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A Letter to the Churches Of the BMA of America

By Charles Johnson, President • BMA of America

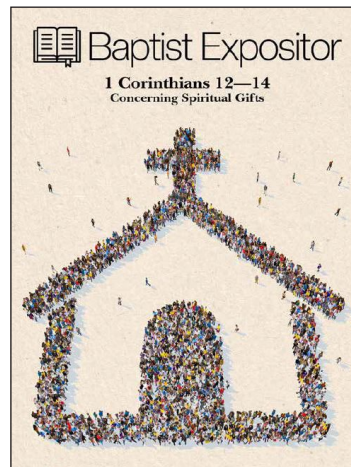
I am very humbled at your recent vote to elect me as your president this year. This is not an office I desired, but I accept it as God's will and direction. I pledge to you to do my best with the Lord's help and guidance. I ask of you the same two things asked of the churches I have pastored — remember I am human and be sure to pray for me.

I was born in 1952 to godly parents who started their married life in 1930 as tenant farmers in East Texas. I graduated from Jacksonville College in 1972 and worked in teaching, coaching, maintenance and administrative positions in public schools for 40 years while also serving as a bi-vocational pastor. Since 2015, I have been in the full-time pastorate.

In 1972, God gave me a top-notch helpmate when I married Charlotte Harrell a "P-K" whose daddy, Melvin Harrell was a long-time, faithful BMA pastor in Wood County, Liberty and Hopkins County Associations in northeast Texas. We have been blessed with a son, Dr. David Johnson of Tyler, Texas; a daughter and son-in-law, Mary Ann and Brian Mauk, who are both educators and church youth directors; and two granddaughters, Triniti and Allie Mauk.

I was saved at age 12 during a revival meeting held by Bro. Mike Reed. I surrendered to preach at age 16 during a revival meeting held by my uncle, Don Hymer. I was ordained to the gospel ministry in March 1971 while attending school in Jacksonville. I have been privileged to serve as pastor of three BMA churches in the past 53 years and am going on year 40 at my current field at Rosewood

See LETTER, Page 4



Spiritual Gifts, Tongues And Silent Women

By Jordan Tew, Exec. Director Baptist Publishing House

Did I get your attention with that title? Our summer Sunday School quarterly will provide an in-depth study of I Corinthians 12-14. This is an often-neglected passage in Sunday School and Bible study groups, as it can be very challenging to study.

While I Corinthians 13, the "Love Chapter," is well known by many, chapters 12 and 14 are less familiar. Honestly, these chapters can be uncomfortable to study, as the apostle Paul wrote extensively on the issues of tongues, spiritual gifts, orderly worship and even advocates that women are to be silent in the church.

While we all tend to have strong views and opinions about such topics, allow me to ask this question, "When was the last time you and your church studied these chapters of God's Word?"

Sadly, these topics are the source of much confusion and controversy among Christians today. False teachings about spiritual gifts, tongues and the roles of men and women within the local church run rampant online, in Christian bookstores and on television and radio. Our churches need to know what God says about these things in His Word, the Bible.

I encourage you to order this quarter of the *Baptist Expositor* for your church. Not only would it be good for Sunday mornings, but it would also be a great Wednesday

See BPH, Page 4



2024 Legacy Missionaries: Bill & Jeanette Gibson

By Holly Meriweather

Executive Editor's Note: The Gibsons and the Dicksons were honored this year as the 2024 Legacy Missionaries for BMA Global. This is the story of Bill & Jeanette Gibson. The Dicksons' story will be shared in next week's issue.

Honoring our legacy missionaries is a priority for BMA Global, and whether deceased or alive, learning from their lives and ministries is important to their incredible legacies. Through family testimonies, archived articles, and ministry partner stories, understanding the ongoing work in their former fields impacts future generations. Bill Gibson is one of those legacy missionaries.

William L. Gibson was born Jan. 17, 1942, in Jonesboro, to a family of farmers. He and Jeanette were the same age, their families farmed within five miles of each other and they went to church together. Bill and Janette were both saved at an early age and began showing interest in each other at 14 years of age. Later on, Bill began picking Janette up for church services every Sunday at Big Creek Valley in Jonesboro, pastored by G.E. Jones.

See LEGACY, Page 4



No King But Christ (Eph. 1:22-23) (Part 2)

By Dr. Clif Johnson, President • BMA of America

Executive Editor's Note: This is the second part of the President's Message that was preached in the opening session of the national meeting on April 16, 2024. For Part 1, see the April 24 issue or go to BaptistTrumpet.com.

No Head for the Church but the King of the World

"And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church" (Eph. 1:22 ESV).

Here we see the description, or the type of power that has come toward us who believe. It is a resurrection power and a reigning power that has no rival, now or ever. Paul wanted us to know the results of that power. What does God do with the reign of Christ, who is over all things? All things are under the feet of Jesus.

With that status as being the king over all things for all time, God placed

See SERMON, Page 5

In This Issue

CBC's Tower Media Recognized (pg. 2)

Master's Builders Feature (pg. 8)

Substance Over Style (pg. 3)

The Epic Story of Truth (Part 11) (pg. 6)

The Ministry of Discipleship (pg. 3)



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PROFILE

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Terry Kimbrow
President



(L/R) Candace Slayton, Grace Vandergriff, Mason Crymes and Emily Owen

Tower Media Recognized At Media Association Competition

Central Baptist College Tower Media students competed at the Arkansas College Media Association competition at Ouachita Baptist University on April 12. A total of 16 colleges competed, and our students brought home several awards.

In the general excellence awards, **Senior Emily Pharr** won third place for designer of the year for the *Tower*, and the *2023 Carillon* received an honorable mention for yearbook of the year.

Our students also brought home three individual awards. **Junior Mason Crymes** won third place in newspaper headline writing, and juniors **Candyce Slayton** and **Grace Vandergriff** won second place for best video podcast.

Emily Owen won several awards for her work on the *Carillon*. She received first place for student life writing, third place for organization writing, third place for academic writing and third place for divider page.

Tower Media Faculty Advisor Ann Gardner is very proud of the work our CBC students have put forth. "Tower Media has a core group of students who put out much effort in producing news for the campus. They work well together, and these awards are the result," Gardner said.

She offered special praise when considering Emily Pharr's third place standing as designer of the year. "Emily Pharr deserved this award for designer of the year. The pages of the *Tower* have stood out this year because of her newspaper design skills. I'm very proud of her."

Like Mrs. Gardner, CBC faculty and staff are very proud of all these students, and we look forward to seeing what Tower Media produces next year.

