

Baptist Progress

Baptist Progress, P.O. Box 2085, Waxahatchee, Texas 75168
Postmaster: send change of address to:
500125

Official Publication of the Baptist Missionary Association of Texas | June 17, 2015 | Vol. 102 | No. 12

Texas Baptist Home president addresses accusations of neglect reported by WFAA news

By **EDDIE MARSH**

Texas Baptist Home President

Our first U.S. President George Washington was once approached concerning an accusation about him and how people would respond. He is quoted as saying, "If they are your friends, no explanation is required, if not, they will not believe the explanation anyway."

Texas Baptist Home for Children is under attack. A couple of years ago, I told you at the annual meeting of the Association, that we realize our battle is not against flesh and blood, it is spiritual warfare.

Those of you who have access to WFAA Channel 8 News from Fort Worth may have seen a report indicating that Texas Baptist Home for Children is guilty of neglect in dealing with the children who are in our care. The report is not true. For the last few months we have tried to keep a balance between the accuser and our former clients who have expressed a desire to come to our defense.

In the outset, let me explain that when anyone is hired or becomes a trustee for the Home, they are required to sign a confidentiality statement. The document states that everything that is heard concerning any client (child) will be kept in strictest confidence. Therefore, I am limited in the

specifics of what I can share. Although others may discuss and report as they choose about past cases, we do not have that liberty. If we violate the trust of a child we could be required to forfeit our license, and understandably so.

When a child comes into the care of the State of Texas, they are assigned a caseworker by Child Protective Services. Also, they are assigned a caseworker by the Residential Child Caring Agency—in this case, Texas Baptist Home for Children—and a CASA worker. Each person is in place to insure that each individual, in the care of the State of Texas, receives proper care until they can be reunited with their biological parents. In some cases, the rights of the biological parents are terminated or relinquished, at which time the child becomes eligible for adoption.

If a child encounters a problem while they are in care he or she has the freedom to share the concern with any of the people previously mentioned. Every outcry is taken seriously and prompts an investigation by Residential Child Care Licensing and law enforcement, if necessary. Steps are taken to protect the child while the investigation is under way. If licensing believes that an infraction has taken place, action is taken immediately. In the



case of a foster parent allowing abuse in their home, the foster parent would be terminated immediately. The agency would then be placed on what is known as "placement hold," meaning that no children will be placed with the agency until the matter is properly resolved. If a foster parent, houseparent or

staff member was involved, criminal charges would be brought against them.

The Department of Child Protective Services does not "take children away from their parent," they remove children from

TEXAS BAPTIST HOME continued on p. 2

Inside



It's Transition Time
Page 5



BMA Seminary's 58th commencement
Page 6



Jacksonville College
Page 12



www.bmatexas.org

Baptist Progress

Jerry Fulton, Editor/Business Manager
P.O. Box 2085, Waxahachie 75168
972-923-0756 • www.baptistprogress.org

**BMA of Texas Missions/
Loan Association**

Jerry Burnaman, Director
PO Box 73, Waxahachie 75168
972-923-0757
www.changedintexas.com

Jacksonville College

Dr. Mike Smith, President
105 B. J. Albritton Drive
Jacksonville 75766
903-586-2518
www.jacksonville-college.edu

Texas Baptist Home

Eddie Marsh, President
PO Box 309, Waxahachie 75168
972-937-1321 • www.tbhc.org

Baptist Progress

USPS: 043120 • ISSN: 005-5751

Published every first and third week
of the month by the Baptist Missionary
Association of Texas

Jerry Fulton, Editor/Business Manager
editor@baptistprogress.org

P.O. Box 2085 • Waxahachie, Texas 75168
972-923-0756 (office) • 972-923-3534 (fax)

www.baptistprogress.org

Periodical postage paid
at Waxahachie, Texas 75165
and at additional mailing offices

SUBSCRIPTION RATE:

Mail Church Plan: \$1.50 per month
E-Mail Church Plan: \$1.00 per month
Mail Subscription: \$21.00 per year
E-mail Subscription: \$15.00 per year
Mail & E-mail: \$25.00 per year
(Advertising Rates Available on Request)

Postmaster: Send address changes to
Baptist Progress, P.O. Box 2085,
Waxahachie, Texas 75168



From the Editor

\$103 for 103 years of ministry

Don't forget that *Baptist Progress* is celebrating 103 years of ministry this year. Help us meet our budget requirements this year by asking your church or group to send \$103 for 103 years of ministry to *Baptist Progress*. Individuals are also encouraged to give. You may even give in memory or honor of someone. A list of churches, groups and individuals who give will be in a future issue of *Baptist Progress*. We appreciate your partnership in ministry.

More high school graduates

The list of high school graduates names from First, Blooming Grove were inadvertently omitted from our last issue. Pastor Grady Cashion got the list to us on time. I am responsible for leaving the names of the list and apologize for my mistake. Congratulations to high school graduates:

- Dalton Blake*
- Dylon Blackmon*
- Tyler Ellis*
- Bailey Melton*
- Dylan Newland*
- Chelsea Reames*
- Haley Stout*



▲ Jerry Fulton



Texas Baptist Home for Children

Texas Baptist Home president addresses accusations of neglect reported by WFAA news cont.

an unsafe environment in order to place them in a safe environment. Through this practice the lives of many children have been saved. The goal of the State of Texas is always reunification of the child or children with his or her biological parents. The parents are monitored on a regular basis while the child is in care and if improvement is shown the children are allowed to return home.

To be completely transparent with you, there have been cases where biological parents have been reunited with their children and later would bring accusations against those who cared for their children while they were at Texas Baptist Home. In none of these cases have the accusations proven to be true. Employees have even submitted to polygraph tests to prove their innocence only to see the attacks continue. Biological parents have received direction from the Waxahachie Police Department to cease harassment of our employees, to no avail. Biological parents have taken their complaint to the Sunset Commission for the State of Texas. When this failed they went to the newspaper and on to television.

Integrity is of supreme priority to this ministry. Without it, we cannot justify our existence. Texas Baptist Home for Children is recognized as one of the top Child Placing Agencies in the State of Texas. At the time of this writing, there are 159 children in our care. This is the most children this ministry has housed in her history. We are blessed with gifted and talented employees, for whom we are grateful. However, we understand this is not our ministry; it belongs to our Heavenly Father. We are here only as His hands, feet and voice to abused and neglected children. We did not speak sooner because we feel as though He can fight His own battles.

If you are still concerned about your children's home, I would welcome the opportunity to visit with your church or any of your boards or committees and answer any questions you may have.

I serve in this position by your discretion. I thank you for this honor. Keep us in your prayers.



Family Matters

Disasters, Diseases, Deaths

By **DR. TRAVIS PLUMLEE**

I cannot remember a time in my life when the whole State of Texas has flooded like it has this past month. Top to bottom was a flood, and it is a pretty big state. My sister called at almost midnight to tell me that their home in Houston was flooding. Since my family had experienced flooding years ago, she was calling to get ideas on how to keep the water out of her house.

