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Preach the Powerful Word (Ezek. 37:1-14)

By Richard W. Smith • Annual Message at 2022 BMAA Meeting

A few years ago, my college roommate, Shelby and his wife Janet, Kim and I visited Gettysburg, Penn. — the site of one of the great battlefields of the Civil War. There is a lot of ground to cover, and so Janet came up with the bright idea to rent and ride Segways.

We wore helmets and earphones that gave us historical information as we rode through the old battlefield.

While we were having fun, riding, joking and learning a little history, we came to an elevated place, the top of a hill. We were told to stop and to look over the field, and that is when we heard in our earphones, “This is the place where more than 50,000 soldiers were wounded and too many died.”

Our countenance changed as we tried to imagine something so horrible — men who were daddies, sons, brothers, uncles and cousins, lying in that very field. Janet said, she had “no words.” Kim said, she felt “overwhelmed,” and I had no clue as to what Shelby was thinking, but I wanted to leave. I wanted to keep moving. I did not like the powerful emotions behind the feeling of “no words and overwhelmed.” That made me very uncomfortable.

I invite you to Ezekiel 37, where God gives Ezekiel a vision that is worse than a Civil War battlefield. The vision before Ezekiel was not filled with nice headstones or crosses, but a sea of scattered, dried and disconnected bones, scorched by the sun. Ezekiel must have shuddered at this gruesome scene. According to God’s Word, bodies that were left unburied were a sign that they had fallen under God’s curse. These people were not only dead and

MOVING with Ministers and Staff

This is only a news column, and the publishing of a person’s availability should not be considered a recommendation by the Trumpet. To view previous listings from this column, visit our website at www.BaptistTrumpet.com.

Jonathan Attebery will serve as an associate pastor and youth pastor summer intern at Antioch East Baptist Church in Magnolia.

First Baptist Church in Taylor is seeking a full-time youth/children’s minister. Resumes and references may be sent to taylorfbc@gmail.com by May 14.



Books For Philippine Students

By Dr. Thom South

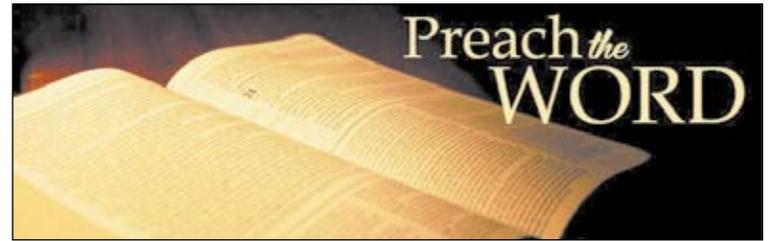
I will be going to the Philippines in July at the request of Missionary Stan Scroggins to teach four graduate courses so the instructors at the college can complete a master’s degree. The students and pastors there have limited resources and finances. I hope to raise funds to supply books for all those taking my classes. The cost will be about \$90 per student (\$100 would cover books and help with the cost of shipping). I am expecting between 15 and 20 students. I need to purchase books early in May to get them sent before the class.

If you can help, please send funds to “Philippine Book Fund,” Eastside Baptist Church, P.O. Box 2728, Conway, Ark. 72033. Any funds received above those needed for books will be used to refund travel costs to the missionary work funds which were used for travel. Thank you for your help!

humiliated but, according to Jeremiah 34, they were cursed.

This horrible, pitiful, scene is a vision and picture of the most hopeless situation a person, family or nation could ever encounter. This is a vision of the most irreversible, irredeemable, unrecoverable and beyond hope situation ever imagined. If that were not strange enough, in this vision, Ezekiel sees himself walking among the bones. But wait, it gets even more strange, God asked him the most farfetched

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Keep Preaching the Word

By Dr. Clif Johnson, BMAA President

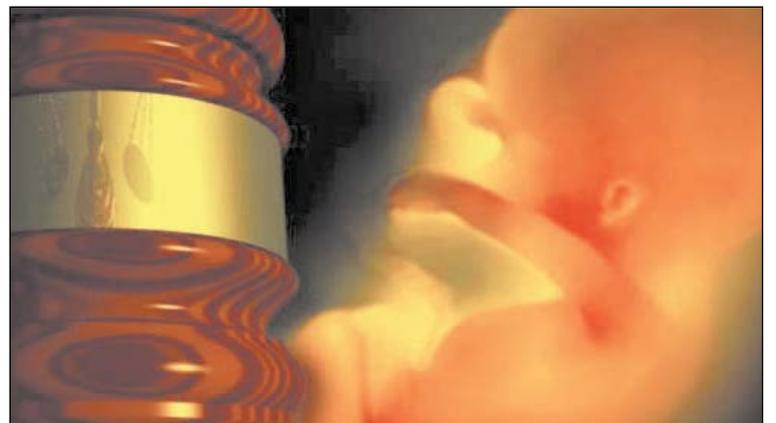
The meeting is over, goodbyes have been said and handshakes and hugs have been given. By now, receipts have been turned over to the treasurer and we are back in the groove of our ministerial routines. Thus goes the rollercoaster of religious activity — highs and lows, peaks and valleys. How about we step off the rollercoaster and think about how we might bring the theme of our meeting — “Preach the Word” — into our ministries?

We may think that such a theme would be easy to incorporate into ministry. We may even wonder what the big deal really is. After all, do we not preach the Word Sunday after Sunday? Well, hopefully we do, but we should always seek to improve as pastors and to grow spiritually and in wisdom. With that in mind, here are some action steps to employ as you continue to preach the Word:

- **Get training.** Preaching is a rare occupation in that there is very little encouragement to continue your education or skills training once you graduate from Bible college and seminary. The BMA Theological Seminary is a great place to take a refresher course on preaching. Several other ministries exist that will help you improve in your preaching such as Simeon Trust Preaching Workshops that can be taken online. G3 Preaching workshops and The Preaching Lab conferences are also available. The point is, never stop learning, growing and receiving training.

- **Find or be a mentor.** Perhaps the greatest impact an older pastor can have on the younger generation of pastors is intentionality. Show younger guys how you develop your sermon. Talk with them about what you take into the pulpit (outline or manuscript) and why. Give them advice on preaching “hard” passages. Let them

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Supreme Court Reportedly Votes to Overturn Roe v. Wade

By Steven Ertelt • Lifenews.com

In a monumental decision that could finally end an era of abortion on demand and 63 million babies killed in abortions, the Supreme Court has reportedly issued a decision overturning Roe v. Wade. This is according to a release of a draft of the decision.

“Roe was egregiously wrong from the start,” Justice Samuel Alito wrote in the draft opinion of the court dated Feb. 10, according to Politico.

Politico said the decision is not final and could change but the leaked draft of the opinion has four justices (Clarence Thomas, Neil Gorsuch, Brett Kavanaugh and Amy Coney Barrett) joining Alito; while three (Stephen Breyer, Sonia Sotomayor and Elena Kagan) dissented.

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Terry Kimbrow
President

Central Baptist College

1501 College Ave. • Conway, Arkansas 72034
(501) 329-6872 • (800) 205-6872 • www.cbc.edu
Twitter: @CentBaptCollege and @tkimbrow



Pictured (L/R): Austin Teal, Taylor Collins and Jeremiah Sanchez

CBC Honors Three In White Coat Ceremony

The Central Baptist College Math and Science Department recognized three students for their academic excellence by awarding them with white coats in a private ceremony held Monday, April 25. This event marked the 11th White Coat Ceremony to be held by the college. Each student achieved academic excellence, completing rigorous academic requirements set forth by Math and Science Department faculty and was approved as a recipient for their white coat.

“At most institutions, the White Coat Ceremony is a rite of passage; it is a way of welcoming new students into the medical profession,” said Vice President for Academic Affairs Dr. Gary McAllister. “At Central Baptist College, the white coat symbolizes the high expectations that science faculty have for their students. This ceremony is intended to impress upon our students the need to excel in their study of science, to love others and show compassion and to pursue their profession with diligence and integrity.”

The 2022 ceremony included a prayer of blessing led by Associate Professor of Biology Dr. Rachel Scott and the presentation of the honorees and their white coats by department faculty and the 2021 white coat members.

The 2022 White Coat Class is listed below with their major:

- **Taylor Collins** — Associate of Arts General Education-Science
- **Jeremiah Sanchez** — Bachelor of Science in Biology
- **Austin Teal** — Bachelor of Science in Biology

CBC Math and Science Department faculty include Math and Science Department Chair and Professor of Science Judy Gabbard, Natural and Social Sciences Division Chair and Professor of Chemistry Dr. Elizabeth Gomez, Associate Professor of Biology Dr. Rachel Scott and Associate Professor of Biology Dr. Mi-Seon Seong.