Honor and Memorial Gifts

The following are honor and memorial contributions received since the last report by Central Baptist College. Some of the contributions are recurring gifts but are only listed once:

In Memory of **Sarah "Sally" E. Bishop** by Caroline Grantham, **Kenneth R. Brown** by Marie Brown; **Jerome Cooper** by Nina Cassidy; **Jennie S. Duckett** by Sue Smith; **Jesse M. Duckett** by Sue Smith; **Sandra K. Francis** by Marie Brown; **Judy A. Godfrey** by Central Baptist Church, Texarkana; **Lillie Leonia Greenway** by Esther M. Kershner-Mitchell; **Opie Hefner** by Mr. & Mrs. Jay L. Hefner; **Bill Hoggard** and **Rena Hoggard** by Shirley Q. McCone; **Byren Jones** by Dr. & Mrs. Terry A. Chrisope; **Lucile Jones** by Dr. & Mrs. Terry A. Chrisope; **Betty Kingston** by Bethel Baptist Church, Lonedell; **Clyde Leslie** by Mr. & Mrs. Daniel T. Leslie; **Elizabeth Leslie** by Mr. & Mrs. Daniel T. Leslie; **Jenny H.**

Lindsey by First Baptist Church, Caldwell; **Donald R. Lowry** by Mr. & Mrs. Doug Hoffmann; **Zak Lowry** by Mr. & Mrs. Doug Hoffmann; **Donna "Micki" M. Mitchell**, **Jurl N. Mitchell** and **Dr. Ron Mitchell** by Esther M. Kershner-Mitchell; **Betty Jo Reddin Morrison** by Elton J. Taylor; **James R. Raines** by Dr. & Mrs. Joel Slayton; **Stephen G. Raines** by Dr. & Mrs. Melvin Bender; **Dr. Tommy Raines** by Dr. & Mrs. Joel Slayton; **Jean Sullivan** by Mr. & Mrs. Grady Higgs; **Dr. Jesse Thomas** by Dr. & Mrs. Melvin Bender; **Eugene Wooten**, **Lonnie Wooten**, **Robbie Wooten** and **Wilber Lee Wooten** by Marie Brown.

In Honor of: **Dr. Blake A. Duffield** by Dr. & Mrs. Melvin



Sports News
By Erik Holth

Women's Golf

• **St. Louis, Mo., April 22** — For the final time this season, the American Midwest Conference (AMC) named their golfers of the week, and **Alyssa Hagewood** was named the women's golfer of the week for the second time this season. Hagewood shot 78-83 for a 161 at the Missouri Baptist Invitational to finish in a tie for ninth place. She was four shots better than the next highest AMC golfer in the field and was fifth among the NAIA competitors.

• **Eugene, Mo., April 22** — Teeing off for the final time in 2024, CBC was on course at Redfield Golf and Country Club for the first round of the AMC Championship. CBC shot a 355 in round one to put themselves in second place, 12 shots ahead of third place William Woods.

• **Eugene, Mo., April 23** — Teeing off on the final round of the AMC Championship in second place, CBC looked to unseat the leaders, Columbia, as the new champions of the AMC. The Mustangs would finish second in the tournament, firing a 341 to finish with a 696 overall, 18 strokes ahead of third place William Woods.

Softball

• **St. Louis, Mo., April 22** — CBC corner infielder **Lauren Anderson** earned AMC Player of the Week honors. Anderson nearly repeated what she did a week ago to earn the penultimate player of the week award this season. In five games, Anderson was 10-16 with 4 doubles, 2 home runs and 11 RBIs. On Tuesday at Crowley's Ridge, she hit a pinch-hit, game-winning three-run home run in game two to give CBC a 5-4 lead at the time. On Friday, in the split at Cottey, she homered again and had four more RBIs in the game one win.

• **Conway, April 23** — Playing an AMC doubleheader for the final time this season, CBC hosted the Eagles of Williams Baptist University (WBU) at City of Colleges Park. CBC (30-18, 14-4 AMC) secured the #2 seed in the AMC tournament by sweeping WBU (31-15, 14-4 AMC) 8-0 and 5-3.

• **Conway, April 26** — Playing their final doubleheader of the regular season at home, CBC hosted the Eagles of Texas A&M-Texarkana (TAMUT) at City of Colleges Park. CBC (30-20) only scored nine runs on eight hits as they dropped both ends of the doubleheader, 9-2 and 9-7, to TAMUT (22-20).

• **Columbia, Mo., April 29** — The AMC announced their season awards for softball at the pre-AMC tournament banquet, and eight Mustangs were recognized for their achievements on the field. **Lauren Anderson** and **Jordyn Frederic** were both selected to the first team, while **Madeline Bruce**, **Alex Jeter**,



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Graduating Seniors

It's that time of year. In just a few weeks (or less), your high school seniors will be hitting one of life's major milestones here in the US. They will walk across a stage, have their name called and become high school graduates. Parents will cry. Students will rejoice. And we, as the local church, should be there to celebrate with them.

Does that mean that you need to go to those painfully long ceremonies? It depends. If you are a youth pastor or have been directly involved with that student, you should do your best to be there. However, there are different times and ways to celebrate them. Here are a few suggestions for celebrating your seniors as a church:

• **Honor them during a Sunday morning service.** Carve out a time to recognize your graduates. Share how they have been involved in the church and some of their plans for the future. While we want to celebrate them, it should still be a time to honor how God has been at work in their lives. Let that shape what and how it is said. This is a great time to present them with a Bible or some other tool to help them as they seek to grow in their faith.

• **Have a reception/meal after a service.** There is nothing quite like sharing a meal as a church family. It also provides church members the opportunity to share gifts and words of advice. If money is an issue for a meal, simply make it a potluck. It doesn't have to be fancy to be impactful to your students.

• **Have a card shower.** What do graduates really want as graduation gifts? I think there are two things. One, they desire words of affirmation. They need to hear what you think of them and your belief in their ability. Two, they want money. I know that sounds a bit materialistic, but face it, they are trying to figure out how they will pay for books in the fall or gas. An envelope with some kind words and some money can be a very welcome gift.

• **Pray over your graduates.** We often say that our students are the "church of tomorrow." The truth is, they are the church of today. Many of our students serve. At Calvary, we have students serving in children's ministry, as well as on our worship team. It hurts when they graduate because their availability may change. We want to pray that they will continue to serve in whatever community they end up.

There are lots of ways to celebrate your graduates. I hope you will take some time to think it through and not let it slip by. Our culture makes a big deal about it, and our churches should be leading the way. It provides a milestone toward adulthood. Connect with us in our Facebook group (Facebook.com/groups/StudentMinistryMattersCommunity) to share ways you celebrate the graduates in your church.

Kinley Johnson and **Abi West** all earned second team honors and **Kori Truelove** and **Hannah Work** both earning third team recognition. **Sydney Weiser** was recognized as the Champion of Character.

Baseball

• **Hot Springs, April 23** — CBC took on Champion Christian for the fifth time this year at Majestic Park. CBC (32-12) took 11 innings
See SPORTS, Page 4



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SUBSTANCE AND CONTENT OVER STYLE AND HYPE ANY DAY.

Derwin L. Gray

Substance Over Style

In *Uncommon Life Daily Challenge*, Tony Dungy tells the story of wanting a pair of Chuck Taylor Converse All-Star high top basketball shoes. At the time, in the eighth grade, everybody who was somebody had a pair. His dad took him to Kmart and there they were for \$7.99. The problem was that Kmart had the same pair for half the price. His dad showed him that the Kmart brand was made of the same material and with the same quality. His dad did not see the need of paying twice the money for basically the same shoe. Tony did not agree because he wanted the “cool” shoes and the opinions of his friends mattered greatly.

Well, I have been there and done that a couple of times, how about you? Tony said this was his first lesson on valuing style over substance, which can, as he says, “force us into a lot of unwise decisions.” Style over substance not only impacts the purchases you may make but also the goals you pursue and even the people with whom you associate. Tony reminds us that, “God chooses substance over style, and He wants us to do the same... He wants us to have substance ourselves, to be able to see the substance in others and to value it above outward appearances. After all, styles change. Substance can last forever.”

Tony’s story reinforces, once again, that who you are is more important than what you do! Just ask Samuel about David when God told him, “...For the Lord sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart” (I Sam. 16:7 ESV). Man seems to be drawn to flash and flare, while God is looking for those who are upright. Just ask the Pharisees when Jesus said, “You are the ones who justify yourselves in the sight of others, but God knows your hearts...” (Luke 16:15 HCSB). The answer is humility that is focused on serving the mission of God and serving those who are serving the mission

of God. Position, placement and persuasion is not the goal.