As the waters receded, we talked over all that had happened. We both put it into perspective that it was nothing compared to those who had their entire family swept away, along with their homes, across the state. Moving your furniture and stacking it up as high off the floor as you can; mopping up water in your home is all a huge ordeal. But it is really just an inconvenience when you think of the families who went on a weekend getaway to the Hill Country of Texas and were all swept to their deaths from raging flood waters.

Our little 4 year old great niece is battling leukemia. She is a real warrior princess. Her mom has quit her job and takes care of her full time now. She does home chemotherapy each day through ports in her arms. Then, once a week she has to go for the big tuff stuff at the hospital several miles away. Her two little brothers adapt well as mom and dad have to spend so much time with their sick little girl. Yet, through it all, my niece has never been closer to God.

She is growing exponentially in her faith and relationship with God. For the first time ever, she called last week and we discussed scripture over the phone. When all the blond curly

hair that flowed halfway down her back fell out—everyone cut off their hair in support.

While my niece and her family grow in strength and courage from the Lord, the little girl just keeps on playing, and singing and being like a 4 year old when she feels good. She doesn't even know to have a bad outlook on life. When she is not sick, she is happy and playing and enjoying life.

Her mom told me that on the way to get chemotherapy last week at the hospital, a man cut them off in traffic on the freeway. She said, "I would have honked and gotten so mad in the past. But it didn't even bother me. I thought that maybe he was battling some big problem and just wasn't paying attention, or had to hurry home for an emergency." She just prayed for him.

Our neighbor lady just around the corner from us is terminally ill. She told us recently that she is just about gone. We have been going over and praying over her. She is so appreciative and goes on and on about how wonderful it is. It is really nothing.

I get kind of sad thinking of all the people who are hurting and no one comes to help them or visit them or pray for them. It makes me think that there are a lot of Christians out there who are too busy with their own pursuit of happiness to minister to the needs of others.

Our neighbor is building this huge deck onto the back of her house. I thought it was strange that she would just be starting this major building project at this point in her life.

But I learned years ago that people deal with disease and death in their own unique way and it is never a good thing to judge others on how they choose to respond to their life situations. She said, "I have to do something. I want to enjoy coming out here on my deck. I have to do something that keeps me going. I need projects to cause me to get up in the morning. It helps me still feel alive."

I admire her resiliency, while I think of how many of us complain about having to do chores around the house on a day off. Should we be thankful that we even have a day off to do our chores? Should we be thankful that we have good enough health to get outside and work around the yard?

The reason for these three stories, disaster, disease and death, is to shake us back into the realization of how thankful we should be for all that God has blessed us with. We should live every day to its' fullest and not worry about the little things. With God in charge of all that happens, we shouldn't even worry about the big things.

You see, all people who go through disasters and tribulations gain a new perspective on life. They learn to appreciate life more. They live each day in the present and grab hold of all the beauty they can find. It is there each day if we look for it.

People who go through fiery trials learn that all of this other stuff we get so hung up on is not really important at all. Homes, clothes, cars, money, jobs, what to do with your leisure time, worrying about losing a few pounds, etc. is not important. People are important. Life is important. Jesus is important. Your relationship with Christ and to others is really all that matters.

My advice to you all is to not wait for a disease or a disaster to strike to learn what is really important in life. Live each day to its' fullest and focus on what is truly important that day. Get an attitude adjustment. If a four year old with leukemia can sing "Jesus Loves Me," then I think we can have a better attitude as well.

Life is too short, too frail, too unknown to spend any day worrying, fretting or fighting with a loved one. Get busy focusing on what really matters and living each day as if it were your last. Readjust your priorities. Loving Jesus, Loving Others and loving the life God has blessed you with. That's all that truly matters.

Dr. Travis Plumlee is a full-time professional speaker and leads Family Ark Ministries. He is national board certified as a therapist/specialist in various areas of human behavior. For more information or to contact him, visit www.travisplumlee.com.



Bibles, Books, Music & Gifts

To order Bibles, books, music and gifts from *Baptist Progress*, visit www.bmatexas.org and click the flashing box at the top of the right hand column.

When you order through our website, Christian Book Distributors shares their sales profit with us. Get to shopping!

Church Health

Making disciples is the priority

By LARRY BARKER

While worshipping in a church in the southern part of Thailand the pastor was preaching on the Fruit of the Spirit. Then as he challenged them he gave them a test where he asked them to score themselves on a scale of 1-10 in four different areas. He said that no one is a 40 because all of us are still a work in progress (so true). Then he teased them that at best some of them were only a 20. They laughed but it caused me to wonder how we would score on an evangelism test. The four questions could be:

Question 1: Am I completely confident in being able to show someone from the scriptures how to repent of their sins and ask Christ to be Lord of their life? **Remedy:** Get trained in how to share the gospel!

Question 2: Am I burdened to share my faith with people in my circles of influence and am I burdened enough to do something about it, not just talk about it? **Remedy:** Fall on your face before God and beg Him for this!

Question 3: Do I approach every day as an opportunity to share the love of Christ with others around me both in demonstration and verbally? Do I listen to their story, share my story, and then tell His story every chance I get? **Remedy:** Realize you are Christ's ambassador wherever you are and wherever you go!

Question 4: Have I shared my faith with someone in the last week? **Remedy:** Commit to share your faith with someone in the next week and do it!

Okay, how did you do? Remember, no one gets a 40 but many, if we are totally honest, struggle to score a 20! While most churches would say that their primary reason for existence is evangelism/discipleship, they would readily admit that the areas they are most challenged in is evangelism/discipleship! We know that only 15 percent of all churches in America are growing and only 1 percent are growing through new converts.

With that truth staring us in the face how do we reconcile

that with the Great Commission which says, "Go and MAKE disciples!" It does not say make them better disciples (which does happen and is important) but it says make them; from scratch. The pastor in Thailand shared with us that 80 percent of the people in the congregation that day were new converts in the last year. It always causes me to rejoice when I visit a church plant and I am told that 80 percent or more are new converts. We must stop shuffling the Christian deck and once again commit to "making" disciples.

George Barna has noted, "Evangelism is not a priority in most churches, so the fact that most churches do not verbally share the gospel in a given year is not deemed problematic. Only one out of eight churches bother to evaluate how many of their congregants are sharing their faith in Christ with non-believers." This, in the face of the fact that conversion growth is the only kind of church growth that can be supported as the biblical kind of growth. While a church is thankful for biological growth and transfer growth they do not produce Kingdom growth and the kingdom of darkness is not pushed back.

Evangelism occurs more often in relationships than with complete strangers. Sixty seven percent of the leaders (growing churches through conversions) surveyed attributed personal relationships as the primary means by which their churches were reaching people with the gospel. Here are some steps to think through:

What if the pastor, staff, and leaders of the church gave 10 percent of their time (or day a week) to developing relationships with lost people and training other believers to build intentional relationships?

Where could you go and build relationships with people who are far from God? Get out in the fields and hang out with lost people wherever that might be in your context!

What if you challenged 10 percent of your people to accept the challenge with you? Timothy was admonished by Paul to do the work of an evangelist! We must figure out a way to mobilize our people to live missionally and incarnationally. The best way is to lead is by example!

