembrance all that Jesus had taught them (John 14:26) and would guide them into all truth (John 16:13). The "apostles' teaching," therefore, was "breathed out by God" (2 Timothy 3:16).

In the earliest days, the apostles themselves did the teaching and preaching. Later they were joined by "prophets," people who were given the gift of inspired speech and other miraculous gifts by apostles laying their hands on them (1 Corinthians 14:3; 2 Timothy 1:6). Using the language of the New Testament itself, the church was "built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone" (Ephesians 2:20).

The apostles and those who heard and obeyed them understood that apostolic preaching was from God. Paul told the Thessalonians, "And we also thank God constantly for this, that when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the word of God, which is at work in you believers" (1 Thessalonians 2:13).

The message they first preached orally and later wrote is the same message, and it was still the word of God after they wrote it. "If anyone thinks that he is a prophet, or spiritual, he should acknowledge that the things I am

writing to you are a command of the Lord" (1 Corinthians 14:37). Paul says "the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly. When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit" (Ephesians 3:3-5).

The New Testament Scriptures are included in the statement that "all Scripture is breathed out by God" (2 Timothy 3:16). The apostle Peter included Paul's epistles in the category of Scripture (1 Peter 3:15-16). Paul quotes "Scripture" citing both Deuteronomy 25:4 and Matthew 10:10 (1 Timothy 5:18).

The apostles' teaching was uniformly proclaimed to all the churches wherever the apostles and prophets preached. Paul wrote of "my ways in Christ, as I teach them everywhere in every church" (1 Corinthians 4:17). "Now con-

ARK & GOPHER WOOD

This ancient illustration has been ridiculed as "old hat" and "hackneyed," but no one yet has shown that Noah would have obeyed God if he had made an ark of pine or oak.

cerning the collection for the saints: as I directed the churches of Galatia, so you also are to do" (1 Corinthians 16:1). The Macedonian churches and some of the churches of Asia were also included in this direction (2 Corinthians 8:1-4; Acts 20:4). Again, "As in all the churches of the saints, the women should keep silent in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak, but should be in submission, as the Law also says" (1 Corinthians 14:33-34).

So the apostles' and prophets' oral teaching brought the church into being, taught the saints how to live day by day and how to assemble for worship and edification. We, now, are subject to that same teaching through their written word.

Argument From Silence



Cecil May, Jr.,

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The expression, "the argument from silence" is somewhat misleading. The silence of Scripture is not always prohibitive; if it were, church buildings, printing presses and copy machines for producing teaching materials and automobiles and airplanes to travel in would all be prohibited.

Silence is only prohibitive in cases where God has spoken. The classic illustration is God telling Noah, "Make yourself an ark of gopher wood" (Genesis 6:14). If God had just said, "Make yourself an ark of wood," any kind of wood would have been permitted. However, God specified "an ark of gopher wood." He spoke! In order for Noah to be obedient, the wood for making the ark had to be gopher wood. Any other kind of wood was prohibited because God, having spoken about gopher, was silent about any other wood.

This ancient illustration has been ridiculed as "old hat" and "hackneyed," but no one yet has shown that Noah would have obeyed God if he had made an ark of pine or oak.

The New Testament makes use of the same principle regarding the priesthood. "For when there is a change in the priesthood, there is necessarily a change in the law as well. For the one of whom these things are spoken belonged to another tribe, from which no one has ever served at the altar. For it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah, and in connection with that tribe Moses said nothing about priests." God set aside the tribe of Levi to be priests. Jesus, our High Priest in the new dispensation, is of the tribe of Judah. Since Moses spoke specifically about Levi and the priesthood and was silent, "said nothing," about priests from Judah, "there is necessarily a change in the law" (Hebrews 7:12-14).

Some laugh and say no one knows what gopher wood is. "Gopher" is a transliteration of a He-

brew word, a word used only here in Scripture. It has been variously thought to refer to cedar, fir or cypress. There is insufficient evidence, right now at least, to settle with any certainty what kind of wood or tree gopher was.

What is certain, however, is that God knew what kind of wood he was specifying and Moses know what

kind to use. Scripture says, "Noah did this; he did all that God commanded him" (Genesis 6:22).

The apostles and prophets in their oral teaching (Acts 14:23) and later in their writings (Titus 1:5-9) taught that churches were to be overseen by a plurality of elders, meeting certain criteria and chosen from among the congregation. With that instruction "spoken," apostolic silence as to one bishop or pastor over a congregation or as to a hierarchical arrangement with individuals or groups overseeing and directing more than one congregational, are prohibited.

Silence is only prohibitive in cases where God has spoken.

The apostles' teaching specifies bread and fruit of the vine as elements of the Lord's supper (1 Corinthians 11:22-26), sound doctrine as the substance of what is to be preached (Titus 2:1), singing as a means of teaching and admonishing one another (Ephesians 5:19) and the fruit of our lips as an offering of praise (Hebrews 13:15). That prohibits fried chicken and french fries for the Lord's supper, philosophies and traditions of men as the preached message, and guitars, keyboards and drum-sets for admonition and praise.

The apostles and prophets proclaimed the same message when preaching orally and when writing.

Inspiration, Canonization

Many who challenge the inspiration and authority of Scripture maintain, as the second questioner did, that "the 27 books of the New Testament were not declared canonical until the fourth century." "Canonical" is a word understood to mean "recognized as belonging in the Bible; therefore, inspired and authoritative." "Until the fourth century" refers to a couple of Councils held in North Africa, the Council of Hippo, A.D. 393, and the Council of Carthage, A.D. 397, which were the first Councils to list exactly the same 27 books we include in the canon

today.

By the time of these ecclesiastical councils, the hierarchical system of church government that, when fully developed, became the Roman Catholic Church, was

That prohibits fried chicken and french fries for the Lord's supper, philosophies and traditions of men as the preached message, and guitars, keyboards and drum-sets for admonition and praise.

well underway. Though the RCC claims to have given us the Bible, these Councils did not confer apostolic authority on the books they en-

dorsed. They were reporting what had already been recognized. The books were inspired, and therefore authoritative and canonical, when they were written.

The fact that a book's apostolic authority was questioned by some people at some point in time does not weigh against its authenticity. King Jehoiakim rejected Jeremiah's prophecy. He took a penknife, and as it was read to him, cut out each column in turn and threw them into the fire (Jeremiah 36). The highest Israelite authority denied the divine authority of the book of Jeremiah, but it possessed divine authority nevertheless. It was rewritten at the command of the Lord, and remains canonical to this day.

The New Testament books testify to their own canonicity. Paul's epistles claim divine authority (1 Corinthians 14:37). Peter counts Paul's epistles as Scripture (2 Peter 3:16). Jude quotes 2 Peter 3:3 as apostolic (Jude 17-18). Paul quotes Matthew 10:10 as Scripture (1 Timothy 5:17-18).

Though questions were raised about some individual books in some quarters, there is no book outside our twenty-seven that ever received general acceptance. Simply to read the other books of that time that were never generally accepted as canonical is to readily concur with the consensus decision of the early church that they are not breathed out by God. The differences are stark!

The New Testament books are authoritative because they are breathed out by God or, as we say, inspired. They were accepted as from God when they were first received by those to whom they were addressed. A few books were disputed by some people for a little while, but the canon was complete when the last New Testament book was written.

God has kept His promise. The apostle Peter quotes Isaiah 40:6-8 and applies it to the New Testament gospel. "All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, but the word of the Lord remains forever." And this word is the good news that was preached to you" (1 Peter 1:24-25).

Demon Possession (Man's Free Will)

- Roger Johnson -

There are several instances in the New Testament in which it speaks of people being possessed by demons. Such possession was manifested in a variety of ways. An individual may become blind (Mt. 12:22), unable to speak (Mt. 9:32), lame, mentally deficient (Mt. 17:15), possess unusual physical strength (Mk. 5:3-4), dropsy (Lk. 14:2), or even have epilepsy.



Roger Johnson

Several years ago the comedian Flip Wilson coined a phrase that became popular, "The devil made me do it." Anytime an evil deed was done it was attributed to the devil's influence as if that absolved man of all responsibility for the wrong committed.

The interesting thing is that even during the period of time in which demons actually possessed man, you never read of their forcing a person to violate God's word against their will.

Demons are special servants of the devil who inflicted mental and physical anguish on men during the first century. They only did harm and never anything good (Jn. 10:21).

"The devil made me do it!" (???)

During his ministry the Lord manifested his power over the demonic world by casting them out of men (Mt. 17:18). The demons knew who Jesus was, the Son of God (Lk. 4:41). They even recognized his power over them as evidenced by the fact that some demons entreated him to cast them into a herd of swine and he granted their request (Mt. 8:31-32).

The ultimate end of the devil and his angels is the eternal fire of hell (Mt. 25:41) and he wants to take as many as he can with him.

Demon possession was always manifested in some mental or physical malady... never in causing a person to transgress the Lord's will. James said, "But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death" (Jas. 1:14-15, emphasis mine). Thus, if we meet the Lord on the Day of Judgment in a lost condition, we can only blame ourselves. *We can't even blame the devil.*

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"Back to the Bible Campaign" Knocked Over 8,000 Doors

A Note From Russ:

Bro. Franks,

Always enjoy reading the MM and the 'goings on' in Mississippi. We recently finished our 8th Annual Back to the Bible Campaign in Gardendale, AL and wanted to let you know the results, all of which we will never know while on this earth.

A Report From Russ:

The Cox Blvd church of Christ, Sheffield, AL and the Decatur Highway church of Christ, Gardendale, AL conducted a Back to the Bible Campaign in which over 8,000 doors were knocked. Every person talked to was invited to attend services and was asked to study the Bible.

Prior to the campaign two people were baptized, three more during and one after the campaign. Another person, who had material on her door, gave it to her mother and she read it and was restored after 20 years. Isaiah 55:9-11 tells us God's Word does what He wants it to do and never returns void.

The Decatur Highway elders spoke about the value of a Back to the Bible campaign; that it was not just in the souls added to the kingdom and people being taught the plan of salvation but in how much closer the members are to each other. **John McMath** told of members who were 'pew sitters' but are now conducting Bible Studies, talking to visitors and taking an active part in reaching and teaching the lost. **Dan Ricks** who coordinated the campaign for Decatur Highway, said the campaign changed members' lives and the congregation is going to continue knocking doors to reach and teach the lost.

This was the 8th Annual Back to the Bible Campaign conducted by the elders at Cox Blvd Church of Christ. If your congregation is interested in having a Back to the Bible Campaign, please call 256-366-4226 and talk to **Russ Blackwell**.

An Apology to our Brethren at West Main

A picture published in the summer issue of the MM did not properly identify two of the persons. Sorry!



Ronnie Crosswhite, "Chuck" Tharp and Doug Greenway

Ronnie and Chuck are elders of the West Main Church of Christ in Tupelo and Doug Greenway is preacher. We regret that we published this picture in our summer issue without naming the two elders. (The picture was a part of the travel report by Eddie Lewis.)

NOTE: We have learned that the West Main church has recently selected two additional elders to provide added strength to the leadership of the growing congregation.

Readers' Response

Dear MM,

I would like to thank you for your paper. It is a blessing to read like minded people in this place. We have no church of Christ that ministers here. So when I get your paper I cannot wait to read it. I am not in a position where I can help with money, but will when I get out. Thank you once again. (Sam P. Fletcher, Wiggins, MS)

Thank you for the Magnolia Messenger and what it stands for. I have enjoyed the publication for many years... (Michael D. Price, Bossier City, LA)

Thank you so much for sending me the MM. I look forward to receiving every issue. God bless you all for your good work. (Ann Whetstone, Northport, AL)

Marriage Enrichment Workshop

Feb. 8 - 10, 2014; Presenters:
Richard & JennaLynn May

Kosciusko, Mississippi
Huntington St. Church of Christ

No Charge. More information? 662-289-3791

Is God Working in Your Life?

CECIL MAY JR.

PROVIDENCE
The Silent Sovereignty of God
Foreword by Phil Sanders

Providence
by Cecil May Jr.
Writer of Gospel Advocate
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New Albany Church Celebrates 75 Years of Spiritual Service On October 5

- Paul Franks -

Almost 40 years ago, I made my first trip in my own car. That trip was from Kosciusko to New Albany to attend a two week singing school. **L.O. Sanderson, Leon Sanderson and Robert Brown** were the three instructors.

I stayed in the home of **Charlie Gooch** and was blessed to spend time with many of the members of that congregation. **Bill DePriest, James Rodgers and Charlie Gooch** kept me busy during those two weeks. It was a great experience! Another



(on left and right) **Richard Jennings** and **Troy Robertson**, Elders (center) **Jesse Robertson**, Speaker at the 75th Anniversary Celebration

a gathering of the Lord's church in Mississippi."

On October 5, 2014 over 300 attended a special day to celebrate 75 years as a congregation. **Jesse Robertson** who grew up in the New Albany congregation, and who teaches at FHU, was the guest speaker for the day.

The church is served by two elders, **Richard Jennings** and **Troy Robertson**.



Jesse Robertson and **Miriam Styers**

family that I got close to was **Seth and Miriam Styers**.

When I heard that the New Albany church was having their **75th** anniversary, I began to make plans to attend since I have felt close to the congregation all of these years.

The present church building was finished and opened on May, 2, 1971 with over 850 attending that event. Someone said that "At that time, it was a record number for

Mike King has been the evangelist for the church since 2010.

40 years ago, after the singing school was over, my car wouldn't run. **Larry Cobb** who attended at New Albany, repaired my car and sent me on my way. Larry now preaches for the Randolph congregation, a few



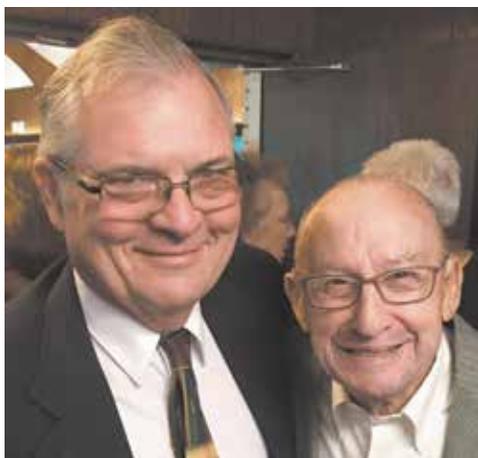
Mike King & Larry Cobb

miles out from Pontotoc. I got to thank him again for helping me to get home.

We pray that the New Albany congregation will continue to grow and prosper!

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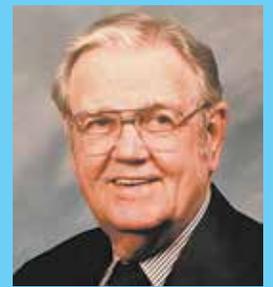


Troy Robertson and **Bill DePriest**

Now You Take It From There...

by
John Simpson

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Hugs For Our Teachers

Teachers, you are important, with the highest calling in the ranks of God's Family. You are set first in the Great Commission (Mt. 28:19,20), and the future of the Kingdom depends upon you.

Teachers, you are among the most dedicated and productive folk, because every part of the working program of the Church revolves around the Bible School; it is the Hub and Heart of a vibrant congregation.

Teachers, you are important. You can take the non-churched and make orderly and eager learners of them. Your head, heart, hands and help are not for sale. You are God's gift to all of us. You are God's Angels of mercy to children, and He counted you worthy of recognition in His immortal message: "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation?" (Heb. 1:14).

Teachers, we thank you – you are:

- Our Bell-ringers and Song Singers.
- Our Faith-Builders and Heart-Healers.
- Our Guardian Angels and Life-Changers.
- Our Soul-Winners and Kingdom-Lifters.
- Our Marching-Soldiers and Triumphant-Warriors.
- Our Bridge-Builders for Following Pilgrims.
- Our Heavenly Highway Heroes and Heroines.

At the end of the day, we are all better because you have:

- Burned a lot of midnight oil.
- Prayed for and cried with your students.
- Sacrificed time and energy from home and work, preparing for your assignment.
- Lived loved, worked and walked among us.

And you can tell everybody that I said so!

And others have hugs for you, too! Someone wrote: "Great teachers are a rare breed. They trust God while others ask for answers. They step forward while everyone else prays for volunteers. They see beyond the dangers, the risks, the obstacles and the hardships". AMEN!

Now, you take it from there!



Lord's Church. Lord's Supper. Every Lord's Day. (Acts 20:7)

Wednesday at Wren Mid-week Visit

On a recent Wednesday night, Glenda and I visited with the Wren church of Christ. We got to the building, conveniently situated on Hwy 45, about 10 miles north of Aberdeen, a little early. As we parked, another car drove into the parking lot. I expected it to be **Tommy and Nell Lawson** and, sure enough, it

was. They immediately welcomed us and made us feel at home.

Tommy started preaching for the Wren church in 1974 and, **after 40 years**, is still faithfully serving this congregation. We were excited to hear that between 40 and 50 gather on Sundays to worship. Even on the Wednesday night of our visit we had a good attendance.

The church auditorium is a beautiful room; but, what made it *really*

pretty that Wednesday night were the faces of a dozen or so of young children who had been brought to the mid-week service to learn more about the Bible.

I love Wednesday night services. It is a "shot in the arm" for your spiritual life. **I need it every week!** If you don't have a habit of going on Wednesday nights, determine to go and get involved! You will be glad you did. (Paul Franks)

It's All God's Fault

- Mike Benson -

It's fascinating to watch this story unfold in the sacred text. Inspiration records a vivid drama that not only instructs, but convicts.

Moses had finally gotten on board with God, despite earlier excuses to the contrary (cf. Exodus 3:11,13; 4:1,10). He would be, with Divine assistance (Exodus 3:12), God's agent with God's message to the most powerful man in the world (Exodus 5:1).

Moses eventually met with Pharaoh and delivered Jehovah's edict (Exodus 4:22-23; 5:3).

To Moses' chagrin, the king was defiant, and since Egypt considered him fleshly deity, he not only rejected the orders which had been brought before his throne, but he forced the Hebrews to scour the topography of Egypt in search of the straw necessary for his building endeavors (Exodus 5:6ff).

As a result, the children of Israel were no longer capable of meeting their brick quotas. And since the bulk of their time was now devoted to searching for the components to make bricks, they weren't able to produce to Pharaoh's satisfaction.

Hebrew construction supervisors, not surprisingly, took the bulk of the blame. They were beaten for not meeting the necessary brick allotments.