From the Math and Science Department, CBC offers the following bachelor's degrees: Bachelor of Arts in Biology, Bachelor of Science in Biology, Bachelor of Science in Health Sciences, Bachelor of Science in Molecular Biosciences. Additionally, minors are offered in Biology, Chemistry, Math and Science. To learn more about the Math and Science Department at Central Baptist College visit cbc.edu or contact CBC Admissions at admissions@cbc.edu or (501) 329-6873.

Students Honored at Academic Awards Ceremony

CBC students were honored at the Academic Awards Ceremony held on Friday, April 22nd in the Burgess Auditorium.

The Bible Department gave one award during the ceremony. **Macy McKissack** was given the Jesse Thomas Christian Service Award for Outstanding Achievement in Christian Ministry.

The Business Department also gave out one award. This year **Keeley Bulza** was presented the Outstanding Graduate Award.

The Literature and Language Arts

Department presented two awards. The Outstanding Student in English was presented to **Philip Fulmer**, and the Outstanding Student in Spanish was **Laura Wilson**.

The Communications Department presented the Outstanding Student in Oral Communication Award to **Danny Walker** and the Outstanding Student in Communication Award went to **Mallory Guyton**, while also presenting awards to their Tower Media Leadership.

The Math and Science Department

presented three awards. The Outstanding Student in Mathematics Award was presented to **Lena Srdanov**, and Outstanding Graduate Awards were presented to **Madelyn Jameson** and **Lena Srdanov**.

The Kinesiology Department presented the Kinesiology Award to **Andrew Montoya**.

The Music and Fine Arts Department presented several awards. **Alejandro Mendoza**, **Julian Lilley** and **Jeremiah Dodson** for being selected in Arkansas Collegiate Band, and **Alison Mantooth** and **AJ Woodraska** for winning first place in their divisions at the National Association of Teachers of Singing.

Students on the Dean's List and President's List from the fall 2021 were also recognized.



Volleyball

• **Conway, April 26** — CBC Athletic Director Lyle Middleton has announced the hiring of **Rick Brown** to take



over the reins of the Mustang volleyball program. Brown becomes the eighth head coach of the program since joining the NAIA in 2010. Brown succeeds Stephanie Irwin, who left in November after three seasons at the helm. He inherits a team that went 11-16 and 4-5 in the AMC, making it to the conference tournament for the second year in a row. Five Mustangs were named to the all-conference teams last season as well.

Coach Brown comes to CBC from Midwestern State University, an NCAA Division II school in Texas, where he served as an assistant during the 2021 season. He was also the lead recruiter for MSU in his only season as an assistant for the Mustangs. Prior to his arrival at MSU, he had been an assistant at McCook Community College in Nebraska. He has also spent time at the High School level in Arizona and at Eastern Wyoming College as an assistant as well. Brown graduated from Northern Arizona University with his BS in Business Administration with an emphasis in Computer Information Systems. He is married to Michelle and the couple has two children — Carli and Dawson.

Track & Field

• **Little Rock, April 16** — **Ally Swaim** made history again as CBC competed at the Little Rock Twilight Meet at the Coleman Sports Complex. Swaim won the 100-meter hurdles with a time of 14.58 to qualify for the NAIA Outdoor National Championship with a “B” standard qualifying time, just .03 off the “A” standard time.

Baseball

• **Conway, April 16** — **Devon**



Student Ministry Matters

Phone: (479) 790-7808
bmayouthdepartment@gmail.com
www.StudentMinistryMatters.com



Dan Carson
Director BMA of Arkansas Youth Department
1410 North Porter Rd. • Fayetteville, AR 72703

Is God Still Calling?

At the recent BMA of America National Meeting in Springfield, Mo., BMAA President Dr. Cliff Johnson ended his message by having the ministers over the age of 65 stand and move to the center aisle. He then invited ministers under that age to move in and allow the older men to pray over the younger ones. It was a powerful thing as Larry Hendren prayed over me. I was so glad that I went to the meeting. However, as the age lines were drawn, it was apparent that those 65 and up clearly outnumbered those below that age bracket. I believe that if that number had been moved to 60, 55 or even 50, the numbers would have been even more dramatic. With a visual like that, it got me thinking. Is God still calling men to preach?



I want to believe that God is still calling young men to preach and pastor His churches. The numbers at the meeting don't seem to indicate that, but not everyone can attend a meeting in the middle of the week. For the bi-vocational and part-time pastor, a meeting far from home is an impossibility, so I remain hopeful that God is calling young men and we just aren't getting an opportunity to meet them because of logistics.

What can we, as student ministry workers, do about this apparent deficit in the next generation of pastors and servants? There are a few things we should all embrace as we watch for our pulpits and staff positions to be filled in the coming years:

• **Pray for God to call more.** Matthew 9:38 (ESV) says, “Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.” We should be praying in general for young men to be called, but we should also pray specifically for the students in our ministries. Pray that God will shape and mold them into the next generation of kingdom servants.

• **Speak into students' lives.** I remember a recent podcast interview with Dave Vandergriff of Lufkin, Texas about his experience with Jim Courtney. As the former head of the Music Department at Central Baptist College, Bro. Courtney influenced many lives. One day, he simply asked Dave if he had considered a life of ministry. The rest is history. Dave has had two long-term successful ministries after graduating from Central Baptist College in 1994. We don't want to be, and can't be, the Holy Spirit in students' lives; but we can ask the question of those we see God working in. Ask the questions.

• **Honor those in ministry.** We never want to sugarcoat what it is like to be in the ministry, but we also don't want students and potential servants to be turned away from ministry because of the way we treat our pastor. Love your pastor well. Encourage him. Care for his family. Don't let your actions push away those considering God's call on their lives.

Is there a quick answer to this problem? No, but we can take small steps. God is still calling. Let Him use us in that process.

Koonce made history for CBC as the Mustangs wrapped up their American Midwest Conference (AMC) series with the Spartans of Missouri Baptist University (MBU). Koonce fired the fourth no-hitter in program history and the first since 2018 in CBC (21-20, 6-9 AMC)'s 12-2 win over MBU (17-17, 10-5 AMC). Koonce's no-hitter was the third solo no-hitter and the fourth no-hitter total in the Mustangs' baseball history.

• **Paragould, April 26** — Beginning a five-game road trip to end the regular season, CBC was at Pioneer Park to take on the Pioneers of Crowley's Ridge College. CBC (24-24) got their offense rolling in game one, losing on a walk-off 12-11 before the offense went quiet in

game two in a 5-2 loss to CRC (18-24).

• **Columbia, Mo., April 29** — Opening their final regular-season AMC series, CBC took on the Cougars of Columbia College (CC) at Battle High School. CBC (24-26, 9-11 AMC) was swept by Columbia (35-9, 15-5 AMC) by scores of 9-3 and 11-0.

• **Columbia, Mo., April 30** — Looking to end the regular season on a high note, CBC wrapped up their series with the Cougars of Columbia College (CC) at Battle High School. CBC (25-26, 10-11 AMC) took an early lead and never relinquished it, getting clutch hitting late to win 9-7 over CC (35-10, 15-6 AMC).

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LARRY BARKER, Director of Operations North America
BMA of America Missions Department
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Leading Inside Out

In a culture full of celebrity preachers, comparisons and competition, what should biblical leadership look like in the local church? Having charisma and competency has trumped character in far too many ministries. In following Jesus, it is first “who” you

know, not “what” you know you. Being driven by being “successful” more than being faithful has caused untold casualties. There is no perfect pastor, nor does anyone have the ability to leap over small buildings in a single bound. Remember, God is

omni-everything and you are omni-nothing. That is why in John 15:5 Jesus said “without Me you can do nothing.”

In God’s vision to Ezekiel, He commands him on what he should say to the people. Then He reminds the prophet of this truth in Ezek. 3:7 (HCSB): “But the house of Israel will not want to listen to you because they do not want to listen to Me.” The truth will not always be well received, but do not succumb to thinking that you are the only one teaching and speaking the truth. Also, if you are not careful, your message can be the correct message but be delivered in the wrong way. Yes, we are always to speak the truth, but we are to speak that truth in love. The Colson Center states it well, “Outrage is not a strategy!”

In *How to Lead and Still Have a Life*, H. Dale Burke says: “Therefore, any wise approach to leadership must begin with the heart of the leader. Life is always lived from the inside out.” Solomon said it this way: “Guard your heart above all else, for it is the source of life.” Paul challenges us in II Cor. 10: 5: “taking every thought captive to obey Christ.” Leadership is first a matter of the heart. If we begin thinking wrong, before too long, we will begin believing wrong. If we begin believing wrong, it will not be long before we are acting wrong. Character and spirituality are far more important than charisma and competency.

The inner life of the leader is summarized by H. Dale Burke with four V’s: **voice, vision, values**, and he states, “these three elements need to be lived out in the context of the **vital relationships** in your life.” You are called to protect and promote the vital relationships around you by loving God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind. How is your relationship with Him? Then we are told to love our neighbors as ourselves.