How did Jesus make disciples? He cared about lost people and we must care about what He cares about. Leaders must model what they want their people to do! Money, methods, nor facilities are our limiting factors; leadership is! You cannot reproduce what you are not doing!

Someone recently said, "Our churches are full of people who say they love God but do not love what God loves!" God loves the world and Jesus said He came to seek and to save that which is lost! Are we looking for the lost daily? Are we conscious of those around us who need to see a demonstration of the love of God? Are we listening to their stories and showing them they are valued by us and by God?

Let me make this very clear: Reaching people with the gospel of Jesus Christ is not only the responsibility of the leaders of the church. It is every believers' responsibility to share the gospel of Jesus Christ! It is interesting that one statistic that has remained almost unchanged over the last 30 years is this: 85 to 88 percent of people who are reached with the gospel are reached because of a friend or a family member. It really is about relationships and our circle of influence. What are you going to do about it?

Larry Barker is the operations director for North American Missions. For more information or to contact him, visit www.bmamissions.org.



EVERY SUNDAY BULLETIN SERVICE IS NOW BEING OFFERED THROUGH BAPTIST PROGRESS!

Simply set up your account with Baptist Progress for the number of bulletins you regularly need on Sunday, and they will be shipped right to your door. We have a wide selection offering six bulletin styles in various sizes to fit the worship style of nearly any church. Extra bulletins are available to add to your regular order for special days such as Easter, Christmas, Mother's Day, etc. To order or for more information, visit www.baptistprogress.org, click MORE at the top, then click Every Sunday Bulletin Service or give us a call at 972-923-0756 or send an e-mail to editor@baptistprogress.org.

If your church currently purchases bulletins directly from Warner Press, please allow us to add your church to our customer list. Baptist Progress will receive a commission if you are added to our customer list. The price for your church will be the same. Just give us a call to make the change, 972-923-0756 or email editor@baptistprogress.org.

Mission Life

It's Transition Time

By **JERRY BURNAMAN**

State Missions Executive Director

I've been working with the Mission Trustees about transition—the time to transfer leadership to someone else. In our last trustee meeting, the decision was made for me to end my tenure as Mission Director, Dec. 31, 2015. They also agreed for me to be Missions Director Emeritus through 2016 to assist the new director get established.

The Baptist Missionary Loan Association (BMLA) Trustees met and they will recommend that I serve as business manager of the BMLA on a part-time basis on June 6. The title of missions director emeritus was a plan to help the new State Missions director get established, so working part-time for the BMLA I will be in the office and have the opportunity to help the new director get established.

This past April, I concluded 17 years as executive director of the BMA of Texas, and it has been a good ride. We made some positive changes, and some that didn't work. We haven't reached all our goals but that may be

good. Denis Waitley wrote, "Have a purpose that will outlive you and pursue it with passion."

The trustees will have information in the *Progress* for interested persons to apply for the position. This is a time for us to pray fervently and seek God's guidance.

Applications being accepted for State Missions director

The trustees of BMA of Texas Missions are seeking and receiving applications for the position of director of Missions. Resumes are to include, but are not limited to: personal information, educational/spiritual/pastoral/missions experience, prior work history, administrative/financial experience, computer/web/social media/video skills, references, and a description of God's call on your life.

A description of the responsibilities of the Director of Missions is posted on the BMA of Texas website. Resumes

should be sent to Robbie Caldwell by Aug. 31, 2015 to be considered at the address below:

Robbie Caldwell
New Harmony Baptist Church
10251 FM 724
Tyler, TX 75704
robbie@nhbc.us
903-593-5811

Jerry Burnaman is the executive director of State Missions and the Baptist Missionary Loan Association. Contact him at jerryburnaman@yahoo.com or 972-923-0757.



Southern Gospel recording artist returning to Anthony Drive, Ennis for concert, June 21, 2015

Special to Baptist Progress

Southern Gospel recording artist Gordon Mote performed a concert at Anthony Drive, Ennis a couple of years ago, and he is returning on Father's Day, Sunday, June 21, 2015. The concert is free and will begin at 7 p.m.

Few artists possess a more impressive resume than Gordon Mote. And few artists have had to overcome more challenges to realize their dreams. Blind since birth, Mote's faith provides the foundation for his life and constantly fuels his creative spirit. When he was just three, Gordon surprised his family on Thanksgiving by sitting down to the piano and miraculously playing "Jesus Loves Me" with both hands. "I was just passionate about music," states the Attalla, Alabama native. "My music is so eclectic today because I listened to every album I could get my hands on growing up. As kids, my brother (who is also blind) and I traveled and sang in churches of all sizes and denominations."



▲ **Gordon Mote**

As a young man, Mote became one of the first blind students in the country to be mainstreamed into the public school system and later received a full scholarship to Jacksonville State University in Jacksonville, Alabama. After three years at JSU, he transferred to Nashville's Belmont University and graduated with honors. Two days after graduation, Country music legend Lee Greenwood asked Gordon to join his band. Since then, he's toured with Trisha Yearwood, Porter Wagoner, Gaither Vocal Band as well as the long-running Gaither Homecoming Tour.

As a studio musician, Mote's big break came when Country Music Hall of Fame keyboardist Pig Robbins (who is also blind) was unable to make a session and recommended that Gordon fill in. That particular day, Alan Jackson cut the poignant 9/11 tribute, "Where Were You When the World Stopped Turning?"—resulting in the first number one single Gordon played on. Since that time, Gordon has played for Country music's biggest names, including Brad Paisley, Martina McBride, Alan Jackson, Rascal Flatts, Lionel Richie, Alison Krauss, and many others. His unmatched studio prowess earned him Music Row Magazine's instrumentalist award in 2009 and 2011, which recognizes the musician who played on the most top ten albums. Mote is honored and humbled by the artists

and producers who place their trust in him, "I always try to bring my creativity and do the very best I can."

Since stepping into the spotlight as a solo artist, Mote has recorded an impressive body of work—three instrumental and six vocal albums—including the Dove Award-nominated *If You Could Hear What I See* (2004), *Don't Let Me Miss the Glory* (2007), *Songs I Grew Up Singing* (2012) and his acclaimed Christmas collection *The Star Still Shines* (2012). A two-time winner of the Academy of Country Music's top piano/keyboard player award, Mote has recorded with Brad Paisley, Darius Rucker, Blake Shelton, Carrie Underwood, Gaither Vocal Band, Alan Jackson, and many, many others. Yet on his latest New Haven Records album, *All Things New*, Mote again proves he's more than just Music City's most respected musician, he's also a consummate artist. From the exuberant title track to the compelling "Meanwhile Back at the Cross," Mote's voice wrings every ounce of emotion from tender ballads and teems with passion on high energy anthems. "I never recorded a project that is as fun--but as deep--as this album," Mote says with a smile.

Anthony Drive Baptist Church is located at 801 Anthony Drive in Ennis. For more information, email anthonydriveennis@yahoo.com.

BMA Seminary's 58th commencement



By **DR. PHILIP ATTEBERY**

BMA Theological Seminary Dean

Sixteen individuals received a degree from the Baptist Missionary Association Theological Seminary of Jacksonville during commencement exercises conducted May 16, 2015. The seminary hosted the event in its Dorman Memorial Chapel on the main campus in Jacksonville.