They in turn took their anger to Moses. "...And they said to them, 'Let the LORD look on you and judge, because you have made us abhorrent in the sight of Pharaoh and in the sight of his servants, to put a sword in their hand to kill us'" (Exodus 5:20-21). From their perspective, Moses had not only failed to deliver the Hebrews as promised, but he was primarily responsible for their pain.

Moses, like his peers, took his troubles upwards. He blamed the next "leader" up the chain of command - which, in this case, was God Himself. "Lord, why have you brought



Mike Benson

trouble on this people? Why is it You have sent me? For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in your name, he has done evil to this people; neither have You delivered Your people at all" (Exodus 5:22-23).

Mull the whole story over in the recesses of your cranium.

When we've stood for the right and boldly, and yet lovingly, spoken the Truth only to be the recipients of criticism and harsh censure, it is then we must open our ears and hearts to one fact - "I am the LORD!"

God sent Moses. Moses went to Pharaoh. Pharaoh rejected God and Moses and punished the Hebrews. The Hebrews and their supervisors blamed Moses. Moses blamed God.

It was Eve, Adam, the devil, and God all over again (cf. Genesis 3:8ff). **"God, it's all Your fault!"**

But have you ever considered what God said to Moses on this occasion? He told Moses simply, **"I am the LORD"** (Exodus 6:2).

Maybe that doesn't sound too profound at first, good brethren, but it's essential that we ponder, meditate upon, and internalize this truth!

Please don't miss this point! Over and over again, when Moses encountered opposition, God told the prophet, "I am the LORD" (Genesis 6:6-8, 29; 7:5, 17; 8:22; 10:2; 12:12; 14:4). You see, He wanted his servant to understand that the answer to every problem was to be found in Him!

When we've stood for the right and boldly, and yet lovingly, spoken the Truth only to be the recipients of criticism and harsh censure, it is then we must open our ears and hearts to one fact - **"I am the LORD!"**

When we've rejected the cries of the politically correct and those who seek to foster immorality on our culture, it is then we must ponder, **"I am the LORD!"**

When the world insists that we water down the doctrine of Christ in order to accommodate the masses, we must dwell on God's affirmation to Moses - **"I am the LORD."**

Are you being criticized for doing and speaking the right thing? Remember God said, **"I am the LORD!"**

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Mike serves as the pulpit minister for the Kensington Woods Church of Christ in Hattiesburg, MS. He can be reached in care of the church of Christ,

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Hattiesburg, MS 39402
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Weekend Meeting at Midway Church Features Ferguson Family

(Utica, MS) The Midway congregation, south of Vicksburg, had invited **Les Ferguson, Sr.** to come, visit and report on mission work in Mexico. But before the appointed Sunday, the church decided to expand their effort and host a special weekend involving other Ferguson family members.

Arrangements were made for **Billy Ferguson** (preacher at 7th

Street in Columbus) and **Les Ferguson, Jr.** (preacher for the Lake Harbour church in Ridgeland) to also preach during an evangelistic weekend labeled "Seeking & Saving the Lost".

The meeting date was October 24-26, 2014. Les Jr. preached on Friday night, Billy preached on Saturday night, Margie taught a ladies' class on Sunday morn-



Home of Christian Student Center at Moorhead, MS

Fall Semester Report

By Gene & Madolyn Gibson

It was so good on our first Wednesday night to see the young folks piling in. Both of the first two weeks, we had between 45 and 55 students. It was a strong reminder that even though we had spent as much money, energy and time working on the outside of the building as we did this summer, we did not add one inch of room to the inside. It made me wonder if we would have space for some of the times in previous years that we had 65 and 70 present.

We must begin plans for a larger facility for our meetings. We still have plenty of room out back; we just need the encouragement and the right people and congregations to back it financially. I know that I say it each year, but even though these young people do not show a great amount of Bible knowledge, they seem very willing and, some, even eager to learn. Please pray for the work, that many will learn what it takes to be a true Christian!

Additional Note: We have decided to try our **Fish Fry - Talent Show** in the early spring, hopefully around the first of March. Please watch for the announcement at a later date and PLEASE be working on your participation in the talent. (Gene and Madolyn Gibson; P. O. Box 651; Moorhead, MS 38761; ggibson331@bellsouth.net) Information taken from the Gibson's e-mail report)



Fergusons: (from left) Billy, Margie, Les Sr. and Les Jr.

ing and Les Sr. preached Sunday morning and afternoon.

According to long-time preacher, **Donnie Cain**, the activities of the weekend were "great." He reported that, shortly after the evangelistic effort, two precious souls were baptized and that attendance had increased so that this

past Sunday (November 9) seventy souls were in attendance. Donnie asked that the MM give special recognition to the leadership of the men of the congregation for the encouraging progress being made by what is truly a **growing country church** in SW Mississippi. (alf)

Relationship Problems

"From the First Century Until Now"

A Challenge To Change

- Les Ferguson, Sr. -

At our house you will often find the TV on, even when we are not watching it. One day recently, when I came home, that was the case. The program was an old rerun of "Walton's Mountain."

Just as I walked in, the scene was a Sunday church service that had just dismissed. People were exiting the church building, greeting the preacher and one another. It was pretty obvious that the father, John Walton, had a problem with one of his sons. Or we may say the son had a problem with his father, or they had a problem with each other.

The son's facial expression indicated that and his actions proved it. He looked at his father without a smile, a greeting or a handshake and hurried out. I do not know what happened after that because I went on my way. I had things to do. But as I went on my way, I could not help but think about the brief scene I had just witnessed on the old rerun. I seriously doubt the authors of that particular episode intended for that scene to teach a spiritual lesson. But it did.

I believe the God we seek to serve is in the people business. That means the church is in the people business also. How we conduct that business impacts relationship. We often sing, "O to be like thee," a song that encourages us to be like Jesus. To be like Jesus requires that we be willing to make changes in our life. Back to that Walton scene: What kind of change needed to take place in both the father and the son in order for their relationship to be impacted positively?

As I thought about that, I remembered reading what Jesus said in that passage we call the "Sermon on the Mount" (Matthew 5, 6 and 7). Here's the passage that came to mind: "Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something



Les Ferguson, Sr.

against you, leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift" (Matthew 5:23, 24). This tells us that there were relationship problems in the first century. In the midst of all the changes since the first century until now, some things have not

One of the saddest things is when a death occurs within a relationship that has been torn asunder for one reason or another and nothing was ever done to repair it. Now that death has come, that opportunity is forever gone

changed. We often have relationship problems today.

I have been in the ministry, in "people business", for many years. There has been much joy and happiness over those years. There has been some sadness, too. One of the saddest things is when a death occurs within a relationship that has been torn asunder for one reason or another and nothing was ever done to repair it. Now that death has come, that opportunity is forever gone.

You cannot ever say, "I'm sorry" or "please forgive me" or "I love you;" the heartache is so very strong. And there are no words a preacher or anybody else can say that will make it be all right. **If there are fences to be mended, do it now.** You may not be successful. But at least you can say, "I tried."

What kind of relationship do you have with your mate? What about with your children? How would you describe your relationship with

God? Are there changes you need to make in order that your relationship with others will be impacted positively? I realize that, at times, it is hard to change, to say, "I'm sorry," or "please forgive me." But the challenge to change is abundantly clear in scripture. We are challenged to be like Jesus, to live and walk in the light. How am I doing with that? What about you?

It is easy to blame others for our shortcomings, our attitude. Parents are blamed for a lack of love and nurturing. Teachers are blamed for not caring or recognizing our need. Society is blamed as seen in the statement, "He/she is a product of his/her environment." Life is often portrayed as giving us a "raw deal." Everything and everybody is against us. We see ourself as the "victim." And as long as we can pass the blame, there is no personal responsibility, no need to change.

"Passing the blame" has been around for a long time. We see it in the beginning in the Garden of Eden. When God came looking for Adam and asked him about eating the fruit of the one tree He had commanded him not to eat, Adam's response was to "pass the blame." He said, "...The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate" (Genesis 3:12). So it was both God and the woman's fault. Today, thousands of years later, we are keeping Adam's example alive. We are still "passing the blame."

Relationships are not "dumping grounds" for whatever negative attitude we have. Someone said it like this: "We only grow when we assume responsibility for our own joy and happiness."

Am I, are you, growing? How would you rate your relationship with God? How would He rate it?

Les Ferguson, Sr.

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Kosciusko, MS 39090

lfergusonmm@hotmail.com

Enjoy God's Nature in Peace

- Vincent Franks -

As the sun beams over the horizon, I begin to see the beautiful colors displayed in the sky. I see the pinkish-orange colors bursting through the clouds.



Vincent Franks and a Recent Catch

As the sun continues to rise, I begin to see much more. The water of the lake becomes clear as the sun shines through. A new world is now visible to the eye. All the many species under water are swimming for their lives. Feasting on their desired food.

For me, fishing is a way to connect with nature. Peaceful places are hard to find these days. By being on the water, I find myself not only fishing, but also meditating on God's beauty He created. Many times I take God's beauty for granted. I believe that, as humans, we make this mistake quite often. We become so wrapped into our worldly lives; we often ignore what is important. Satan is out to devour us. As Christians, we must be reminded of this.

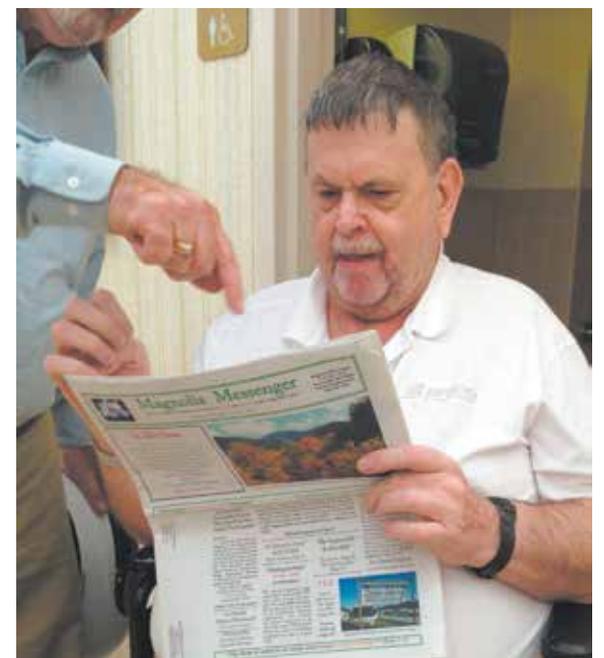
When I'm fishing, I often use artificial bait that, to a fish, resembles a tasty shad. Christians are the fish and Satan is the one holding the rod and reel -- luring us to him. We must focus on God and ignore the worldly pleasures of this world. My challenge for you today is to go out and enjoy God's nature in peace. Meditate on his beauty. Focus on Him always and ignore what Satan has to offer us.

(Vincent is the son of Paul and Glenda Franks. He has recently returned to Kosciusko. His email address: Vincentfranks92@gmail.com)

Help... Help... Help

You can Help Teach God's Word Through the Magnolia Messenger

Another Soul Is Introduced to the Magnolia Messenger



In a recent visit to the VA Residential Home in Jackson, Mississippi, a resident is seeing, for the first time, a copy of the MM. The hand pictured above belongs to **W. E. Walker**, a long time friend, supporter of the MM and a member of the Siwell Road church of Christ. Brother W.E. is shown pointing the new reader to the "Question Box" -- always found on the back page of each issue.

Growing A Church... GOD'S WAY!

- Hugh Fulford -

"Let no one keep defrauding you of your prize by delighting in self-abasement and the worship of the angels, taking his stand on visions he has seen, inflated without cause by his fleshly mind, and not holding fast to the head, from whom the entire body, being supplied and held together by the joints and ligaments, grows with a growth which is from God" (Colossians 2:18-19, NASB, emphasis mine, hf).

Having been a preacher of the gospel for some sixty years, and having served as a local minister for over forty years (but still busy preaching every week), I believe I have some qualifications to address the subject of church growth. Since I am a preacher, I will write primarily from the preacher's viewpoint. Thus, what I say could be viewed as my philosophy of preaching and church growth.

A preacher of the gospel and a congregation of God's people should stick with the fundamentals (not to be confused with what we sometimes refer to as "first principles"). The fundamentals of church growth as I perceive them are:

Sound, relevant preaching (II Timothy 4:1-5; Titus 2:1);

A solid, well-rounded Bible school program (Matthew 28:20; II Timothy 3:16-17);

Visitation and personal evangelism (Acts 5:42; 20:20);

A strong emphasis on helping the poor and needy (Matthew 25:31-46; Galatians 6:10; James 1:27);

Elders who truly shepherd the flock (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:1-3);

Deacons who zealously serve (1 Timothy 5:13);

Members who use their individual gifts (abilities) for the building up of the body of Christ (Romans 12:3-8; 1 Peter 4:10-11; Ephesians 4:7-16);

And the exercise of both preventive and corrective church discipline (I Thessalonians 4:11; II Thessalonians 3:6; Romans 16:17; I Corinthians 5:9-13) -- **all backed up with a genuine commitment to being the "aroma of Christ" in the community** (II Corinthians 2:15-16).

Really I could stop right here because the above says in a nut-shell all that is necessary to grow a church God's way, but being a preacher I will say a few more words!

While staying with the Biblical message, churches and church leaders should not be afraid to try new, fresh methods and approaches that are relevant to today's world and its needs. At the same time, they should avoid gimmicks and fads that promise fast growth and "quick fixes." Otherwise, they

will constantly be jumping from one thing to another without ever settling down to the real work before them (and in order for the church to grow, real work is necessary). And while all Christians should be interested in the growth of the church and work for such, the emphasis should not be on being a big church (at least number-wise) but on being a good and faithful church -- one where the members can "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (II Peter 3:18), and be equipped to live out the message of Christ in their own lives and to effectively present that message to others. Such a church, I am convinced, will be blessed "with a growth which is from God" (Colossians 2:19, NASB).

Most churches will have problems (major or minor) from time to time. These problems should be identified and dealt with biblically, honestly, realistically, and in love. Just because a "vocal minority" or a "powerful minority" oppose something (or someone), does not mean that the rest of the congregation should give in to it. On the other hand, just because an "influential majority" wants to change things in order to have its way is no reason to change if the change involves doctrine or practice that is contrary to the word of God. No church can grow or please the Lord while catering to such pressure groups.

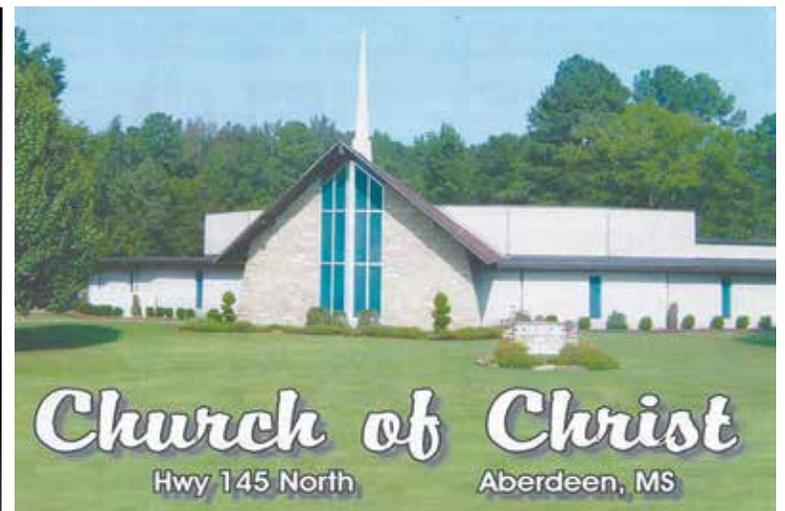
Churches make a mistake when they keep changing preachers, hoping to find the "right man" (miracle preacher). The congregation may need to look inwardly to itself. Are the elders truly shepherding? Are the deacons sincerely serving? Are the members diligently working? Elders, deacons, teachers, preachers, and members must work together as a team, recognizing that all have both strengths and weaknesses. They need to be forbearing with one another and forgiving of one another (Ephesians 4:1-3, 32).

The congregation's leaders need to have a vision of the church and its mission. They need to pray, plan, and guide. They need to challenge and motivate the membership, rather than spending their time and energy "putting out brush fires." All members of the congregation, including its leaders, need to "roll up their sleeves" and become personally involved in the various works of the church. A big part of the leadership of elders, deacons, and ministers is by example.

May God grant His people the vision to see and the desire to do!

Hugh Fulford
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Most churches will have problems (major or minor) from time to time. These problems should be identified and dealt with biblically, honestly, realistically, and in love.



Delightful "Drop-in" WN Visit in Aberdeen, Mississippi

- Editor -

Finally, after several years, on November 19, 2014, we were blessed with the opportunity of revisiting the Aberdeen church on Highway 145, N. It was a delightful evening.

We were pleased to see and greet folks we have known for "almost a life-time" but had not seen in a long time, including Charles Tharp who has served as their preacher for the past 7 or 8 years. We were blessed also to meet several

new people, including Todd Wilemon, one of the elders and also song leader the night of our visit. I was also very thankful for the invitation to teach the adult Bible class.

In a very attractive church bulletin, published by the church (printed by Allmond Printing Compay in Aberdeen), we learned that the congregation is presently served by four elders. They are **Tom Allmond, James House, Dwight McComb** and **Todd Wilemon**. Five deacons serve. They are **Ernie Allmond, John Allmond, Jimmy Grace, John McArthur** and **James**

Stockton.

Radio and Television programs mentioned on the front page of their bulletin included "Bible Talk", "The Bible Speaks", "Truth for the World", "In Search of the Lord's Way" and "Day-spring." We were thankful also to learn from the bulletin that **Jewel Jones** was recently baptized into Christ.

The day following our Wednesday night visit we were blessed to eat lunch with the Tharps, Charles and Francis. We were joined at noon by Paul and Glenda Franks who were in the area and had visited the Wren church on Wednesday night. It was a treat for all of us to eat at the "Cottage Tea Room", owned and operated by a member of the Aberdeen church.

A very special thanks to the Aberdeen church for helping to make our Wednesday night "drop-in" very delightful. And, thanks again to brother and sister Tharp for their invitation to stay over and eat with them the next day. Trust we can return sooner than later!



Frances and Charles Tharp

Wider Circulation Warrented

A few months ago, **Gary Williams**, preacher for the East Main congregation in Tupelo, wrote about "Courage" in their weekly

church bulletin. Brother Gary made the following observation which, we believe, deserves even wider circulation. (alf)

"Today's evangelistic efforts have been more centered around what can we do to make them [the lost] come to us and worship with us, instead of us going out to find them. Why do you think that is so? Isn't it because it is much easier to stay in the comfort of our own facilities and never have to go where we do not feel comfortable. It takes courage to go out into the unknown."

