

Baptist Progress

Baptist Progress, P.O. Box 2085, Waxahatchee, Texas 75168
Postmaster: send change of address to:
501025

Official Publication of the Baptist Missionary Association of Texas | August 20, 2014 | Vol. 101 | No. 16

BMA International Headquarters Grand Opening scheduled for September 25 in Conway, Arkansas

By **DONNY PARRISH**
BMAA Chief Creative Officer

Dedication for the new BMA International Headquarters facility is scheduled for 2 p.m. Sept. 25, 2014 in Conway, Ark. Following the dedication, the public is invited to tour the new facility until 5 p.m.

The Baptist Missionary Association of America (BMA), a group of 1,300 churches committed to sharing talents and resources in order to make disciples of all nations, has created a family of ministries. Three of those ministries will now be located in Conway, Ark. BMA of America Missions and DiscipleGuide Church Resources have relocated to share facilities and a common vision with Lifeword Media Ministries, who has been a Conway resident for over 50 years. The BMA also supports the BMA Theological Seminary who has its main campus in Jacksonville, Texas and an extension campus at Central Baptist College.

BMA of America Missions seeks to facilitate churches in fulfilling the Great Commission through assessment, training, coaching and missionary care. BMA of America Missions helps churches mobilize missionaries by getting them to the field and sustaining them in their ministries. Presently, BMA of America Missions assists more than 1,000 missionary families in nearly 85 countries around the world.

DiscipleGuide Church Resources partners with local churches to help make disciples of Jesus Christ. Through print and internet-based products, DiscipleGuide creates discipleship materials that are used in hundreds of

churches. Thousands attend the world-class conferences and workshops produced by DiscipleGuide. DiscipleGuide also operates Daniel Springs Baptist Camp, located in Gary, Texas, which hosts hundreds of campers each year.

Lifeword Media Ministries uses technology to take the Gospel of Jesus to the world. Through radio, television, the Internet and mobile devices, Lifeword brings the message of Christ to places and people that may be inaccessible any other way. Presently broadcasting 48 unique programs in 35 languages, Lifeword has a potential listening audience of tens of millions.

Also housed in the new BMA International Headquarters is the BMA Foundation, an endowment ministry that seeks to fund missionary endeavors around the world. In addition, a professional production team of web, print, video and audio engineers complete with audio and video studios are located in the facility.

BMA International

Headquarters is located at 611 Locust Street in Conway, Ark. For further information about the dedication call 501-329-6891, ext. 3833. For more information concerning the ministries of the BMA of America visit the following sites:

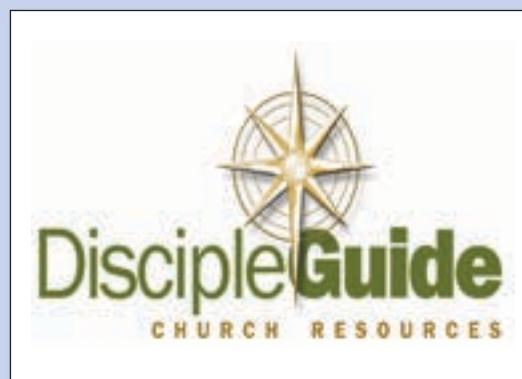
www.bmamissions.org
www.discipleguide.org
www.lifeword.org
www.bmats.edu



Inside



Jacksonville College
Page 6



DiscipleGuide
Page 7



Pastors Oasis
Page 12

Mission Life

Revival in Texas

By JERRY BURNAMAN

I'm of the opinion at the time of the founding and early development of our country, Christianity exercised a dominant influence over American thinking. Our forefathers believed in sin, the devil and hell as constituting one force; and they believed in God and righteousness and heaven as the others. They were compelled to choose sides; they could not be neutral.

They considered their Christian heritage as a battleground against Satan and his forces. Sermons and songs in those days often had a martial quality about them, or perhaps a trace of homesickness. Many of us can remember singing "Onward Christian Soldiers," and we seldom if ever sing it in today's worship services. The idea is to charge the forces of evil with the Word of God in the power of the Holy Spirit.

How different today: the fact remains the same but the interpretation has changed completely. Through the years I've read books by A.W. Tozer and Vance Havner. Both preached and wrote clearly that men think of the world, not as a battleground but as a playground. We are not here to fight, we are here to frolic. We are not in a foreign land, we are at home. We are not getting ready to live, we are already living, and the best we can do is to rid ourselves of our inhibitions and our frustrations and live this life to the fullest.

Consequently this thinking has seeped into our Christian thinking and the authority of Christ is lacking in many, if not most churches. What are we to do? We are to meekly bow down in humility and confess that we have grieved the Holy Spirit, confess our sins and our weaknesses and give Christ the place that our Father has given Him—He is Lord of every believer and of the church.

Then and only then will we be in position to have REVIVAL. I don't have to tell you in our society there is moral decay, continuous criminal action, alternant lifestyles, drugs, alcohol and a host of other things that the Bible refers to as sin. Furthermore, most churches are declining and have little influence in society. It's time for REVIVAL.

Seek a Deeper Relationship with Christ

The growing Christian with the idea of being a mature believer consistently reads the Bible, and then applies God's teachings to daily living. You never reach a point where you've read and learned enough.

It is essential to remember that grace is not cheap. "Cheap grace is the grace we bestow on ourselves. Cheap grace is preaching forgiveness without requiring repentance, baptism without church discipline, communion without confession.... Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ, living and incarnate."

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship*

God forbid that we present a cheap grace! Jesus Christ died for our sins and He calls us to follow Him and give our all for His cause and mission.

Remember God's Purpose

Jesus came to reveal salvation to every person. We know the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20), but do we personally practice it. It's more than giving money during mission's emphasis for some distant missionary to reach people with the wonderful news of the gospel; it includes our involvement to share the "Good News" with our family, neighbors and friends.

It is confession time in order to come to the realization that God is in control and He knows our hearts better than we do. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it? I, the Lord, search the heart, I, test the mind. Even to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his doings." Jeremiah 17:9-10

We Have a Personal Responsibility

After a person has been reconciled to God through salvation, then comes Paul's call to every Christian: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable and perfect will of God." Romans 12:1-2

It is our responsibility to prove the will of God. How can we possibly apply this individually? Paul gives us the conditions.