How are your relationships with those around you that God has called you to lead? What needs to be done to improve and restore those relationships?

Begin with making sure you are hearing God’s voice and direction in your leadership. You must decide who

will be the loudest voice in your life. How will you make sure you are hearing His voice and being directed by His instructions? Every time you read God’s Word He is speaking to you, so start there. Make sure you are practicing silence, solitude and

slowing down in His presence. Silence is not passive but rather it is proactive listening. God often speaks His loudest when we are our quietest. H. Dale Burke suggests, “Don’t expect Him to shout above the noise of your busy world. Learn to be quiet with Him.”

Then focus on values, core values. That is not what you are going to do but how you plan on doing it. These are the deep convictions from God’s Word and direction in your life that are non-negotiable. These core values are what caused the three Hebrew children to declare that they would never bow down to his golden image, even if God did not deliver them. Core values are consistent (they rarely change), passionate (they generate emotion and energy), biblical (they are rooted in Scripture) and distinctive (they reflect God’s unique assignment for you). They direct you in knowing what should never change and what should.

H. Dale Burke says this about core values: “These are your guidelines on **how you do business**. You base them on your convictions (which, in turn, are based on the truth of God’s Word) and adhere to them regardless of whether they help or hurt you.” In *What Are Ministry Values?*, Steve Ogne wrote: “Firmly rooted values protect the church from every strong opinion or dominant personality that tries to shape the church. Strong values keep the church from being taken off course by every fad or new program that comes along.”

Now you need a clear and compelling vision by knowing where you are headed and what you believe to be God’s preferred future for you and your ministry. Vision is not where you want to be in three to five years but instead, where does God want you to be in three to five years. H. Dale Burke says: “And (the vision) is anchored in eternal principles that are

God looks into the heart



1 SAMUEL 16:7

SPORTS

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Softball

• **Conway, April 16** — Playing a non-conference opponent for the final time this season, CBC hosted the Royals of Ecclesia College at City of Colleges Park. CBC (17-15) took care of business, sweeping Ecclesia (8-25) by scores of 6-4 and 10-3 in the doubleheader.

• **Conway, April 16** — Looking to begin their final 10 games of the season against on a high note, CBC hosted the Eagles of Williams Baptist University (WBU) at City of Colleges Park. CBC (19-15, 7-3 AMC) won in walk-off fashion twice, beating WBU (14-24, 2-10 AMC) 5-4 in nine innings in game one and 8-0 in a run-rule in game two.

• **Conway, April 26** — After finishing the regular season, CBC had to sit and wait to find out where they would be seeded in the upcoming AMC Tournament, which will take place May 3-7 at the Antimi Softball Complex in Columbia, Mo. CBC earned the #3 seed in the tournament, their highest seed since they were #4 in 2018.

just as true and relevant today as they were 100 years or 1,000 years ago.” Here is a big part of a God-vision — becoming more and more like Jesus every day. Inside-out leadership demands that we are being conformed and transformed by the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Leading inside out demands that we are hearing God’s voice, have established unchanging core values, are being led by a clear vision of where God desires us to be and they are all functioning in healthy vital relationships. H. Dale Burke defines a compelling vision for this as “The divine portrait of me, the servant-leader, transformed into the person the Master wants me to be.” What does God want you and your ministry to look like when you cross the finish line? To be able to say as the apostle Paul did in II Tim. 4:7, “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.” Leading inside out!

HOMECOMINGS

141st Homecoming at Bluff Springs in Rosston, May 15, 10:30 a.m.; Travis Dillard (devotional); Stan Harris (message); lunch and singing to follow; Donnie Dillard, pastor.

Union, Rosston, May 22, 10:30 a.m.; Shawn Drewett (message); Joe Brown, pastor.

164th Homecoming at Center Grove in Cord, June 12, 10:30 a.m.; Jeff Herring (message); lunch and singing to follow; Barry Anderson, pastor.

Bodcaw, Bodcaw, July 24, 10:30 a.m.; John Ed Dorman (devotional); Tim Vines (message); potluck lunch and singing; Lane Garner, pastor.

Just Thinking...

By Dr. Tom Mitchell

(501) 804-6647 • temitchell1946@gmail.com



Nothing Surprises God!

This past Sunday, I was honored to preach at Shady Grove Baptist Church at Prescott. My message focused on the fact that God is always in control. It’s really a good idea for the preacher to preach to himself! As I pondered the message, I was just thinking how nothing surprises God! I knew that, but sometimes it is good to be reminded of things we already know.

Because God is sovereign, there is no one and no thing above Him. Because of His divine characteristics of omnipotence, omnipresence and omniscience, He has power over everything. He is ever-present with everything, and — here’s the real eye-opener — He is ever aware of every circumstance, whether it has to do with nature, nations or individuals.

• **Calamity doesn’t surprise God.** Often when I read of or watch on TV the report of terrible storms wiping out entire subdivisions, I hurt for the families and communities. Invariably, someone will say, “Why didn’t God stop this?” or “Why did God allow this to happen?” Such a response is due to anger and despair. But then a family being interviewed may say, “We lost everything, but God spared our lives.” And then they go on to say, “We are so glad God was in control.” Calamity is awful, but how uplifting it is to hear those affected publicly express the goodness of the God who is always in control, knowing that He was in no way surprised when the storms occurred.

• **Conflict doesn’t surprise God.** “Why do we have to have wars?” is another question that is often heard. The intellectual may think that after all these years on earth mankind ought to be able to live in harmony, no matter the nation of focus. Some actually thought Russia and its penchant for war was no longer a threat. People were actually surprised at how that nation has risen to the forefront of troublemaking again. But, my friends, God was not!

Rest assured, God is still in control! From the earliest of times, nations have risen against other nations and wars have raged throughout history. The Bible even tells us that in the last days there will be wars and even more rumors of wars. That in itself tells us that God is not surprised by what happens day to day, month to month, year to year or decade to decade. He is omniscient. He already knows, and He is in control!

• **Change doesn’t surprise God.** At my age, I have seen so much change, not just in the U.S. but all around the world. We see changes in medicine, education, home life, communities and definitely in morals. The attire of people in public has changed dramatically in my lifetime.

The judicial system has changed. The attitude toward substance abuse has changed. Even the perspective about when life begins and gender identity has changed. I mentioned education previously. Education is one of the most important aspects of life in our country and around the globe, but it can also be lacking. God’s Word says of the attitudes of the last days that people will be “always learning but never able to acknowledge the truth” (II Tim. 3:7).

I’ll admit that, as a human, I wrestle with how things have changed. I am surprised that things have actually gotten worse rather than better. But God is not surprised! He said these things would come to pass. That’s because He is omniscient.

• **Criticism doesn’t surprise God.** We live in a time where people blatantly criticize a belief in a divine Creator. Not only do they criticize our belief, but they criticize the God in Whom they do not even believe. But we should not be surprised. Even when our Lord walked this earth He did so amid calamity, conflict, change and definitely criticism. Jesus was continually criticized by the Pharisees. They especially attacked His teaching, considering Him to be delusional.

We should not be surprised in 2022 that believers will fall prey to criticism by not just those who do not believe, but also by those who profess to be believers. Paul wrote to Titus, “In all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, with purity in doctrine, dignified, sound in speech which is beyond reproach, so that the opponent will be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us” (Titus 2:7-8).

We may be surprised by all that is occurring around the world, but our Sovereign God is not. He is always aware, and He’s always in control — of nature, of nations, of humanity and destiny. We serve an awesome God!

I leave you with this — what God plans, He purposes; what He purposes, He performs. “The Lord has sworn ‘Surely, as I have planned, so will it be, and as I have purposed, so it will stand’” (Isa. 14:27). Because He is the Sovereign Lord, He can plan, purpose and perform whatever He wants, however He wants, wherever He wants and whenever He wants. He is God... and there is no one else!

MESSAGE

(Continued From Page 1)

question that could ever have been asked? “Can these bones live again?” But wait again, God makes the vision even stranger. When Ezekiel is commanded by God to preach to these bones. God said to His preacher, in the most hopeless situation ever envisioned, “**Preach the Word!**”

• **God wants the man of God to see the true state of humankind.** Why would God give Ezekiel such a gruesome, bone-chilling vision? Ezekiel grew up in a priestly home, where, he had been preparing his whole life to someday serve in the temple at Jerusalem. What a great honor, but it would never come to fruition. Because of Judah’s continued idolatry and disobedience, Jeremiah’s prophecy that the people of Judah would go into exile became a reality. God moved King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon to send an army to Jerusalem to capture the city, remove Israel’s king and set up his own leader. He then brought about 11,000 Jews from royal and priestly families to Babylon, including young men like Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego.