When God Whistled

- John Gardner -

Granddaddy was a whistler. As a rural mailer carrier in Webster County, MS, J.C. Gardner whistled as he drove his route each day. He whistled at home as he took care of his cows and other chores. In fact, one could locate him long before seeing him on most occasions because of his melodious whistling. A friend of my grandfather's told me a few years ago that if you passed "J.C.'s" house and did not hear whistling, you knew he was not at home!

In times past, whistling was a common expression of enjoyment in American culture. Millions have whistled along in merriment to "Whistle While You Work" in the Disney film Snow White. Many can remember the upbeat whistling of the prisoners of war in the classic movie Bridge on the River Kwai.

Because of reruns, everyone has heard the cheery whistling intro to The Andy Griffith Show. Many other examples of tunes from radio, television and the movies in the past could be given. Regrettably whistling seems to have lost much of its appeal in our current sound-saturated society.

In various world cultures over the centuries whistling has had specific meanings and uses other than those associated with pleasure or entertainment. In the Bible, for example, there are three places where several translations (such as the New King James Version and the English Standard Version) affirm that God promised He would "whistle". Each use is far from the idea of idle entertainment or mere merriment.

According to the Bible, two times God uses a "whistle" to describe his summons of foreign powers of great might and cruelty to punish rebellious Israel. Because his people had "rejected the law of the Lord of hosts" and "despised the word of the Holy One of Israel," the "anger of the Lord was kindled against his people" (Isaiah 5: 24, 25



John Gardner

English Standard Version).

The prophet looked ahead and prophesied, "He will raise a signal for nations afar off and whistle for them from the ends of the earth" (Isaiah 5: 26). He then describes the viciousness of the Assyrians God had chosen to punish his people (Vv. 26 - 30). The Almighty did not have to work out some kind of alliance with the Assyrians for them to do his bidding; he simply whistled and they obeyed.

God is in control of the nations—all of the nations, all of the time... When the time is right, he just whistles and nations rush to do exactly what he chooses.

When confronting a rebellious King Ahaz who refused to ask a sign from God, Isaiah tells him, "The Lord will bring upon you and upon your people and upon your father's house such days as have not come since the day that Ephraim departed from Judah—the king of Assyria" (Isaiah 7: 17). The next verses say, "In that day the Lord will whistle for the fly that is at the end of the streams of Egypt and for the bee that is in the land of Assyria. And they will all come and settle in the step ravines, and in the clefts of the rocks, and on all the thornbushes and all the pastures" (Vv.18, 19).

Using the image of swarms of noxious flies and tortuous bees, the prophet predicts God's use of the Egyptian and Assyrian armies to completely overrun and dominate the

land. He had only to whistle and those godless nations would speedily obey God's summons to afflict Judah.

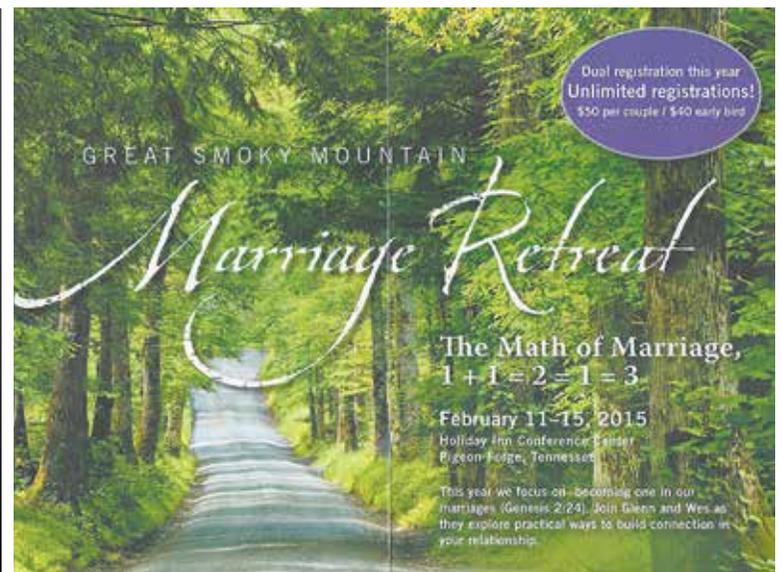
But after the punishments and captivity, then what? Zechariah has a message full of hope. The merciful God says of his people, "I will whistle for them and gather them in, for I have redeemed them and they shall be as many as they were before. Though I scattered them among the nations, yet in far countries they shall remember me, and with their children they shall live and return. I shall bring them home from the land of Egypt and gather them from Assyria, and I will bring them to the land of Gilead and to Lebanon till there is not room for them" (Zechariah 10: 8 - 10). Only an effortless whistle from God would release captives, overthrow the purpose of kings, and bring his people home.

God is in control of the nations—all of the nations, all of the time. He rules over his people and for his people in the affairs of men. He does not have to work strenuously and over long periods to get things lined up to accomplish his purpose. When the time is right, he just whistles and nations rush to do exactly what he chooses.

God has revealed that he has in store at least one more great summons for mankind. It will not be in the form of an authoritative whistle, but a trumpet blast that wakes the dead and calls all to a final judgment (1 Thessalonians 4: 16, 17; 1 Corinthians 15: 51, 52; 2 Corinthians 5: 10). Is that trumpet poised to blow today? Soon? Will that cosmos-piercing sound be a summons to joy unspeakable, or to punishment unimaginable? Whether or not we live faithfully in Christ determines what that summons will mean to each for us.

Brother Gardner preaches for the North Brandon church. His address: John Gardner; P. O. Box 251; Brandon, Mississippi 39043
gardner.john43@gmail.com

Thanks for Reading the MM



Great Smoky Mountain Marriage Retreat
Holiday Inn Conference Center; Pigeon Forge, TN
Feb. 11-15, 2015. Call: 1-877-338-3397

WHO'S WHO Among Leaders In Churches of Christ? (An Award Program)

The Bible teaches us to "weep with them that weep and rejoice with those who rejoice." (Romans 12: 15) We need more rejoicing in the church.

We are also taught in Scripture to honor and recognize men and women of great faith (Romans 12:10). We believe that when deserving brethren are recognized and honored for their work of faith and labor of love, they serve as worthy examples, providing encouragement to others!

Jesus Himself recognized certain individuals for their faith. Jesus complimented a centurion for his faith by saying, "I have not found so great faith, no not in Israel" (Matt. 8:10). Jesus also bestowed honor upon a woman who anointed his head by saying, "Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her." (Matt. 26:6-13)

Because of the need for recognition and the benefits of giving honor to whom honor is due, the Magnolia Messenger is asking you to send in the name of someone who has made a difference in your life and has helped your faith to grow. Please, along with the name, include information about the person you are nominating and how he/she has helped you and/or others

Each time we print an issue of the "Messenger", a committee of preachers and elders will select a name from among those sent in by readers. If and when possible, we will visit the congregation where the selected person attends and present to him/her a very special plaque with his/her name inscribed as an honored leader in the body of Christ.

Please submit the name of the person you believe should be honored in this way, giving your reasons why. We will need your name and contact information if we have any questions. (If you wish, we will keep your name confidential.)

You are invited to send your nomination to:

MM Award Program
P. O. Box 1578
Kosciusko, MS 39090

MM Welcomes YOUR
Comments & Suggestions. We really do!

Visiting Among Churches in North Mississippi

- Eddie Lewis -

It was a great joy for me to visit among the churches during the months of July to September. I was able to attend some special occasions and help other churches as they look for ministers. I was encouraged to see all the good works being done to the glory of God. The following is my report on the churches.

July 6: I visited with the **Danville church of Christ** south of Corinth, MS. **Dan Eubanks** is serving as an interim preacher for the congregation. I have known



Peggy and Dan Eubanks

Dan for a long time. He was originally from Paragould, AR and his father was one of the elders at the Seventh and Mueller church where I preached in the 70's. He now lives in Selma, TN.

Also at the congregation were **Charles and Peggy Leonard**. Charles preached at Danville when



Peggy and Charles Leonard

I lived in Corinth. He is unable to preach now because of illness. It was good to meet the brethren there. They have around 21 in attendance and no elders. Also I met **Fred Burns**, one of the members there. He is 100 years old and still active in the congregation. He is a wonderful Christian man.

Dan taught the Bible class. They are in a study of 1 Corinthians. He discussed chapter 10, reminding them of the possibility of falling away. One statement Dan made that I felt was good, "We study not just for information, but for transformation." Amen.

Dan's sermon was on the superiority of spiritual freedom over national freedom. He emphasized that if we know the truth of God we will be free. He asked, "Free from what?" He said the truth sets us free from the Old Law, the guilt of sin, unresolved guilt, and the power of sin. It was a wonderful lesson.



Mike Griffin, Wade Huddleston and James Nunnally

July 13: I was invited to preach for the **Ripley church of Christ**. They recently lost their minister and have different ministers from the area filling the pulpit. It was wonderful to see the brethren again. They have around 250 that attend. The elders are **Mike Griffin, Wade Huddleston, and James Nunnally**. They are all godly men and have a heart of love for the Lord and His church. I enjoyed eating and fellowshiping with the Griffins and Huddlestons.

In Bible class I considered Luke 10:25-37, the story of the Good Samaritan. It is a wonderful study of love and what it means to be a good neighbor.

In the worship I preached a lesson on "Perfect in Weakness" based on 2 Corinthians 12: 1-10. Paul's example of dealing with his thorn in the flesh teaches us some great lesson about dealing with trials.

Sunday night I preached on the story of the sinful woman who washes the feet of Jesus with her tears (Luke 7:36-50). This lesson teaches us about the great love of God.

July 20: I visited with the **Goodman Oaks church of Christ**. **Derek McNamara** is the preacher there. **Matthew Crowe** is the associate minister, **Alan Underwood** is the children's minister, and **Jared McCormick** is the youth minister. They have eight elders and around 650 in attendance. The youth had just returned from camp and rejoiced that four young people had been baptized.

I visited with the church, because they were having a farewell dinner for **Ken Joines**. Ken has served the church for over 30 years and is planning to move to Tupelo to be close to his daughter. I love and appreciate Ken for his many years of service in the

kingdom. He is a wonderful friend and preacher. I know they will miss his presence at Goodman Oaks.

Derek had two great lessons from Romans chapter 8. In Bible class he talked about "God's Five-Fold Work for Us" based on Romans 8:26-30. God wants us to conform to the image of Christ. God's will for us is for e k n o w l -

edge, predestination, calling, justification and glorification. Good lesson.



Derek McNamara & Ken Joines

In worship he considered "Groaning for Glory" based on Romans 8:18-27. He said when we groan to God for relief, God hears His people. Good lesson.

July 27: I visited with the **Potts Camp church of Christ** as they celebrated over fifty years of service with a Homecoming service and meeting. **Jerry Coats** is the minister there. He has been there almost four years. They normally have around 54 in attendance, but for the homecoming they had 127.

Brandon Elliott from the Booneville church taught the Bible class. **Paul Franks** preached in the first worship and I spoke at the 2:00 p.m. service. I was pleased to see that 85 stayed for that service. The church is doing a wonderful work. I appreciate the invitation to be a part of this wonderful occasion.

Brandon taught the Bible class from the Gospel Advocate Adult Series. The lesson for the day was, "The Need to be Child Like." The lesson was from the event in Matthew 18:1-5. Jesus said we all



Paul Franks, Eddie Lewis, Jerry Coats and Brandon Elliott

need to have the humility of a child if we are to enter heaven.

Paul preached from Psalms 37:3-5. He talked about what we need to do to have a good day. The Psalmist said to trust in God, do something good, delight yourself in the Lord, and commit your works to the Lord. It was a good lesson.

I spoke on "Overwhelmed and Grateful" based on Luke 7:36-50. I love to talk about the love of Christ and the love we should have for Him.

August 3: The Germantown church of Christ hosted Mission Sunday. For the last 19 months, they have been my sponsor for my mission work in north Mississippi. I appreciate so much their love and support. It was a wonderful day of worship and fellowship.

I was asked to give a report about my work in MS during the Bible class. **Leslie Williams**, a long time missionary, who works now in his home country of Canada spoke in the worship.

I talked about all the ministers, elders, and brethren I have met in my travels. **I have visited with 52 churches and spoke at 23 over the last 19 months.** It has been a wonderful blessing to me to meet



Eddie & Judy Lewis and Baylee & Leslie Williams

so many wonderful Christians.

Leslie spoke about the importance of us reaching out to the community with the message of Christ. It was a wonderful challenge to all of us to make sure our ministry is relevant to the needs of our community and that we present the truth of God's Word.

August 10: I was invited to speak at the **Antioch church of Christ** on Hwy. 306 east of Coldwater, MS. **Chris Keeton** is one of the preachers there. He serves as the Youth Minister in Hernando and preaches twice a month at An-

tiach. They are searching for another preacher to rotate with Chris. The church has around 35 in attendance. It is a wonderful group of Christians. I will rotate preaching with Chris over the next four months.

In Bible class I taught a lesson on the Good Samaritan based on Luke 10:25-37. It's a wonderful lesson on Christian compassion.

In the Worship my lesson was "Perfect in Weakness" based on 2 Corinthians 12:1-13. It's a great study about why Christians suffer. They had a fellowship meal after church services. It was a good day.

August 17: **Glenn Daily** (an elder at Germantown), and I visited with the **Booneville church of Christ**. **Greg Pollock** is the preaching minister. **Jim Estes** is an associate minister, **Aaron Foster** is the campus minister, **Larry Morgan** is the education minister, and **Nathan Pirtle** is the youth minister. They have four elders and their attendance is around 400. Saturday, before we came, the church hosted a Senior Adult Rally. It was a great success. At the end of the month they will host a welcome party for the incoming students at Northeast Community College. They have an active Lads to Leaders program. It is an active congregation with lots of wonderful people.

Jim Estes taught the auditorium class. It was a wonderful class with lots of participation. He asked a series of questions about Acts 8. It was a great lesson on the conversion of the Ethio-

pian eunuch. **Greg Pollock** preached on Acts 24. He talked about Felix's response to Paul's message. The



Greg Pollock & Jim Estes

See VISITING on page 13

Texas-Louisiana RV Rally Brought Together Christians From Several States

Report by Dean Caldwell

In Acts Chapter 2 the Bible says the early Christians devoted themselves to the Apostles teaching and to fellowship. They ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people.

Christians from several states met together and enjoyed that same fellowship during the week of October 21 at the 2014 Louisiana - Texas RV Rally at Salmon Lake Park in Grapeland, Texas.

There were great Bible lessons, praying, singing, games, arts and crafts, entertainment, patriotic programs, food, and lots of time to just relax and enjoy visiting with fellow Christians. The ladies especially enjoyed the card and domino games and the arts and crafts. They made bracelets, other jewelry, colorful beads made of paper, and learned a new art using pen and paper, called "Zentangle".

The men enjoyed visiting, games, and several joined to help **Dan Hawkins** and some of the ladies complete a 1000 piece jigsaw puzzle.

The Rally was organized by **Ray and Donna Franks** from DeQuincy, Louisiana, and **Glen and Ena Franks** from Lake Charles, Louisiana.

Although the scheduled activities began on Wednesday, October 15, anxious Christians began arriving as early as Friday the week before. On Sunday morning, October 12, 15 RV Rally Christians attended worship with the Grapeland Church, where Ray Franks presented the morning sermon.

On Monday evening 27 Christians enjoyed a Beef Brisket meal together, prepared by **Jerry Alford**, of Many, Louisiana. A wonderful seafood dinner was provided for 57 Christians by **David McGee** from Wesson, Mississippi on Tuesday evening.

A total of 71 Christians were together on Wednesday evening for a pot-luck dinner. After that, **Glen Westmoreland** of DeRidder, Louisiana presented a lesson entitled "Free from the Fear of Tomorrow". Then there was Homemade Ice Cream, and entertainment by **Morris Tirtitz**, from Shreveport, Louisiana. Among other songs, he sang about "When the Old Red Wagon was New", always anticipated and enjoyed at every rally.

Thursday morning **Dean and Nellie Caldwell** of Vicksburg, Mississippi, spoke to the men and women in separate classes on the subject "From a Dull Empty Life".

Following a pot-luck dinner on Thursday evening, 78 Christians enjoyed a lesson entitled "Set Free From Guilt of the Past" by **Jason Clark** from Lake Charles, Louisiana. After that, entertainment was provided by a game of "Price is Right", when 36 people participated, and several expert shoppers won valuable prizes.

A special event on Thursday evening was to honor **Dan and JoAnn Hawkins** from Minden Louisiana as special "Honorary Ambassadors" of the RV Rallies. The Hawkins were presented a plaque noting that despite physical limitations



Many Came in RV'S
You Don't Have to Have an RV to Attend

and struggles, Dan is always cheerful and ready to lead singing and other activities. JoAnn is always anxious to give a hug and is a great leader in making the games and other activities fun and enjoyable for all.



Dan and JoAnn Hawkins
"Honorary Ambassadors of the RV rallies"
(Glen Franks shown presenting the award.)

The traditional Auction was on Friday morning, where participants bid and buy wonderful items they have brought to the Rally. The funds are used to finance the rallies and other good works.

Over 120 Christians, including many from the Crocket Road Church in Palestine, Texas, were present on Friday evening for the annual fish fry, with fish caught and provided by Glen Franks. Following the dinner, a stirring Patriotic program was presented. The program included an Honor Guard of Veterans from Palestine, and an acappella singing group of 6 men and their manager, called "His Harmony" from Dallas, Texas. **Dan Manuel**, minister of the Crocket Road Church presented a lesson, entitled "Set Me Free From the Tyranny of an Oppressive Government".

About 60 people gathered on Saturday morning for an old time gospel singing. Saturday night several people went to the "Dogwood Jamboree" produced

by Dan Manuel, at the Civic Center in Palestine. The show featured Dan, the "His Harmony" singers, and many other "Branson Style" musicians.

The group went to the Crocket Road Church in Palestine on Sunday morning.

Ray Franks spoke during the Bible class hour, on the subject, "Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death". During the worship hour Dan Manuel preached. The lesson was entitled "Let Freedom Ring from the White House to the Church House". After services the people from the rally joined in fellowship with members of the Crocket Road Church, who hosted a great pot-luck lunch for the entire group.

As the rally came to an end, and people were heading home, they were already thinking of the next Louisiana - Texas RV Rally at Salmon Lake to be held Wednesday, October 14, through Saturday, October 17, 2015.

There were close to 30 camping rigs at the rally. Several people stayed in motels or cabins. For folks who do not have an RV or prefer different accommodations, there are always rooms or cabins available.