John Bockmon of Whitehouse, Michael Cook of Whitehouse, Cristi Duvall of Brownsboro, Vasquez Granberry of Tyler and Joshua Woolridge of Henderson received the Bachelor of Arts in Religion degree.

The Master of Arts (Religion) degree was awarded to Herman Johnson of Nacogdoches, Dennis Morris of Houston, Scott Schaller of Thorndale, Jordan Tew of Grand Prairie and Lanny Williams of Mineola. Brent Williams of Mabank received the Master of Arts in Church Ministries degree.

Recipients of the Master of Divinity degree included David Dixon of Neches, Wenjuan Durham of China, Anthony Slack of Rayville, Louisiana and Bobby Yang of Tianjin, China.

The seminary also awarded the Doctor of Divinity degree posthumously to Louis F. Asher, former professor of church history and biblical languages.

Jeff Swart, senior pastor of the First, Galena, Kansas and BMA Seminary alum, presented the commencement address. Swart has served full-time in various Christian ministries for 40 years. In April 2015, BMA Seminary selected Swart to receive the prestigious Gerald Kellar Award. Swart's educational background includes a B.A. in Sociology and Political Science from Pittsburg State University, Pittsburg, Kansas, a M.A. in Professional Counseling from Liberty University, Lynchburg, Virginia, and an M.R.E. from the Baptist Missionary Association Theological Seminary in Jacksonville. Swart also authored *The Church Planting Model*, which is used around the world to teach laypeople how to plant New Testament churches.

BMA Seminary provides accredited theological education to qualified individuals by seeking to equip them for Christian service and leadership roles. The seminary supports the educational needs of the Baptist Missionary Association of America and other groups who share a like commitment to the authority of scripture by offering certificates, associate, bachelor and masters' degrees.

DiscipleGuide offers Activate Orientation in Mesquite, June 29-30

By **JERRY FULTON**

Baptist Progress Editor

Todd West, pastor of Oasis Church in Maumelle, Arkansas and DiscipleGuide director of church solutions, is working with several churches through a new initiative called Activate. The initiative is a coach-driven approach to helping hurting churches experience revitalization.

According to DiscipleGuide Executive Director Scott Attebery, "Todd's experience and track record as a pastor, church planter, and consultant have prepared him to serve in this role."

West will present an orientation of Activate at Calvary First, Mesquite, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. June 29-30. Pastors and church staff are encouraged to attend and discover new ways to make the churches they serve healthier.

If you plan to attend, please RSVP to Todd@DiscipleGuide.org.



▲ **Todd West**

OBITUARY

Dale Hankins

(January 24, 1929 - May 30, 2015)

Dale Hankins, Th.D, age 86, went to be with the Lord on May 30, 2015. Dale was born on Jan. 24, 1929 in Gillham, Arkansas. He was preceded in death by his parents, James Monroe and Minnie Dora Birge Hankins; brothers, Leonard Hankins, Archie Hankins; and sisters Paralee Hankins Turner, and Ola Hankins.

He is survived by his wife of 59 years, LaTance Tate Hankins; daughters, LaFonda Nimmons and Robbie Simpson; grandchildren, Ryan Nimmons, Joshua Simpson, Christopher Simpson, Daniel Simpson of Tyler; Rebecca and Bro. Robert Lee; and great-granddaughter, Summer Lee, of San Augustine; brother, Donald and Marilyn Hankins of DeQueen.

Hankins served eight years in the US Navy during the Korean Conflict, 24 years with the Dallas Police Department, and 23 years as a pastor with the Baptist Missionary Association at Richmond Road, Texarkana; Rocky Point, Lula, Oklahoma; Shady Grove, DeBerry, and Friendship, De Queen.

Graveside service were at Valley Cemetery in Gillham, Arkansas on June 3, with Bro. Duane Turner officiating.



▲ **Dale Hankins**

Maintaining Our Christian Freedom



June 28th & July 5th MORAL ACTION 2015 FREEDOM OFFERING

Helping:

Dr. John M. Adams
P.O. Box 305
Mantachie, MS 38855
www.macbma.net






By JASON PREWITT
Camp Ministries Director

It is getting very busy around Daniel Springs in anticipation for the exciting 2015 camp season. We have been so blessed to have volunteer groups work on major projects and are excited about the progress they have made around the campgrounds. The summer staff is putting a lot of time and energy into getting the facilities ready for the summer campers to get here.

We are so blessed to have a great group of students on staff this summer and we are looking forward to the impact they are going to have in the lives of our campers. It is amazing to see their excitement and willingness to work as they cleaned cabins, mowed, weed-eated, picked up limbs and helped with some of the repairs. We are very excited and look forward to seeing how the Lord is going to work in lives this summer.


Register your group at DanielSpringsCamp.com today.



RESERVE NATIONAL

Dental & Vision

[The Great Coverage - One Low Price!]




The Best Medicine is Preventive...
Reserve National's Dental and Vision Policy:

- ✓ Coverage for yourself, your spouse, just for your children or the whole Family
- ✓ Coverage starts immediately. No waiting periods for check ups
- ✓ No restrictive networks. Choose the doctor or dentist that you want
- ✓ Up to \$1,500 per covered person per year
- ✓ Cash benefits paid directly to you, your eye doctor or your dentist
- ✓ Guaranteed renewable at your option – regardless of future dental or vision problems

You get:

- ✓ Dental care from routine cleanings to comprehensive dental procedures
- ✓ Benefits for eye exams, contact lenses, frames and lenses
- ✓ Both Dental and Vision Coverage for one Premium
- ✓ A healthy mouth and eyes for a healthier you!



For a Free No Obligation Quote
 Contact Field Agent:
David Pittman
325-725-0360

Reserve National Insurance Company, a Kemper Company. Rated "A-Excellent" for financial stability by A.M. Best Company. Providing policies for individuals, families and small business owners for over 55 years. An Oklahoma-based Company.



GLORIOUS

SOAR 2015



BOBBY TUCKER
SPEAKER



DUSTIN WISELY
SPEAKER



FOR KING & COUNTRY
CONCERT



AARON WILLIAMS
WORSHIP



STEPHEN CASTLERBERRY
SPEAKER



STEVEN CARROLL
SPEAKER

WWW.GOSOAR.COM

BMA of America News

Honor your dad a little differently this year



By **CHARLES ATTEBERY**

BMA Foundation Director

Are you looking for a different way to honor your dad on Father's Day this year? Why not make a contribution to the BMA Foundation in his honor? Your contribution will never be spent. It will be invested, and only the earnings from the contribution will be used to help all or any of the BMA departments and agencies as you specify. If your dad is deceased, a contribution to the Foundation in his memory would be most appropriate and meaningful.

Your contribution can help BMA Missions send missionaries throughout the world; help Lifeword Media Ministries spread the gospel by radio, television and the internet; help DiscipleGuide provide much-needed resources to BMA churches; help BMA Theological Seminary train pastors, teachers and missionaries; help Ministers Resource Services provide retirement services to pastors, church staff members and denominational employees; and help the Moral Action Agency articulate our beliefs on very important issues of our day. In assisting these departments and agencies, you will be helping build God's Kingdom as the departments and agencies assist BMA churches in carrying out the Great Commission.