First, present your body a living sacrifice. Remember that your body is God's temple, and only through your body can

God's will be done. When the believer is completely surrendered to God without any strings attached, then you will not be long finding God's will for your life. Then you will not care what you do or where God puts you. Note the key idea; it is your responsibility to present your body as a living sacrifice.

The second condition is testing the good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God. It is this: "...be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind." Most Christians are as careless and carefree and unregulated in their lives as the man without Christ and without God in the world.

What a difference Christians can make when they take responsibilities for their individual lives to live for Christ and nothing else. It would bring about REVIVAL in our churches and once again influence our communities with the "Good News" of salvation.

As a result of our workshops about REVIVAL, many have responded and it could be we're at the doorstep of experiencing a great renewal among the BMA churches of Texas. Make REVIVAL a priority in your prayer life.

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



Hotel/Motel Information for Baptist Missionary Association of Texas Meeting with Keltys First Baptist Church, Lufkin, November 4-5, 2014

• BEST WESTERN PLUS Crown Colony Inn and Suites

3211 S. 1st St., Lufkin, Texas 75901
936-634-3481

Special association rate: \$89 (includes breakfast)
Rooms have interior entrances.

• LAQUINTA INN AND SUITES

2119 S. 1ST St. Lufkin, Texas 75901
936-634-3351

Special association rate: \$67.50 (includes breakfast)
Rooms have exterior entrances.

• COURTYARD BY MARRIOTT

2130 S. 1st St.
Lufkin, Texas 75901
936-632-0777

Special association rate: \$112 (breakfast not included)
Rooms are interior entrances.

Reservations should be made directly with the above facilities. Cutoff date is three weeks before the association or October 14. Be sure to mention you are with the BMA of Texas to receive the reduced rate. These hotels are approximately five miles from First Baptist Church of Keltys where the association meets. There are other inns in Lufkin; however, these are the three recommended by our hosts and the ones willing to give us a discounted rate.

Pastor Mark Livingston of Keltys First, Lufkin has expressed they have adequate parking lot space to accommodate several RVs for parking. These are not hookups for the RVs, only parking sites.



Texas Baptist Home for Children

School Days, School Days

By **EDDIE MARSH**

The response for back-to-school supplies has proven to be an overwhelming success. Classes for our students begin Aug. 25. Texas Baptist Home for Children expresses our sincere appreciation for your efforts to get the supplies to the campus in time for distribution. There are at this time 120 children in the care of this ministry who represent a lot of needed supplies. However, due to your response, the Baptist Home purchased fewer items than any year.

Your efforts began in April when this president visited Craft, Jacksonville and returned to the campus with a van loaded with school supplies. Rosewood, Gilmer sponsored a paper drive which helped to provide Kleenex. Once the ball got rolling, it seemed that almost weekly, churches were arriving on campus with more items. We now have enough rulers to build a retaining wall, glue to hold it together and crayons to paint it any color we choose.

A group from Buna attended Homecoming with a former resident of the Home who is a member of their congregation. They brought supplies and Bibles. Some

of you arrived at the Change for Children Celebration with more supplies. The Home received calls from both GMA and WMA. Groups who requested a supply list and inquired about our greatest need, were told that backpacks are always in demand. Girl Scout groups arrived with backpacks and supplies.

In the last few weeks, Farley Street, Waxahachie and New Harmony, Tyler organized their members to help with the effort. Farley Street collected items for the Home and other children in the community who are in need. New Harmony's GMA, WMA and Art with Heart groups provided much needed backpacks, general supplies and calculators that were much nicer than the Baptist Home would have been able to provide.

Supplies were distributed at the Bedford location on Aug. 5 and on the Waxahachie campus on Aug. 7. Each of these was done in conjunction with mandatory foster parent training. Child care was provided at both locations by members of our staff. Over 60 children filled the TBHC Activity Center in Waxahachie while their foster parents

sat through training. Thirteen children were entertained through the Bedford office. Both offices had to make a wild dash to pick up last minute items, but it was nothing compared to years past. In the last few days you received a letter from Texas Baptist Home for Children requesting support for Back-To-School. Some of you have graciously and generously responded. The funds received go to help purchase school clothes for the campus children and money for fees, field-trips, and organizations such as band and choir. This is truly a team effort and we are so glad to have you on our team. We can't do it without you.

Eddie Marsh is president of the Texas Baptist Home for Children in Waxahachie, Tex. Contact him at emarsh@tbhc.org or 972-937-1321. You may also visit the TBHC website, www.tbhc.org.



Texas Baptist Home hosts 2014 Adoption Celebration

By **DANA HOLT**

Texas Baptist Home for Children

It is with great glory we share with you about the Texas Baptist Home for Children 2014 Annual Adoption Celebration. Every summer we plan an event that allows all the children and families that have adopted through TBH, to come together and celebrate the creation or addition to their family unit. We celebrated at the local YMCA in Waxahachie.

On Saturday, July 19 from 5:30-8:30 p.m., staff and families had a great time celebrating with each other. We had a turnout of 88 people this year. There was great fellowship around the pool area with families. Families truly had time to visit, get reconnected, tell their stories and introduce their children to other like families.

We also included the "Rolling Video Truck." The kids loved using their technology/creative skills to play video games inside the cool air on the big screen televisions. Tummies were filled with great barbecue, smoked by David Price, chicken strips and hot rolls from Cotton Patch, along with numerous sides. Most importantly, the cake—every morsel—was gone!

The excitement on the kids' faces, when mom and dad said "YES" to two pieces—due to the celebration—was priceless! And for the TBH staff, we take great pride in seeing these families, and knowing that we were a part of creating these bonds/families is forever warming to our hearts! "Children are a blessing from the Lord..." Psalm 127:3





www.bmatexas.org

Baptist Progress

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

**BMA of Texas Missions/
Loan Association**

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

Jacksonville College

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

Texas Baptist Home

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



When the world grows dim

Americans were shocked at the announcement of comedian/actor Robin Williams' death Aug. 11. Williams stood alone in his generation as an all-around entertainer. Whether stage, television or the silver screen, Williams was a master of his trade.