For more information on the Louisiana-Texas rally, contact Ray Franks at 337-515-0866 or Glen Franks at 337-477-2660.

Anyone who decides to attend the rally will be welcome, and will have a great time of fellowship with folks from all walks of life.

In closing, a BIG THANKS to Dan Manuel and the Crocket Road Congregation for their continued support.

Dean Caldwell; Vicksburg, MS



After 4 heart stints, Billy Tindell's 78th birthday called for a celebration on the day he got out of the hospital. Janie, his wife, is by his side.

Do We Trust In God Or Government?

- Will Anderson -
*Should We Obey
God or Government?*

Well, the answer to that question is "both" -- if at all possible, but sometimes we recognize that the laws of the land are not in keeping with the laws of God. In those circumstances, the Bible is clear: "we ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29).

This does not mean we should rise up violently against our government or its representatives; that is not the purpose of the Kingdom of Christ (John 18:36). The faithful child of God will always stand for God's will, no matter what the circumstances or the cost. But he must always act in a way which is becoming of a Christian, one who correctly wears the name of Christ.

While we might "pledge allegiance to the flag" (which has its roots in nationalistic socialism), our fullest allegiance is to God Almighty. We must recognize that we are first and foremost a Christian, no matter where we may reside. This world is not our permanent home, our citizenship is in heaven (Phi. 3:20). While our patriotism may be part of our life, Jesus is our life (Col. 3:4).

God Rules in the Kingdoms of Men (Dan. 4:17, 25)

This is an absolute which we must not forget. God's general providence falls upon all of mankind, while His special providence is available for His faithful children (Mat. 5:45; 6:24-33; Rom. 8:28). God has a plan, and is providentially working His plan. It is not up to us to always know His ways and His devices

Let your voice be heard at the ballot box, which is our duty as American citizens. But even more so, we MUST let our voices be heard as we teach the soul-saving Gospel of Jesus Christ to a lost and dying world.

(Isa. 55:8-9), it is our duty to follow what has been revealed to us and leave the rest up to Him (Deut. 29:29). That is the perfect example of a trusting faith (Pro. 3:4-6).

Go ... Teach All Nations!

Our duty is not to fret and worry, our duty is to teach. The Apostles went into all the world under the rule of one of the most wicked empires the world has ever known. The historian Suetonius has documented some of the debauchery and indecency of twelve of the rulers of that empire, some of whom reigned during the time of Christ and the Apostles. They did not allow the world around them to discourage them from the charge that was given to them, which was preaching and teaching the Gospel (Mat. 28: 18-20; Mark 16:15-16).

Let your voice be heard at the ballot box, which is our duty as American citizens. But even more so, we MUST let our voices be heard as we teach the soul-saving Gospel of Jesus Christ to a lost and dying world. (Will Anderson; preacher, South Huntington Street Church of Christ; Kosciusko, MS 39090; P. O. Box 1399; e-mail: will-manderson@yahoo.com)

More... Readers' Response...More

Hello,

I really enjoy getting the Magnolia Messenger. Thank you so much. I am a member of the Fulton Church of Christ. My husband passed away February, 2010. The church is my only strength. I read your magazine. It helps me so much. Tried to answer the Question Box...Thanks again, (Arlene Shedd, Fulton, MS)

Dear ones,

Wanted you all to know what Mayfield is doing since Al was our first fulltime preacher. Hoping you all can come and visit us sometimes. Jewel and I are enjoying reading the Messenger altho my eyes are fading fast. We are praying for you and the work you are doing. God bless you all. (Ruth Gunter, Saltillo, MS)

A Welcomed (?) Knock on Our Door

- Report by June Franks -

On Sunday, October 26, 2014 we were blessed with the opportunity to worship with the Ripley church of Christ in Ripley, Mississippi. Al taught the class and preached Sunday morning and Sunday night.

We had parked our motor home on the church parking lot. After a wonderful day of worship and fellowship, we returned to our motor home for the evening. Since we were on a parking lot open to whoever may drive by, we were a little uneasy. You just never know who may come by and knock on your door.

I had indicated to Al, unless he knew for sure who knocked on our door, to please *not open the door*. After we had retired for the night, around nine o'clock, we heard a knock on our RV door. My question was, "Who on earth can be knocking on our door at this time of the night?"

Al jumped up quickly and talked to someone on the outside of the motor home. We soon learned that the person knocking at the door had a very important message. We were informed that her 88 year old dad, Edsel Jamieson, had decided he wanted to be baptized.

We quickly dressed and hurried across the parking lot to the church building where we found about twenty people already gathered together. Our hearts were filled with joy as Mr. Edsel stood before those present and made the good confession; "I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God." He was then taken the "same hour of the night", as taught in the Bible (Acts 16:33), and Al baptized him into Christ for the remission of his sins.

Edsel Jamieson had been attending church services for many years, but had never humbled himself to Christ by submitting to baptism. But, finally he decided to obey the Lord. He was heard to repeatedly say, "I don't know why I waited so long."

Among those who witnessed his baptism there were many tears of joy. His wife of sixty years, Evelyn, was extremely thankful as well as his daughters. One of his daughters, Regina, commented that she had been waiting for that occasion all of her life.

After brother Edsel's baptism, one of his sons-in-law, Mike Bennett, stepped forward and said he would like to make it a "double" [a second one to be baptized]. So, once again there was great joy on earth, as well as in heaven, because of Mike's decision to become a Christian. Immediately Mike made the good confession and he,

too, was baptized into Christ for the remission of his sins. Mike and his wife, Janet (married for thirty five years), had been attending services for a long time, but Mike had never put his Lord on in baptism.

We can learn from the baptisms of these two precious people. According to the Bible, baptism is that act of faith when the sinner is forgiven of his sins and enters into Christ. (Study Mark 16:15,16; Acts 2:38 and Gal. 3:27).

One lesson we learn is that we never get too old to obey the gospel. As long as there is life and breath in our body and we are truly willing to repent of our sins, to confess the name of Jesus and to submit to baptism for the remission of our sins, God is willing and anxious to add us to His church.

Another lesson is that Edsel and Mike each had taken a great risk by waiting a long time before they obeyed the gospel. In their case, God had granted them length of life. But we never know how long we might live, so we need to prepare before it may be too late. When one submits to baptism, it evidences their humility and their desire to obey all of God's commandments.

When we choose to become Christians earlier in life, we benefit greatly because of the added years we are privileged to enjoy all spiritual blessings found only in Christ Jesus. We also are blessed with added opportunities to encourage others, by our example and teaching, so they, too, can come to know the Lord and live in hope of life eternal.

We are very thankful for the knock on our door and for the two precious souls who submitted to the call of the gospel. We pray God's richest blessings upon our brother Edsel and our brother Mike. We are also thankful that God placed us in Ripley on that very special Lord's Day!



"Do not open the door... Unless...."



Edsel Jamieson



Mike Bennett

NOTE: In addition to the name of the person being memorialized or honored, please include your name and address and the address of a family member to whom a written acknowledgement may be sent.

Thanks from the Franks
Magnolia Messenger
P. O. Box 1578
Kosciusko, MS 39090

Magnolia Messenger

In Memory Of

BRELAND COLLIER
ARLICE BRIDGES
WAYNE BRIDGES
 Don & Mary Wates
 (Montgomery, AL)

PEGGY C. AGEE
 James H. Agee
 (Chattanooga, TN)

DYNELL NEVINS
 Garnett & Betty Harris
 (Brandon, MS)
 Carole Milner
 (Brandon, MS)

SHELBY JEAN BISHOP
 Rick Bishop
 (Columbus, MS)

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

VELMA DELANCEY
 Wilburn DeLancey
 (Benton, MS)
 Carl & Vera Spencer
 (Jackson, MS)

HEATHER SPENCER
 Carl & Vera Spencer
 (Jackson, MS)

MAE WARD
 Hazel Cook
 (Columbus, MS)

THOMAS SHAWN DICKERSON
 Tommy & Ruby Dickerson
 (Olive Branch, MS)

ORLYN LOTT
 Tony & Ginny Luther
 (Columbia, MS)
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SIDNEY & MARY COLEMAN
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ADRIAN SANDERS
 Robert & Elaine Evans
 ((Columbus, MS)



GARY HAWKINS
R. C. FRANKS
TROY WILBANKS
C BENNETT WALKER, Jr
CHARLIE McCAIN
 Ray & Donna Franks
 (DeQuincy, LA)

TROY WILBANKS
TERRY NEELY
 Garnett & Betty Harris
 (Brandon, MS)

BILL WILSON
 Mary Ellen Albritton
 (Crystal Springs, MS)
 Judge & Mrs Ed Patten
 Mr. & Mrs. Jerry Owen
 and Pharmacy Staff
 (Hazlehurst, MS)

MRS MICHAEL (BECKY) COLEMAN
 Gene & Madolyn Gibson
 (Moorehead, MS)

JULIA J. OGHIN
 Dorthy Henderson
 (Rolling Fork, MS)

LEE COLE
 Church of Christ
 Carbon Hill, AL

In Honor of

THE RALLY SUPPORTERS
 Ray & Donna Franks
 (DeQuincy, LA)

MS LONVERTIA MONTGOMERY
 (97 Years old)

MS CONNIE WIGGINS
 (98 Years old)
 Yvonne Carter
 (Vicksburg, Ms)

THANK YOU
For Sending
Gifts In
Memory or in Honor

VISITING with Eddie (Cont. from page 10)

message to the non-Christian is: **"Here is salvation, take it!"** The message to the Christian is: **"We must follow Christ all the time and not just when it is convenient. We must obey Christ all the time and not just when it is convenient."**

We enjoyed our visit with the church and our meal with the Estes family. Booneville is a wonderful congregation.

August 24: I preached at the **Antioch church of Christ**. In Bible class I taught a lesson on the "Parable of the Soils" based on Matthew 13. It is a challenging passage on the importance of sowing the seed. In the worship **Howard Scroggs** lead the singing. I preached on "Overwhelmed and Grateful" based on Luke 7:36-50. It's the story of the unnamed woman washing the feet of Jesus with her tears. It's a wonderful lesson on Christ's love for us and our love for Him. The love of Christ is seen in the tender way he deals with the sinners. Also this lesson teaches us the greatness of love.

August 31: I preached at the **Cleveland church of Christ**. **Tim McCarter** is the minister there. He

was out of town on vacation. They had around 65 in attendance. It was wonderful to see so many great friends and family. Some were out of town for the Labor Day holiday.

I presented three lessons. The first two lessons were taken from two parables in Matthew 21:23-46. Jesus is beginning His last week before His crucifixion. In the first parable, "Actions Speak Louder," a father asked his two sons to go work in the vineyard. We considered the call, the work and the workers. The second parable, "Rebellion in the Vineyard," was about the goodness and severity of God. Jesus pronounced judgment on the Jew for their rejection of the Messiah. One great lesson for us is God's provision call for great responsibility. Sunday afternoon I spoke on three parables that talk about the growth of the kingdom of God: the Seed, the Mustard seed, and the Leaven. It's a great lesson on personal growth and kingdom growth.

September 7: I preached at the **Antioch church of Christ** on Hwy. 306 east of Coldwater, MS.

In Bible class I considered the three parables in Luke 15. They

are wonderful lessons on "Seeking the Lost." We discussed God's attitude toward the lost and how the lost find their way home.

In the worship I preached on "Humbled and Exalted" (Luke 14:1, 7-14). It's a wonderful lesson on the principle of humility. Humility is one of the attributes of a Christian.

September 14: I visited with the **Hills Chapel church of Christ** east of Booneville, MS. Their new preacher is **Mark Neaves**. He has been there about a year. He is a bivocational preacher. He teaches



Mark Neaves

high school in Itawamba County and lives with his family in Saltillo.

The church has about 65 in attendance and has no elders. It is a wonderful group of brethren. Mark recently on his Facebook page said, "They are the most wonderful people in the world."

Mark taught the Bible class. His theme was 1 Timothy 5:1-30. It was a good lesson about relationships in the church. The theme was about helping widows. He said we do this out of a pure heart. I agree.

Mark's sermon was entitled "Turning the Other Cheek" and was based on Matthew 5:38-48. He gave several examples of Bible figures showing love and forgiveness to those who had wronged them. He asked the question, "What is a slap on the cheek compared to saving someone's soul?" It was a good lesson. I enjoyed my visit with the church.

September 21: I preached at **Antioch church of Christ**. I spoke on "Powerful Prayer" based on Luke 11:5-13. I considered the example of persistence in prayer. In the worship I discussed the parable of "The Rich Man and Lazarus" based on Luke 16:19-31. I enjoyed seeing everyone and we had a good time in worship.

September 28: I preached for Homecoming at the **Pine Bluff church of Christ**. It was a wonderful occasion. They had lots of visitors. It was so good to see everyone. They had a fellowship meal after services. They had an abundance of good food.

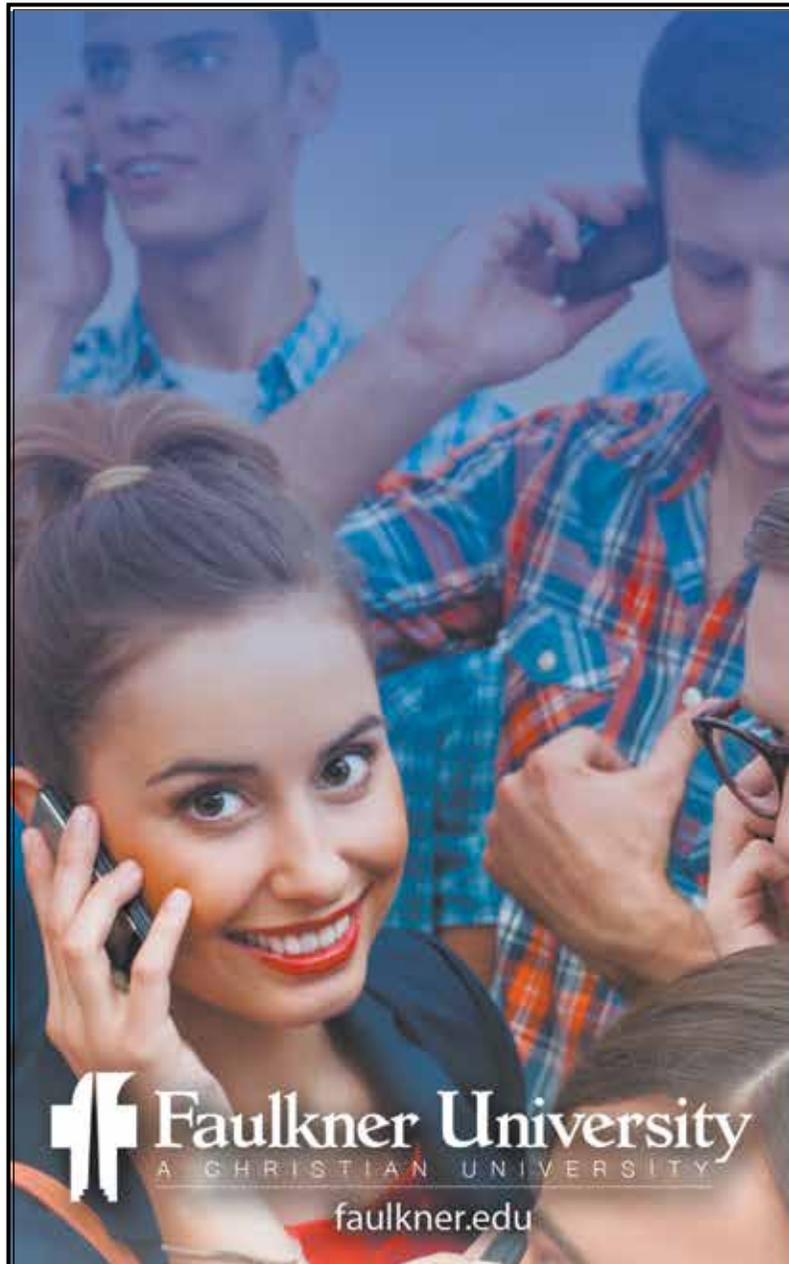
I served as an interim preacher for them the first three months of this year. They have found two men who travel from the Tupelo area to help them with preaching responsibilities. **Luc Michaud** and **Nathan Swanson** continue to work with the church.

In Bible class I presented the lesson "Are You a Good Neighbor?" Luke 10:25-37. It's the parable of the Good Samaritan. In worship I preached on "Seeking the Lost" based on Luke 15. Luke 15 is the heart of the Gospel. It tells us of God's love for us.

I enjoyed my visits with each congregation. I pray that the lessons I have presented to the churches have been a blessing to each person.

By **Eddie Lewis**, Missionary to North Mississippi, **9423 Laurel Hill, Olive Branch, MS 38654**

NOTE: Since Eddie's visit, **Mark Neaves** has accepted full-time work with the Pine Grove church, near Fulton, MS.



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- Jon Podein, "Commit to a Holy Standard"
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- Melvin Otey, "Aspire to Be Holy"
- Steve Orduno, "Stand upon Holy Ground"

For more information contact Dr. G. Scott Gleaves by phone at (334) 386-7154 or by email at sgleaves@faulkner.edu

MBC Graduate Serves As Missionary in South Africa

Chris and his wife, Gill, recently returned to USA to visit supporting churches



Report by Paul Franks

Through the influence of his physical brother, Chris du Preez from South Africa, made the decision to become a Christian. Later, as he began searching for a place to prepare himself for full time ministry, his attention was drawn to Mississippi. After much prayer, Chris selected Magnolia Bible College in Kosciusko, arriving in 1997 and finishing his degree in 2000.

Since 2001 Chris and his family have been involved in mission work in South Africa. Over those years he stated, "more than 200 people have been baptized." Chris also told me that he has been involved in the conversion of "many more, either directly or indirectly."

During the last two weeks of October and the first few days of November of 2014, Chris and his wife Gill have been traveling around the country reporting to congregations who are supporting their work. We got to visit with them in Kosciusko and were reminded of the good work they are doing in South Africa.

One of the main projects that Chris is working on now is securing the funds and the people to help him build a youth camp on 40 acres near East London on the coast of South Africa which is also the location of Eastern Cape Bible College and where Chris and his family live.

Chris told us that in South Africa, there are "no camp facilities for churches of Christ." In addition to the youth camps, there are plans to use these facilities for youth rallies and fellowships as well as a retreat center for church leaders.