Contributions should be mailed to P.O. Box 1188, Conway, Arkansas 72033, along with contact information for anyone you would like us to notify regarding your contribution.

Baptist Missionary Association Theological Seminary offers free online course

By **DR. PHILIP ATTEBERY**

BMA Seminary Dean

BMA Seminary will offer a FREE eight week course on the Life of Paul from Sept. 9, 2015 until Oct. 28, 2015. Registration for this FREE online course opens Aug. 1, 2015.

This course is designed to enlighten the student in Pauline chronology and to survey pertinent historical incidents which affected or coincided with his ministry. Special emphasis is given to the environmental background of early Christianity as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles.

TEXTBOOKS: Two required

The Holy Bible - student selected English translation

Paul His Life and Teaching - John McRay, Baker Academic, ISBN 080102403

To enroll contact the seminary at: <http://bmats.edu/other-educational-opportunities/free-courses/> or bmats@bmats.edu or Toll free 800-259-5673.

THIS IS A NON-CREDIT COURSE-YOU WILL RECEIVE A CERTIFICATE ONLY

The church is our focus



By **SCOTT ATTEBERY**

DiscipleGuide Executive Director

Someone recently asked me to describe DiscipleGuide's ministry. My first instinct was to share our four Cs: camps, conferences, curriculum and church solutions. Before the familiar words could leave my mouth, something else came to mind: DiscipleGuide invests in churches.

We believe that the key to fulfilling the Great Commission lies in the local church. No other institution has been given the responsibility. Therefore, we work hard to help churches maximize their potential for kingdom work. Here's how:

Our camps focus on winning the church of tomorrow to Christ. Every year hundreds of campers trust Christ as their Savior and thousands more hear the gospel.

Our conferences inspire church members with relevant teaching and new ideas to take home to their local congregations. Students, senior adults, pastors, and youth ministers all find specialized conferences to address their needs.

Our curriculum sets the framework of a biblical worldview and belief system for our churches. Age-appropriate materials aid churches in training their members biblically throughout every stage of life.

Our church solutions ministry provides hands-on coaching for churches struggling with issues and challenges. Every church has room for improvement, and we want to help.

As you can see, we love churches! In fact, we want to be known as your church's best friend. Please let us know how we can help your congregation. Contact DiscipleGuide at info@discipleguide.org or 800-777-1442.

IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO
MAKE A SPLASH WITH
YOUR KIDS THIS SUMMER.

REGISTER YOUR GROUP TODAY AT
DANIELSPRINGSCAMP.COM

Auxiliaries

Making a joyful noise

By SHARON COLE

Making a joyful noise in the Philippines is the theme of the National WMA missions project for 2015-2016. The purpose of the project is to raise funds for the BMA of Philippines Bible College in Silay City on the island of Negros Occidental. The emphasis will be on physical and academic improvements such as: expansion and furnishings, major renovation to include electrical wiring, plumbing updates, repairs and a gravel parking lot. The goal is \$35,000.

The Bible College is under the direction of Bro. Doug and Diane Lee and was established and founded in 1976 by Bro. Doyle and Linda Moore. Their aim is to train and equip young Filipino pastors and Christian workers to serve the Lord. The college enrolls students not only from the Philippines, but from countries of China, Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam and Indonesia. Many of the students from these countries go back home to spread the gospel to their own people. Some will become working pastors, teachers, missionaries, musicians and disciple makers to many countries around the world, especially the Creative Access Nations.

They desire your prayers that God will protect them from Satanic forces and courage to spread the gospel throughout Southeast Asia. These project funds will improve the students' learning environment while they are training.

Their needs exceed their resources as it is in many other institutions. The school has three departments of learning: 1. Theology, with emphasis on church planting and missions; 2. Religious education and 3. Music education. There are presently 69 students enrolled. Ways that you can support this project is by purchasing a CD featuring Doug and Diane Lee

and the BMABC Singers from the Bible College or by direct donations to the National WMA Corresponding Secretary: Pat Duncan, P.O. Box 30, Hardy, AR 72542. Contact information: 501-351-1339, patduncan3314@yahoo.com.

Ways you can raise funds for this worthy project are many. You can always have a bake sale and combine it with a yard sale. One person's trash is another person's treasure. Ask the people in your church if they will give the items to you that they clean out of their attic, closet or garage. Items that sell well are trinkets, whatnots, children's clothing, old framed pictures and tools. Do a carry-out dinner at church on Sunday morning after services. Plan a menu, have it boxed ready to go for people to pick up. You can charge a fee or go on donation basis.

What kind of teacher am I?

If you are a teacher, have you ever asked yourself that question? Have you ever evaluated yourself wondering if what you present to your students whether they are adults or the youngest of children? There are several criteria that are necessary to be an effective teacher. It is important no matter what age you teach that you be prepared.

You might think, "I can tell those bible stories to those little kids without even looking at the lesson. I know them by heart." But there is much more to teaching than just relating a bible story that you have known all your life. You start by prayer; and more prayer. Pray for God's guidance in every step. Don't wait until Saturday night to go over the lesson.

Evaluate your motives in teaching. Do you teach because no one else will do it? Those are hard pointed questions that

need to be addressed if you become an effective teacher. Prepare yourself physically; get proper rest and sleep. Prepare yourself spiritually, study the scriptures, not just the Sunday school quarterly.

Get to know your students. A child will respond well to you if they know you are interested in their daily lives. Call them during the week if they are absent. Ask to speak with them, not just the parent. They need to feel important. Be happy in the classroom, leave your personal agenda at home. Be faithful in attendance as much as possible.

Have your classroom comfortable and functional with all needed supplies in order. If you use visual aids, have them in order and practice using them at home so that there will be no confusion during lesson time. Kids are smart. They can tell when you are nervous and indecisive about what to do next. If they see you during the week, do they see the same calm, confident attitude that they see on Sunday morning.

Do you know people who have a church behavior and an opposite daily behavior? If we have the same behavior during the week as we have on Sunday then we are teaching the children confidence and consistency. Many people shy away from teaching children because they don't want to deal with their behavior. This can be one of the most difficult aspects of teaching. We want to provide a loving outreach to all children and make all families feel welcome and accepted.

Make each child feel special and unique. If they feel comfortable around us and in the classroom, they will be receptive to our teaching. Now for the parents, grandparents, guardians: There are things learned at home that a child cannot and does not learn at school, church or anywhere else. We should try to develop a spiritual thought pattern in them. While they are very young, children need to learn to include God in every area of life. We often teach them to say blessings at meals and prayers at bedtime. What about the rest of the day? They need to remember God when they are doing chores, going to school, playing, or doing other things. The influence of the world has the opposite effect on our children. It teaches that God is only for Sunday, if then. This influence carries over into our home life because of ungodly words and actions they see on the television.