Still, deep below the surface, something was wrong in Williams' life. Away from the spotlight, a darkness haunted him. All of the fame and wealth Williams had earned during his career failed to fill the emptiness within his heart.

The signs were there, as the comedian/actor struggled for years with alcoholism, drug addiction and failed marriages. Also, Williams was aging in a world that was less than kind to those whom youth had passed by. At 63 years old, he suffered greatly from depression—a disease, disorder or perhaps a spiritual condition—that conquered him.

Was Williams a Christian? Only the Lord knows the answer to that question. Raised by an Episcopalian father and a mother who belonged to the Christian Science cult, the entertainer proved through his comedy routine that he knew the Bible. Sadly, he made a mockery of biblical miracles, Jesus and the Virgin Mary with his filthy, foul-mouthed jokes. Evidence would show that Williams was far from God, but again, only our Lord can truly look upon the heart of man.

A point to be made is that fame is fleeting and wealth seduces, only to leave one empty. It is Christ alone who can satisfy the

inner longings of every man, woman and child.

Secondly, suicide is never the answer. If one dies, never having entered into a personal saving relationship with Jesus Christ, all is lost, and things will forever be worse than they were before making his or her last decision; true hell will become an instant reality. Those who know Christ, yet commit suicide, will rob themselves of the joy of laying certain rewards at the feet of Jesus someday.

Thirdly, it is important for all believers to notice the signs of depression in their friends and relatives. Prayer alone might not be enough for those around us who are suffering. Steps should be taken to show one who is hurting that life is worth the living, just because He [Jesus] lives!

As far as Robin Williams is concerned, nothing more can be done for him. He is either with God forever, or separated from Him for eternity. What can be done, is for Christians to pray for the wife and children he left behind, and ask the Lord to use the tragic ending of Williams' life to change and perhaps save the lives of others.



▲ Jerry Fulton

Baptist Progress

USPS: 043120 • ISSN: 005-5751

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

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

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

www.baptistprogress.org

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

SUBSCRIPTION RATE:

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

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

Letter to the Editor: Donated Organ

In recognition of the unselfish act of Pastor Rick Ellington of Hubbard Chapel, Quitman, I want to acknowledge publicly his gift of a beautiful Conn organ to Greenpond, Como. It will undoubtedly benefit our music ministry, both now and in the future. Since *Baptist Progress* served as the conduit for this action, I feel it is appropriate to express thanks in this venue.

As our church organist, I responded to the notice on page 5 of the July 16 issue of *Baptist Progress* indicating Pastor Ellington's desire to honor his mother's memory by the donation of her organ. Skeptical of the offer, I nonetheless contacted him for details, fully expecting an instrument in worse condition than the one I have been playing that had developed problems an expert declined to tackle.

When other musicians aware of the problems with that organ had suggested to me that we needed to request a new one, I rejected that possibility, for presently, I have no substitute. Furthermore, I now live approximately 25 miles round trip from my church in an assisted living cottage. Also, my car is not new, and I am not young. Spending money for a new organ seemed foolish to me, considering the possibility I might become unable to attend, much less play.

After promising the organ for my church, this gracious man further advised he had the instrument in an enclosed trailer and would be happy to make delivery. At that point, I contacted our church leaders to work out further details.

Having played the organ the first time last Sunday, I am now beginning to familiarize myself with its many bells and whistles and hope I can eventually be worthy of honoring the memory of Bro. Ellington's mother. I want to express my personal thanks to him for this gift as well as those of the church.

Mrs. Peggy Pullen

More \$102 Offerings

Since our last issue, we have received more contributions in our \$102 for 102 Years of Ministry Offering Campaign.

Thanks to the following:

- Bethel, Port Arthur
- Glen Fawn, Cushing
- Mahl, Nacogdoches

Total Received: \$8,327

EVENTS

AUGUST 17, 2014

116 Year Anniversary
@ Tundra, Canton
Dr. Mike Smith, guest speaker
Music by Brand New Touch
Lunch following service
10 a.m.

AUGUST 26, 2014

East Texas Missions District Meeting
@ Hispanic Mission in Tyler
Covered dish meal, 6 p.m.
Meeting, 7 p.m.

AUGUST 27, 2014

100 Year Anniversary
@ First, Maydelle
11 a.m.

SEPTEMBER 14, 2014

Homecoming
@ First, Judson
2038 FM 1844 Judson, Texas
Celebrating 131 Years of Worship
Sunday School: 9:30 a.m.
Worship: 10:30 a.m.
Followed by covered dish lunch

SEPTEMBER 21, 2014

78th Anniversary Homecoming
@ Woodland, Gilmer
6049 FM 3358
9:45 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
Message by Rily Pate
Dinner at noon in the fellowship hall and
singing: 1:30 – 3:30 p.m.

OCTOBER 13-14, 2014

Annual Liberty Baptist Association
@ Little Mound, Big Sandy

NOVEMBER 4-5, 2014

Annual Meeting of the BMA of Texas
@ Keltys First, Lufkin

PERSONNEL & POSITIONS

AVAILABLE POSITIONS

Youth—First Baptist Church, Springhill, La is seeking a youth minister/leader. Send inquires or resumes to: Search Committee Chairman-Dave Thomas, 225 Thomas Rd, Springhill, LA 71075, or call at 318-422-0593.

Pastor—Brumley, Pittsburg is seeking a bivocational pastor. Send resume to Brumley Baptist Church, c/o Alan Senn, 5925 Fox Road, Gilmer, Texas 75644 or to atsenn1@aol.com. For more information, call 903-790-3385.
(9/3/14)

Pastor—First Missionary, Morton is seeking a pastor. Send resume to the church at P.O. Box 981, Morton, Texas 79346 or to jimmysealy@aol.com
(9/17/14)

Interim Pastor—New Salem, Centerville, Texas (Centerview Community) at 8097 FM 811, is seeking an interim pastor. Contact Bro. AC Hoyt at 903-536-2616 for information. (TFN)

Music or Music & Youth—First, New Caney is seeking a bivocational music or music & youth minister. Send resume to Pastor Jonathan Fitzgerald, P.O. Box 1027, New Caney, Texas 77357 or to fbcnewcaney@att.net, or call 281-399-9930. (TFN)

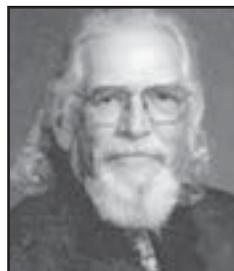
Music—Tundra, Canton is seeking a minister of music to lead an adult choir and blended worship services. Send resume to Pastor Gary House at the church, 2313 FM 1651, Canton, Texas 75103 or to Tundraparson@aol.com.