While this was bad, there was still a small glimmer of hope that the remaining Jews would repent and turn back to God; but no, they continued and even brought false idols into God’s holy temple. Can you imagine having a worship service in your church building where a false god is worshiped along with Jesus Christ? This was appalling, so God moved King Nebuchadnezzar, to send a second siege to bring more judgment and take more Jews to Babylon, and a young priest, 25 years of age, named Ezekiel, is in this group.

In chapters 1-24, Ezekiel pled with God’s people in Babylon to put away their false gods and worship God alone. Even during judgment, they still refused to repent. King Nebuchadnezzar sent his army a third time to totally ransack Jerusalem. He destroyed the temple, burned the city, even plowed up the foundations, took a final group to Babylon and killed or scattered the remaining Jews. Jerusalem was a desolate, dead place in which all hope was gone. Ezekiel would never return and never serve in the temple.

Now understand what is going on here — Israel has been removed from the Promised Land, and they are in the process of being assimilated into Babylon. This meant Israel was about to be no more — extinct, cease to exist.

In chapters 25-32, Ezekiel warned other nations that because of their sin, they were also going to be destroyed and assimilated into Babylonian life. Today, many of those nations no longer exist. This could have been the extinction of Israel. Like the dinosaurs, only bones and skeletons were left to give any indication they ever existed.

It was in this setting, that God gave Ezekiel the vision of the Valley of Dry Bones. But why? Why would God give the priestly prophet such a disturbing, hopeless vision? Weren’t things bad

enough without God adding more misery? Vance Havner once said, “The tragedy of today is that the situation is desperate, but the saints are not.”

Has anybody been to a gas station lately? We are living in a time when hope is at an all-time low. For over two years, world leaders and media outlets have been promoting fear as I have never seen in my lifetime. We have Washington D.C., the CDC, Wall Street, the World Health Organization, the UN and the world’s leading scientist, Dr. Fauci, telling us why we should be afraid.

We have seen riots, looting, crime, cities on fire, murder and inflation that has not been this high in over 40 years. People are wondering, “Are we on the brink of World War III?” And they keep telling us that it is only going to get worse.

At the 50th annual meeting of the World Economic Forum in June of 2020, important business and political leaders from around the world came up with a plan to rebuild the world after the COVID-19 pandemic. They call it the Great Reset and it is already being set in motion. They are telling us the Great Reset, this new world order, is our hope. But I say to you, the greatest pandemic of all pandemics is not COVID-19. The greatest pandemic known to humanity is **sin!**

Have you noticed all these podcasts and conferences on how to pastor post-COVID? How to get your people to come back? How to do church post COVID? It seems like I get another email every week on this popular subject. I will be honest, I have listened to a few of them, hoping for insight and help; because, let’s be honest, pastoring today is hard and it’s getting harder. Not one of the ones I have listened to has disturbed, challenged or commanded me to do what God told Ezekiel. But I declare to you tonight that this is the answer for post-COVID pastoring and preaching in 2022.

Years ago, some young men came to William Booth, the founder of the Salvation Army, and one of them asked him how could they best prepare for ministry. He replied, “If I had my choice, I wouldn’t send you to school, I’d send you to Hell for five minutes, and you’d come back real soul winners.”

That is not a bad idea, but it is not possible, and neither is it completely adequate. But the Lord has a **vision** that is both possible and completely adequate for God’s man and His people. In verses 1-10, we have the vision, and in verses 11-14 we have the interpretation of the vision. God said these dry bones are the whole house of Israel. While Israel said their bones were dried, hope was gone and they were cut off, God revealed to the prophet that He was going to restore Israel to her land physically someday and He was also going to make them spiritually alive someday. This was written to Israel, not the church or America.

While this vision is about Israel’s restoration, there are great truths taught in both the Old and New Testament that this vision powerfully illustrates for us today in these hopeless, desper-

ate times in which we are living.

• **God wants the man of God to know Him and to make Him known.** Three times in this passage, God declared, “*then you shall know I am the Lord.*” The fact that Israel still exists today should reveal to us that God is the one true God and Lord of all. There is nothing He cannot do, including restoring and returning a dead nation. When you think of all the people, leaders, nations and even a few religions that have vowed and tried to get rid of Israel, you just must know that God is what keeps them coming back.

Out of King Nebuchadnezzar’s Babylon, the book of Ezra reminds us how God returns and restores His remnant. Rome defeated and destroyed the temple in 70 AD. After about 2,000 years, and what seemed like out of nowhere, in 1948 Israel is recognized as a nation again. Hitler and all the religions have not stopped God’s plan. Only God could make this happen.

It should cause us to stop and ask, “Who is this God who preserves a rebellious people for His name’s sake on a promise He made to Abraham thousands of years ago?” This is the God who never lies and keeps His Word and covenant. God loves to make Himself known to His people. When God sent Moses to Israel to deliver them from Egypt, it was His purpose that they might know Him.

“*I will take you as My people, and I will be your God. Then you shall know that I am the Lord your God who brings you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians*” (Exod. 6:7). As odd as it may seem, we often come to know God the closest and most intimately when we are faced with challenging times, difficult people and difficult leaders and governments.

“*Then I will harden Pharaoh’s heart, so that he will pursue them; and I will gain honor over Pharaoh and over all his army, that the Egyptians may know that I am the Lord. And they did so*” (Exod. 14:4). God is not worried about the World Economic Forum and their Great Reset. He is going to let the entire world know He is Lord. This is a time when pastors and Christians need to come close to God and know Him like never before.

In the New Testament, Paul declared: “*that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death*” (Phil. 3:10). Some of you may be thinking about now, “I do not want to know Jesus quite that well.” But the Scriptures shout to us, “Oh yes, yes you do.” It is through suffering that our relationship with God becomes less formal, less artificial, less distant and becomes more personal, real and intimate. You have heard the A.W. Tozer quote, “It is doubtful whether God can bless a man greatly until he has hurt him deeply.” Why would a Christian man write something like that? Because it is in our hurt and suffering that we really come to know our Lord.

Early in my ministry, I was deeply hurt to the point I wanted to quit, but

something good came out of that experience. I came to know my Savior as I had never known Him before. That experience was a paradigm shift in how I would do ministry. Just last week, 40 years after that experience, I was talking with one of my staff members and explaining to him why I do ministry the way I do. Jesus sent me through that storm to know Him and change me.

One of my pastor friends told me, “COVID has killed my ministry.” I did not know what to tell him. As we ate, I prayed for God to give me something to encourage my brother in the Lord. The Lord reminded me of how through suffering we come to know Jesus more intimately in the power of His resurrection. So, I said to him, “Let it die, and know Jesus is the resurrection. Thank God for COVID-19, the master gardener has pruned the dead weight, now let Him regrow and rebuild, because that is His specialty.” Friends, there is no substitute for knowing the Lord.

• **God wants you to preach to spiritually dead people.** I laughed when I read where Dr. Vance Havner said that “occasionally he would preach in a church where the look on the faces of the people would curdle milk.” Preaching to dry dead bones seems absurd, but the picture God has painted for us here is important to remember. People are dead in sins and trespasses! Sometimes it would seem easier to preach to dead bones than deal with the craziness of real people.

These bones were not the worst crowd Ezekiel had ever preached to before — “*And He said to me: ‘Son of man, I am sending you to the children of Israel, to a rebellious nation that has rebelled against Me; they and their fa-*

thers have transgressed against Me to this very day. For they are impudent and stubborn children” (Ezek. 2:3-4). These dry dead bones are a dreadful picture of the human condition. I would like to remind you that a person without Christ — a person who lives their life separated from God — is in a hopeless state. Sure, they may look like they have everything going for them; but without Christ, they are not living, they are only existing. Paul told us in Eph. 2:1, “*And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins.*” Sin has not caused people to be a little sick. They are spiritually dead.

Dry bones and real people have no spiritual ambition. They do not seek after God. Dry bones and real people have no spiritual awareness. They do not even know they need to be saved. God set Ezekiel down in a dreadful place — right there among the dead, dry bones. Stop looking for perfect people and the perfect place and preach to dry, dead bones.

• **God wants the man of God to preach as commanded.** The Lord qualified what Ezekiel is to preach. He did not get to just get up and speak whatever he wanted or take up some agenda or personal crusade. He was to preach the Word of the Lord as commanded. Twelve times in four diverse ways, the Lord qualified what Ezekiel was to preach. He was to preach, “*Thus saith the Lord,*” “*preach what I have commanded you.*” He was to “*say to them*” and “*I have spoken.*” It is noticeably clear that God did not want Ezekiel to stray from His Word.