In daily contact with our children we should teach honor and respect for teachers, other adults and for all those in authority over them. Children mirror what they see at home, they practice more of what they see than what they hear. Love is the key. If they see love displayed at home, they will show love wherever they go.

Want your *Baptist Progress* issues to arrive faster and save money at the same time?

To receive each issue of *Baptist Progress* approximately one week earlier, switch your mail subscription to an email subscription!

In addition to receiving each issue by email, you will get our e-News Update between issues.

News alerts are also emailed periodically.

The cost of an email subscription is \$15 (\$6 less per year than mail subscriptions).

So...faster delivery, more news, less cost...

WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?

Make the switch, email us today at editor@baptistprogress.org!

Sharon Cole is the editor for the Texas WMA. Contact her at S9Co@aol.com. For more information on the Texas WMA, visit www.texaswma.com.



EVENTS

JUNE 21, 2015

Gordon Mote,
of the Gaither Homecoming Series,
in Concert
@ Anthony Drive, Ennis
7 p.m.
No admission cost

AUGUST 13, 2015

Liberty Association Lifeword Rally
@ Cross Roads, Pittsburg

AUGUST 9, 2015

60th Anniversary
@ Anthony Drive, Ennis

AUGUST 29, 2015

Texas Ladies Retreat
Hosted by Texas WMA
Farley Street, Waxahachie

OCTOBER 11, 2015

Liberty Association Annual Meeting
@ First, Judson
Begins at 3 p.m.
First Session Speaker—
Charles Johnson
Dismiss for Supper at 5 p.m.
Begin second session at 6 p.m.
Second Session Speaker—
Randy Stracener

NOVEMBER 10-11, 2015

115th Annual Session
of the BMA of Texas
@ Champion Forest Baptist Church
15555 Stuebner Airline Road, Houston

APRIL 25-27, 2016

67th Annual Session
of the BMA of America
@ Gatlinburg Convention Center
Gatlinburg, Tennessee
Headquarters Hotel:
Glenstone Hotel

PERSONNEL & POSITIONS

AVAILABLE MINISTERS

MATTHEW LOAFMAN is available for pulpit supply. He is a member of Heritage, Waxahachie. Contact him at 469-285-6060 or loafman.1113@yahoo.com.

JOHN HENDERSON is available for preaching appointments. He is a member of First Providence, Livingston. Contact him at henderson2@livingston.net or 936-327-9228.

AVAILABLE SPEAKER

STACIE BOSTIC is available to speak at women's luncheons, youth retreats, adult conferences, seminars, Bible studies and other events. She has a powerful testimony that focuses on the art of surrender, walking by faith and rising above circumstances. Her message resonates with a wide range of listeners. She has the ability to tailor her message to fit a group's unique event theme. Stacie is a member of Liberty, Gun Barrel City. Contact her at claypotworks@outlook.com or 903-603-8597. Also, visit www.claypotworks.com or connect with Stacie on Facebook at <https://facebook.com/claypotworks>.

AVAILABLE POSITIONS

CHILDREN'S MINISTER—Farley Street, Waxahachie is seeking a children's minister. Bachelor in Education or Children's Ministry a plus. Send resume to resume@farleystreet.com.

PIANIST—Rocky Hill, Huntington is in need of a pianist. Any interested, available persons please contact Bro. Bobby or Deanne Russell at 936-553-4628 for more information.

MUSIC—First, Crandall is seeking a bi-vocational music leader. Salary negotiable. Mix of contemporary and traditional. Call Bro. Mike Waits for more details: 214-697-7998 or mbwaitssr@att.net. Visit church website at firstbaptistcrandall.org.

PASTOR—Forrest Hill, Quitman is seeking a pastor. Send resume to Clara Ziegler, Box 545, Winnsboro, Texas 75494 or for more information, call David Kerens at 903-850-3420.

PASTOR—Lake Highlands, Sulphur Springs is seeking a full time pastor. Send resume to the church at P.O. Box 441, Sulphur Springs, Texas 75483-0441.

YOUTH—Antioch, Gilmer is seeking a bivocational youth/student minister. Send resume to the church at P.O. Box 688 Gilmer, Texas 75644; Contact person—Michael Pool, pool-michael@hotmail.com. 903-315-6822.

PASTOR—Grace Temple, San Angelo is seeking a full-time senior pastor. He will also oversee associate pastors and child development center. Send resume to Pat Jackson 7809 CR 339, Christoval, Texas 76935, email pwjack@aol.com or call 325-651-7875. TFN

PASTOR—First Missionary, Morton is seeking a pastor. Send resume to the church at P.O. Box 981, Morton, Texas 79346 or to jimmysealy@aol.com. TFN

PASTOR & STAFF CHANGES

MICHAEL MANIS is the new pastor at Pine Acres, Gilmer.

CHURCHES IN REVIEW

MAY 31, 2015

Church	SS	Worship	Additions
Anthony Drive, Ennis	66	101	
Cedar Creek, Teague	15	20	
Farley Street, Waxahachie	490	655	4 by letter
First, Blooming Grove	224		
First, Crandall	71	106	1 by statement
First, Omen	47	85	
First, Palmer	38	68	
Jackson, Joaquin	66	137	
Little Flock, Lufkin	8	15	
Little Mound, Big Sandy	39	49	
New Harmony, Tyler	337	479	2 by letter
Pine Forest, Huntington	18	30	
Rosewood, Gilmer	117	204	2 by baptism
Security Calvary, Cleveland	16	32	
Temple, Mexia	46	57	
Woodland, Splendora	31	58	
Yellowpine Macedonia, Hemphill	15	18	

JUNE 7, 2015

Church	SS	Worship	Additions
Anthony Drive, Ennis	57	88	
Cedar Creek, Teague	12	14	
Farley Street, Waxahachie	508	568	1 by statement
First, Blooming Grove	210		
First, Omen	42	76	
Glade Creek, Gilmer	18	42	
Jackson, Joaquin	61	105	
Little Flock, Lufkin		70	
Little Mound, Big Sandy	39	60	
Merriman Hills, Sherman	13	13	
New Harmony, Tyler	280	338	5 by letter, 1 by baptism
Security Calvary, Cleveland	17	28	
Temple, Mexia	26	42	
Woodland, Splendora	37	40	

For publication, statistics for Churches in Review must be received by Monday at 5 p.m. on Monday.

HALL FURNITURE LTD.

*Fine Church Furniture
since 1939*
P.O. Box 157
(1321 Industrial Dr.)
Henderson, TX 75653
903-657-4501



What Happens To Your Gift to the BMA Foundation?

All gifts to the Foundation, except those designated for operating expenses, are placed in an endowment fund and invested for one or more of the BMA departments or agencies as specified by the donor. Income from the investments provides supplemental funding for those ministries until the Lord returns. Gifts of cash should be mailed to P.O. Box 1188, Conway, Arkansas 72033. Call the Foundation office at 501-329-6891 for more information on other ways to give.