In *Jesus on Leadership* by C. Gene Wilkes, he stated, “As long as leaders worry about who sits at the head table, they have little time for people they are called to serve. We don’t see opportunities for service while our eyes are fixed on the competition.” Just take a look at what Jesus said in Luke 14:7-14. The biblical mandate of greatness is not a measure of self-will, self-advancement or self-promotion but rather self-abandonment. Our challenge is to be like Jesus in Phil. 2:8-9 (HCSB) where it says He humbled Himself and then, “For this reason God highly exalted Him and gave Him the name that is above every name.”

Wilkes continued, “Exalt in the dictionary of faith means God lifts up those who have humbled themselves before Him and His purposes.” Style focuses on my performance and ability to persuade others to my viewpoint, methods or procedures. Substance is produced by walking with the Lord in righteousness. Style is led by a desire to overpower with our strong personalities or ability to dispute and confront those with whom we may disagree. Self-analysis is needed, but remember that it is, by definition, subjective. You and I need the light of biblical truth to inject some objectivity into understanding our internal motivations.

Substance is more about being right with God than being right in a process or decision. Substance is not only being right but dealing with a situation in the right way and in a godly fashion. Wilkes said this about biblical humility, “Humility produced by the presence of God brings a Christ-centered confidence in the leader.” Substance is dealing with a difficult situation in the right way, while treating others with respect, kindness and valuing their viewpoint. Wilkes said this, “The difference between pride and authentic confidence is the source. God grants confidence to those

Revivals

Union Grove, Blevins; May 12-15, Sun. 6 p.m., Mon.-Wed. 7 p.m.; Jim Moss, evangelist; Donald Thompson, pastor.

Barney, Enola; May 15-18, 6:30 p.m.; Verlon Wood, evangelist; Reagan Shearer, pastor.

Union, Rosston; May 25-27, 7 p.m.; Jim Moss, evangelist; Joe Brown, pastor.

Bluff Springs, Rosston; July 20-23, Sun. 5 p.m., Mon.-Wed. 7 p.m.; Sun.-Tues.-Kenneth Bobo, evangelist, Wed.-Damien Rogers, evangelist; Donnie Dillard, pastor.

who trust Him.”

Confidence in God is the strong faith in three things: the certainty that God created you, the certainty that Jesus bought you through His death on the cross and that He called you to join Him in serving His mission. God made you, which brings us to one of the toughest doctrines in the Word of God, sovereignty, and not for the reason you may think. That means He is God and you and I are not. We did not make any of the decisions concerning where we were born, when we were born, whom we were born to, the color of our eyes, our gender, our DNA or our natural giftings. Our natural inclination is to object to God being God.

We desire to call the shots and remain in control, but that is not how it works if we remain focused on self-surrender to His will and calling on our lives. That means rejoicing for others, even when they are more gifted, blessed or “successful” than you are. In *Envy: A Big Problem You Didn’t Know You Had*, Mike Fabarez stated, “The more I can process this reality, the less likely I will foolishly pine away that I’m not Jim, Tom or Ryan. Not only do I not have the gifts, skills or talents of those guys, but I also can’t fly, I can’t be born in the fifth century, I can’t live in the center of the earth and I can’t be a turnip.”

Biblical substance is the realization that God created you, bought you with His own blood and has called you to serve Him and serve others in that mission as well. In I Cor. 7:7, Paul put it this way, “I wish all people were just like me. But each has his own gift from God, one person in this way and another in that way.” You and I were created by God in His image to glorify Him, and Paul warned the Galatians to not think more highly of themselves than they ought to think. Substance over style means we remain committed to practicing the “one anothers” in our relationships and dealings with one another in God’s family.

Just Thinking...
By Dr. Tom Mitchell
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The Ministry of Discipleship

I was just thinking about how extremely important the ministry of discipleship is. In the early church, the members were called disciples. Our Lord’s Great Commission was for believers to make disciples — “*Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son, and the Holy Spirit*” (Matt. 28:19 NIV). Making disciples is the very important task of evangelism. We might say gather disciples.

We should pay close attention to the next verse of that Great Commission — “*and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you*” (Matt. 28:20). The definition of a disciple is a learner. We would use the term student.

First Things First

The Great Commission applies to every believer in Jesus Christ. Each of us has the responsibility of taking the gospel to our world — across the street, in the office, on the golf course and in the home. Too often, church members want to send the gospel around the world and not take it to their world.

Before any of us can be good disciple-makers, we must first become disciples. James, the brother of Jesus, wrote, “*Not many of you should become teachers, my fellow believers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly*” (James 3:1). Just becoming a believer in Christ does not make one a teacher. Every believer needs to study God’s Word, both under the tutelage of another and in one’s personal study. That is why the apostle Paul wrote to his young protégé, Timothy, “*Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth*” (II Tim. 2:15).

Teaching God’s Word brings much responsibility. One who has disciples under his or her care must not rest on what he learned years ago alone. That teacher must always be studying the Bible in order to be better able to prepare those who have asked questions that may have application to this generation. Our personal opinions may be expressed, but those opinions need to match up with what God’s Word actually says.

How to Know What a Disciple Needs

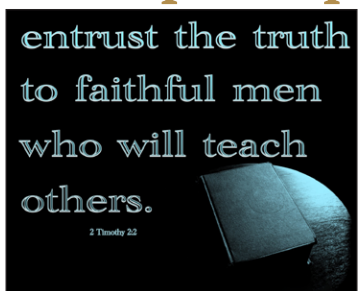
With few exceptions, Jesus taught by answering the questions of His disciples, as well as others who might not have been true believers. If one is a Sunday School teacher, he or she needs to listen to what the pupils, young or old, are asking. If that teacher doesn’t know the answer, he should not just pass it off, but tell the class he will try to have a scriptural answer at the next time of meeting.

Parents are some of the most important teachers, although many of them will never stand behind a pulpit or lectern. One of the greatest classrooms for discipling others is the home. I have long said that the most important task parents have is to see that their children know the way to Heaven. Children trust their dads and moms more than anyone. Parents, listen to you children. Remember, no one has taught until someone has learned.

Disciples Should Teach Disciples Who Will Teach Disciples

For three years, Paul was in the desert being disciplined by the Holy Spirit. He learned that he was to teach others. Among those were two young men — Titus and Timothy. Here is what Paul said to Timothy: “*And the things you have heard me say to in the presence of many witness entrust to reliable men who will be qualified to teach others*” (II Tim. 2:2).

Just think, the salvation of the apostle Paul led to him teaching others, and those who learned from him taught others. That wonderful work of evangelism and discipleship has, for centuries, been carried on — reaching to Europe, and then to the Eastern shore of the United States. Settlers pushed westward, but they did not fail to make disciples and then they taught them to teach others. The result, we who are alive in 2024 now have the responsibility to make disciples and to teach them everything our Lord has taught. And His promise remains: “*And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age*” (Matt. 28:20).



LEGACY

(Continued From Page 1)

Bill graduated from high school in 1959 and attended CBC for a year but dropped out to join the National Guard. He trained at Fort Knox, Ky., then Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., while Jeanette went to Jonesboro Business College for a secretarial degree. They were married in 1961, and Bill farmed with his dad for a while.

From Pastor to Missionary: Costa Rica

Then God called Bill to ministry, and he returned to CBC to complete his studies. Just like many “preacher boys” at CBC, he pastored a church while there — Fairview Baptist Church in Violet Hill. After graduating in 1966, he began pastoring Bethel Baptist Church in Forrest City, then served as a missionary pastor at Missionary Baptist Church in Wichita, Ks. It was there that he felt the call to missions work in Costa Rica.