OBITUARY

William "Bill" Arthur Hamilton

July 9, 1937 - August 9, 2014

Services for Pastor Bill Hamilton were Friday, August 15, 2014 at Rockhill Baptist Church in Brownsboro, with Rev. Shelby Davidson officiating. A graveside service at Oaklawn Cemetery in Athens. Bro. Hamilton died August 9, 2014 at Hospice of East Texas, while surrounded by family and loved ones. He was born July 9, 1937 in Clinton, SC. He served in the United States Air Force for nine years. He studied at Nazarene Bible College in Colorado Springs, Colorado and graduated from Piedmont Technical College in South Carolina. He served as a police officer in Laurens, South Carolina and pastored three churches in the area.



He moved to East Texas in 1982 and drove a truck for Southland Corporation until 1988 when he started his own trucking business. He pastored for 15 years at Union Hill Baptist Church and served on many boards and committees for the Baptist Missionary Association of Texas. He served in Circuit Riders Motorcycle Ministry in many positions, including chapter president and the spiritual covering for the ministry. At the time of his death, he was serving as the pastor of New Beginnings, Edom.

He received many awards for his achievements in transportation and ministry. He was preceded in death by his parents, William Arthur and Hannah Hamilton; infant daughter, Elizabeth Hamilton; son, Danny Moore of Chandler; and brothers, Ray Hamilton and Gene Hamilton.

Among survivors are his wife, Charlotte "Charlie" Hamilton of Chandler; daughters and sons-in-law, Larissa and Steve Williams of South Carolina, Becky and Steve Edwards of Chandler, Ramona and Scott Weeks of South Carolina, Misty and Don West of Brownsboro; sons and daughters-in-law, Ray and Vanessa Hamilton of South Carolina, Ray and Vickie Moore of Arkansas; twenty-one grandchildren; six great-grandchildren.

Memorials may be made to Hospice of East Texas, 4111 University Blvd, Tyler, Texas 75701, New Beginnings Baptist Church Youth Group in Edom, or Salvation Army of Tyler.

CHURCHES IN REVIEW

AUGUST 3, 2014

Church	SS	Worship	Additions
Anthony Drive, Ennis	69	94	
Cedar Creek, Teague	14	24	
Elwood, Wills Point	13	56	1 by baptism, 1 by letter
Farley Street, Waxahachie	440	529	
First, Blooming Grove	216		1 by baptism, 2 by letter
First, Crandall	74	114	
First, Palmer	40	65	
Glade Creek, Gilmer	25	50	2 by letter
Harvest, Lufkin	25	30	
Jackson, Joaquin	68	126	
Little Flock, Lufkin		23	
Long Creek, Sunnyvale	55	68	
Merriman Hills, Sherman	18	18	
New Haven, Dallas	25	45	
New Hope, Mineola	64	164	
Oak Hill, Gilmer	35	59	
Pilgrim Rest #2, Golden	41	51	
Pine Brook, Tyler	34	98	2 by baptism
Rosewood, Gilmer	96	258	
Sand Flat, Grand Saline	65	78	
Simmons Hill, Diana	24	49	
Temple, Mexia	44	53	
Woodland, Splendora	42	73	

AUGUST 10, 2014

Church	SS	Worship	Additions
Anthony Drive, Ennis		154	
Cedar Creek, Teague	12	21	
Elwood, Wills Point	10	34	
First, Blooming Grove	202		1 by baptism
First, Crandall	68	97	
First, Palmer	44	56	2 by letter
Glade Creek, Gilmer	19	43	
Harvest, Lufkin	25	30	
Jackson, Joaquin	69	110	
Lighthouse, Rowlett	28	48	1 by baptism
Little Flock, Lufkin	20		2 by letter
Long Creek, Sunnyvale	64	77	4 by letter
Merriman Hills, Sherman	20	20	
New Harmony, Tyler	273	311	1 by baptism, 1 by letter
New Haven, Dallas	33	62	
New Hope, Mineola	62	117	
Pine Brook, Tyler	33	74	
Rosewood, Gilmer	111	183	1 by baptism, 3 by letter
Sand Flat, Grand Saline	69	80	
Security Calvary, Cleveland	15	30	
Temple, Mexia	43	51	
Tundra, Canton	103		
Woodland, Splendora	41	58	
Yellowpine Macedonia, Hemphill	18	21	

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

HALL FURNITURE LTD.

Fine Church Furniture
since 1939

P.O. Box 157
(1321 Industrial Dr.)
Henderson, TX 75653
903-657-4501





JACKSONVILLE COLLEGE

JACKSONVILLE COLLEGE

Adoption

By DR. MIKE SMITH

Christianity Today reports that international adoptions by Americans have hit their lowest rate since 1992. Adoptions have dropped from a high of 22,991 in 2004 to a low of 7,094 in 2013. Ukraine has replaced Russia as the third largest source of adoptions for U.S. parents. I personally know several couples who have adopted children from other cultures, and I applaud them. It often requires a financial sacrifice, yet the joy overrides the cost. We need more parents to consider adoption.

I ask you to consider adoption from another perspective. Why not consider adopting a student at Jacksonville College by donating a scholarship? Because college is expensive, there is a great need for individuals, churches, and associations to adopt a student at JC to offset his or her cost of education. Scholarships are often the only way a student can attend college.

While we offer numerous scholarships at JC, there is a need for more. Paul Galyean, Director of Financial Aid, can assist in setting up a one semester scholarship or a perpetual one. Call 903-586-2518 and ask to speak with Mr. Galyean. Yes, adoption through a scholarship requires a sacrifice, but the joy and blessing you will receive outshines the cost. Your participation will play a part in transforming a life and pay eternal dividends.