Sunday School Lessons

Deacons who serve

By PAUL GAUNTT

DATE: June 21, 2015
TEXT: Philippians 1:1, 2: 1 Timothy 3:8-13
THOUGHT PRIMER

When the Holy Spirit descended upon the church in Jerusalem about 50 days after the ascension of Christ, 3,000 souls became believers in Jesus Christ, after Peter's great message, according to Acts 2. This new, fast-growing church was comprised of people who spoke 19 different dialects. Fast growth, coupled with a variety of cultures and nationalities is exciting, but trouble can also accompany it. By the time we come to Acts 6, the church numbered in excess of 20,000 people.

Among the great diversities of the church were the Hellenistic Jews (Jews who had been assimilated into Greek Culture) and the traditional Hebrews. One scholar noted in a sermon that the ancient Hebrews already had a detailed and sophisticated plan in motion to provide care for the aged and needy and had for generations. It was a plan, which was unknown to the Greek-speaking Jews.

The result? Murmuring arose among the Hellenistic Jews against the traditional Hebrews because their widows were being left out of the daily distribution of food. The elders were hard-pressed to keep up with the workload even in the best of circumstances, but add to that the breach of fellowship between these two groups and it spelled trouble.

This necessitated action by the elders of the church, who asked the church to select, pray over and lay hands upon seven men, ordaining them to take this workload off of the elders to free them up to devote their time to the word and prayer.

Although no mention was made of these original seven men being deacons, clearly they were carefully selected to serve in the church, and the laying on of hands indicated they were ordained. Acts 6 is probably the premiere passage used in deacon ordination services today.

STUDY

1. The definition of the word "deacon"

The word "deacon" means "to serve." It denotes waiting tables — and meeting needs. Servitude is the driving force of the deacon. Servitude is also the driving force of everyone else in the Body of Christ. Different forms of the greek word which denotes the word "deacon" refer, in a general way, to service and/or ministry. The service is directed to God, to one another in the body and to the needy. First Timothy chapter 3 is the first reference in scripture to the actual qualifications of the office of deacon. Everyone in the body has a calling of God to serve — but deacons are the ones who are set aside to not only serve, but to model service to the church.

2. The qualifications of a deacon: 1 Timothy 3:8-13

- Grave: worthy of respect — living a life of utmost integrity.
- Not double-tongued — not changing his story or opinion from one person to the next in order to appease.
- Not given to much wine: The public image of the church and the ordained office will be tarnished if it is represented by one who is given to public drunkenness.
- Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience: the nature of the office of deacon requires making decisions, and necessitates having an understanding of scripture in order to have a discerning spirit.
- Wives must be grave: it is a direct reflection on the life of a deacon if his wife is void of integrity, sobriety, and has a slanderous tongue.
- Husband of one wife: marital fidelity is essential in the life of an ordained leader in the church.
- Ruling children and household well. Nothing will undermine the integrity of an ordained official in the church like children whose actions and lifestyles bring reproach on the servant, and in turn, the ministry.

3. The distinction between a deacon and an elder:

Although the qualifications of an elder and a deacon in 1 Timothy are virtually identical, it was clear in Acts 6 that elders/teaching shepherds of the church had a calling to minister the word — "to equip the saints to do the work of the ministry." (Ephesians 4:12)

while the deacons served the elders, the congregation, and most importantly, Christ.

4. Erroneous uses of the office:

Sometimes, people prevail on the deacons to perform "services" which are not biblically mandated. Deacons have been used as the administrative board of the church; they have been used to serve as liaisons between disgruntled church members and the pastor. Some deacon boards have even been known to dictate to the teaching elder what he would preach or how he would minister.

5. Erroneous motives for ordaining deacons:

- Conferring honor on a man simply for being an astute community influence or good business man.
- Ordaining young men in hopes it will help them be better members.

6. The results of a body of deacons that follow scriptural mandate:

- The ministry of deacons can minimize dis-unity and murmuring, and promote fellowship in the church.
- The ministry of deacons will serve as a model of service and ministry to the congregation.
- The ministry of deacons will free up the pastor to give his undivided attention to meditation on the word and in prayer.
- God blesses the church when spiritual deacons follow God's word. Acts 6:7. "Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith."

APPLICATION

Practically speaking, when the deacon body is functioning according to scripture, growth on every front, will be experienced by the church. It usually stands to reason that when a church is void of this most urgent office of the church — people are content to permit the pastor to "burn the candle at both ends" taking care of all the needs of the church, the pastor will have little or no time to study to feed the flock of God and equip them for ministry, which leads to spiritual immaturity in the membership, resulting in murmuring and discord. Then add to that, the lack of time the pastor has to devote to his own household. If he fails at being a spiritual leader at home, resulting in his children going awry, his ministry is crippled, or finished. The ministry of deacons is tantamount to a body of believers dwelling together in unity.

CHALLENGE

- To the would-be deacon: If your church has deemed your lifestyle, spiritual walk with Jesus, and work ethic to be such that would warrant their investigating you as a candidate for deacon, pray earnestly about it, and consider that a church that recognizes such, could possibly be of the Lord. If you accept such a position, never take the task lightly, and always exude a servant's heart.
- To the ordaining church: Check your motives for setting men aside for the purpose of ordaining them to the office. Make sure it's for no other motive than a recognition of special gifts in his life, and a lifestyle of integrity and a spiritual walk. Lift each candidate up to the Lord in fervent prayer. Pastor, spend several study sessions with them. There are many good resources to help you teach them. Men of Honest Report is a concise booklet, written years ago by Bro. J.D. Hudson and Bro. Donald Pruitt, which is excellent. Dr. Herb Peterson, who was long-time pastor of First Baptist Church of Oak Cliff, developed some excellent material for a deacon training program. Consult the Baptist Progress, www.bmatexas.org/baptist-progress.html; DiscipleGuide, www.discipleguide.org; LifeWay — www.lifeway.com for assistance in selecting a good study.

Paul Gauntt is the former BMA of Texas Department of Church Ministries director. He has served several churches as pastor, and is a correspondent and featured article writer for Baptist Progress. Contact him at paul.gauntt@att.net.



Truth in symbols

By PAUL GAUNTT

DATE: June 28, 2015
TEXT: Acts 2:36-42; Matthew 26:26-30
THOUGHT PRIMER

In days of old, aged grandparents would pause in restaurants and other public places, approach total strangers, and open a wallet, allowing a string of photos to drop to the floor — and they would bore the poor unsuspecting "captive audience" to death by taking a half hour to dote on their dozen or so grandchildren.

But those days are past — today, the same thing happens — only not with the wallet — it's now an electronic device, as small as a wallet, which will archive thousands of photos — because today grandparents can capture virtually everything their precious grandchildren do every five seconds of their lives.

The pictures are not the actual grandchildren — just symbols — pictures of them.

When I have had to be away from my family overnight, or for a week in a revival, I kept those pictures near — to remind me of the great greeting I will have when I get home. That's what pictures are for.

It seems that one of God's favorite teaching tools is to use pictures and symbols. The Old Testament is filled with them. The testing of Abraham's faith on Moriah in Genesis 22, when he was commanded to take his son, Isaac to be offered as a sacrifice, was one of the most vivid, heart-wrenching pictures of God's Sacrificial Lamb one day being offered on the cross of Calvary. The brazen serpent of Numbers 21 was also a vivid picture/symbol of the Son of God yet to come and be presented to a lost world. When we study the life of Joseph, we find so many parallels, pictures and symbols in his journey to the top in Egypt, as he was the instrument God used to save Israel and Egypt from famine. God knows better than anyone that "a picture is worth a thousand words."