The family, including nine-year-old Bill, Jr. and four-year-old Monica, traveled to Costa Rica to visit Missionaries Duane and Francis Heflin and to seek their counsel. The visit confirmed his calling, so in 1971, they bought a Volkswagen bus named “Herbie,” and loaded the van and headed to Costa Rica on Sept. 29.

Some of the best missionary stories are about a family’s travel to a new mission field, and the Gibsons’ story is no exception. On the way to Costa Rica, four-year-old Monica became ill in Mexico City, and they had to stop to see a doctor and then wait two days to recover at a hotel. Two famous wrestlers were also staying there. One of them was professional wrestler Jerry Lawler, who taught nine-year-old Bill Jr. how to swim in the hotel pool.

The journey to San Jose was long, especially for the children, but the ride was made easier due to the generosity of Francis Heflin, who gave Bill Jr. and Monica presents for the children to open on each day of travel. The Heflins continued that love and care for many years.

Attending language school was the only training offered to new missionaries in that era, so Bill and Jeanette spent their first year in Costa Rica at language school in San Jose while the children attended school with their Spanish-speaking peers. The Gibson children were always part of their ministry: Bill preached, Bill Jr. led singing and Monica helped in Sunday School.

They also built relationships with Costa Ricans by handing out flyers and inviting everyone they met to church. Even the children

participated. During one of those outreaches when Monica was five years old, she handed a lady an invitation, but the lady said, “No, thank you. I’m Catholic.” Monica replied, “That’s okay. Anyone can come to our church.”

Bill was known for his genial nature and never-met-a-stranger attitude. He willingly met people’s needs on the mission field, loading up Herbie, the little Volkswagen, and went where he was needed. If someone said, “I need you to go to my family’s hometown up in the mountains,” the family would load up and head to the mountains to meet needs. If someone said, “I want you to go talk to my family,” or “We want a church,” he was faithful in meeting with them.

In addition to planting churches, they established a Bible Institute during their 20 years in Costa Rica. By the time they left Costa Rica, Bill Jr. and Monica had graduated and moved back home.

Herbie stayed with the Heflins.

Eastern Europe: Czech Republic

After the Berlin Wall fell and communist countries opened up, Bill was one of the many missionaries who seized the opportunity to share the gospel with the unreached. So, in 1992, the Gibsons left Costa Rica for the Czech Republic (former Czechoslovakia), basically moving from a friendly Latin culture to a cold, unreceptive one. The Gibsons had a hard time with the Czech language, and people weren’t responsive, but Bill met a man named John, and that one contact has kept the work going.

To the States, Then Back: Honduras

In 1994, they returned to Jonesboro and began pastoring Cottage Home. Five years later, Bill was asked to serve in Honduras as Bobby Bowman retired from his work at the BMA Bible Institute there. Bill and Jeanette went to Honduras, where he served as administrator of the BMA Bible Institute in Sula from 1999 to 2007.

Final Mission Field: Chile

The Gibsons went to Santiago, Chile in 2007 where they planted Metropolitan Baptist Church. One of the first people Bill met in Santiago was Pablo, their water delivery man and neighbor. He was also a pastor, and when Pablo saw Bill’s Bible, they hit it off immediately. The Gibsons began attending the church where Pablo pastored, and then they worked together to plant a church. Today, Pablo’s son and another young man have gone farther south in Chile, where Pablo Sr. and his wife, Miriam are

BPH

(Continued From Page 1)

night, Sunday evening or small group study for your church to use throughout the summer or even at a later time. Try something new this summer! Get it while you can, because once the summer is over, the books will be unavailable.

We have taken extra care concerning the writing of these lessons. This quarter was written by Dr. David Hellwig, who serves as professor of Greek and New Testament at BMA Seminary and Dr. Philip Attebery, who is the dean of BMA Seminary. Both men also serve in the pastoral ministry and are on the “front lines” of ministry each week. Therefore, the tone of this study is very practical and user-friendly.

To ensure the content of these lessons is helpful and consistent with BMA doctrine, we also consulted a panel of BMA pastors to

now. Currently, there are thriving churches in the cities of Tibas, Santa Ana and Villa Colon.

The Gibsons returned home in 2012 when Bill was diagnosed with Parkinson’s. He died Oct. 29, 2015.

The Work Goes On: Multiplication

When missionaries start a work and plant a church, there are many unknowns. Regardless of the preparation, location and fervent prayer for success, there’s always the question, “Will this plant take root?” God perfectly fitted Bill to be an encourager and exhorter and give sound advice to everyone he knew, particularly if there was a question about ministry. When Bill’s son-in-law, Randy Stimach, told Bill, “I’m afraid God’s calling me to the ministry.” Bill replied, “Well, don’t be afraid, just do it!” Those who served with him said he was always direct and to the point but loved and cared for people.

Former Missionary Phil Knott served with Bill in Costa Rica for many years and tells a story of the two men handing out flyers to invite people to church for a week-long revival. When Costa Ricans heard they would also be fed, even more people came. Bill was footing the bill, and one person was saved out of the entire week, and Bill had spent a lot of money. Always the optimist, Bill told Phil, “Whew, that was an expensive soul!”

Monica said, “My dad would’ve died on the mission field if he could have. At his funeral, letters came in literally from around the world talking about the impact that both my parents had on them. They truly fulfilled the Great Commission.”

LETTER

(Continued From Page 1)

Baptist Church in Gilmer, Texas. I have been in the BMA my entire earthly life plus nine months! My grandmother, Zelma Hymer was a messenger in 1950 at Lakeland, Fla., when the BMA (then NABA) was formed. I love and believe in the work and ministries of the BMA at all levels.

Please mark your calendars for April 22-24, 2025, which will be our next annual national association meeting at Pathway Baptist Church in Waxahachie, Texas. Preliminary plans are already being developed around a theme of the importance of local churches.

review the lessons. I was pleased by their input and encouragement in this process.

The summer Sunday School quarter runs June through August. You can pre-order your copy of the study today, and orders will be shipped in May. You can also order the digital version today and receive it via e-mail today.

Pastors, I recommend that you purchase a copy for yourself to add to your library. The writing that has been done on these topics is “top notch,” and it would serve you well to keep this study on your bookshelf. Think of it as a little BMA Bible commentary on I Corinthians 12-14. I know it will be a blessing for you and your people!

SPORTS

(Continued From Page 2)

to beat the Tigers 9-8.

• **Conway, April 24** — CBC began their final AMC series of the season with a doubleheader against Williams Baptist University at Victory Field. CBC (33-13, 13-7 AMC) split with the Eagles (27-17, 9-11 AMC) falling in game one 3-2 before winning game two 16-1 in a run rule.

• **Conway, April 26** — CBC hosted the Eagles of Williams Baptist University at Victory Field on Senior Day. Eight seniors and the family of Andrew Killough were recognized before CBC (34-13, 14-7 AMC) run-ruled WBU (27-18, 9-12 AMC) 16-6 in eight innings.