I want to tell you one of the most disappointing things that came out of COVID-19 for me. All my life, I have

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JEFF HERRING, Executive Editor
editor@baptisttrumpet.com

P.O. Box 192208 • Little Rock, Arkansas 72219-2208
Telephone (501) 565-4601 • Fax Line (501) 565-NEWS
(Note: An answering machine on the 565-4601 line will take messages after regular working hours — Monday-Thursday)
www.baptisttrumpet.com

ALLAN EAKIN, Associate Editor
associateeditor@baptisttrumpet.com
(mailing list changes & billing inquiries)

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Mickeal & Sharon Quillman • Zambia

The past month has been a whirlwind — the past year actually. This journey started in June of 2021, but we didn't really start traveling to fundraise until November. We got three visits in before the holidays shut us down. Since then, we have visited 24 churches in 17 weeks and spent 4 more weeks in Africa.

This past week, however, was the most packed week we've had. We loaded the vehicle and set off for the national meeting in Springfield, Mo. after Easter services at our home church. (This was the first weekend we've gotten to be back at Temple in many weeks, and it was refreshing to spend such an important day with family and friends.) The weather turned off on the cool side for our trip to Springfield, but, with the air conditioning out in the SUV, we weren't complaining one bit. We spent three days standing at our table meeting so many new people and passing out our prayer cards. It was such a wonderful time of fellowship and making great connections. We loved getting to put personalities to these new Facebook friends we had made.

On Wednesday, we were commissioned by the BMA to officially serve in Zambia as missionaries. Seeing all the missionaries, current and former, who joined us on stage to pray over us as we begin our journey was awe-inspiring.

We spent an extra night in Springfield before we started our trek to our next weekend of churches in Livingston and Port Arthur, Texas. The road was long, and we took our time. It was a good chance for us to spend time together as a couple, husband and wife, best friends. It was time we needed to talk and sing old crazy songs to each other. Since we weren't in a hurry, we detoured and spent the night in the speaker's quarters at Daniel Springs Baptist Camp in Gary, Texas. We drove on down to the ocean and walked the beach before heading back up to Livingston for Sunday morning. We had the opportunity to stay in the house of Tanta, a new and dear friend, and it was such a wonderful relaxing place. She really outdid herself in her hospitality, and she and Lilly (her precious pup) will always be in our hearts.

As we type this, we are on our way back to Jonesboro to jump back into the craziness of life. We can't help but reflect on all the wonderful, amazing people we have met on this journey. People who have prayed for us, loved on us, spoiled us and supported us — people that we never would have met had it not been for this whirlwind. We thank God for these people. We know that without each and every one of you, we couldn't do what it is that God is calling us to.

When it comes to missions, we all have a role. For some of us, God calls us to go to a place we never thought we would go, leaving behind loved ones and all the "stuff." God has called some of us to pray for those called to go, so we encourage you to pray fervently. We all need it. God calls some of us to financially support the ones who are called to go. Again, we encourage you to support whom God has laid on your heart to give to. Some of us are called to encourage those God has called to go. Don't hesitate to send them a note, text, call or message giving them the encouraging words God has shown you to give. We so enjoy getting those messages, even when we can't respond immediately, they mean so much.

We all have a role — what's yours? Pray about your role in the Great Commission and get involved. Whether you are called to open your home for missionaries to sleep in like Tanta, write an encouraging letter to a missionary on the field or join in the monthly financial support of a missionary — there are no insignificant roles for the kingdom as we fulfill the Great Commission. (pastorquill@gmail.com)

Stan & Donna Scroggins • The Philippines

Darlene Carey Christian Academy — In June, the building will be officially completed and dedicated. When I was a little seven-year-old boy, I knew of the WMA (Women's Missionary Auxillary) as "those ladies who brought cookies to our Sunbeam group on Sunday nights." As a local church minister for over 42 years, I knew the WMA as "the go-to mission group in our church." The old saying in local churches was "If you need something done, call the WMA." As a missionary in the Philippines, I know them as "dream fulfillers!"

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MESSAGE

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had exceedingly high respect and regard for medical and science professionals like Dr. Fauci. When they would say, "this is the science, here is what you need to do," I just believed them. I believed what they were saying was true and in my best interest. COVID-19 has changed that for me. I believe some in the medical world have been corrupted by politics and money. That makes me sad, because I want to trust them. Men, we need to make sure we are preaching "thus saith the Lord," and not second opinion chapter two according to me. People trust us, but more importantly, God has entrusted us with His Word.

Paul, writing to the Corinthians, said, "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ" (II Cor. 10:3-5). Our world is gripped in strongholds that are being held there by lies. The only thing that is going to set them free is God's Word. A few weeks ago, the president of the United States stood before our nation on national television and told a huge fable, which does not follow the Word of God or science. You can outwardly see the difference between a man and a woman. It is obvious to all; science bears it out physically. But not only that, scientists have known for years about the DNA of people. They know a proven truth, proven science that all the surgeries, hormone treatments and whatever will not change a person's DNA. But because of their own desires, they turn away from the truth and accept this made-up fable. They want us to accept this fable and play along with it like it is true; and if we do not, we are the ones being called bad and evil.

Christian, you are going to have to make up your mind. Are you going to mislead people in order to be accepted and politically correct, or are you going to tell them the truth and be hated? A person cannot be saved until they first understand that they are a sinner and need a Savior. We need to make the gospel clear and plain. Jesus lived, died on the cross to pay for our sins, rose from the dead and whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life. All His Word is true above man's opinions.

• **God wants the man of God to pray in the Spirit as commanded.** God commanded Ezekiel to prophesy or we would say, pray unto the wind. Ten times in this passage, the Hebrew word "ruach" is used; it is translated spirit, breath or wind. But it is the same Hebrew word — "ruach."

In Ezekiel's vision, he preached the Word, the bones heard the Word of the Lord and there was this rattling as those bones began to come together. Then muscle and flesh appeared. They now had bodies, but they were not breathing.

God commanded Ezekiel to pray

to the wind, spirit and breath so God's breath would enter these bodies. What a picture God paints for us here! They are quickened — made alive — as Paul said in Eph. 2:5: "Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, by grace ye are saved." Preaching does not work without prayer. God never intended for us to preach without prayer. If preaching was just giving information about God or the Bible, it would not require much prayer. Sermons are not meant merely to give information, but to transform. Sermon content alone cannot do this. We need God to set our messages on fire with the Holy Spirit.

Pastors, I did not hear this in any podcast or conference on how to come back from COVID-19, but every pastor must learn that there is a secret, silent, sacred place every preacher must hide away and confess our utter helplessness without God. If you were to raise the lid on my pulpit in Waxahachie Texas, there is a scripture printed and taped inside the pulpit. When we moved into our new building eight years ago, the first thing I did was make sure this scripture was put in place to always remind me. The movers were there and said, why don't you stand behind the pulpit and see how you look. I know they thought I was crazy, but I said, "No sir, not until this scripture is in place." What scripture am I talking about?

"I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing" (John 15:5). Someone said, "The hope of our preaching is for God to do what we cannot." Brothers, we must fight for our prayer lives. I wish I could stand here and tell you I do this so well, but I do not. But I know this, our Father delights to speak through prayerful preaching.

There is an old hymn written by George Atkins that explains it well: "Brethren, we have met to worship and adore the Lord our God; Will you pray with all your power, while we try to preach the Word? All is vain unless the Spirit of the Holy One comes down; Brethren, pray and holy manna will be showered all around."

Know this, there is no hope unless the wind, spirit and breath of God is blowing. But if you ask, seek and knock, it will be given, answered and opened.

Now, I have purposely saved Ezekiel's response to God's question for last.

• **God wants the man of God fully convinced that God is our only hope.** When God asked Ezekiel "can these bones live," he replied, "O Lord God, you know." Ezekiel did not presume upon God; neither did he doubt God's ability. Instead, he put the ball back in God's court.

In the gospels, Jesus had been healing and doing all kinds of miracles right before the disciples' eyes. A multitude had gathered. Jesus had preached. They had been there a while and their stomachs were growling. The disciples come to Jesus and said, "send the people away" because they are getting hungry. But Jesus said, "you give them something to eat." Jesus was testing them to see

if they would look to Him to provide the meal, but they did not.

Will the Lord test us? I believe He does, and I believe He will test every single one of us, not just once, but repeatedly. How would you answer this question brought to Ezekiel in a hopeless situation, or to the disciples, or after a pandemic? Did you know there are more than enough promises in both the Old and New Testament that we can stand with great confidence and preach the powerful Word?

There is nothing in this Book that says God's Spirit cannot or will not do a great work. It does not depend upon your age, your degrees or if COVID-19 is raging all around us. We cannot breathe love into marriages, health into bodies, obedience into children, passion into churches or morality into society any more than Ezekiel could breathe life into those dead bones. But he was convinced, with all his being, that God's Word, with God's Spirit, preached in obedience to God's command, can raise the dead and do what God wants done.