Today, we are studying the only two pictures Christ left for the church to administer — Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Baptism and the Lord's Supper are vivid "pictures" of what Christ did for us on Calvary. They are simple pictures — to remind us of a great reunion we shall one day experience in the portals of glory. 1 Corinthians 11:26 says, "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come."

STUDY

Scriptural baptism is a symbol and only a symbol: In one of our texts, Acts 2:36-42 we find that the multitude who heard Peter's message, came under conviction (2:37) and then questioned what they must do. Peter said they were commanded to "repent" — which means to turn from one direction and go 180 degrees in the opposite direction. It is a change of heart. Many construe Acts 2:38 to say that water baptism is a part of the salvation process.

Repentance is an indication of salvation, and is, of itself, a gift from God (2 Timothy 2:25) Only believers can be scripturally baptized. In Galatians 3:27 Paul tells the church "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ." That is the the point of salvation — when the Agent of the Holy Spirit, baptizes one into the Substance of Christ. Water baptism is not the salvation - it is the picture of it. To quote one of my mentors in the faith and ministry, my Uncle Jack Bloxom, he said, "You cannot place something physical into something else physical and make it spiritual." Peter writes, in 1 Peter 3:21 that water baptism does not wash sin away — it is the answer of a good conscience toward God. A believer is commanded to be baptized — and any genuine believer will have a strong desire to be identified with Christ and His church through water baptism — and if he or she neglects it, they will always have a nagging at their conscience that something is left undone.

Ephesians 2:8-9 is the classic reference dispelling the belief of baptism being essential to salvation. It says, "Not of works." The grace, the faith, the repentance and the salvation are all of God. Titus 3:5 says, "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." Ask anyone who adheres to a doctrine of baptism being essential to salvation — they will admit baptism is a work of righteousness. But without a genuine change of heart through repentance, and trust in Christ, the act of being immersed in water is merely an exercise in futility.

Scriptural baptism is by immersion only: The scripture in Acts 8:36-37 when Phillip had led the Ethiopian eunuch to Christ, the eunuch said, "See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?" And Phillip said, "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."

That was the eunuch's profession of faith, and his salvation experience. The next verse says they both went into the water. Why would Phillip go into the water with the eunuch unless he was to immerse him rather than to just sprinkle him or pour water on him.

Baptism is a picture of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, and the believer's commitment to bury the old man, and be resurrected

in newness of life. A funeral burial is not performed by placing a casket into a six-foot deep hole and sprinkling a little dirt over it, or pouring a small bucket full of dirt on it. It must be completely covered with dirt. Otherwise there will be a stench very soon. And figuratively speaking, church fellowships sometimes are broken because some of God's redeemed people, whose former person has been buried, sometimes wants to dig him up — thereby creating a "stench" in the fellowship.

Scriptural baptism is only performed by a scriptural, New Testament Church. As Christ was about to ascend back to His Father, He left His Great Commission to His church — the New Testament Church. In that commission, He mandated the church to baptize believers in Christ. No other entity has been given that mandate. And that includes groups who claim to be a church, but who do not practice scriptural truth. There are doctrinal prerequisites which must be adhered to before a group can be called a true, Bible believing, Christ-following New Testament church — but that's a lesson for another time.

The Lord's Supper is the second ordinance of the Church: Matthew 26:26-30

1. The symbol of the Lord's Supper: The Lord's Supper was established by Christ, and given to the church to administer, commemorating the death of Christ on the cross — the fruit of the vine signifying His shed blood, and unleavened bread (no yeast) signifying His sinless, perfect broken body for the remission of sin. Scriptural Lord's Supper is only symbolic, not transubstantiation — a belief that the elements literally change into the body and blood of Christ. Not con-substantiation, in which some churches believe the blood and body of Jesus Christ are contained in the elements.

2. The elements of the Lord's Supper: The cup Jesus gave the disciples in the upper room that night, is known as the fruit of the vine. Matthew 26:29. The bread, a mixture of flour and water which is baked, signifies His broken body He suffered on Calvary.

3. The spirit of the church coming to the Lord's table. The church must be in a self-examination mode as the supper is received. 1 Corinthians 11:28-30. Failure to examine oneself, or partake of the supper in an "unworthy" manner, sets themselves up for judgement (verse 30) When one partakes in an unworthy manner, they are failing to seriously meditate on the purpose of it, and fail to "discern" the Lord's broken body and shed blood. To partake of the elements in an unworthy manner is to place oneself in danger of judgement through sickness or premature death.

4. The time to partake of the Lord's Supper: 1 Corinthians 11:25, Paul says, "this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me." Scripture does not specify how often to partake, but whether it is monthly, semi-annually or annually, we are to partake of it in remembrance of the One Who gave His life for us for the remission of sin.

APPLICATION

Sadly, many a church member has only the memory of being buried in water, and nothing else, to base their eternal security on. One young lady came to my office years ago, in tears because she had been carrying the burden of having followed some girlfriends down the aisle a few years earlier, and getting voted into the membership by profession of faith. She told me, "Bro. Paul, I knew the second that I went under the water that night that this was all wrong." So right then and there, she asked Jesus to come into her heart. How many church members are living with that fear that they have been trusting in the physical act of baptism as their "ticket" to heaven?

CHALLENGE

If you associate with a so-called church which practices doctrines alien to Holy scripture, such as an erroneous view on baptism, salvation, the doctrines of Christ, Holy Spirit, and God the Father, get out as quickly as possible and find one, which adheres purely to the historic doctrines of the Christian faith.

If you have been saved, but you have not made it public through the testimony through the ordinance of baptism, then settle the issue now.

As pertaining to the Lord's Supper, often it is a "lack on" to the end of a regular service, and often becomes nothing more than just a tradition. It is good to dedicate an entire service to the Lord's Supper. Make it a special celebration. Some churches have the deacons to dress as the disciples in the upper room and dramatize the event, incorporating the church into the supper. Some have held a totally silent Lord's Supper. It is always appropriate for the pastor to call the church to the altar before observing the Lord's supper to confess sin, and prepare their hearts to partake in a "worthy" manner. challenge people who have been out of fellowship with a brother or sister to go to them and make it right before partaking of the supper. Make the supper meaningful — just as it was extremely meaningful to the disciples in the upper room 2000 years ago.

Storm Damage at Jacksonville College

On May 25, a severe storm hit Jacksonville with straight line winds, causing significant damage to Jacksonville College property. At least 20 trees fell around the College, including one that fell on a home used for JC student housing. Light poles, fences, and signs were damaged or destroyed, and JC roofs and property around the campus were damaged. An SBTC Disaster Relief team responded quickly to help, as did groups from Harmony Hill Baptist Church of Lufkin and Bois D' Arc Baptist Church. JC employees and individuals from the community also volunteered their time and resources to help in the relief efforts.



Insurance will not cover all the necessary expenses involved in repair, so please pray about sending financial assistance.