• **St. Louis, Mo., April 29** — The AMC announced their season awards at the pre-AMC tournament banquet, and a host of CBC players were among the selections. **Cade McBride** earned both Dual Position Player of the Year and Newcomer of the Year honors, while **Dylan Parton** grabbed Freshman Pitcher of the Year. **Gram Middleton**, **Austin Teal** and **Ruben Hernandez** all earned spots on the first team and **Austin LeJeune**, **Danilo Tabor** and **Ryan Dauphinee** grabbed second team spots. **Luke McBride** earned the gold glove at shortstop for the second straight season, and **Cameron Harden** was the Champion of Character

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SERMON (Continued From Page 1)

Jesus as head over the church. We can have a tendency to misunderstand the idea of Jesus being head over the church. If you grew up playing sports, you may have heard the phrase before, "Don't play to the level of people around you but be the type of player that raises the level of others." That is what Paul wants us to know and believe and understand. Jesus, as head over all things, is the head of the church, and He is not limited by our limits or inability. That makes our churches — full of weak, unimportant, poor, unwise, foolish people — the greatest institutions on planet earth. The greatest force for good in the world, the greatest source of generosity on the planet and the greatest means for the display of truth, goodness, holiness, beauty and excellence.

Jesus, as King and Ruler over all things, all countries, all kingdoms, is our leader in our churches. It isn't me. It isn't a denomination. It is King Jesus. And as King over all things, He is **for** us, He is **for our churches** and He works through **our churches**, constraining and pushing and pulling the universe in its course for the good of the church. The whole of creation is being conformed to purposes that serve the glory of Christ's church. What a compelling reason, not only to be a part of a local church, but to give your life to a local, biblical church; to build your life around the church.

If you were told that Michael Jordan was going to be on your basketball team, you wouldn't be content just playing pick-up basketball, or be a weekend warrior with Jordan. If he called you up and said, "I have scheduled us a game for Tuesday," you would absolutely be there! Your world would revolve around him and that basketball team!

In fact, something similar happened with Jordan. In 1995, Jordan was beginning production on the movie *Space Jam*, and he was also making his return to basketball after a brief stint playing baseball. So how was Jordan able to get back into basketball shape during that time? The stipulation was that the movie company had to build a gymnasium on the movie set so Jordan could practice, and that's exactly what they did. After all, if Jordan tells you to do something, you do it. You know what else? Jordan called up other NBA players to come and work out and scrimmage with him. He was calling future hall of fame basketball players to come and help him get in shape, and they came, played and scrimmaged. Why would they do that? Because when the great one calls, you don't ghost him. You show

up. You become a part of the drama.

Yes, we will be smeared, slandered, belittled and minimized by the world, but our power should be absolutely undeniable. Our resolve should be undiminished, our willingness unfazed and our effect, the best at what we do.

But are we? Are we the best at what we do? Are we the best in creating culture? Are we the best at defining and defending who we are and what we do? Are we the best at being devoted to God's Word? Are we the best at preaching? Are we the best at administrating? Are we the best at putting on a conference/business meeting? Are we the best at education? Are we the best at defending the cause of the vulnerable? Are we the best, as churches, at leading and sustaining institutions?

It seems that the Lord is testing our metal in that very area right now, is He not? Some major BMA educational institutions have either gone through leadership change or will soon go through leadership change. I, for one, believe that these institutions, which are extensions of our churches, are extremely important and deserve our very best, and should be producing the very best of pastors, missionaries, professors, Sunday School teachers, elders and deacons.

When you survey the landscape of church culture in America, and the BMA in particular, does it look like the church is the greatest institution — the strongest, most creative, most servant-minded, most sacrificial institution out there? Or do our churches come off as fragile and faded out, inconsequential and not influential even among her own members? How is it possible that the church could be worldly and weak? How is it possible that the church could be cheap imitators of the culture when we have Christ as our King?

One simple answer is that we are listening to Christ as friend instead of Christ as King. We think of Him as Christ the advisor instead of Christ the King. We don't have "No King But Christ," but rather we have a host of kings, lined up like shoes in our closet, and we're trying to figure out which pair will work best with the events of the day. We pick and choose what we want from Him and what we will obey, and we teach our people to do so as well. We may know the goal, but we don't necessarily know the way or the discipline it takes to reach the goal. Or maybe we do, but we deem the discipline as too invasive, too... disciplinary.

Since Jesus, as King of the world, is head of the church, our power is immeasurably greater than all other powers in order to fulfill all

that God has called us to do. The mission of the church has been fully equipped by the power of the God through the resurrected Christ. The resurrection of Jesus is the proof we need to put all our energy into the Great Commission.

No Other Mission But Global Discipleship

The church is the *"fullness of him who fills all in all"* (v.23 ESV). Understand the picture — the resurrected and reigning King over all things fills the church with His power and purpose, and the church then fills the world with His power and purpose. The church is God's ordained means of global transformation.

"There is not a square inch in the whole domain of our human existence over which Christ, who is Sovereign over all, does not cry, Mine!" (Abraham Kuyper)

Do you not like the way the world looks around us? Invest in the church! Give your life to the church! This filling of the world with Christ's glory through the church is a hope we alone, as churches, possess. No other agency or institution on earth has been given this promise! Our mission purpose does not end at the doors of our churches. Every part of the world is our domain. All of culture is our goal, all ambitions we should find interest in. All that is good and beautiful belongs to us to enjoy and cultivate because we know the Creator.

Our goal is not to seek and acquire more political or military power in order to impose God's will and purpose on the world. That is not how the rest of this letter tells us to go about filling all things in all the world. Instead, we are given a blueprint for our lives and our church, that, when followed, transforms everything in our path.

As King, Jesus has commanded and commissioned us to make disciples of all nations, while at the same time promising His Spirit to be with us, in us, working through us so that the goal is accomplished. These realities should lead us to be both serious about the mission and joyful in our pursuit of it.

We must take Christ's commission seriously. After all, He is the King. We must take it seriously, not just in parsing it out grammatically, theologically and with advance strategic plans, even though those areas are very necessary. But we must put it into effect immediately! His commission is to start with ourselves in being His disciples. That commission is to fill and shape the atmosphere of our homes, and it is leak out to our churches and communities. Our lives are to be marked by the stamp of being a

disciple of King Jesus. Our homes and churches should be filled with evidence of being chiseled away at by God's Spirit using God's Word as His chiseling tool. We must take Christ's commission seriously, in every facet of our lives. We need pastors to be disciple makers, executive directors to be disciple makers, presidents of seminaries to be disciple makers, in our homes, through our churches, in our workplaces, in how we conduct and run our companies and schools.

If we want the deepest desires of our hearts fulfilled, we have to be serious. If we want the clearest expression of the gospel of God's grace to be seen in and through our church, we have to be serious. If we long to see people saved by the gospel of Jesus Christ, we have to be serious. If we want to see churches planted and nations reached, we have to be serious!

I think we are serious. We, as churches, have banded together to help one another fulfill this purpose, but we must not stop there. We have to be serious about praying for those we have asked and tasked with leading those very departments that help facilitate the goal. We have to be serious about their encouragement and engagement. Do we do that? Do you know how incredibly impossible it is to make 1,200 churches happy? But their goal is not really to make you happy. It is to be faithful to the task, and that will sometimes make some churches unhappy.

Our communities, our world should feel the impact of BMA churches' and departments' counter-culture presence and influence within it because we are to be counterculture, and not a shallow echo of the world.

The healthcare industry and the education industry has its genesis in the church being transformed by the power of the resurrected and reigning Christ. Why should it stop? It shouldn't! The power is still available. The task is great, and the road is long, but the journey is worth it!

We will be planting churches that are counter cultural. We will be running schools that are counter-culture. We will be raising families that are counter-culture. We will be establishing and running businesses that are counter-culture. We have to be serious about creating and living in a counter-culture rather than trying to sprinkle Christian-fairy dust on the worldly culture around us.

Do you have no other King but Christ? My plea for you today is that you will take seriously this question — can it be said of you that you have no King but Christ?