The nation of Israel is not going away, God will make sure of it. That should give us great confidence in the Word of the Lord. Preach the Word because we serve a God Who can rebuild, restore and resurrect. This is no time to quit. This is the time to recommit and rededicate to preach the Word. God has chosen us to preach His Word in one of the most hopeless times in the history of the world. God has commanded us and, whether we believe it or not, preaching the powerful Word of the Lord is mankind's only hope. Preach the Word!

Revivals

Trinity, Stamps, May 7-9, 7 p.m.; Mon.-Cary Cox; Tues. — Randy Cox; Wed.-bubba Wells; James Cox, pastor.

Temple, Fordyce, May 8-11, 7 p.m.; special singing nightly; Jim Moss, evangelist; Lance Hollis, pastor.

Corinth, Rosston, May 9-11, 7 p.m.; Justin Rhymes, evangelist; Kenneth Ward, pastor.

Faustina, Hampton, May 15-18; 11 a.m. and 5 p.m. Sun.; 7 p.m. Mon.-Wed.; Dwayne Williams, evangelist; Gene Boyette, pastor.

Union, Rosston, May 23-25, 7 p.m.; Mitch Dulaney, evangelist; Joe Brown, pastor.

Bodcaw, Bodcaw, July 25-29, 7:00 p.m.; Jimmy Walker, evangelist; Lane Garner, pastor.

Landmark, England, Aug. 14-17, 6 p.m. Sunday, 7 p.m. Mon.-Wed.; Master's Voice (in concert); Ricky Capps, evangelist; David Inzer, pastor.

DISTRICT CALENDAR

Greenbrier District Men's Fellowship, May 21, 8 a.m.; Mt. Olive, Guy.



The Location of The Antichrist's Empire (Part 5)

The evidence has been heard and it's consistent. Shouldn't that be what we expect from the Bible — consistency? From the Law, the Prophets, the Poets and the New Testament, the location of this final empire is the same. All Scriptural evidence points to modern-day Turkey and a revival of the former Ottoman Empire which was the Islamic Caliphate or Islamic State.

From descriptions of the Antichrist's Empire being a neighbor of Israel, north of Israel, and from the former Assyrian Empire to Ezekiel pinpointing it as Magog to John the Apostle in Revelation writing it would be the empire to hold Jerusalem after Rome, all tell the same narrative and pinpoint the same location.

Surely, the jury would be satisfied with the ample evidence, but there's still one other passage I'd like to enter into the argument.

Daniel chapter 8 may tell us the next prophetic event that will occur and reaffirms Turkey as the location of the capital of the Antichrist's Empire. In this chapter, Daniel receives a vision of a goat and ram, then the angel Gabriel comes and interprets the dream for Daniel. The vision deals with two nations rising and going to war. One nation prevails and from it eventually comes the King that would war with the Prince of Peace. The Prince of Peace is the Messiah — Jesus. Therefore, the King to war with Him must be the Antichrist. There are also other clues within the passage that point to this King being the Antichrist. Clues like the ending of the sacrifice, him coming against the Beautiful Land (Israel), and this King's rise matches the Antichrist's rise from Daniel 7, Daniel 11 and Revelation 17.

Therefore, if this King is the Antichrist, then the location he comes from within the vision would identify the location of the Antichrist's empire. In the vision, the Antichrist comes from the "Goat Kingdom" which is typically translated in English versions as Greece, but the original word is Javan. According to the passage, Javan is the location of the final empire.

"The two-horned ram that you saw represents the kings of Media and Persia.

The shaggy goat is the king of Greece, and the large horn between its eyes is the first king" (Dan. 8:20-21 NIV).

Notice the NIV translates Javan as Greece. All major English versions do this. The exceptions are the Literal Standard Version (LSV) and Young's Literal Translation (YLT) which keep Javan.

"And the young male goat, the hairy one, is the king of Javan; and the great horn that is between its eyes is the first king" (Dan. 8:21 LSV).

The LSV and YLT keep the translation Javan because that matches the same method of interpretation as done in the previous verse. Media and Persia actually appear in the original Hebrew, while in Daniel 8:21 Javan appears in the Hebrew not the word Greece.

The argument made in commentaries is that Javan was the Hebrew word for Greece, but that's not necessarily true. The word Javan was likely used to speak of peoples in western Asia Minor, which is modern-day Turkey to eastern Greece, even the Macedonian region. According to the *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible*, Javan is linguistically associated with Ionia, a region in westernmost Asia Minor that was colonized by Greeks, so, by extension, Javan came to be applied to Greece itself.

It seems the original location for this name was western Asia Minor, modern-day Turkey. John Calvin wrote, "By the word 'Javan' the Hebrews designate not only the Greeks but the Macedonians, and the whole of that tract which is divided by the Hellespont, from Asia Minor as far as Illyricum."

The assumption that Daniel would intend on this being Alexander's Empire is built on the passage being interpreted as purely historical. Yet, twice in the passage, Gabriel says that this will happen at a later time possibly signaling the end of the age. Regardless of that debate, this is one more passage pointing to modern-day Turkey as the location of the Antichrist's Empire. The evidence seems conclusive.

The location of the Antichrist will be modern-day Turkey and there will be a revival of the Ottoman Empire. That's good to know, but why did I

PREACH

(Continued From Page 1)

in on how you pray for your church members. Answer the questions you once had as a young pastor. In other words, pour your ministry into them.

Younger guys, don't make it a habit of always being around younger guys. When you go to national meetings, find older men to talk with and learn from. Find them in your local association or find them online and ask them the questions you want to be answered.

• Study the Christian Worldview.

(Defined as the framework from which we view reality and make sense of life and the world as a Christian individual, group or culture.) In addition to continuing to study the craft of preaching, preachers also need to know what the Christian worldview is and how the Christian worldview is to interact with the world in which it finds itself. Church members not only need to know the Word of God, but they also need a clear understanding of the world of God that is under the course of sin.

• Use a preaching survey. One practical way to get a gauge on your preaching and know how to improve is to hand out a survey to a few people in the church. Questions on the survey could be as simple as a rating system that asks if your main points were made clear, if the illustrations were helpful, if the application was relevant, etc.

Men, the time is now. The task is clear, but the task is not easy. It requires work, prayer and holy sweat. Let's get to it. Preach the Word!

spend five articles on the subject? I did so because it's there in Scripture. The Lord guided His prophets and the Biblical writers to talk about this last empire in detail, therefore, we should take notice and be prepared.

If we're watching for the fulfillment of these prophecies, then Turkey should be the focal point with the Middle Eastern Muslim world in tow. We should be watching for a renewed desire and surge of action to spread Islam and form an Islamic State. This surge would look much like the Arab Spring in 2011 and its current repercussions or maybe even more like the dream of Turkey's President Erdogan to reinstate the Ottoman Empire in 2023.

Jake is available for revivals and preaching learn more at standfirmministries.com



Kelly Dwayne Payton, 45 of Jonesboro, passed away April 28. He was a member of Prospect Baptist Church.

James Thompson, 86 of Magnolia, passed away April 25. He was a member of College View Baptist Church.

Wanda Louise Rhodes Dillard, 82 of Rosston, passed away April 24. She was a member of First Baptist Church.

Simon Schell, III, 83 of Marvell, passed away April 19. He was a member of Calvary Baptist Church.