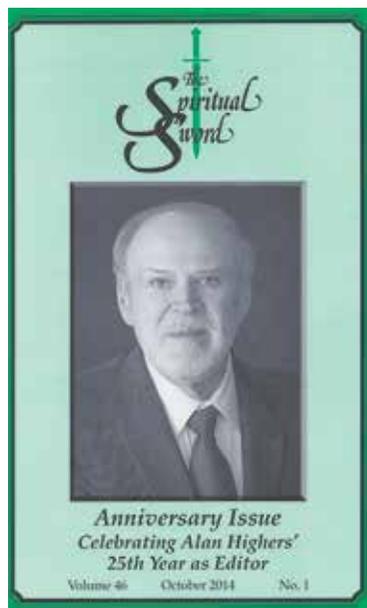
If you are interested in more information, you can contact **Curtis Hays**, mission committee contact person for Chris's sponsoring church, the Lewisville Church

of Christ in Lewisville, Texas. His number is 214-802-7778. You can also go to FACEBOOK and look for Chris duPreez in South Africa and communicate with him directly.

Even though Magnolia Bible College has now been closed for five years, great work continues all over the world with former students and graduates of MBC. We pray that Chris will continue to be successful in spreading the gospel in his part of the world.

(Paul Franks; apaulfranks@gmail.com)

The Spiritual Sword



Thomas B. Warren, editor
1969 - 1989
Twenty Years

Alan E. Highers, editor
1989 - present
Celebrating 25 Years

Our congratulations and appreciation extended to brother Highers (editor), the Getwell church of Christ in Memphis (sponsor) and all who have been and continue to be a part of another good work in the Kingdom of Christ. (alf)

Journeys of Paul (A Few of the Stops Along the Way)

- By Paul Franks -

West Monroe, LA

A few weeks ago we visited with the West Ouachita congregation in West Monroe, LA. **Nathan Keene** and his new



wife, Avery, are working with this congregation as Nathan is the new minister.

Ray Paseur, who moved back to Kosciusko and is now working with the Forest church, had been the



Ray Paseur at Forest

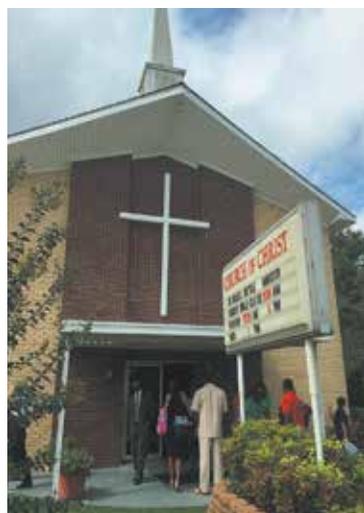
minister for this church. We pray that Nathan will have a successful work there. The church was very friendly to us and made us feel right at home.

Vicksburg, MS By Pass

Glenda and I stopped to visit with the Bypass congregation in Vicksburg. **Willie Nettle**, a MBC graduate, has been a friend for many years. I was given the opportunity to preach and worship with this fine church.

The singing was wonderful. Willie and the other three elders, **Dean Caldwell**, **Bill Murihead** and **Willie Powers** are doing a great job shepherding this flock of 150.

Willie Nettle also has **Joel Dimmette, Sr.** and **Joshua DuBoise** working with him as evangelists for this multi-cultural congregation. "In the Bible, there is no white church, black church, brown church, red church, yellow church. There is only the blood bought church of Jesus Christ." When you attend the Bypass church of Christ in Vicksburg, you are reminded of that point. (PF)



ByPass in Vicksburg

(Ripley, MS) Beech Hill

Several weeks ago, we had the privilege of visiting one of the premier country churches of Christ in Mississippi. I am talking about the Beech Hill congregation west of Ripley, Mississippi.

The church is served by two preachers, **King McCarver** and **James Horton**. The elders are **Dan Harrell**, **Don Ward** and **Stanley Ward**. The church also has 13 deacons.

We were there to attend their annual gospel meeting. **Drew Kizer**, preacher for the Ashville Road church in Leeds, Alabama, was the guest evangelist. The Beech Hill church is a great congregation of the Lord's people.

French Camp, MS (Huntsville)

When I think of the Huntsville church of Christ, I think of **Dan Beardain**. So it was wonderful to see Brother and Sister Beardain when I attended the Huntsville congregation a while back. Dan has had some health problems and has retired from preaching, but still attends every service that he can.



Dan & Linnie Beardain

It was great to visit with their preacher, **Nathan Wright**, a MBC graduate. It was also a pleasure to visit with **Okley Tharp**, one of the elders. **Roger Beardain**, the other elder, was out of town the day I was there. Brother Tharp took me on a tour of their new multi-purpose building. They have been working on this, as funds are available, and have made a lot of progress.

The Huntsville congregation, located in Montgomery county five miles west of French Camp, MS, is a very active church, with strong leadership. We are excited about the future growth of this "country" congregation of the Lord's people.

Your Comments Welcomed!

New Orleans, LA

Glenda and I made a quick trip to New Orleans, LA, the day before Thanksgiving, to attend the funeral of **Tim McReynolds** who was a member of the Hickory Knoll Church of Christ. Tim was a deacon at the Enterprise Blvd church in Lake Charles when I served as their minister. We love and appreciate the entire McReynolds family and will certainly miss Tim.

Also, we got to visit with **Eric Dishongh**, one of the ministers, and talk with him about the work at Hickory Knoll. He is excited to be working with 3 other ministers, **Jose Luis Campos**, **Malvin Sanders** and **Dennis Jones**.

Eric went on to tell me that, since Hurricane Katrina, this congregation

has become much more racially diverse. It has made the church stronger and able to reach out to the community better. We pray that this church will continue to grow and prosper.



Eric Dishongh

Burnsville, MS

Rick Jones is a gospel preacher who loves to preach. Rick owns a church furniture company and is a realtor for the NE Mississippi area. His favorite role, as he put it, is "getting to preach" for the Burnsville congregation meeting on Hwy 72 between Corinth and luka.

Glenda and I got to visit with Rick and the Burnsville congregation recently where we were blessed to renew our friendship with Rick and that congregation. We went out to lunch with him and his granddaughter, **Emma**. It was a delight to visit with this active congregation served by two elders, **Gerald Parsons** and **Gary Orick**.



Burnsville in NE MS

Wonder Why These Records Were Written ?

Old Testament Examples

Nadad & Abihu

(Leviticus 10:1-2)

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

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

Korah

(Numbers 16: 31-33)

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

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

Uzzah

(2 Samuel 6: 6-9)

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

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

New Testament Teachings

Jude 5,6,7

(a) Israelites

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

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

(b) Angels

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

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

(c) Sodom & Gomorrha

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

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

Why were the Old Testament Examples written in the New Testament?

Inspired answer (Jude 7):
"Set forth for an example."

People Disobeyed God; God Destroyed People

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

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

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

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

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

(Editor)

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

Whence the "Sunday School"? And Where To From Here?

- Ken Joines -

Robert Raikes knelt beside his father's grave following the funeral. He had for years worked alongside his dad in the print shop there in Gloucester, England but his father was dead and those days were now gone forever. He mopped the tears from his face with a handkerchief and whispered a promise to his dad that he would make him proud, and then rose to his feet. The year was 1757.

Looking now for some meaningful new direction for his life so he could keep his promise, Robert involved himself in the lives of young boys on the streets of his town. A few were homeless. All had to work to help feed their family. And because of this, none went to school. He knew their future was grim. Worse yet, there was no one to teach them the good news of the gospel and how to live God's way, thus making their own lives count for something of value.

An idea began to form in Robert Raikes' mind and he soon shared it with his minister, Thomas Stock. "Let's start a Sunday school," he said. Stock was incredulous and replied, "What? school on Sunday?" "Yes," said Robert, "we'll teach them to read and write part of

the day and the Bible the rest of the day." After several long sessions discussing this new-fangled and seemingly unworkable plan, the two agreed that it was worth a try.

At first there were very few takers, but soon more than a hundred boys were meeting every Sunday. Soon they invited the girls, too. One young girl named Graci said to Raikes, "But we don't have good clothes to wear to this school." Robert told her, "All you need do is comb your hair and have a clean face." Graci said, "You're so nice," and began attending along with the boys. Be-



Ken Joines

fore long there were more than 4,000 Sunday Schools in England. The rest—as they say—is history.

For those of us 75 years and older, may I remind us that Sunday School came into vogue in churches of Christ largely during our lifetime. We saw churches realize the value of organized teaching programs and begin to allocate huge sums of money to erect educational buildings. Budgets were adjusted to accommodate the procurement of "Educational Directors", a new staff position that came with no small amount of controversy. Was this justifiable? Did we need such a full-time staff member?

We soon began to see the positive results from this new initiative. During the 1940s,

What happened along the way was that when churches started building strong educational programs and hiring educational directors, too many parents abdicated their position of responsibility and turned the job of teaching God's word over to the Sunday School teachers.

50s and 60s we saw knowledge of the Scriptures catapult churches of Christ to the forefront in our ability to discuss God's word with those who did not know. Ira North, the famed preacher for Tennessee's Madison Church of Christ coined the phrase, "As the Sunday School goes, so goes the church." In view of the phenomenal success at Madison it ill behooved one to argue with this. Churches would load up their teachers and drive several

hundred miles just to see firsthand to see "how they're doing it at Madison."

Now, let's go back to England and Robert Raikes in 1757. The question that needs to be asked is, "For 1700 years the church grew and flourished. Great preachers were produced. Men and women of faith made a permanent impact on their world. Boys and girls grew into adulthood fully armed with the Word of God. They knew the Scriptures!

But how? How did the church not just grow, but **multiply -- with no Sunday school?** How did they get the Word firmly planted in these hearts with no organized program down at church? How did boys and girls learn enough to obey the gospel and grow spiritually?

The answer is found in Deuteronomy 6:6-9 (ESV). Care to know what it says? "And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on

the doorposts of your house and on your gates."

The rest of that chapter suggests that these truths were then transferred to the children of these men and women. In the words of apostle Paul, "Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord." (Eph. 6:4 ESV) This was God's charge to parents. When mothers and dads take this charge seriously, the children know the way of the Lord.

Fifty years later we now see mothers, fathers AND children

See Sunday School on Page 16



Home of GBN in Olive Branch, Mississippi

A Great Need

We have made it our goal to be the best stewards possible of the Lord's money. We presently operate 100% debt free. As of 2013, we have paid off our building, our studio and all equipment. Our policy going forward is never to purchase that for which we do not have the money already in hand. We believe this will keep us solid footing financially in the future.

We have a great need for some equipment that will allow us to bring "Master Control" in house. Presently we send all of video material to a company in Atlanta who then ingests the material and holds it on their server ready to send out via satellite. This service cost us about \$5000 per month. If we could purchase our own equipment we could eliminate the need to pay a third party and thus would save \$60,000. The problem is that the equipment we need costs approximately \$100,000.

If we can raise the needed \$100,000 and purchase this equipment, it will result in several benefits to GBN:

- 1) *We will save \$5000 per month in third party expenses.*
- 2) *We will have greater flexibility for live events and schedule changes.*
- 3) *We will be able to store a larger amount of material in our archive, thus giving us a broader scope of programming.*
- 4) *It will open the door to a second stream which we hope to use for Spanish programming.*

If you are interested in contributing to the equipment for master control, please send your check to: **GBN, 8900 Germantown Road, Olive Branch, MS, 38654** and mark it for "master control equipment."

Booneville Church Still Seeks to Serve

My June and I were blessed to visit the Sunday evening services of the Booneville church (2nd St) on November 23, 2014. Our delightful visit reminded us of the capable leadership and the dedicated work of the congregation of about 400. Their example of putting their faith into action is worthy of being followed.

The Booneville church hosted an annual area wide campaign held September 28-30. Several congregations in Prentiss and adjoining counties cooperated in this special evangelistic effort with **Keith Parker** doing the preaching. **Attendance** on Sunday night reached **1,013**. During the meeting, 23 souls responded to the invitation. Forty-eight more responded in Booneville on the following Sunday and Wednesday for a total of **62 responses**.

The Booneville church is presently served by 4 elders. They are: **Jim Estes, Buster Green, Eddie Mauney** and **Larry Morgan**. Several new deacons have re-

cently been added, bringing the **total number to 24!** Each deacon has been given a specific area of work for which he is responsible.

The church continues their long standing tradition of being very active in local evangelism, benevolence and missions. By reading their weekly church bulletin, it is apparent they are making an effort to be "ready unto every good work."

In addition to **Greg Pollock** (Pulpit), **Jim Estes** (Associate) **Nathan Pirtle** (Youth) and **Aaron Foster** (College) also serve as special ministers.

On the evening of our visit, I was privileged to preach and was blessed with encouraging response, especially the next morning when we joined their "Golden Circle" for breakfast at the "Front Porch" Restaurant, located just down the street from the church building. The food was delicious, the fellowship was uplifting and the two day visit was a blessing indeed. June and I are grateful. (Al Franks)

GBN EXPANSION

Don Blackwell,
Executive Director

GBN cannot be successful unless we continue to expand. We are pleased to announce that in the last several months we have added three new stations that are carrying the Gospel Broadcasting Network as one of their 24/7 channels.

SOUTH AFRICA

In our last newsletter we mentioned the Purple Turtle Group. They are based out of Port Elizabeth and Cape Town, South Africa and now include GBN as one of their channels in the web TV service that they offer to customers.

ATLANTA, GA

Southern FiberNet Corporation is a start-up FTTH-fiber to the home-company in the Atlanta area. They will soon be operational and will be expanding in Fulton and Coweta counties in Georgia. GBN will be one of their regular channels from day one.

EAST ALABAMA

Our newest station is Cable TV of East Alabama (www.ctvea.net). This is the Phenix City area of Alabama.

RADIO

The FCC has approved sixteen applications for congregations around the brotherhood to become the owners of their own FM radio stations. GBN has been an integral part of this, and we plan to provide our own GBN radio stream to these congregations to fill air time. Sixteen low-power FM radio stations airing the gospel around the country! We will provide more details later as to the locations, dial settings and call letters of these new stations.

We need your prayers as we continue to expand.

A Reader's Response

"Just want you to know how much we and many others enjoy the Magnolia Messenger. The articles are very informative. Keep up the good work. Thank you for all the good you do to spread the gospel." (Billy Joe and the Waterloo congregation in Waterloo, Alabama)

Sunday School

(Continued from page 15)

with very scant knowledge of the holy scriptures. *What happened along the way was that when churches started building strong educational programs and hiring educational directors, too many parents abdicated their position of responsibility and turned the job of teaching God's word over to the Sunday School teachers.*

Not many years later we began training Youth Ministers and even more parents resigned their position as their children's primary source of training for their children.

Some observers believe that the Sunday School as we know it is on its way to the storage room. Class attendance continues to decline. Colleges are no longer training Educational Directors. I personally know of very few churches that have such a staff member.

The question is, Can the church survive without Sunday School? Yes it can. But not without mothers and fathers who not only know the Bible but who teach it to their children at home. There is absolutely no substitute for God's plan.

A few other questions are in order. Dads, are you willing to forego your obsession with sports and pleasures long enough to learn what the Bible says and then take the time to teach it to your children? And Mothers—especially single mothers—are you willing to lay down your tennis racquet long enough to learn what the Bible says and then take the time to teach it to your children?

The 20th century has really done a job on us. It gave us comfort and ease, recreation and sports and it diverted our attention from what was really essential. Now we are paying the price. I urge every parent of young children to start today taking this matter very seriously.

This would probably be a good time to say that neither the educational director nor the youth minister brought your children into this world. And it

is not primarily their responsibility to teach your children. If your children do not know the holy scriptures the fault lies at YOUR door and no one else's.

Am I opposed to the Sunday School. By no means! Am I opposed to strong youth programs? Of course not. But if parents think they can turn the job of getting God's word and God's Way over to the Sunday School teacher, youth director or educational director, they are wrong. WRONG!

Sadly, we have raised an entire generation (or two) of men and women in this nation who cannot even name the ten commandments, nor the twelve apostles. They know almost nothing about the establishment or history of the church, let alone God's requirement for membership. They don't know an apostle from an epistle. Most are morally bankrupt, and will scoff when reference is made to what the Bible has to say on any subject. This nation is reeling, and many believe, on the verge of collapse. All because Dads and Moms did not take the time to teach and train their children in the way of the Lord.

Dear God, please forgive us for failing to do what you asked us to do so long ago. We have sowed the wind and now we are reaping the whirlwind. It is late, but not too late. We can reverse the trend. In-flight corrections are sometimes difficult, but not impossible.

Ken Joines

1722 Lakefield Drive
Tupelo, MS 38801
1-901-212-1601

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God..." (2 Tim. 2:15)

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Overwhelmed and Grateful

Luke 7:36-50

- Eddie Lewis -

Jesus received an invitation to dinner from Simon the Pharisee. Other guests were invited so Simon was a man of wealth in his community. The guests would recline around a table to eat. It was a custom the Jews borrowed from the Greeks. The Greek word "kataklino" translated "sit at table" really means to "lie down or recline."

Let's consider some of the characters in the story.

The first person in the story is Simon. He is a Pharisee. Pharisee means "the separated one." The Pharisees were the purists of their day, but their obsession was not in observing the Law, it was in observing their petty regulations about the Law. They did not associate with common people. They invited Jesus to eat with them so they could find fault with him and his teaching.

The second character is the unnamed and unknown woman. Some suggest she is Mary Magdalene or Mary the sister of Lazarus, but there is no reason to think that it is either of these women. The unknown woman is probably a prostitute. She had met Jesus earlier and that meeting caused her to repent of her sin.

Now, let's consider the story. This woman comes into the house of the Pharisee and takes a position behind Jesus. She begins to weep and her tears fall upon the feet of Jesus. She wipes his feet dry with her long hair. She



Eddie Lewis

anoints his feet with a precious perfume and begins to kiss his feet. Simon and his friends are shocked by this scene. Simon said, "If he were a prophet he would know that this woman is a sinner and would not let her touch him." Jesus understood her grief and repentance. He tells the story of the two debtors. He asked, "Which of the debtors would love the master more?" Simon said, "The one who was forgiven the greatest debt." Simon now understood the difference between himself and the woman. Simon had not extended to Jesus even the routine courtesies of the day. He had not washed his feet, or anointed his head with oil, or given him a kiss of greeting. The love of the woman was so overwhelming that she washed his feet with her tears. She anointed his feet with a precious perfume and lavished his feet with kisses. This difference is the greatest difference of all.

There are many lessons in this story, but we will consider three.