UPCOMING EVENTS

Gospel Singing; May 4, 5 p.m. - Potluck, 6 p.m.-singing, featuring Jeremiah Gallentine and Family; Dickinson, Harrell; Paul Outlaw, pastor.

Gospel Singing; May 12, 10:30 a.m.; featuring Shawn Drewett; Union, Rosston.

Hot Dogs and Hot Rods (Water for Christ Fundraiser); May 18, 10 a.m.; LifeSong, Greenbrier.

Ordination Service for Paul Outlaw, pastor at Dickinson, Harrell; May 18, 2 p.m.; Calvary, Warren.

50th Anniversary Homecoming; May 19; Kellogg Valley, No. Little Rock; Paul Rice, pastor.

Gospel Singing; May 19, 5 p.m., featuring The Representatives; Barney, Enola; Reagan Shearer, pastor.

SOAR 2024; July 3-5; Live! By Loews Convention Center; Arlington, Texas.

Student Ministry Workers Retreat; Sept. 14; Central Baptist College; Conway.

Re:Charge Leaders Oasis; Oct. 1-3; Calvary, Fayetteville.

BMA of Arkansas Mtg.; Nov. 7-8; Central Baptist College, Conway.

Reports from the Churches

First, Bald Knob added two by baptism and three by letter; Matthew Grantham, pastor.

First, Damascus gained two by letter; Daniel Williams, pastor.

First, No. Lewisville received one by letter; Jerry Evans, interim pastor.

Immanuel, Greenbrier reports one by letter; Dr. Billy Crow, pastor.

Park Place, Bryant welcomed four by letter and one by statement; Gary Lambright, pastor.

Opportunities For Service

Blooming Grove Church in Rector is in search of a bi-vocational pastor. For more information, contact Tim Barnum at (870) 335-8061, Roby Ward at (870) 476-7013 or Ben Isom at (870) 595-4499.

Old Bethel Baptist Church in Canton, Texas, is seeking a bi-vocational pastor. Resumes may be sent to OBBCResume@proton.me. For more information, contact Chris Cade at (903) 343-4953.

Soda Baptist Church of Livingston, Texas is seeking a full-time pastor. Resumes may be sent to Soda-baptistPastorcomm.2024@gmail.com or Soda Baptist Church, Attn: Pastor Search Committee, 8135 Highway 190 E., Livingston, Texas 77351.



The Epic Story of Truth (Part 11): The Promised One's Death Was Necessary, but Wasn't Permanent

In this attempt to tell the running narrative of Scripture to help us see the big picture as well as see how often fringe topics such as God's continued plan for Israel or the end of the age fit in with the rest of the Bible, we looked in the last article at how the Promised King or Messiah came but was soon crucified. This would make it seem that the narrative was over and the promises would never come to pass, but the same prophets that foretold of this Messiah and His kingdom also told of a sacrificial death the Messiah would face. This reality was there on the pages of Scripture long before Jesus came to His creation and His people.

The hints begin in Gen. 3:15, which says Satan would "strike the heel" of this Promised One. In the Old Testament laws and feasts, sacrifice was paramount, especially the Passover Lamb. Right before the people, there was always this imagery of a sacrificial lamb and a scapegoat. Daniel recorded in chapter 9 of his book that the Messiah would be cut off. Then Isaiah spoke at length about how there would be a suffering servant who would come. One of those such places is in Isaiah 53: "Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Isa. 53:4-6 NIV).

Not only was this foretold in Scripture, the apostles also understood that Jesus' death was sacrificial and the fulfillment of passages like this in Isaiah. "But now apart from the law the righteousness of God has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through the



shedding of his blood — to be received by faith..." (Rom. 3:21-25).

"You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! For if, while we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! Not only is this so, but we also boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation" (Rom. 5:6-11).

The death of the Messiah was part of the plan. It also means that the flow of this world has moved past half of the plan. Not only does the accuracy of the prediction of the death of Jesus show that He must be who He said He was, but His death wasn't permanent.

After being falsely accused, imprisoned, beaten, flogged and then crucified, Jesus' body was placed in the tomb of a believer. The tomb was sealed and guarded because He had said He would rise again. Yet, on the third day, Jesus rose from that tomb. He was alive. He would go on to be seen by 500 people. Then He ascended to Heaven after 40 days. His death, though necessary, wasn't permanent.

The necessity of His death should make us pause, though. Why did He have to die? Isaiah said He would suffer because of our iniquities — our wrongs. The Apostle Paul wrote in Romans that Jesus' death was necessary for the forgiveness of sins and being made right with God. In Romans 3, Paul wrote that everyone has sinned — those in the past, present and future. Everyone then brings us into this story through the death and resurrection of the Messiah, which



Neil Cameron Whittaker, 83 of Jonesboro, passed away April 27. He was a member of Temple Baptist Church.

Violet Jane Young, 92 of Morrilton, passed away April 23. She was a member of Calvary Baptist Church.

Jerry Bullington, Sr., 75 of Sulphur Rock, passed away March 30. He was a member of Center Grove Baptist Church in Cord.

Revis (Red) Wells, 87 of Crossett, passed away March 11. He was a deacon at Beech Street Baptist Church.

Glenda Smith, 80 of Crossett, passed away Oct. 15. She was a member of Beech Street Baptist Church.

DISTRICT CALENDAR

Jonesboro Dist. Brotherhood; May 14; Prospect, Jonesboro.

Mt. Vernon Youth in Harvest; May 20, 6:30 p.m.; Bethel, Forrest City.

Mt. Vernon Dist. Brotherhood; June 3, 6:30 p.m.; Grace, Wynne.

United District WMA; July 13, 10 a.m.; Hattieville, Hattieville

Jonesboro Dist. Brotherhood; June 25; Discover Mission, Prospect, Jonesboro.

HOMECOMINGS

Bluff Springs, Rosston, May 19; 10:30 a.m.; Stan Paris, message; meal and singing to follow; Donnie Dillard, pastor.

Union, Rosston, May 26; 10:30 a.m.; Mitch Dulaney, message; Joe Brown, pastor.

Center Grove, Cord, June 9; 10:30 a.m., lunch to follow; Forrest Priest, devotional; Charles Bullington, pastor; Barry Anderson, pastor.



Bluff Springs, Rosston; June 1, 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m.; *Shine*.

Celebration, Haskell; June 2-5, 6:30 p.m.; *Mega-Kids Camp*.

Calvary, Stamps; June 9-12, 6 p.m.; *Shine*.

happened nearly 2,000 years ago. Would this mean He died for us?

Dive into the Epic Story yourself by reading Isaiah 53, Romans 3, Romans 5, Romans 10, Mark 16 and Acts 1.

— *Jake is a state missionary and would love to share about the work in Northwest Arkansas and encourage your church to stand firm. (standfirmministries.com)*



Assembling With the Saints

"I was glad when they said unto me, 'Let us go into the house of the Lord'" (Psalm 122:1). The NIV uses the word "rejoiced" instead of "was glad." Either way, the Psalmist David was looking forward to worshiping in the house of the Lord. When our daughter was quite young, she memorized this verse but had her own version — "I was glad **until** they said unto me..." While we may laugh at her innocent misquote, I can't help but think that many feel that way.

Notice that David invited others to go with him. It is essential that believers meet together to worship and praise God. It isn't an option, nor is it just filling a position in the pew. It is much more than that — it is a common bond among God's people who share the same beliefs, convictions and mutual cooperation. We call it fellowship and together, we worship God, serve each other and promote the gospel of Jesus Christ. Keep in mind, however, that without a right relationship with the Father and the Son, there is no true fellowship within the body of believers — no peace, no joy and no unity.