Dr. Mike Smith is the president of Jacksonville College. Contact him at msmith@jacksonville-college.edu or 903-589-7106. You may also visit the Jacksonville College website, www.jacksonville-college.edu



▲ Stars On Stage summer theater camp at Jacksonville College hosted 30 campers, 9 counselors and two adult leaders. This was a record size and a record for talent. We are growing.



▲ Dressed as a character from the Wild West, Texas WMA President Diana Morris tells an exciting Bible story with a Western flair to the Texas Sunbeams who attended the 2014 "SonWest Roundup" house party July 18-19 at Jacksonville College.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Fall 2014 Semester Begins

August 20 (Also the last day to register)

27th Annual JC Benefit Golf Tournament

Saturday, September 20

Call Lynn Nabi at (903) 589-7137 for more information

AMPED East Texas Youth Conference

September 27 from 1:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. in Buckner Chapel

For students in grades 7 through 12

Cost: \$5 per person (includes dinner)

Contact information: Ricky Berry (214) 883-0851, rberry87@yahoo.com; Tanner Choppy (832) 515-7599

Register through the AMPED website at www.ampedetyc.com.



DiscipleKids Fall Preview

By DR. SCOTT ATTEBERY

Have you noticed how kids are becoming more socially conscious these days? In their rush to connect with friends, kids need to know that God desires a relationship with them. He loves kids and thinks they are so important that He has provided a perfect plan of salvation through Jesus Christ. This fall's quarter of *DiscipleKids* will teach the children in your church that through reading God's Word and spending time with Him in prayer, they can discover how He wants them to live.

In addition, by studying the life of Joseph this quarter, kids will learn that even when things are tough, God still has a plan and is at work accomplishing it. Kids today experience hurt, temptation, loneliness, materialism, difficulties in relationships and need. *God Can Help* will teach kids that God never hurts them, that He helps them run from temptations, and that He is with them and will never forget them. Kids also will talk about forgiving others, showing compassion and using their material possessions wisely.

DiscipleKids is the children's line of Sunday school curriculum published for the Baptist Missionary Association by DiscipleGuide Church Resources. To order, or for more information, call 1-800-333-1442 or go to discipleguide.org.

Understanding and Pursuing God's Will

By DR. SCOTT ATTEBERY

DiscipleGuide Church Resources has released a new book entitled, *Navigate: Understanding & Pursuing God's Will*. The book, authored by DiscipleGuide Executive Director Scott Attebery, focuses on a biblical understanding of God's will and offers practical advice for making life decisions.

Whether you are:

- Contemplating a career change
- Searching for "the one"
- Wrestling with relationships
- Agonizing over a life-changing decision

• Or rethinking your college major

This book will help you think biblically about your situation.

If you want to:

- Gain clarity in the midst of a myriad of options
- Enjoy confidence in decision making
- And honor God by exercising wisdom and discernment

Consider purchasing a copy of *Navigate* from DiscipleGuide Church Resources by going to discipleguide.org or calling 800-333-1442. For more information on *Navigate*, or to find links for ordering a copy for your kindle, iPad or other digital device, go to navigategodswill.com.



Dr. Scott Attebery is the executive director of DiscipleGuide Church Resources. Contact him by email at scott@discipleguide.org, on Facebook: Scott Attebery or Twitter @scottattebery. Visit www.DiscipleGuide.org.



Does Your Church Know What We Believe?

By DR. SCOTT ATTEBERY

What comes to mind when you hear the word "doctrine?"

In I Timothy 1:3 and 11, Paul instructs Timothy to "*command certain people not to teach false doctrines . . . and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine that conforms to the gospel.*"

Today, many people think that doctrine is a negative, outdated term. However, we must remember that it is a biblical word! Doctrine simply describes what we believe. Thus, the title of DiscipleGuide's upcoming Compass quarterly series is called *We Believe*.

Some may say, "We don't need to teach doctrine. We just preach Jesus." But as soon as you begin unpacking questions such as "Who is Jesus and what did He do?" you have begun teaching doctrine.

In writing to Timothy, Paul describes the doctrine to be taught as "*sound.*" Doctrine must come directly from Scripture, not man's imagination. Apparently, others in Ephesus had already been teaching "*false doctrines.*" The problem is that "*false doctrine*" is not always obvious. Satan disguises false teaching with just enough truth to make it difficult to tell the difference. Like poison hidden in a cup of cold water, what you don't see can hurt you no matter how good it looks.

Romans 16:18 warns against such false teachers who, "*by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.*"

That's why it is crucial to study doctrine. We must keep ourselves apprised of Biblical truth. Our discernment will rise and fall in proportion to the amount of time we study God's Word.

Are you "*ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you*" (I Peter 3:15)? How else will you be prepared to defend and communicate truth unless you think on whatever is "*true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things*" (Philippians 4:8-9)?

Studying doctrine will prepare you for:

- When your co-worker asks why you go to church,
- When your children ask why they can't go to the party with their friends,
- When you question why a loved one tragically passed away,
- When a trusted friend betrays you.

The person who studies doctrine "*shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper*" (Psalm 1:3).

So what are you waiting for? Join in the study of our BMA doctrine this fall in the Compass adult quarterly and help your church stand strong in what we believe!

For more information, or to order, call DiscipleGuide at 1-800-333-1442 or go to discipleguide.org.

Church Issues

Unrealistic Expectations

By LARRY BARKER

At a Church Planting Leadership Fellowship (CPLF) in Nashville, Tenn., I heard it again; “Unrealistic Expectations!” Several spoke about the difficulty of discouragement when big dreams and visions do not become a reality. I remember years ago Jeff Swart, now pastor of First, Galena, Kan., describing two optimists stranded on a deserted island and setting their goal for Sunday school at three. Now that is eternal optimism.

All of us can struggle with unrealistic expectations. In our Dynamic Church Planting International (DCPI) Essentials training landmine #10 is **Unrealistic Expectations!** It says, “We try to set goals by the standard of someone else’s church. Faith can sometimes be confused with presumption or wishful thinking. A church planter may have such a burning desire for a large, dynamic church that he will imagine that God has granted him certain numerical goals for the start of the new church.”