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<i>Term to Expire 2023</i>	<i>Term to Expire in 2024</i>	<i>Term to Expire 2025</i>	
Will McGee (I.a.)	Devin DiGuilio (Ark.)	Katie Holliman (Texas)	
Clayton Edgar (Okla.)	Charlotte Johnson (Texas)	Frank Escamilla (Texas)	
Diana Morris (Texas)	John Gradberg (Texas)	Robert Murphy (Texas)	
<i>Term to Expire 2026</i>	<i>Term to Expire 2027</i>	<i>Term to Expire 2028</i>	
Nick Jacobsen (Ark.)	Pam Chavers (Texas)	Carissa Araujo (Texas)	
Noah Hill (Ark.)	Carissa Araujo (Texas)	Thomas Mobley (Okla.)	
Emilee Baker (Texas)			
Lifeworld			
<i>Term Ending 2023</i>	<i>Term Ending 2024</i>	<i>Term Ending 2025</i>	
Sancy Faulk (Ark.)	Marvin Delk (Ark.)	Melody Thompson (Texas)	
Dwayne Orr (Texas)	Michelle Corder (Ark.)	Rodney Burns (La.)	
Darrell Spigner (Ark.)	Winston Foster (Ark.)	Ross Burgess (Ark.)	
<i>Term to Expire 2026</i>	<i>Term to Expire 2027</i>	<i>Term to Expire 2028</i>	
Brad Weineke (Mo.)	Dr. David Martin (Ark.)	Steve Neal (Texas)	
Jeremy Riddle (Ark.)	Steve Neal (Texas)	Vicente Hernandez (Texas)	
Bryan Atwood (Miss.)			
BMA Foundation			
<i>Term Ending 2023</i>	<i>Term Ending 2024</i>	<i>Term Ending 2025</i>	
Robert L. Welborn (Miss.)	Van Widger (Mo.)	Judy Wallace (Ark.)	
Steve Martin (Ark.)		Pat McCown (Texas)	
<i>Term to Expire 2026</i>	<i>Term to Expire 2027</i>	<i>Term to Expire 2028</i>	
Marilyn Battles (Ark.)	Paul Jensen (Ark.)	Mike Baldwin (Ark.)	
<i>Term Ending 2023</i>	<i>Term Ending 2024</i>	<i>Term Ending 2025</i>	
Charlie Legg (Miss.)	David Ashby (Ark.)	Kenneth Lott (Miss.)	
Ed Ridge (Texas)	Eddie Ballard (Texas)	Dennis Clark (Okla.)	
<i>Term to Expire 2026</i>	<i>Term to Expire 2027</i>	<i>Term to Expire 2028</i>	
Jonathan Baird (Ark.)	Eric Goble (Ark.)	Brian Gunnels (Ark.)	
<i>Term Ending 2023</i>	<i>Term Ending 2024</i>	<i>Term Ending 2025</i>	
Linda Dertinger (Miss.)	Sidney Davis (Miss.)	Dan McGee (Mo.)	
John Smith (Colo.)	Randy Burk (Calif.)	Jerry Jolly (Ark.)	
<i>Term to Expire 2026</i>	<i>Term to Expire 2027</i>	<i>Term to Expire 2028</i>	
Andy Hawkins (Ark.)	Jerry Adams (Mo.)	Dennis Shell (Mo.)	
Nominating Committee			
<i>Term to Expire 2023</i>	<i>Term to Expire 2024</i>	<i>Term to Expire 2025</i>	
James Sprayberry (Miss.)	Frank Garrido (Calif.)	Thom South (Ark.)	
J.D. Courtney (Ark.)	Aaron Polok (Kan.)	Vernon Newman (Miss.)	
	Zach Roger (Miss.)		
Enrollment & Finance Committee			
Grant Barnett (Ark.) (Chairman)		Wes Hulvey (Ark.)	



BMA OF ARKANSAS
STATE MISSIONS

Missionaries

Michael Hight, Hispanic Coordinator; (501) 326-0198
 Ruben Isturiz, Misión Ebenezer, West Little Rock; (501) 707-5388
 Juan Carlos Posadas, Misión Creciendo en Cristo, NLR; (501) 712-8752
 Johnny Shew, Faith Chapel, Flippin; (870) 421-1984
 Clinton Morris, The Table, Springdale; (870) 316-1519
 Bryan Clay, Faith Journey, Benton/Saline County; (501) 522-0079
 Roberto Marcelletti, Northwest Arkansas; (936) 202-7988

Donna Webb, Administrative Asst.; (501) 565-4601
 E-Mail: bmaofarkfrontdesk@gmail.com
 Office Location: 10712 Interstate 30 • Little Rock, AR 72209
 Mailing Address: PO Box 195514, Little Rock, AR 72219
www.bmaARmissions.com

Facebook.com/ArkansasMissions



PAUL WHITE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
arstamis@comcast.net

On Mission

In John 5:1-7, we read the story of the man Jesus healed at the pool of Bethesda. I see in this incident in the life of Jesus a parallel to the great task of evangelism we encounter daily. First, I want to draw your attention to the fact that Jesus went (action word). The cripple did not come to Jesus, but Jesus went to him. An important fact that Webster tells us is that the word “went” is the same as “go.” As the command in Matt. 28:16 the disciples were gathered, and Jesus told them to go. In Greek, the word go means “as you are going.”

We do not know what feast Jesus went to observe and that is not important for His real reason for going was to illustrate what He had said in verse 24: “*Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.*”

I cannot explain what took place there, but it must have been extraordinary for the man to lay there for 38 years waiting patiently. No matter how you look at this miracle, it is an illustration of the grace of God. It was grace that brought Jesus there. Who would want to be around that crowd? In verse 3 of our text (the great multitudes), we see the human need, sickness, disease, brokenness and an inability to change their condition. Is it possible we have become so familiar with the command to do Missions that it has lost some of its meaning?

On a list 1-10, one being the most important, where would Missions be placed in your church? Better yet, on this same scale, where does Missions rank to you as an individual?

In verse 4, we see God’s provision that is the stirring of the waters by an angel of the Lord. Then in verse 7, we see the problem — there is no one to put the man into the pool after the waters have been stirred.

When I read this, one thing that jumps out at me is, “What happened to the people who got healed? Why didn’t they help the others?” When we look at this story in the light of these questions, you can see that it is illustrative of our present state of evangelism. Sadly, many who have received the gospel messages are like those who were able to get into the pool and receive healing. It seems that once they had been healed they left that place where so many were desperate and needy and failed to help them under the gospel message that they, too, might be saved.

There are two extremes of experiences in evangelism which are so prevalent in the church today. One is a lack of results leading to hesitancy, and two is self-satisfaction leading to self-absorption. I want to see us move to the place of seeing evangelism as just a natural part of living the Christ-life and not as a rigorous duty to be entertained. When I read the words of the crippled man, I cannot help but hear the cries of men, women, boys and girls across Arkansas, America and the world who are wandering in sin’s darkness.

I want to give you an example of what your support of Missions does hundreds of times a year. While serving as your missionary at Highland Hills, a member (Jo Ann McCann’s) mother came to live with her. JoAnn asks me if I would visit her mother. When I visited this kind and dear elderly lady and began to share the great love of Jesus and how He loved us so much to die in our place, the tears begin to run down her face. She looked me in the eye and said, “Bro. Paul, no one has ever told me that before.” She was well up in years and lost. She grew up with churches all around her and yet no one helped her to Jesus.

Friends, that breaks my heart for I know there are thousands just like her who are waiting, wanting, hoping that someday someone will help them right here in Arkansas. But praise God, because people like you and those that make up all our churches cared enough to send a missionary (me) to help this lady into the pool of God’s forgiveness. There is a church in Highland today that is still sending out the light — all because others cared enough to send someone.

There is no higher honor to be conferred upon the Christian and no greater privilege given to the believer in Jesus Christ than to be associated with Him in the great and blessed work of bringing a lost world to the knowledge of the truth. Truly this is being Christ-like — *“for the son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost”* (Luke 19:10).

From Our Missionaries

Misión Creciendo en Cristo (Growing in Christ), North Little Rock: Juan Carlos Posadas writes,

“On Monday, I met with German Rodriguez, who needed to hear the Word of God. After praying and reading the Word, German decided

to start the discipleship process. Pray that his commitment is real and that he will be established in faith.

“During the week, we were very busy preparing the building for the celebration of the first wedding in our congregation. In some discipleship meetings we decided to use the time to decorate the building.

“On Saturday at 3:30 p.m., we began the marriage ceremony between Oscar and Emelda, who decided to honor God with that step of obedience and have become a good example for the congregation. We were very happy, the whole church was partying and we enjoyed meeting the friends and family of Oscar and Emelda. Let’s pray for this marriage.”

Ebenezer, West Little Rock: Ruben Isturiz writes, “Thank God, we recovered attendance a little this week compared to last week. The Berean Group (Home Group) in Stonehedge Dr. was suspended because five of its members were sick because of allergies. I am very happy with what is happening in this group. New people are coming to hear His Word.

“Last Wednesday was our second meeting at the Alcazar family home. Dulce is doing well, but she was having problems with spiritual battles. We have had great progress. My prayer is for a new Berean Group will come out of this place. They are in Shannon Hills.

“Thursday, I visited the Southwest Little Rock Berean Group. They are already a functioning group without my presence. It is a blessing to see them grow.

“On Sunday, I gave a Bible study to the baseball players. The season has started, and I am a baseball chaplain.

“This week I will be very busy Monday, Wednesday, Thursday with the Berean Groups and on Tuesday with discipleship to some young people. Thank you for your prayers. To God be the Glory!”

Faith Chapel, Flippin: Johnny Shew writes, “What a great week at Faith Chapel! We had great attendance and an amazing time of worship!”

“We had one join this week, and we will be baptizing her at our mother church, The Bridge, next week. We have been praying for this lady for a long time, and God is faithful.

“Another that we have been praying for, Adam (the young man I told you about that left John 3:16) came back to service Sunday, praise God! He entered a different faith-based treat-

Opportunities For Service

Beacon Baptist Church in Gravette is seeking a full-time pastor. Contact Roy Key at (470) 787-5373 or send a resume to rkeycabinets@yahoo.com.

Fairview Baptist Church in Jonesboro is seeking a bi-vocational youth minister. For more information, contact Pastor Gary Henderson at (870) 935-0266 (church office), (870) 974-1996 (cell) or pastorgaryhenderson@gmail.com.