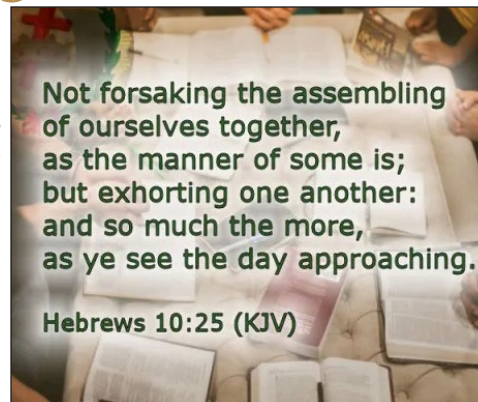
We are one in Christ, in body, in hope and in purpose. Even coming from diverse backgrounds, we can enjoy harmony one with another. The Apostle Paul wrote about the virtues that believers should exhibit — compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience and forgiveness. Then he added, "And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity" (Col. 3:12-14 NIV). Unity is necessary to carry on the work of the Lord. Manifesting these qualities leaves no room for disharmony. Conflict or discord within the body of believers comes from selfish gain or motive and is not lead of the Spirit.

We are to "encourage one another and build each other up..." (1 Thess. 5:11 NIV). We are also exhorted to "consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds" (Heb. 10:24 NIV). We can meet the needs of those in our fellowship just by reaching out with love and concern.

We have this admonition: Let us "not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another — and all the more as you see the Day approaching" (Heb. 10:25 NIV). We are living in the last days and, therefore, we must not neglect meeting together. When COVID hit, many Christians stayed away from church for health reasons. We were, indeed, admonished to limit our association with other people. However, when the pandemic was no longer a serious threat, many who were physically able chose not to come back for assorted reasons. Perhaps (though in error), they thought watching online was just as good as worshipping with other believers. Being out for a length of time, however, can often make it more difficult to get into the habit of attending again. Someone said that "watching church on live stream is like watching a fireplace on a screen. You see it, but you don't feel the warmth." It is essential that you do not forsake meeting with other believers. That is where you will grow in faith and develop as a strong believer in Christ.

Don't be deceived. "...Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour" (1 Peter 5:8). Satan can't take away your salvation, but he can certainly attack if you have become lenient in your walk with the Lord. He can shake your faith and trust in God, discourage you and make succumbing to temptations a little easier, leading you down a path where there is no joy or peace.

Attending church when it's convenient will not enable you to enjoy the fellowship of other believers — a fellowship we all need. Be faithful. Assemble with the saints. Your church needs you and you most definitely need the church.





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The Watchmen

"I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence" (Isa. 62:6).

Who were those watchmen? They were believers in God. Why were they needed? Because the enemy was constantly attacking. Do we still need watchmen today?

"Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple" (Rom. 16:17-18). Several scriptures follow those to let us know why.

Now that we have answered the question, "Do we still need them," let us go on to who they are. Surely, it's God-called ministers who are to rightly divide the Word of God. Yes, and yet the responsibility to contend for the faith that was first delivered through the Apostles Doctrine is every single child of God.

Writer Tim Challies stated: "The Christian's responsibility is clear — we are to learn God's truth by searching God's Word. We must carefully evaluate every teaching according to God's unfailing standard. What passes the test is sound doctrine, and what fails the test is false doctrine."

Please remember the warnings below and do as those in Berean: *"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so" (Acts 17:11).*

Brothers and sisters, we are living in perilous times. Many churches are being deceived. These wolves in sheep's clothing can lead God's sheep astray. Please do not let personality come before sound doctrine. Be sure you love God and His Word more than a false teacher or preacher.

Do you know what those who are teaching your children, teens or you really believe? A church is a family, and we need to protect one another. Asking questions is not rude; it is your responsibility.

"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears" (II Tim. 4:3-4).

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (I John 4:1).

"If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness" (I Tim. 6:3-5).

"For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ" (Jude 1:4).

"But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction" (II Peter 2:1).

"For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ" (II Cor. 11:13).

"And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Eph. 5:11).

"Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away" (II Tim. 3:5).

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (John 4:16).

"These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you" (I John 2:26).

"If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder" (Deut. 13:1-3).

From Our Missionaries

Misión Creciendo en Cristo (Growing in Christ), North Little Rock: Juan Carlos Posadas writes, "I thank God for the meeting with the Advisory Committee of the Department of Missions and its director on Monday morning. It is always refreshing to have a conversation with a group of faithful men of God who

are interested in the work entrusted to us and pray for its success.

"This week, we had the opportunity to serve Karla and her family, who suffered the loss of Cristian, a 17-year-old young man who suffered from cancer since the age of 3. In his fight for his health during those years, Cristian managed to establish a relationship with Christ, who kept

him firm in the face of adversity and helped his family, especially Karla, who was by his side all that time. On Saturday afternoon, we held a funeral service in the temple with the participation of the family, hospital staff who cared for Cristian and some families from the church. A week before, we did not know Karla and her family. We hope that, from now on, we can guide them in the path of the Lord.

"Sayra accompanied me to New Orleans because I had to do some paperwork at the Honduran Consulate. We left at 1 a.m. on Thursday and returned at 6 p.m. on Friday, just in time for our prayer meeting. It was a short and exhausting trip that we made protected by the Lord, who helped me stay awake and alert while I was driving.

"We thank God for the progress on the project to change the roof and install fascia and gutters. We still need to install the fascia on the south and north sides of the building, as well as the roof of the storage room. The good thing is that we have all the necessary financial resources. Glory to God!"

Ebenezer, West Little Rock: Ruben Isturiz writes, "It has been a busy week. Monday morning, it was my turn to meet with the Arkansas Missions Advisory Committee. We meet twice a year to report on what God is doing in Ebenezer. As I told the committee, each time we have met it has been a mix of emotions — it is good to have their support in prayer and encouragement.

"Tuesday night, we visited Mayra Cifuentes at her home. She had been released from the hospital for pancreatic problems. It was a visit to provide encouragement, deepen our friendship and pray for her. The great blessing was to see her on Sunday at Ebenezer with her husband and family.

"Wednesday night, we had our Discovery Bible Study (DBS) at the Hernandez family's home south of Little Rock. Since we started the DBS, we see how Ebenezer is taking on new energy. We needed to restart the home groups. Amalia arrived on Wednesday. She is Catholic and a faithful attendee to her church. For the first time, she picked up a Bible and studied it. To see her face of amazement and what she was discovering in the Word of God was a great blessing for me. She is the type of individual who would never go to Ebenezer, but she would go to

a home group. Let's pray that God will continue to touch her life and she will surrender to Jesus Christ.

"Thursday night, we had the DBS in our home and, for the first time, Moises Rico led it, and he did very well. Little by little, we are also developing new leadership.

"Sunday, it was a blessing to see people we haven't seen for a long time because of their work. There are many things happening in Ebenezer, and there is not enough space here to talk about all of them.

"Brothers and sisters, you are making the best investment in the kingdom of God. Thank you for investing in Missions. To God be the glory!"

Faith Chapel, Flippin: Johnny Shew writes, "We had a great week at Faith Chapel, even though sickness, travel and a good old fashioned thunderstorm dampened our attendance quite a bit, not to mention a broken water main outside our rented building when we got there. But it all worked out, we had a good service and the Lord was glorified! Praise God!"

"We also got word this week that the Jonesboro Association voted at their semi-annual meeting to help support us. We praise and thank God for them and all the others who are supporting us as well! God is determined to plant this church in Flippin, and we are determined to help Him do it.