Honestly, I can be way too idealistic in my thinking. I will picture in my mind how something should be and when it happens it is never as I imagined. That can create some disappointing situations in dealing with the gap between the ideal and reality. The dictionary describes an idealist as: “a person who is guided more by ideals than by practical considerations.” Idealism is: “the tendency to represent things in their ideal forms, rather than as they are.” Someone has said, “There can be a fine line between faith and presumption.”

DCPI says, “If attendance doesn’t measure up, both the pastor and his people may feel they have failed. Instead of rejoicing in what God did, Birth Sunday may become a depressing experience. Planting churches is a lot like

raising children. Every child is unique. Each one has its own growth rate, and every child grows to a different size and shape. But parents love each one for who they are. Comparison with other children is unwise and unhealthy. Whether 40 people came, or 400, or 4,000, God was worshiped, the Bible was taught, and the love of Christ became real in a new church. Let God set the expectations: it is His church.”

There are at least two possible dangers that can come out of unrealistic expectations. The first is **The Copy-Cat Syndrome**. We idealistically think that because it worked for the larger church or the mega church, it has to work for us also. So often we develop a strategy before we ever get to know the people we are trying to reach. You must have a great understanding of the heartbeat of the community God has placed you in. Don’t try to be someone else, be who God called you to be! Tom Nebel says, “Culture trumps strategy every time!”

The second possible danger of unrealistic expectations is **The Comparison Obsession**. Why are they running 400 and we are only running 40? Is it good to evaluate to be a stronger and healthier church? Yes, but it can be unhealthy to always be comparing ourselves to someone else. In the same way that we are all uniquely created different, every church is unique. Every church’s leaders are unique and uniquely gifted. Every assignment God gives us is a unique assignment in a unique location.

Unrealistic expectations can undermine what God is doing and cause us to be so goal driven and number conscious that we will never have the joy God intends. Larry Osborne said this during our CPLF meeting, “Shepherd the sheep you have and don’t just use them to

reach the sheep you want.” Should we have a passion for the lost and pursuing them? Most definitely, but we also must care for those who God has already connected to our ministries. It is okay to lean toward being idealistic but you also must have an injection of realism.

Here are some realities that are good for every child of God and every one of His churches.

Be real and authentic! Don’t try to be somebody you are not or think you must be Walmart and provide everything everyone wants. Love goes a long way! When you genuinely care about people they can tell and are drawn to that compassion.

Be aware of your giftedness! All of us are uniquely gifted and God has placed gifted people in your churches. Focus on your strengths and what you do have instead of coveting what others have.

Be flexible! Things will almost always be different than what you thought. Know what the essentials are and never change them but be flexible on the non-essentials. All too often churches are driven more by preferences than they are God’s directives.

Healthy churches are realistic with where they are but lean toward being idealistic in where they want to go!

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



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

Simply set up your account with Baptist Progress for the number of bulletins you regularly need on Sunday, and they will be shipped right to your door. We have a wide selection offering six bulletin styles in various sizes to fit the worship style of nearly any church. Extra bulletins are available to add to your regular order for special days such as Easter, Christmas, Mother’s Day, etc. To order or for more information, visit www.baptistprogress.org, click MORE at the top, then click Every Sunday Bulletin Service or give us a call at 972-923-0757 or send an e-mail to info@baptistprogress.org.

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

Christian Living

Encampment on the mountain

By **PAUL GAUNTT**

Baptist Progress Correspondent

I have awakened in recent mornings with my heart heavy for a people—a people in a distant land, whom I’ve never met.

They are the thousands of Yadizis (Kurdish speaking people) who have found perhaps a temporary refuge atop a mountain, from the barbarism of a so-called new, super army of terrorists—an army so terrible, even al Qaeda disapproves.

I know little about what they believe—but from what I’ve read, theirs is an ancient monotheistic religion—they believe in one God, but they’ve extracted beliefs from several Mesopotamian religions. I don’t know what they believe about Jesus Christ, but I do know ISIS wants them dead. If they are followers of Christ, then being stranded on a mountain with only a few pages of scripture, and the promises of God usually means revival.

My earnest prayer is that such an experience never befalls us here. Yet another part of me wishes to be a fly sitting upon a parched, desert rock, listening to what’s happening on that mountain.

They are on a mountain top! Isn’t that where Jesus went when He wanted to be alone with the Father? Do you think that rather than pandemonium breaking out, it’s possible these people are having the revival of a lifetime?

When I think of them, the word “encampment” comes to mind. Isn’t that what we do when we make

our pilgrimage to Daniel Springs every summer? Aren’t we (metaphorically speaking) a little higher—up on a mountain top—having escaped many of the trappings of the world, if only for a few days? Although the camp ground has been modernized light years from what it was 50 years ago, still campers are without a few creature comforts—they have escaped the perils of network news—the deafening sounds of music piping from iPods and iPhones. Focus is on Christ, the Word, worship and fellowship.

If you recall your encampment days, you remember leaving in cars or buses, making the trek home, anxious to spread this new-found glory to the folks back there. It’s hard to say goodbye to such an encampment.

I’m sure that band of Yadizis on that Iraqi mountaintop will be relieved when the peril, from which they’ve escaped, will be past. But still, I wonder what kind of meeting with God they may have had on that mountain.

I look back to Smyrna—the persecuted church—literally, the “crushed” church. Smyrna is taken from a word which means “myrrh,” a substance extracted from a shrub, which, when crushed into the skin, provides a sweet aroma. The more it’s crushed, the sweeter the smell. What a metaphor of what persecution does to the people of God!

Consider the persecuted church behind the iron

curtain during the cold war. The church flourished as she met in secret in basements, or under trees in the woods. Persecution has never hurt the church—just causes her to flourish. While there are a dozen Bibles in every American home, Russ Polson of Underground Evangelism, once said Russian people, who only had a few precious pages from scripture, and held them near their hearts, would walk 20 miles in freezing rain and snow to receive a Bible from Underground Evangelism, and literally fall to their knees and kiss the feet of the one presenting it to them.