Hillcrest Baptist Church in Texarkana is seeking a bi-vocational music director. For more information, contact Pastor Kelly Owens at hbctexarkana@gmail.com.

Lone Oak Baptist Church in Mississippi County is seeking a full-time pastor. For information, call Glenn Moody at (870) 740-2532 or visit loneoakbaptistchurch.com. Resumes may be sent to glenn.farmers1st@att.net.

West Park Baptist Church in Ozark is seeking a full-time pastor. Send resumes to P.O. Box 541, Ozark, Ark. 72949 or pastorharold@att.net.

Meadowside Baptist Church in Pittsburg, Kan. is seeking a bi-vocational pastor. Contact Greg Hardister at (620) 704-6860.

Reports from the Churches

Broadway Avenue, Bay received two by baptism; Rick Jenson, pastor.

Charity, Ward reports three by letter; Keith Lewis, pastor.

Cleveland, Cleveland added two by statement; Gib Cole, pastor.

ment program in Harrison, got a job and is attending church services and Bible studies there. He looked amazing, and he just kept talking about all that Jesus had done for him. Thank You, Lord, for hearing our prayers; and thank You, Lord, for your answers!

“We thank you for your prayers for us, Faith Chapel and for Flippin. Please continue; He truly is answering them.”

The Table, Springdale: Clinton Morris writes, “I had great meetings on Monday and Tuesday. Several of our people are moving, so we have been helping them. We also had one of our visitors from a few months ago start attending regularly.

“A few of our meetings were going over some more creative ways of engaging our community, and we may have a way to get into some of the public schools because of our newest attendee.

“Drew filled in for me in many of our meetings while I was away with my family for a few days. He also preached on Sunday. I am so pleased with his commitment to working and helping.”

Faith Journey, Benton: Bryan Clay writes, “*This is the day that the Lord has*

UPCOMING EVENTS

Gospel Singing, May 7, 7 p.m.; featuring Linda Morgan; Lemonwood Baptist Church, White Hall.

Hot Dogs and Hot Rods, May 21; proceeds benefit Water for Christ; Lifesong, Greenbrier.

National Galilean Camp, June 24-27; Stoneridge Baptist Camp, Smithville.

SOAR Student Conference, June 29 – July 1; Hilton-Anatole, Dallas.

CBC Day 2022, Sept. 11. Student Ministry Workers Retreat, Sept. 17; Central Baptist College, Conway.

re:Charge Leader’s Oasis, Sept. 27-29; Hot Springs Hotel, Hot Springs.

Lifeworld Sunday, Oct. 23. BMA of Arkansas, Nov. 3-4; Central Baptist College, Conway.

National Senior Adult Conference, Nov. 15-17; Chateau on the Lake, Branson.

Fellowship, Walnut Ridge welcomed one by baptism; John Durham, pastor.

Old Hickory, Hattieville gained six by letter since last report; Blake Martin, pastor.

Shiloh, McRae witnessed five by baptism; Rodger Cole, pastor.

Spring Lake, Texarkana reports four by baptism; Randy Shepherd, pastor.

West Race, Searcy rejoices over two professions of faith; Chad Brandon, pastor.

Zion, Fordyce received four by letter and two by baptism; Scott Smith, pastor.

made; We will rejoice and be glad in it’ (Psa. 118:24). God showed up and showed out for Faith Journey for our launch day on May 1. We held our very first meeting at The Cabin 3H today, and had a good attendance for the mission.

“We began our first service with a time of fellowship by asking everyone to pair up with someone they did not know and learn something about the other person. It was a great way to get to know others, and we had a lot of fun with it. We then began our worship time with music and singing led by Roy Hale, owner of The Cabin 3H. He has a gift from God with his music, and it set the tone for us to worship in God’s presence. I was able to share what I believe is God’s vision for Faith Journey and gave a sermon on sharing the gospel with all people (Luke 5:27-31).

“I would like to thank the BMA of Arkansas and our sending church, Celebration Baptist Church in Haskell, for allowing us this opportunity to serve and share God’s Word to further the expansion of His kingdom. It was a great day, and we are rejoicing in the Lord!”

ROE

(Continued From Page 1)

“We hold that Roe and Casey must be overruled,” the opinion reportedly continued. “It is time to heed the Constitution and return the issue of abortion to the people’s elected representatives.”

Chief Justice John Roberts has yet to cast his vote, and it is unknown which side he will vote with, Politico reported.

“It’s impossible to overstate the earthquake this will cause inside the Court, in terms of the destruction of trust among the justices and staff,” SCOTUSblog tweeted Monday night. “This leak is the gravest, most unforgivable sin.”

No draft opinion of the court in modern history has ever been leaked in this manner, Politico reported. It has already been derided as an effort to bully the Supreme Court into keeping Roe in place, and Jonathan Turley called it “one of the greatest breaches of security in the history of the Court.”

Leading pro-life groups weighed in on the news of the leaked draft saying they hope eventually the accuracy of the Supreme Court overturning Roe will be confirmed.

“We don’t know whether rumors of the end of Roe are accurate yet, but we know that ending Roe is the right decision, returning the issue to ‘We The People’ from a few judges with an agenda,” said Kristan Hawkins of Students for Life of America. “You won’t find ‘abortion’ written in invisible ink in the Constitution undiscovered until seven men saw it in 1773. Ending preborn human life is, and has always been a judicial error.”

SPOTLIGHT

(Continued From Page 5)

When the Darlene Carey Christian Academy was first selected as the new WMA project in 2020, we knew this would be the help we needed to get our “dream” off the ground. Then COVID hit, and our project needed to be postponed. It was the right thing to do, but it made our dreams diminish just a little — “But God,” as Editor Emeritus Diane Spriggs always used to say. Never underestimate the WMA — church WMAs, local association WMAs, state WMAs, and of course our national WMA! At the close of this year’s books, over \$57,000 will have been raised for the Darlene Carey Christian Academy, making the project completely paid for and a dream fulfilled.

Master’s Degree — When we needed help getting four of our college teachers trained with an accredited master’s degree, the BMA Theological Seminary (BMATS) stepped in to help us. What began as a project directed at 4 possible students has grown to 15 students. We will now welcome BMATS Academic Dean Dr. Philip Attebery in May and BMATS Professor Dr. Thom South in July to help these students finish their master’s degrees.

From Stan — May is going to be extra busy as we close a very fruitful school year. As the Lord leads, please remember the following events for us: May 4 — choir sings in chapel, pre-registration for fall classes and senior music recitals; May 5-6 — BMAP association meeting; May 15 — mission dedication, baccalaureate and Jimmy

Walker arrives; May 16 — Awards Ceremony, graduation; May 18 — Dr. Attebery arrives; May 19 — Carey Academy Dedication; May 20, staff development; May 21, Jimmy Walker departs; May 23-June 3, Master Class.

From Donna — We are looking forward to lots of events happening in the month of May, especially welcoming guests from the United States. Because of COVID, it has been a long time since we’ve had any visitors, so there will be lots of trial and error for these first visits after the pandemic.

We got word that our new visas and i-cards have been approved, so we will have our passports back any day. This means we can now travel again, even out of the country. Stan is planning to visit our missionaries in Japan, and I hope to travel home to check in on our family, house and love on our kids and grandkids. Yay!



Calvary, Stamps, June 12-15, 6-8:30 p.m.; theme — The Mighty God.

First, Cave Springs, June 12-17, 6-8:30 p.m.; theme — Zoomerang: Returning to the Value of Life.

Celebration, Haskell, June 19-22, 6:30-8:00; MegaKids Camp.

Antioch, Conway, June 20-23, 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m.; theme — Monumental: Celebrating God’s Greatness.

Bodcaw, Bodcaw, July 10-15, 6:30-8:30 p.m.; theme — The Mighty God.

CENTRAL BAPTIST COLLEGE

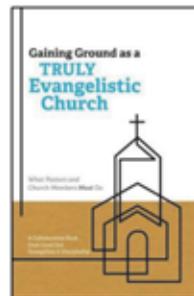
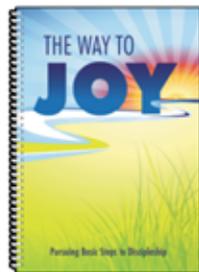
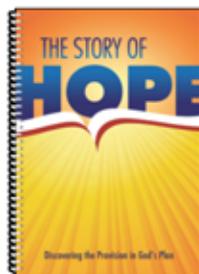
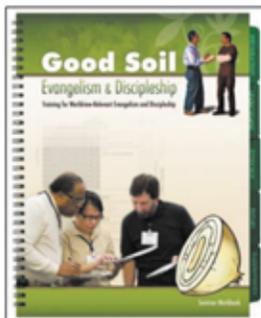
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