First is Christ's love for us. He loves even the worst of sinners and wants them to be saved. She was a known immoral sinner. It was unheard of for a woman to even speak to a rabbi, but she took great liberties in touching Jesus and this shocked Simon and his friends. The point is Jesus receives sinners. Jesus was sensitive to the needs of the woman. He handled this down-trodden woman in a way to encourage her (John 4:7-30, 39-42). Jesus was a friend to sinners and tax collectors. He is demonstrating to us how much God loves us.

Second, our love for Christ is in proportion to our consciousness of sin. Simon was not aware of his sin, but the woman could never forget that she was a sinner. Simon did not feel he needed forgiveness, but the woman knew that she needed much forgiveness.

It is a misapplication of the parable to say that you have to be a great sinner to have a great love for Christ. I believe that the point is not the amount of sin, but our awareness of sin that makes us love Christ more.

I remember an interview with Dolly Parton some years ago. The interviewer asked her why she had a picture of her house she grew up in on the wall of her home. Her answer reveals this truth. She said, "I have it there to remind me of where I come from and how blessed I really am." Our awareness of sin will cause us to love Christ more.

Cont.; 4th col.; this page

Marietta, MS Church Youth Attend Bible Bowl in Cookville, TN



For the last 19 years, the Marietta church of Christ has attended the Cookeville, TN Bible Bowl that is put on every September by the Sycamore church of Christ. It is held in TN Tech's coliseum and brings together over 2,000 participants from all over the Southeast.

Teams of four answer 100 questions individually and the top teams compete in final rounds for winners in Jr. and Sr. divisions. This

event began in 1980 and was moved to the Hooper Eblen Center in 1994.

The Marietta youth group gets the study material at the beginning of summer and is ready for competition by September.

You are welcome to call **Ronnie Livingston** (Marietta's preacher) for information on how your congregation can be involved in this Bible Bowl. Ronnie's number is **662-720-6015**.

A Note From Ken Gardner

(Received by MM in December, 2013)

Brother Al,

*Hope all is well with you and your good family. Several congregations in this area are involved in teaching Bible classes at the Rankin County Jail at Brandon. In the last 2-3 months we have been able to baptize 9 inmates into Christ. One of them, **Charles Dukes**, recently handed me a poem he has written. He has given me permission to have it printed. If you agree it is worthy, please run it in MM. Thanks and God bless your efforts.*

This Is My Plea (with all my heart)

*This is my plea. Of my sins I feel remorse;
I'll stand with God; I've made my choice!*

*His path I'll take, my faith leading the way;
My heart is with Jesus, I will not stray!*

*Through His love and mercy, I'll make my way;
To spread His word, I'll worship and pray.*

*I'm fighting a battle, but I feel no alarm;
My sweet Savior will keep me from harm!*

*Brothers and sisters, hear my plea;
Surrender to Jesus; come serve Him with me.*

Poem by

Charles Dukes, 98328
Jefferson County CWC
101 Corrections Road
Fayette, MS 39069

UPDATE:

On September 22, 2014, we received an email from brother Gardner in which he wrote the following update.

*I am so thankful for the prison work at the Rankin County Facility. It started with a phone call from bro. **W. E. Walker** asking me to go and visit an inmate who was taking a BCC from him. With the help of the **North Brandon, Nile and Clinton** congregations there have now been **25 baptisms** and continued ongoing Bible classes... I should have also mentioned that sometimes these inmates are moved out before they can complete their obedience. In such cases, gospel preachers who work in the vicinity of the new location of the inmates, have been great in stepping in and helping. Bro. **Trey Henry** in particular has been most helpful.*

Cont. from col. 3; this page

This parable teaches us of **the greatness of love**. Why did Jesus ask Simon "which of the two men loved his creditor more?" In spite of all the faults the sinful woman had, she still loved Christ. With all the righteous deeds Simon did, his one fault was that he didn't love Christ.

This story shows us the importance of love. The two great commandments in the Bible are to love God and to love others (Mark 12:29-31). In 1 Corinthians 13, Paul tells us that if we have the ability to speak in tongues and don't have love, we are nothing. He

said if we give all our money to the poor, but don't have love, it doesn't profit us anything. He said if we become a martyr for the cause of Christ, but don't have love, it doesn't profit us anything. The point is our love for Christ is no greater than our appreciation for our pardon. This appreciation for pardon depends on our awareness of our sin. We can't make light of sin and appreciate our salvation.

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

Please Pray for the MM

Churches Looking For Preachers

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

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

Quitman Church of Christ 124 Long Blvd P.O. Box 77 Quitman, Ms. 39355

The Quitman church is seeking a full-time minister of the Gospel. We are seeking someone who is enthusiastic, sound in the faith and willing to help us with the Lord's work. We desire a family man who has a sincere desire to please God and help the church and community grow.

We are a small congregation, have a nice building with a fellowship hall and a large three bedroom home next door. We are debt free with the exception of normal monthly expenses and support contributions.

We support the Pine Vale Children's home, Faulkner University and any local disaster when they occur. We have a benevolence program and support patient care at the Cancer Center with small incidentals. We want to grow in number and spirit spreading the Gospel to all who will listen. Salary and Home provided.

If interested please contact us by one of the following numbers,

William Crocker
1-769-232-1938

Austin Dickerson
1-601-527-3968

Mark Hudson
1-601-934-9272

www.clarkecountychamber.com would be a good place to see the area and what Quitman has to offer.

Caledonia (Near Columbus, MS)

The Caledonia Church of Christ is seeking a **full time minister** to work with our congregation in Caledonia, Mississippi. We are an established, solid congregation with **attendance around 50** on Sunday mornings. We have a preacher's home located next to our church building. We have a new church building and are debt free.

We seek an individual with a solid, Bible-based education who possesses a sincere desire to preach the Gospel. He must have the ability to teach and communicate his knowledge to others in a class setting and individual teachings. He must be scripturally married, able to work with the congregation and the community, and have a true servant heart.

Applications may be sent via e-mail or postal mail to the following:

Paul Curry
154 Glenwood Drive
Columbus, MS 39705
bamacurry@cableone.net

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

Coffeerville Church Seeks New Preacher

The Coffeerville Church of Christ in North MS is currently looking for a full time preacher. We have a Sunday AM attendance in the mid seventies. We offer adequate salary, a three bedroom, two bath house adjacent to the church building and partial utilities paid.

If interested, please contact **John W. Purdy**, phone 662-675-2681 or email: purdyvj@gmail.com

Pontotoc Church (Hwy 15) Looking for Preacher

The church at Hwy 15 in Pontotoc is seeking a full time minister of the Gospel. We are seeking someone who is enthusiastic, sound in the faith and willing to help us with the Lord's work. We desire a family man who has a sincere desire to please God and help the church and community grow.

If interested please contact **Randy Swanson** at 901-634-1735.

Pulpit Minister Needed (Bolivar, TN)

The Bolivar church of Christ presently has an opening for our pulpit minister. We are located in southwest TN approximately one hour due east of Memphis, TN. Our community has 5800 residents. We average 85-90 on Sunday morning. Our three elders are seeking someone who is married, with or without children, outgoing and able to communicate effectively with all age groups within the congregation. Ability and willingness to inject oneself in to the community at large is vital. Long-time experience level is not necessarily a pre-requisite.

If interested please contact:
Jeff Shackelford - 731-609-5277
Bill Hendrix - 731-609-5176
Andy Austin - 731-254-8612

THANK YOU

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

Thanks for Reading the MM!

Carthage, Mississippi Church Would Like a Full-time Preacher

Eddie Neal and family, who preached for the Carthage church in central Mississippi for the past several years, has recently moved to Arkansas. At the present time, Emmette Armstrong of Kosciusko is willingly and freely filling the pulpit. While the Carthage church appreciates brother Emmette's help, they would like very much to enlist the assistance of a preacher who could live and work in their community of about 5,000 souls.

The Carthage church (about 20 in attendance) is planning to move their present church building to a new and more visible location on the southeast side of the city. The church is willing, but unable, to pay a full-time salary. They would especially like to discuss possibilities with a preacher who is "semi-retired" or one who can bring most of his support with him. For more information, please feel free to call one the church leaders -- **Bob Clark** at 601-654-3527.

"...How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things." (Rom. 10:15)

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The Church at Lake Placid, Florida "An Opportunity to Help"

- Ken Joines -

A few month ago I stood looking into the faces of God's people at Lake Placid, Florida while serving as interim for the third time over the years. These faces were filled with a resolve to rebuild the congregation as well as salvage a \$3 million house of worship that has been in foreclosure for some two and one-half years. These people are in a great need of financial assistance and they deserve the support of those who care.

It was in 1959, when the church first started, while serving 15 miles north at Sebring, Florida that on Sunday afternoons I preached to some of these same people when this embryonic church was meeting in the Lake Placid high school trying to establish a base of operation. They finally grew to the point of buying property and erecting a building that proved adequate for them until eight years ago when they purchased land on one of the busiest north-south thoroughfares in the state.

Things were moving ahead in a good way but during construction the economic downturn, coupled with unexpected sharp cost overruns left them on hard times. Some grew frustrated and discouraged and left. There remains today a good nucleus that can once again become a viable congregation. But they must have help from beyond their own small number.

Following foreclosure, the church has been renting the facility for the past two and one-half years from the bank at the rate of \$2,500 per month. No serious buyers have come forward during this time, so the facility remains for sale.

A recent development of interest is that the lending bank has been sold and will change hands as of October 2014. There is now an opportunity to repurchase the property at a significant reduction in price. But this church needs to raise something in the neighborhood of \$200,000 to \$250,000 as a down payment. If these funds can be raised, there is a good chance the property can be repurchased at significantly less than the asking price for the church building at this time.

Lake Placid is a beautiful city situated on the southern tip of "The Ridge" section of Florida, squarely in the middle of citrus and vegetable growing country. Summertime population is something like 5,000-7,000.

This swells to approximately 12,000-15,000 in the winter months. This is one of the hottest Bass and Crappie fishing areas in the country, drawing many winter visitors. The church enjoys a summer attendance of around 45-50 with winter numbers more than twice that.

A large Alabama congregation has agreed to supply funds for a full-time preacher, as well as assistance with VBS, special days and other community outreach efforts. Other churches have expressed a willingness to assist in similar ways, leaving the Lake Placid church free to pursue help to reclaim the house of worship itself.

A fund has been established and now totals some \$70 ,000+, as of September 8, 2014, for the sole purpose of recovering the property. Anyone who wants to donate may make the check out to: **Lake Placid Church of Christ Building Fund** and mail to: **Lake Placid Church of Christ, P.O. Box 1440, Lake Placid, FL 33862.** All donations are being held in escrow by the church's attorney and will be returned to the donors in full should the church fail to reclaim the building.

Three veteran preachers, all of them anxious to share information with you, now alternate serving in this interim. They are **Ken Joines (901-212-1601)**, **Frank Parker (863-385- 7637)** and **Arlin Chapman (941-780-7520)**. Or you may contact Lake Placid member **George Mason (863-441- 0732 or 863-465-7971)**. It is hoped that in the near future a full-time preacher can be on the scene to help spearhead a vigorous evangelistic thrust.

Would you please look closely at your own situation, taking into account how God has blessed you, and determine now to not allow this struggling unit of God's family to tread water any longer without our help.

This house of worship is not the church, but if we allow this valuable tool to slip from our grip, it will take literally decades for this church to secure a facility this well located. All across this land there are congregations and individuals with funds sitting idle that could be used to God's glory in this dire emergency.

In Christian Love,
Ken Joines
1722 Lakefield Drive
Tupelo, MS 38801
1-901-212-1601

A "Christian University" Report Card

- Jim Howard -

The history of higher education in our nation is replete with the names of institutions which were begun with the goal of serving the purposes of the religious institutions that began them. Harvard University was founded in 1636 for the purpose of educating Puritan ministers but has, over the centuries, ceased to have any meaningful relation to a particular religious group. Dozens of other colleges and universities share the same kind of history.

Beginning with the establishment of Bacon College and Bethany College in the 1830's and 1840's, a host of institutions of Christian higher education have been begun by members of the American Restoration Movement. Not every college begun by a member of the "restoration movement" was intended to be a "Christian college" as that phrase has come to be understood. For example Tolbert Fanning established Franklin College as primarily an agricultural-vocational col-

lege with a Christian emphasis.

But many other colleges were established with the purpose of serving and furthering the interests of churches of Christ. The founders of these schools, while deeply concerned with the training of gospel preachers, also desired that every student, regardless of major, be afforded an opportunity to take general education courses taught from a Christian perspective as well as courses in Bible and related subjects.

Another major goal was to provide a total Christian environment involving such things as daily chapel and mandatory Bible classes along with extra curricular activities directed by Christians whose primary concern was the spiritual development of every student. Those who gave substantially, sometimes sacrificially, to establish such schools gave with the intention that the schools would further the purposes of churches of Christ.

With the changes that are



Jim Howard

currently engulfing churches of Christ, it would be strange indeed if none of that change made its way into our colleges and universities. Perhaps it is time to give those institutions who claim to be "Christian" a report card asking questions to help those of us in churches of Christ to ascertain whether our schools are remaining faithful to the purposes of their founding.

Jim Howard is a minister and educator who may be contacted at 103 Hallmark Pl., Madison, Mississippi 39110.

Vital Questions that Deserve Answers from "Christian Universities"

(1) Is the Bible still the source of highest authority around which every activity of the school revolves? Are Bible classes still mandatory and a major component of every student's degree program. Is Scripture still the major area of study for Bible and religion majors.

(2) Are all the members of the board of trustees required to be active members of the churches of Christ? Are all of the faculty and a majority of the student body members of the churches of Christ? Unless such is true it seems highly unlikely that the purposes of churches of Christ, for which the school was established, will be furthered.

(3) Is a concerted effort made to ensure that a Christian environment and lifestyle be guarded on the campus? With today's pagan culture, students who attend a Christian university deserve to live in an environment free from lascivious dress styles, immoral movies and music, and other forms of worldliness. Christian parents still appreciate an in loco parentis philosophy on the part of the school's administration by which their eighteen year old is not thrown to the wolves.

(4) Is the administration of the Christian college or university firm in its resolve to refuse to receive federal funding if such funding necessitates approval of unbiblical practices (e.g. approval of homosexuality)?

(5) Is the Christian education emphasis so strong that, after four years, the graduate goes out into the world with a genuine servant heart? For such to result the student body, as a whole, must be willing to participate in such service activities as disaster help, blood drives, spring break mission trips etc.

(6) Is the administration of the school so firmly committed to the restoration plea that it refuses to include in its lectureships or public speaker series ministers and scholars who are not members of churches of Christ or preachers of churches of Christ who promote non-Biblical innovations (e.g. instrumental worship in worship)? Surely such individuals should not be expected to promote the traditional values for which churches of Christ have stood and for which Christian schools were founded in the first place.

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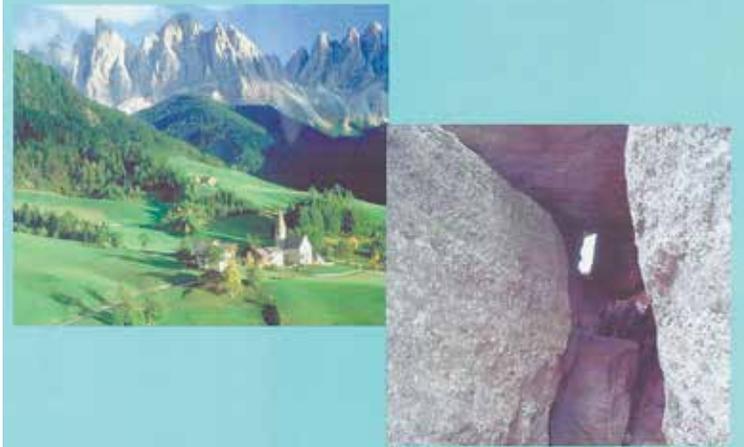
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Tom Holland (left) enjoys making his point to Mark Bridges, an elder at Clinton, MS where Tom recently conducted a gospel meeting.



Michael Floyd, Don Green, Robert Buran and Nathaniel Jones

At Snowdown on Sunday Night Youth Conduct Services

When I think of the Snowdown church, just a few miles northeast of Booneville, MS, I think of **Jim Archer**. Jim died in 2002 and is buried by the building where he served as the preacher for 46 years.

The night I was there (11/23/14), the current minister **Don Green**, a graduate of Magnolia Bible College, had encourage three of the young men to conduct the service. The singing and service was great. (Paul Franks)

19TH ANNUAL

"Another Great Retreat at Sardis Lake"

- By Betty Moss -

Our first day started with a long ride to Sardis, Mississippi with my sisters in Christ from South Huntington Street and Tipton Street Churches of Christ in Kosciusko, Mississippi.

When we arrived, it was like a family reunion. We saw our old friends and made new friends as well.

My Christian sisters numbered 125. Of that number, twenty were girls aged 15 and under. Attending were mothers, daughters, and granddaughters. Thirty congregations from five states were represented. Our oldest lady present was 78 years of age, **Opaline Kelly**. The youngest girl was five years old, **Khori Smith**. The ladies who traveled the farthest were from Little Rock, Arkansas.

On September 26, we started with singing and a devotional. This was followed by a lesson presented by **Ann Nunnally** from Natchitoches, LA. Her subject was "Good News About Jesus". We had singing and a devotional after dinner. Immediately following, we had an hour of one-on-one fellowship. This time allowed us the opportunity to meet ladies

that we did not know.

The next day, we started with a very good breakfast. **Kari Martin** presented the second half of the lesson. The young ladies had their own lesson. Following the second lesson, the girls presented a skit on what they had learned. Like years before, **Jane Maynard** led the *Question and Answer session*. Afterwards we ate lunch, and everyone started packing and saying their good-byes.

If you have never attended one of our Christian Retreats, please plan to attend our 20th retreat planned, Lord willing, for September 25 & 26, 2015 at Sardis Lake Christian Camp. Make it your female family retreat. This will not just bring you closer to each other, but you will become closer to God. You will leave with more knowledge about God and the Bible, and you will make friends for life. For more information, please write **Kari Martin, 171 Shade Tree Lane, Mountain Home, AR 72653**. You can also call 870-404-3658, if you prefer.

(Betty Moss is a member of the South Huntington Street Church of Christ in Kosciusko, Mississippi)

Ladies Day at Lake Harbour

The Lake Harbour Drive Church of Christ in Ridgeland, Mississippi hosted a Ladies' Day on October 4, 2014. There were approximately 109 in attendance. Some of the visiting congregations included: Meadowbrook (Jackson), Durant, Bypass (Vicksburg), Tipton

(Kosciusko), Brandon, Parkview (Jackson) and Tchula. The speakers were **Millie Hardy** and **Angela Burrell**. Millie spoke on "Your Toolkit for Flight" and Angela's lesson was "Opportunity: Use Me Lord." (Thank you **Lisa Freeman** for providing this information.)