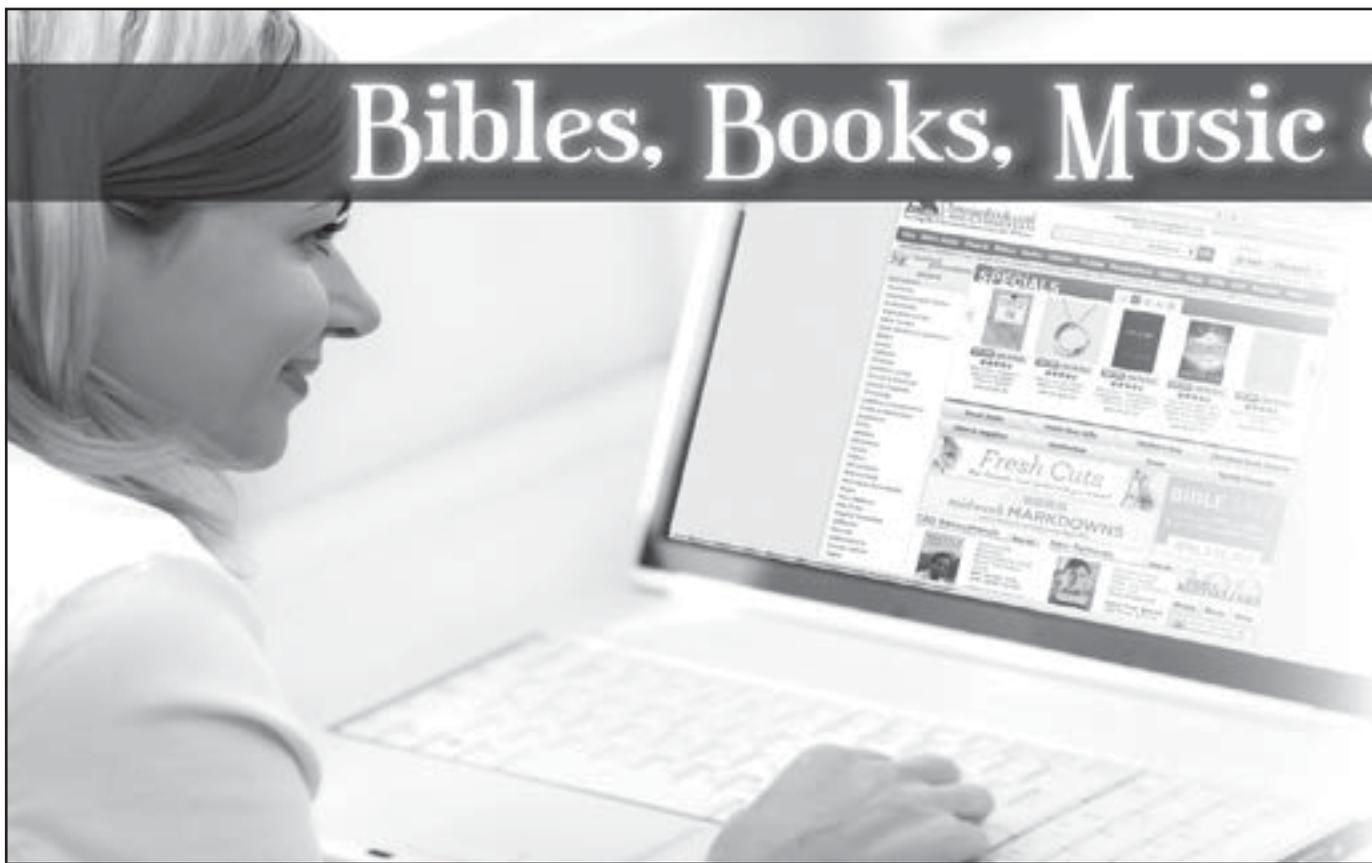
And because of that truth, I think we’d be surprised as to what those Yadizis experienced on that mountaintop. Please pray for them—and for the crushed church everywhere.

But also, pray for the “pampered” church in a land of freedom and plenty—I think we probably need it worse.

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



Bibles, Books, Music & Gifts



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

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

Auxiliaries

Missions

By SHARON COLE

A very important part of the WMA Plan of Work is Missions. Since “Missionary” is our middle name, we place a high value on it. Jesus placed a great emphasis on missions when He was on earth by sending His disciples out two by two to preach and teach. His commission to them was, “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” Matthew 28:19-20

The Great Commission still stands today for all who believe in Him. It is our responsibility to go and tell the Gospel of Jesus Christ. When we hear the word “missions,” we think of a faraway land across the ocean. But, missions is more than that. Jesus emphasized the importance of missions beginning at home when He gave them instruction in Acts 1:8, “... and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”

Jerusalem represented home. All of us ladies cannot or do not receive a special calling of God to go to a foreign land to be a missionary, but our own home and family can be, and is, a mission field. There is no greater joy than leading one of your children or grandchildren to a saving knowledge of Christ. We must live in such a way that others see Christ in us and want what we have.

Jesus said the woman’s conversation, or conduct, can be an influence on her unsaved husband. “Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives.” I Peter 3:1

We are blessed in our Association with many who have committed their life to serving as missionaries. Our missions magazine, *Mission: World* is filled with articles and information from our missionaries to keep us informed of their progress in winning souls for Christ, establishing and planting churches, working with children, teaching men to be pastors of their own people and many other things that are necessary in ministry.

Our missions work is divided into many different areas. Each state or area has a missions director who oversees state missions. Our national missions department is divided into North American Missions and International Missions. *Mission: World* provides a list of all missionaries and their contact information. We also learn who is on furlough from their field of ministry so your pastor can schedule them for a visit in your church.

All the missionaries have many needs that you can

help with but their main desire is that you pray for them. Pray that the Lord will give them wisdom and discernment of the Word so they can effectively reach people for Christ. Pray for their safety in a land that the government may not want them there. Pray for their physical well-being, so they can do the work that they have been called to do. Pray that they can master the different languages, so they can be understood in witnessing. Pray for their children when they have to adjust to a completely different culture, missing their friends, grandparents and extended families. Pray that God will show you a way to minister to them even across the ocean.