"We are working on painting this week. Some of it did not come in, but it should be by the time we need it. The Master's Builders should start coming in by the end of this week as well, and God willing and these storms pass, we will start framing the classrooms on Monday.

"What an amazing time we are having up here in Flippin, and we thank you and thank God for you, that you want to be a part of it! We thank you for your support and for giving to God for us. We couldn't do this without you and Him. Most of all, we thank you for your faithful prayers! They mean everything to us because God is answering them in a mighty way."

Faith Journey, Benton: Bryan Clay writes, "We started the week by meeting with the BMA Advisory Committee for their semi-annual review of what God has been doing through Faith Journey Mission and what we have upcoming in our ministry. It is always a pleasure to spend time gleaning wisdom from these godly men to help learn what it takes to continue to grow a new mission.

"We set a record in attendance in our Thursday small group Bible studies this week with a total of 51 people that came out to fellowship and spend time in the Scripture. It is such a blessing to see others seeking God and loving on one another. God is working in the lives of these groups, and it is such a great time being able to be a part of this ministry.

"This week, we spent time preparing for what activities we would like to implement for the summer to gain more interest in Faith Journey from the community. Some ideas we

discussed will be to continue with the Third Thursday in downtown and adding a few things like kid's games to reach young families that are looking for a church home. We will also be working on some ideas for advertising with flyers, magnets, etc., to get our information into the hands of people who are looking for a place to worship and let them know who we are. God has big plans for the mission, and we strive to continue following His will."

Misión Gracia Soberana (Sovereign Grace), NWA: Roberto Marcelletti writes, "Greetings, brothers and sisters in Christ, from the Northwest of the state. Patty and I had an especially busy week."

"Monday, I traveled to Little Rock to the Spring Advisory Committee. I was able to talk with my beloved brothers about how the mission is doing and what the projects and our struggles are. The brothers listened attentively and prayed for me and for the work we are developing.

"Wednesday and Thursday, we had our discipleship groups in the cities of Rogers and Springdale. Although the number of people attending has remained stable (15 in these groups), there is accountability and instruction in the Word.

"Friday, we traveled to Mississippi, where we went to a conference called 'Before His Gospel.' The reason is that we will get involved and work together next year.

"In our Sunday service, we had Diego from Colombia. He accepted Christ last week on his first visit to the church."

Epic Life, Pea Ridge: Jake McCandless writes, "Last week, I had the chance to meet with the Advisory Committee, and I greatly appreciate their support and understanding that this is still in the early stages. Bro. Paul reminded the group that we'd only been at this just over 20 months. I was excited about the numbers I was able to share. Of course, the stories of real lives and transformation behind these numbers are the true tale of what's going on, but I thought I'd pass these on:

- Seven Connection Groups have been launched in total. This past Thursday, I met with the two leaders who are about to launch Epic Life Brunswick in Bella Vista.

- Four Connection Groups are sustaining and continuing to meet regularly.

- Eight households have committed to be coaches. A coach is a missionary in their neighborhood or network who is willing to lead or host a group.

- We have 43 individuals who are committed to meeting weekly in a Connection Group. That number was 26 last year.

- There have been 135 unique individuals who have come to our Connection Groups so far!

- We had eight professions of faith through our Connection Groups.

- We have five baptisms total, with two pending!"



Kenneth & Linda Strickland with Audrey Tilley (center)

A Visit with Audrey Tilley

By Bettye Wilson

Mrs. Roy (Audrey) Tilley is the oldest living member of The Master's Builders. She was born Oct. 12, 1926, and married Roy Tilley on June 9, 1946, when he returned from service in the Navy. Roy was born March 1, 1926, and passed away on Sept. 10, 2010. They have 5 children, 16 grandchildren, 32 great-grandchildren and 1 great-great-grandchild. He was a master electrician and worked for the Arkansas Power and Light Company (Entergy), where he retired as a superintendent after many years of service.

Roy and Audrey lived in Hot Springs for many years. They lived in Russellville for six years and then

returned to Hot Springs. After Roy's death, Audrey moved to their hometown of Searcy, where she lived in a retirement center. Her sister, Leona, lived in the same facility. They married brothers, so they were not only sisters but also sisters-in-law. Leona's husband was James Tilley.

Roy had done electrical work on mission churches on his days off or vacation time for many years before he retired. After retirement, he and his friends became involved with a new ministry opportunity.

The Master's Builders began as a vision of BMAA men banding together in a building program for the Lord and His people. Bob

Massingill, John Mangum and Roy were friends. They had seen another organization in action and wondered if it would work for BMAA men. They recruited several prospects, and in April 1991, The Master's Builders became a group associated with the Baptist Missionary Association of America. Bob Massingill was the first field coordinator. When he became disabled, Roy served in that position until he was no longer able.

The Tilleys were among the first workers who went to Colorado to answer the call to service. Audrey remembers that first call. She had been a mother and homemaker, staying at home most of the time. She and Roy had hoped to travel after retirement. Then they answered the call to go with The Master's Builders to Dolores, Colo. They were initially concerned about the expense of committing to this new venture. Their son told them they had worked hard all their lives and saved for such a time as this, "Go and enjoy it." They bought a travel trailer and made plans to "travel with a purpose," depending on the Lord to provide for them.

The vision became a reality in June 1991 when five couples loaded their trucks with plumbing and electrical supplies and pulling RVs, went to their first project. They worked for

three weeks in Dolores, helping Ray White with the building of a fellowship hall and work in the sanctuary. Others on the first job were Bob and Lena Massingill (Hope); A.E. and Leona Looney (Oakhurst, Texas); Joe and Virginia Henry (Fort Worth, Texas); and Drew and Ann Hughey (Blytheville).

Audrey remembers that at the end of the job, Ray White took them on a drive down the "million-dollar highway" to Silverton. They had enjoyed the work and were blessed by seeing God's handiwork in the mountains of Colorado.

That was the beginning of an adventure that brought blessings and experiences Audrey still remembers today. She admitted that she didn't have a favorite among the many jobs they were blessed to work on — they were all enjoyable and rewarding. They usually worked on five or six projects each year. She was the leader of the ladies, called the JOY group, for many years. She is loved and cherished by all who worked alongside her and others who feel they know her because they have heard of her faithfulness.

A word from Audrey: "During the 18 years working with The Master's Builders, only two projects were missed, and that was because Roy had open heart

surgery. A special memory of The Master's Builders was watching as they began each workday. The men would form a ring of unity, asking for God's grace, guidance and protection during the day.

"God has taken many of the workers home but has added capable men to continue the work, which I am thankful to see. I am blessed to still have a small part in the work by being on the prayer chain, and I will always have fond memories of our retirement years with our extended family, The Master's Builders. 'Raising Roofs for Christ' is our motto, and mission churches are our priority!"

The Master's Builders needs some new members. The average age of the "builders" is approaching 80 years old. For more information, contact Mike Green at (972) 935-3877, David Axe at (903) 918-0729 or Eddie Sikes at (479) 462-1675.

— Bettye White Wilson and her late husband, John White, were longtime members of The Master's Builders. Audrey lives in Bella Vista with her daughter, Linda and son-in-law, Kenneth Strickland, who pastors Fellowship Baptist Church. If you would like to send her a card or note of encouragement, her address is 9 Tavistock Dr., Bella Vista, Ark. 71815.



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To be considered for the position of Executive Vice President, interested candidates must send a cover letter, resume (including references), and a statement of faith as PDF attachments to Board Chair Kirk Shelton at pastorkirk@icloud.com. Electronic submissions only. Background check required.



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