Angela Says,

"Let Me Be Your Next Ladies' Day Speaker"

Angela Fay [Thorn] Burrell grew up in the Lord's church, attending the North Liberty Church of Christ in Canton, Mississippi. Angela was blessed with dedicated parents (Billy & Nina Thorn) who did a wonderful job bringing up her and her sister. Angela is now 41 years young and has a love for speaking and teaching. She has taught small children, teenage girls, ladies' Bible classes and has been privileged to speak at several area Ladies' Days.

Angela is available to be your speaker for special activities designed for women and/or teen age girls. She may be reached at nurseab73@gmail.com or 601-506-7832. Angela says, "Let me be your next Ladies' Day Speaker."



Angela Burrell

more & more Readers' Response

We thank God!

Thank you for the Magnolia Messenger. I have enjoyed all Issues, especially Volume 36, # 3 Fall, 2014. (**Hazel & Fray Carter, Haleyville, AL**)

Just a line to let you know that I enjoy the Messenger. Someone sent my name in. Thanks to that one that sent it. Here is some money to help with the Messenger. (**J. Sam Webb, Milan, TN**)

Brother Franks,

I'm a subscriber of the Magnolia Messenger, and appreciate much the work you do. I was wondering if it would be possible for you to send me the full article about the elders by Norman Maranto that was recently published... Thanks, and thank you again for the great job you're doing with the newspaper. (**Jon Mitchell, Duncan, SC**)

Bro. Franks,

This check is being sent in appreciation of the great paper, The Magnolia Messenger. We look forward to receiving it each time. We pray God will continue to bless you and family in this work. There are so many good articles in it to help us grow in our spiritual life. May God continue to be with all of you and bless you each day. Yours in Christ, (**Barry & Ann Embrey, Coldwater, MS**)

Dear Bro. Franks:

Please find enclosed a letter that I received in response to the article, "101 year old Soul Winner" that you were kind enough to print in the Magnolia Messenger, Vol. 36, Num. 3. I thought you would find it interesting. It also speaks to the good work you are doing through your fine publication. I pray it will continue to reach the spiritually needy, as it did in this case. Sincerely, (**Bobby Wade, Goodspring, TN**)

My hands are such that I can write very little. You put out a great paper. I enjoy. (**John Parham, Midland City, AL**)

I really enjoy the paper! (**William W. Phillips, Nesbit, MS**)

I love reading the MM. Thank you for your hard work in putting it out. (**Mary Dyer, Red Bay, AL**)

When I Count My Blessings I Include Iuka

On Sunday morning, November 23, 2014, when we arrived for our visit with the Iuka church, we noticed their outfront sign which admonished, "Count Your Blessings."

Among the blessings we counted that Lord's day was the privilege of worshipping with and preaching for the Iuka congregation. Beautiful congregational singing was led by **Amos Schrock**. The adult class in the auditorium was very capably taught

by **Lance Foster** who has preached for the congregation the past 25 years! The church of about 200 (185 present the day of our visit) is capably served by elders **Dwight Pharr** and **Mikey Shea**.

In addition to the warm reception and encouragement given to us by the church, we were blessed additionally to have lunch with elder Dwight Pharr and his sweet wife. We left Iuka counting our blessings! (alf)



Sandra & Lance Foster

"5th Sunday" Dinners and Miss Ruth's Dumplings

- By Ann Rector -

At the Morton Church of Christ, "5th Sunday" dinner can come on a 2nd Sunday—especially on a special occasion.

This past November, **Charles** and **Vada Burch** and two of their children, **Sharon** and **Karen** were at the nearby state park and let us know they would be here on 2nd Sunday; so we had a "5th Sunday" dinner!

If you know any of the members here at Morton, we're known for our 5th Sunday dinners and **Miss Ruth's dumplings**.

As the people line up to go down both sides of the food table, Miss Ruth stands guard by her dumplings laced heavily with chicken pieces.

As soon as the first pot is empty she unwraps a second pot that is steaming with that heavenly aroma! It just wouldn't be 5th Sunday without her dumplings! This particular Sunday Miss Ruth added a new treat, her home-made tea cakes!

Miss Ruth and her daughter go way back. She was bringing her mother on most Sundays. As the years have passed, she has lost her mother, her husband, two daughters and a son-in-law. Her daughter **Betty** or her granddaughter **Amy** brings her to church services.

Miss Ruth has had a lot of leg problems and still wears a brace on her bad leg. But she wouldn't

think of Morton church having a dinner without her dumplings and they never come out of her vehicle until church is over. The dumplings are in their pots nestled together, wrapped snugly in thick towels to stay warm!

As soon as all the food is on the tables and the food has been blessed, two of the men get the pots for her and she begins her vigil over the delicious dish -- smiling as we help our plates!

Getting back to the Burches. They were here from their homes in Mobile, Alabama, for two special occasions. **Charles was the preacher for the Morton congregation thirty one years ago**. He has used every occasion to teach the Bible to his brother and other close relatives in the Philadelphia area. He came finally to baptize them in the church building at Philadelphia. On Saturday, he got the key to the building from **Sid Williams** one of the elders at the church in Philadelphia. (He also went to purchase his cheese from Williams Bros. in Philadelphia.)

We are glad the Burches came our way to visit; so we could have a chance to have "5th Sunday" on the 2nd Sunday in November and another occasion to enjoy Miss Ruth's dumplings.

(Article submitted by Ann Rector long time member of the Morton Church of Christ, Morton, Mississippi.)

Huntsville Ladies' Day Report

Rushmore Asks, "What Makes Us Tick?"

- Report by Judy Lollar -

"What Makes Us Tick" was the theme for Ladies' Day held September 20, 2014, at Huntsville church of Christ, French Camp, MS. The ladies of Huntsville used this theme as a reflection of the book bearing that title written by Rebecca Rushmore.

It was a wonderful day beginning with breakfast, followed by our Ladies' Day program, and ending with lunch. Our guest speaker, Rebecca Rushmore,

used her book *What Makes Us Tick; A Look at Personality and the Bible as the basis for her program.* She divided her presentation into three parts: The Bible's Plea for Unity, Four Personality Types and Bible Characters for Each, and Practical Application Using Knowledge of Personality to Promote Unity in the Church.

Rebecca's presentation about unity included how

unity is defined, why the Bible commands unity, where unity should exist, and how unity can be increased. Although she gave several definitions of unity, all of the definitions had a common word—"one." She pointed out specific scripture where the Bible pleads for us to be unified. In I Corinthians 1:10 Paul told the church at Corinth, "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."

In his second letter to the Corinthians, Paul stated in 13:11, "Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you." And in Ephesians 4:3 Paul stated, "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling."

Conflicts arise within our local congregations, sometimes because of our different personalities. However, conflicts have Biblical solutions which each of us should strive to solve. Rebecca then pointed out that unity should be seen not only in the local congregations but also with area congregations and with the

world. Humbleness, love, truth, and peace are four characteristics to have if we are striving for unity.

Our speaker then had each person score herself, using strengths and weaknesses to determine personality type. In her book, Rebecca outlined those types as talker, worker, thinker, and watcher. In addition, she pointed out Bible characters—Peter, Paul, Moses, and Abraham—who had strengths and weaknesses, indicating an interesting possibility that each may have exhibited a particular type personality.

Rebecca also gave practical applications that we can use independently and collectively to promote unity in the church. Of course, one of the greatest ways for women to promote unity in our individual congregation and with area congregations is in having a ladies' day program and similar events. Coming together with ladies in the broader area helps show support.

It is a strong encouragement not to give up on each other. No matter how badly we think someone has treated us, we should remember how terribly our Lord was treated which is recorded in the four gospels (Matthew 27, Mark 15, Luke 23, and John 18-19). Since Jesus withstood so much to make a way for our salvation, surely our faith should be strong enough to cause us to commit ourselves not to give up in our service to Him.

Rebecca Rushmore is from Collierville, TN, and teaches in Desoto County Schools in Mississippi. She has a Masters of Education Degree in school counseling and plans to continue her studies toward a doctorate. Her book, *What Makes Us Tick; A Look at Personality and the Bible*, has been used in many ladies' classes in the church. She pointed out that her goal in writing it is to help us grow as a child of God and live the life He desires for us.

Judy Lollar
lollarjudy@hotmail.com

MM
Circulation: 26,000+
We Are Thankful!



Rebecca Rushmore

*"Mirror, mirror on the wall,
who's the fairest of them all?"*

The servant is the fairest of them all.

- Erika Anderson -

Picture Cinderella. She is alone in her room sitting in her rags. Day after day she is serving her mean stepmother and her two selfish stepsisters. All the while she is singing with joy in her heart -- *doing as she was told, when she was told* -- by miserable individuals who could not be pleased. Cinderella is good picture of a servant. This princess was a *servant* before becoming a princess.

Having a servant's heart is beautiful and admirable. Cinderella was favored above all others and most desired by the prince because of her service. Like Cinderella, each of us can be a princess who is desired and admired by "**The Prince.**"

Before we look at how we can be a princess today, let's first look at the world's idea of a princess. The world's idea of a princess is a lot like the evil image we get from the stepmothers and sisters in these fairy tale princess stories. They are selfish, mean, hateful, jealous and ungrateful. They want what they want, when they want it. And, they don't care who they have to use or step on to get it!

They believe that they have a right to do or to have anything that makes them happy. They insult and accuse others, simply because they get amusement out of it. They set others up for failure, just to watch them fall. Their mouths have no filter. They believe they should be able to say whatever they want no matter the damage. This worldly princess sets out to provoke others to sin (jealousy, selfishness, etc...).

Philippians 4:6-8 tells us to pray to God *with thanksgiving, making our requests known* and that *He will keep our hearts and minds.* In verse 8, Paul wrote, "*Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.*"

To avoid being provoked by the worldly princess, take Paul's advice. The worldly princess does not think on these things, and she is not grateful. Romans 13:7 tells us to "*render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor.*" Being ungrateful shows disrespect. Being ungrateful is sin and is the beginning of falling away from God (Rom. 1:21).



Erika Anderson

In II Timothy 3:2-5, being **unthankful** is listed with a lot of other sins, like "*lovers of their own selves, boasters, false accusers, despisers of those that are good, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God.*" The verse goes on to say "*these, having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away... They are ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Unthankful men are of corrupt minds and reprobate concerning the faith.*"

As we can see, the worldly princess, like the evil stepmothers and sisters in the Princess movies, can be very dangerous. They bring about much damage and serve no one but self. We can become like this worldly princess if we are not careful.

In contrast to this worldly princess, let's now notice a **true** princess named Ruth. Ruth was a true servant. She was grateful. She thought of others before herself. She was industrious. She was a lover of God. She was loyal and lovable. She was also desired, admired, and chosen by "Prince Charming," better known as Boaz, because of her humble servant's heart.

Boaz was not Elimelech's next of kin (3:12), but he was a good man and he cherished Ruth. He took the proper steps to keep the Law of Moses concerning marriage. He consulted with the next of kin to her deceased husband about marrying her.

He loved Ruth. Boaz said of Ruth, "*All the city of my people doth know that thou art a virtuous woman,*" (3:11). This true story of a servant is a story of love, loss, choices, service, loyalty and selfless living. Ruth is a good Bible example of what it truly means to be a real princess.

Ruth suffered loss in the death of her husband, father-in-law and brother-in-law. She had hard times. She made a hard choice to leave her family and her idol gods to be with her widowed mother-in-law and her God, the God of heaven. She had to make a decision that would change her life. She worked gleaning in the fields daily to supply for the needs of her

mother-in-law and herself. She was loved and desired by Boaz, because of her selflessness. She lived her life thinking of others before herself.

Ruth wasn't a true picture of a princess in and of herself, or in marrying Boaz. She was a true princess, because she chose the Almighty God to be her God, and nothing else took His place -- not self, not Boaz, not work. God was the number one love of her life. That is why she possessed all of those beautiful qualities. That is why she is a true picture of a biblical princess.

How can we be a princess today; what does being a servant have to do with it? We can be a princess when we choose the Prince and the Prince chooses us. We will only win the favor and acceptance of the Prince by choosing him and serving him.

When we serve others we are essentially serving Him. Matthew 25 tells us that when we feed the hungry, give to him who is thirsty, help a stranger, cloth the naked, visit the sick and imprisoned we are doing it to Jesus. The prince, Jesus Christ, sees our beauty in our service, and our service shows the world His beauty. We are to do all things to the glory of God. We serve Him by obeying Him. John 14:15 tells us that if we love Him, we will "**keep his commandments.**"

Sometimes, even if we are the princess of Christ, we lose sight, cease to serve Him and begin to serve self again. When this happens we must remind ourselves whose we are and return to him -- to be his loyal servant once again. Titus 3:3-6 tells us "*For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. But after that the kindness and love of God our savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our savior; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.*" **Heirs of Christ! A princess! His princess!** To be His princess we must obey Him. Being a princess is being a servant. Let's be His Princess!

(Erika is the wife of Will Anderson, preacher for the Kosciusko church of Christ. Her email address: erikaanderson@yahoo.com)

Answer
"The Question Box"
on page 24
It may help
to strengthen &
Save YOUR Soul!

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

Reflections of the Past and Looking to the Future

- By June Franks -

It is difficult to believe that we are fast approaching the year 2015. This is a busy time of the year for most everyone. Many seem so happy as they go about, but it also can be a sad time for many people. Some may be experiencing a serious illness, financial difficulties, death of a loved one or many other problems.

As Christians, we should be attentive to those who may be hurting during this time of the year. It would be a blessing to us if we would focus more on others and their needs than the gift(s) we may receive during this holiday season. Jesus once said, "...*It is more blessed to give than to receive.*" (Acts 26:35)

As we reflect on the past year, we trust each one of us will consider changes we need to make in our lives. If you have been unfaithful to the church, what a wonderful opportunity -- the beginning of this new year affords you -- to restore your faithfulness to God and to the church. You are the one to be blessed by so doing. The Bible says, "*But seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.*" (Matthew 6: 33) It is also a great privilege and blessing to be able to worship God and to give thanks and praises to Jesus Christ for the ultimate sacrifice He made for each of us.

Probably one of the most popular New Year's Resolutions, people make at the beginning of a new year, is to read the Bible every day. Those of us who make this resolution are to be commended; but so often we start but then stop after only a few weeks. A very familiar proverb says, "*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.*" (Proverbs 1: 7) The Bible teaches the way to increase our faith is by hearing the word of God. "*So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*" (Romans 10: 17)

Why do we have those among us who profess to be Christians but neglect to attend the Bible classes provided by the church? Bible classes with fellow Christians is a great opportunity to learn more about God's Word and also to encourage the teacher who spends a lot of time in preparation for these classes.



June Franks

As we look ahead to the future, it is good to remember the words of Paul, "*Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before.*" (Philippians 3: 13) We know that we cannot change the past, but we need to be more like Paul in that we forget the past and reach forth to those things which are before. Many times we dwell on the past and think there is no hope for our future.

There is hope if we truly repent and ask God for forgiveness, A very comforting passage, "*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*" (1 John 1: 9)

Looking To the Future: Magnolia Messenger in 2015

It is difficult to believe that as of October, 2014, we began our **thirty seventh year** of publishing the Magnolia Messenger. It has been an awesome responsibility but also a great privilege to publish the Messenger these thirty six years. It is a blessing and so rewarding to experience the response of a multitude of people to the publication of the Messenger.

The theme of the paper over these many years has been Hebrews 10:24, "*Let us consider one another to provoke unto Love and Good works.*" The "good news" has continued to be proclaimed through many teaching articles and through sharing the good deeds of others who serve as an example and an encouragement to everyone.

Looking back to 1978 when the Magnolia Messenger was begun, it was a *step of faith* or maybe even a *leap of faith*. By faith in God and His people we have continued this publication and earnestly pray we will be able to continue the publication of the Magnolia Messenger for many

more years.

Through all these years, God has blessed our efforts with enough funds to publish the Messenger. There has never been an over abundance of funds, but yet **enough** to enable us to continue.

The Messenger is financed by interested individuals and congregations who enable us to function through the sponsorship of the South Huntington Street church in Kosciusko. We deeply appreciate each contribution whether large or small. The small contributions really do add up; but, it also helps greatly to have some larger contributions along the way.

We are so very thankful for you who have given in the past and sincerely pray that you will continue to support our work in the future. It is our prayer that every contribution be used wisely so that our combined efforts will result in the upbuilding of the Kingdom of God.

We, at times, share some of the letters received from readers of the Messenger. It is very touching to read about the many hundreds of lives the Messenger is touching. We now mail about 26,000 copies of each issue which goes into every state in the nation. We are adding daily to our mailing list and hope to increase it more and more.

When you help the Messenger you are also involved in a prison ministry. The Messenger goes into several prisons. With the emphasis placed upon the "Question Box" the Messenger has a large Bible class with around 700 who regularly send in their answers to the Question Box.

As we look ahead, we solicit your prayers on our behalf. Pray that we will receive the funds to, not only continue but to expand the publication of the Magnolia Messenger. We are also thankful that Paul and Glenda have returned to Kosciusko to help us in this vital work.

May God bless you with joy and peace as we all continue to work together in the greatest work on earth. **Happy New Year!**

Mrs. A. L. Franks
P. O. Box 1578
Kosciusko, MS 39090

Dear Magnolia Messenger,

I was so glad to get and read your Christian articles, and when I was done, I put it on one of the prison day room tables for others to read. I have a few people who are requesting to be on your Newsletter's list. Thank you once again for the inspiring messages. **(Crystal Wiesen, Pearl, MS)**

POEM

By
Barbara

Barbara Cagle Ray
bcagleray@comcast.net



The Treasure "Count Your Blessings!"

*The beggar stumbled down the street,
Again to face the light of day.
With sirens buzzing all around,
He ducked into an alleyway.*

*Each can of trash he'd rifle through,
For many treasures they did hold:
A scrap of food, a tattered coat,
Rags for shelter from the cold.*

*And soon he found his treasure—
One woolen glove so soft and warm,
And off he went with smiling face,
To find the wife he'd left this morn'.*

*He limped slowly to the nearby park,
Where Mary, in the cold, would wait;
Then he saw the crowd and the ambulance,
And he knew his coming was too late.*

*Tears streaming down his face, he fled,
And crammed the glove into the can.
"It's no good to no one else," he cried,
"Cause my Mary only had one hand."*

What a Way to Go!

*We will all leave this world;
Just when, we do not know.
But, if we live for Him,
What a way to go!*

*God doesn't make it hard for us.
With His love and care;
When the gate of heaven opens,
We will be standing ready there.*

*We can choose where we go;
It is not a demand.
So let us trust and love Him,
And not follow the wrong plan.*

*God's love for us will never end,
His Holy Word tells us so.
Study. Obey. Be ready when He calls.
Then, what a way to go!*

Nina Thorn; 1355 Ratliff Ferry Road; Canton, MS 39046

"The Question Box"

These Sent In Answers

(See page 24)

1. Marilyn Howell
2. Inez & Laura Brannon
3. Debra Michael
4. Charlie Goff
5. Ann McDonald
6. Hazel Cook
7. Bobbie Loggins
8. Maggie R. Edmonds
9. Vera Spencer
10. Sharon A. Dantzler
11. Bernice Townsel
12. Kimberley Easterling
13. Jim & Judy Hill
14. Alice Humphries
15. Rosie Mae Felton
16. Mildred Herrington
17. Tommy Muirhead
18. Ken Harris
19. Minnie Garner
20. Emmette Armstrong
21. Dick Green
22. Donna Alexander
23. Trillie Strickland
24. Linda B. Keirn
25. William Pyron
26. Emma Louise Wheeler
27. Christene Holliday
28. Bettye McCool
29. Charlane Stanfield
30. Tommy Rigby
31. Juanita Flanagan
32. Ruth Christian
33. Garry Gooch
34. Sidney Robinson
35. Louwilla Richardson
36. Emma Jean Nelms
37. Garry Joe Arnold
38. Linda F. Anderson
39. Bernice Mills
40. Bonnie Holcomb
41. Peggy Massengill
42. Margaret Parker
43. Laura Nanney
44. Billye Wiygll
45. Betty Ohrem
46. Frances Harrell
47. Exie Motes
48. M/M Arthur Burnett
49. Dorothy Winslett
50. Sharon Praytor
51. Ed Cooper
52. Barbara F. White
53. Addelee Brown
54. Margaret Ann Sanders
55. Mary J. Adams
56. Doyce Britt
57. Buddy Parsons
58. Dorothy Banks
59. Eileen Ferrebee
60. Mylinda Russ
61. Rutha Eastman
62. Doris Darnell
63. Terry Johnson
64. Prince E. Lewis
65. Brenda Redd
66. Mrs. Pearlle Hurst
67. Lawrence Horn
68. Marcella Moore
69. Bud & Linda Wranosky
70. Vera Ashmore
71. Carole Shelby
72. Peggy Hartman
73. Annie Mae Pipkin
74. Ray Parham
75. Allena Wiese
76. Jan Wiese
77. Bobby Lively
78. Bernita Booker
79. Brenda Harvill
80. Sue Fisher
81. Betty Clark
82. Bonnie Skates
83. Mrs. Selma L. McBeth
84. Richard L. Odom
85. Frankie Moore
86. Sue Simmons
87. Betty Van Buren
88. Stacey, Melinda & Gregory
- Hawkins
89. Myra D. Reaves
90. Sharon I. Rachels
91. Shirley Hurley
92. Pat Glover
93. Glenda Fought
94. Merlene Scott
95. Stan Neuenschwander
96. Janice Griffin
97. Charlotte Ritter
98. Jean Lewis
99. J. L. Eaton
100. Janice Vaughan
101. Jerry & Norma Inman
102. Alma McCoy
103. Bet Tucker
104. Mary Jo Purdon
105. Peggy Havard
106. James & Katie Houston
107. Richard Goode
108. Marie Lively
109. Robert Blackburn
110. Charlotte Langley
111. Pierce Flatt
112. Mrs. Shelia A. Williams
113. Sherry Townsend
114. Roger King
115. Opal Sappington
116. Pamela Luna
117. Linda Swan
118. Carolyn J. Pitts
119. Dee Kepler
120. Dorothy M. Clemons
121. Mattie Hoy
122. Mary W. Lewis
123. John Hazel
124. Lozell Milligan
125. Sandee Gilliam
126. Ann Holeman
127. Sarah Hill
128. Betty A. Skinner
129. Shelia D. Jackson
130. Ruby Dilmore
131. Charlotte Vandiver
132. Mary Dyer
- 133. Lenola Balentine**
134. Jan O'Kelley
135. Gary T. Wolfe
136. Linda Cook
137. Glen Brady
138. Kittie Edwards
139. Mattie Ann Owens
140. Foster C. Owens
141. Shirley B. Smith
142. Shellie Hancock
143. Annette Clifton
144. Carolyn Harvill
145. Miriam Styers
146. Mary King
147. Cynetha Curry
148. Beulah Rupert
149. Paul & Elsie Bryson
150. Nadine Patton
151. Faye Stanford
152. June Faulkner
153. Brenda Taylor
154. Geraldine Wilbanks
155. June Brents
156. Doris Gillespie
157. Susan Ainsworth
158. Marvin England
159. Howard Griffin
160. Dorothy Jenkins
161. Billy Willingham
162. Guylla Hubble
163. James R. Brooks
164. Tom McLemore
165. Marty Danilchuk
166. Mr. William Smith
167. Anita Taft
168. Admiral & Ruth Tidwell
169. Rick Bishop
170. Teresa Anderson
171. Gail B. Saxon
172. Johnny & Princess Watson
173. Paul & Darlene McElroy
174. Irene M. Wright
175. Herschel & Dorthy Ford
176. Eva Almon
177. John L. Gates, Jr.
178. Charles Coffey
179. Gloria Boyd
180. Willie Beardain
181. Cumi Miles
182. Arlene Shedd
183. Patrilla Maddox
184. Mary Ella Webster
185. M/M Timothy Holliday
186. Kerry Deaton
187. Dorsa Sparks
188. Amy Hutson
189. Nell Millsaps
190. Annie F. Ballard
191. Donald Peckinpaugh
192. Bobby Brown
193. Phyllis K. Spiers
194. Rhenda Miltner
195. Terry Miltner
196. Carolyn Stanford
197. Webber Ferguson
198. Carol Bonner
199. Iris Casteel
200. Evelyn Page
201. Carolyn Ware
202. Wilda Pounds
203. Madonna Michael
204. Dwight E. Hester
205. Sandra Graves
206. Julius Lee Wales
207. Rosa Sanders
208. Barbara Farris
209. Bill Moore
210. Lois Nielson
211. Ralph Tipton
212. Nell Tipton
213. Mary M. McDonald
214. Helen DePriest
215. Nell Holloway
216. Clara Mae Francis
217. Barbara Loden
218. Ed Lyon
219. Linda T. Shirley
220. Harold Pitts
221. Linda Crochet
222. Marilyn Reaves
223. Reggie Crawford
224. Betty Shackelford
225. Margaret Ratliff
226. Leon Young
227. Rachel M. Pruitt
228. Frances Glover
229. Brenda McDougal
230. Otis Ransom
231. Doyle Sebring
232. Kim Wallace
233. Travis Hamilton
234. Flossie L. Hernandez
235. Velva Dykes
236. Carolyn Ayers
237. Carolyn Garrett
238. 229. Brenda McDougal
239. Otis Ransom
240. Doyle Sebring
241. Kim Wallace
242. Travis Hamilton
243. Flossie L. Hernandez
244. Velva Dykes
245. Louise Ayers
246. Carolyn Garrett
247. Josephine Carter
248. Cathy E. Brooks
249. Ida Wells
250. Billie Jane Davis
251. Jane Kuyendall
252. Linda Kennamore
253. Shirley Wroten
254. Sidney Clemmer
255. Jean Clemmer
256. Georgia Taylor
257. Carl Trimm
258. Nan G. Conley
259. Beverly Miles
260. Ruby Worthey
261. Gerald Worthey
262. Michael A. Euer
263. Mildred Carroll
264. Jack L. Falls, Sr.
265. James Flanagan
266. Denice Agee
267. Evelyn Faulkenberry
268. Shirley Styers
269. Donna Gulley
270. Coy Daily
271. Jerry Gilliam
272. Dannie Davis
273. Nola Kirk
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287. Vera Winfrey
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290. Sarah Dantzler
291. Ruth Lacey
292. Audrey Bowling
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298. Eunice M. Kirkwood
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303. Esther Hall
304. Michelle Simpson
305. Frederick Alan Jones
306. Alma Maddox
307. Margie McKinney
308. Faye Surratt
309. Bobby E. Marques
310. Bill Dodson
311. Cathy Powell
312. Mary Brannan
313. Mary Robinson
314. Eileen Williford
315. Earlean F. Williams
316. Thomas Forrest, Sr.
317. Wanda Cochran
318. Danny Stokes
319. Joe B. Holmes
320. Michael Coleman
321. Claude Williams
322. Marvis Edwards Lee
323. Ann Kimble
324. Willa Fox
325. Ima Jean Fogus
326. Melba Ogg
327. Laura Dixon
328. Bonnie Dixon
329. Marcy L. Kanapaux
330. Ella Darnell
331. Crystal Wiesen
332. Louise Gavin
333. Glenda Wooldridge
334. Margaret N. Freeman
335. Martha J. Freeman
336. Catherine A. Allen
337. Billie Jane Davis
338. Jane Kuyendall
339. Linda Kennamore
340. Shirley Wroten
341. Sidney Clemmer
342. Jean Clemmer
343. Georgia Taylor
344. Carl Trimm
345. Nan G. Conley
346. Beverly Miles
347. Ruby Worthey
348. Gerald Worthey
349. Michael A. Euer
350. Mildred Carroll
343. Bonnie Poore
344. Gwendolyn Gray Bryant
345. Missy Nugent
346. Wm. & Atlean Snow
347. Juanita Bradley
348. Patricia McClure
349. Waymond Hales
350. Linda & Sylvester Burton
351. Marsha Porter
352. Dianne Wiley
353. Pam Nichols
354. R. L. Clark, Sr.
355. Kay Shiers
356. Mary Jane Hollis
357. Sue Bunch
358. Iva A. Hill
359. Peggy S. Walker
360. Glenda Jefcoat
361. Peggy Engel
362. Virginia B. Kissell
363. Sandy Dean
364. Masey C. Brown
365. Oreatha Johnson
366. Yolanda Harsley
367. Faye Garrett
368. Crystal Maness
369. Betty Spears
370. Steven Arthur Franklin
371. Christy Pounds
372. Ruby Wright
373. Aileen Ross
374. Carol Bradley
375. Ginny Luther
376. Jo Ann Mayer
377. Shirley Bostick
378. Barbara Baker
379. Patsy McClung
380. Brenda D. Burlison
381. Linda K. Hughes
382. Betty Edgar
383. Samuel P. Fletcher
384. Kathy Perry
385. Jimmy & Dotsy Downs
386. Mary Beth Dietz
387. Elsie Moore
388. Steve Gooch
389. Cheri G. Moore
390. Taisheivya Smith
391. Lynn Sasser
392. Yvonne Swilley
393. Mrs. Mary Faulconer
394. Nan Wiley
395. Elizabeth Dickerson
396. Jimmy Coggins
397. Sandra Gordon
398. Doris Jean Fletcher
399. Michael Blane
400. Lyman & Betty York
401. Wes & Rhoda Jeans
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403. Earl Franks
404. Bobbie & Mike Goodknight
405. Jessica Slaydon
406. Nicholas Slaydon
407. Stephanie Slaydon
408. Tori Brackbill
409. Lynden Slaydon
410. Corine M. Perkins
411. Bobbie B. Sindle
412. Foy C. Smith
413. Carolyn Perry
414. Joyce Briscoe
415. Wayne Crum
416. Ed Istre
417. Sharon Archibald
418. Sherron Dixon
419. Shelia Hall
420. Idna Eddington
421. Ralph Shaw
422. Wanda Shackelford Yancey
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432. Joshua Williams
433. Alex Williams
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435. Faith Eckford
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439. Betty Standard
440. Alberta Fuller
441. Sandy Rushing
442. Fran Williford
443. Tommy & Nell Lawson
444. Ruthie Horton
445. Shirley Ray & Bernie ?
446. Lillie P. Horton
447. M/M Michael Glover
448. Martha Cooper
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450. Madonna Langford
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452. Debra Sigmund
453. Millie Goode
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462. Floy Smith
463. Jackie L. Hester
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465. Ms. Estella Pittman
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486. Stormie Smith
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495. Carolyn Huffman
496. Marion Crelia
497. Bobbie J. Clayborn
498. Nelda Demirtas
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500. Evelyn Young
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502. Jeanny Barnett
503. Ms. Deidre A. McBride
504. Bobbie Holder
505. Mrs. Willie Huckabee
506. Gaynell Doughty
507. Elizabeth Smith
508. Fred & Evelyn Doss
509. Larry J. Shoemaker
510. Tonia & Kayla Brown
511. Donna Rhodes
512. Mrs. Sandra Corn
513. Jeremiah & Shelia Woodard
514. Jeremiah Woodard, Jr.
515. Benrus & Nicole Womack
516. Na'Nia & Bralan Womack
517. LaVerne C. Becker
518. Mary L. Smith
519. Sue Hamrick
520. Bobby & Shirley Howell
521. Thelma Talbert
522. Mrs. Dean Howe
523. Barbara Skrobak
524. Garlington, Lynell
525. Hattie Hooper
526. Carolyn Robinson
527. Imogene Grayson
528. Gail Gurganus
529. Gail McMillen
530. Nettie Doss
531. Edith Winters
532. Diane Dunaway
533. Earl C. Woodard
534. Charles Beal
535. Artis W. Hinton
536. Doris J. Hinton
537. Beth Cleveland
538. Lillie J. Williams
539. Vicki Latimer
540. Don Lee
541. Beulah Davis
542. Jeff & Debbie Shull
543. Kathey Coopwood James
544. Reginald Davis
545. Ernestine Lathan
546. Muriel Rothwell
547. Dan Hawkins
548. Ms. Doris Laird
549. Larry & Sylvia Harrington
550. Vicki Hickox
551. Rick Wixom
552. Della M. Rhodes
553. Jodie Dilmore
554. Jane Walker
555. Alice Dempsey
556. Janice Galloway
557. James Hurlbut
558. Doyle Varner
559. Ashley Ford
560. Kristy Spriggs
561. Rosie Taylor
562. Lora Roberts

NOTICE

All who sent in answers received by December 3, 2014 are recognized in this issue. If received later, your name should be in our next issue. **Thank you!**

THANK YOU
for
Answering
the
QUESTION
BOX

By So Doing,
You Learn
&
Encourage
the
MM staff
and
all
MM Readers!

Spelling & Wording
Use KJV

The Question Box

Spelling & Wording
Use KJV

Does Doctrine Matter?

- Paul Franks -

Several years ago, I was visiting with a missionary to the Philippines from a major denominational church. I asked him about the main religious group there. He said that 95% of the population was Roman Catholic. He told me they were trying to convert Roman Catholics and that they started with "Making Jesus Lord of one's life"

I asked him how they did that. He said "We start with their baptism." He then said something interesting concerning churches of Christ. His words were, "You guys have a better understanding of baptism than we do."

A few weeks ago, I was approached by a lady who is a "Jehovah Witness." She began to try to teach the doctrine of that denomination, telling me that for me to be pleasing to God, I needed to believe the doctrines of their particular church.

Because of all of the confusion regarding doctrinal matters many have come to believe that doctrine doesn't matter. Basically, what you often hear is, "Loving God and loving others are essential things; doctrine is not essential."

We need to be reminded that each of us has a responsibility to study the Bible. To say that "One belief or doctrine is as good as another" is a cop out for a lack of Bible study. I am reminded of what Cecil May, Jr. said in *Preacher Talk* several years ago. He wrote, "Everyone thinks they are right about what they teach; if they thought they were wrong, then they would change."

All of us need to have an open mind as we prayerfully study the Bible. We need to be prepared to "change our minds" when we are presented with the evidence of what the Bible teaches about a certain doctrine if it conflicts with previous understanding.

I am grateful to be just a Christian, a member of the church of Christ, because as members of the Lord's church, we are encouraged to read and study the Bible. Bible classes, Bible preaching and Bible study are emphasized. We want to be known as "People of the Book." I hope that is what you want as well.

Paul told Timothy, "Take _____ unto _____, and unto the _____; continue in _____: for in doing this thou shalt both _____ thyself and them that _____ thee." (1 Timothy ____:16)

Combine Into One Verse

(Match the left half with the right half. Give chapter or verse)

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. "...If ye continue in my word then ye... | () speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." (Acts 20: ____) |
| 2. "... mark them which cause divisions and..." | () teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." (Matt. 15 ____) |
| 3. "Beware of false prophets, which come to you..." | () not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God." (Matt. ____:29) |
| 4. "... Ye do err..." | () in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves" (Matt. 7: ____) |
| 5. "But in vain they do worship me..." | () are my disciples indeed" (John 8: ____) |
| 6. "Also of your own selves shall men arise..." | () offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them." (Rom. 16: ____) |

True or False (Please study references)

- ____ Respect for the authority of the Bible may require actions that are contrary to our human nature. (Rom. 7:18-25)
- ____ When God's will conflicts with our will, God's will must always be done! (Matt. 26:39)
- ____ Religious confusion and division often comes because of a lack of respect for Bible authority. (2 Tim. 3:16,17; 1 Cor. 1:10; 1 Cor. 14:33)
- ____ If you are truly "spiritual," you are willing to heed the Word of God (the Spirit's sword). (Eph. 6:14-17)
- ____ God wants us to be happy; thus, God is pleased when we please ourselves. (2 Tim. 4:2-4; Rom. 15:1-3)
- ____ Truth mixed with anything else is not truth.
- ____ We can be sure we know Him if we are obedient to his commands. (1 John 2:3)

Remember This Verse

(Fill in missing words) "Not everyone that _____ unto me, Lord, Lord, shall _____ into the kingdom of _____; but he that _____ the will of my _____ which is in heaven." (Matt ____: 21)

When YOU Answer the Question Box YOU...

(a) Learn more about God's Word and (b) ENCOURAGE OTHERS! (Read Names on Page 23!)

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



Look for an envelope inside this issue.

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

MM Circulation

From 2,000 in 1978 to over 26,000 in 2014

We thank the Lord and Readers of the MM.

The MM Goes into Every State in the USA
Extensive coverage in Mississippi.
Added 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 to Help us
Continue and Expand!

Your Prayers are Requested and Appreciated.

Magnolia Messenger
Is Supported By
Volunteer Contributions
From
Churches & Christians
THANK YOU!

New Bible Winner
Lenola Balentine
Florence, AL
Congratulations!

Another Beautiful Sunset in Beautiful Mississippi