Send cards for special occasions or no occasion at all just to let them know you are personally praying for them and their ministry. Don’t forget the State Missions church planters and North American missionaries who may not be so far away, but still need your support financially and spiritually. They have some of the same needs as the International missionaries. Consider sending a group from your church to a missionary’s field to help in VBS, organizing Sunbeams, GMA, or Galileans or WMA. Find out if they need help in a building project, visiting people in their neighborhoods, etc. The list is endless of the possibilities for a ministry outreach for your church and in so doing; you are being a blessing to another church or mission. Missions needs to be the central theme of our WMA in planning our programs and activities.

Have you ever had a missions fair? It can be a lot of fun as well as informative. It will draw you closer to the missionaries as you learn about where they are and how they work. The missions fair can include inviting a missionary to speak, dressing in native clothing, preparing different foods from that area, giving oral reports, making posters, decorating with items from a particular country, show videos that can be obtained from the missions office, etc. There are so many other things you can do to make missions come alive. Write letters to missionaries regularly and get to know them personally, collect medicines, clothing, school supplies and other things and send to them or have fund raising events for them. Missions can be as simple as sending a Gospel tract with your bills when you pay them or going to a nursing home and using your musical talents in playing the piano or other musical instrument and singing or just visiting. Each of us who are saved, are called to be witnesses and missionaries to the whole world. He has a divine plan for each of us and we must seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit to find that place of service and

surrender our will to His.

District News

Smith County District WMA met with Omen, Arp July 22, 2014. Following a delicious meal provided by the host church, WMA President Lois Tucker presided over the meeting. The new project for the coming year is the state project, The Master’s Builders. The following officers were elected: President-Lois Tucker (Fair Park), 1st Vice-Carol Lybrand (New Harmony), Secretary/Treasurer-Claudie Thompson (Red Springs), Project Promoter-Jackie Glasscock (Red Springs), Song Leader-Deborah Brasher (Omen), Assistant-Any volunteer; Pianist-Host Church; Reporter-Mary Reynolds (Omen), Historian-Betty Gibbs (New Harmony), GMA/YLA Promoter-Carol Cline (Red Springs), Sunbeam Promoter-Claudie Thompson (Red Springs), Meeting places for 2014-2015: October 28, 2014-Fair Park; January 27, 2015-Red Springs; April 28, 2015-New Harmony; July 28, 2015-Omen. Concluding the business meeting, the WMA and Brotherhood met together for a program. Bro. Jerry Fulton, editor of the *Baptist Progress* blessed with a concert.

Liberty District WMA had an officers meeting Aug. 5, 2014. The meeting was called by President Glenda Chamberlain. The new theme will be “Let’s Do Something.” Officers elected are: President-Glenda Chamberlain; 1st Vice-Cindi Turner; 2nd Vice-Jessica Hoffpauir; 3rd Vice-Sandra Lewton; Secretary/Treasurer-Charlotte Johnson; Asst. Secretary/Treasurer-Maeva Thompson; GMA/YLA Promoter-Roxanne O’Connor; Sunbeam Promoter-Shirley Hoffpauir; Reporter-Ann Bergman; Historian-Angela Veitch; Asst. Historian-Janice Walker; Project Promotion Committee: Elizabeth Midkiff, Dale Bazinet and Belinda Caudle; Missions Retreat Committee: Doris Allen, Sandra Kizer and Betty Stokes; Pianist-Michelle Ayers; Asst. Pianist-Maeva Thompson; Song Leader-Cindy Clark; and Asst. Song Leader-Melissa Henry. The next meeting will be Oct. 11, 2014 at Camille Acres, Longview. Fellowship, Pittsburg combined with the Missions Retreat on Jan. 10, 2015. Simmons Hill will host the April 11, 2015 meeting and July 11, 2015 meeting will be with Coffeerville, Ore City.

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



Sunday School Lessons

Unexpected service

By GARY HOUSE

DATE: Aug. 24, 2014

TEXT: Acts 27:39-28:10

LESSON IN BRIEF: Be eager to capitalize on unexpected opportunities to serve God. Galatians 6:10.

Following God's deliverance from a hurricane and shipwreck (Acts 27:39), I wonder if Paul was a little puzzled. Standing on the beach of an unknown island, freezing cold with both seawater and rainwater dripping off his nose, his plan had been to go to Rome and have an audience with the highest powers of his world. Instead he is one of 276 half-drowned rats, at the mercy of a people who didn't even speak Greek. Paul's plans were as wrecked as the ship being pounded to pieces by the storm surf just offshore. So how does one remain a faithful servant when the light of his or her plan goes out?

Acts 28:1. Melita (modern day Malta) was an island just 58 miles from Sicily. It wasn't very big, only 17 miles long and nine miles wide. Those on board the ship came to shore not knowing at which island they had arrived. In ancient times, when people from a shipwreck arrived on shore they could very likely face death or slavery. When they heard that the island was Malta, they were overjoyed because Malta was an island that belonged to Rome.

Acts 28:2. Instead of hostility, the victims of the shipwreck encountered people who were gracious and kind. The people of the island

saw the shipwreck and ran to help. Luke calls them *barbarous*, which conjures the image of uncivilized savages. The term, however was applied to all non-Greek speaking people. Immediately, they built a fire to warm the refugees.

Acts 28:3-6. The Apostle Paul quickly helped gather sticks. Notice the attitude of the Apostle Paul. He understood that we are saved so that we might serve. He was willing to do whatever needed to be done. He was quick to pitch in.

In what ways are you serving the Lord? Are you one who is a follower of Christ in name only, or are you putting your faith into action? Do you find yourself saying, "That's not my job?" The apostle Paul loved the Lord and was willing to serve Him in any way possible.

As Paul went to throw the sticks he gathered onto the fire, a snake struck the apostle, grabbing hold of his hand. Paul shook the snake off into the fire. Some criticize this story and say it was made up to enhance Paul's image. They point out that there are no poisonous snakes on Malta today. This doesn't mean there were no snakes of this sort at the time of Paul. As civilization developed across the island, the snakes might have been eliminated. Others charge the snake was not really poisonous. There are two things to keep in mind. First, Luke was a physician and would have been well acquainted with poisonous snakes. Second, the people of Malta obviously considered

the snake poisonous by their reaction to the bite.

Acts 28:4. These people may have known Paul was a prisoner, so when they saw the snake bite Paul, they concluded he was getting what he deserved. They concluded that Paul was a wicked man. I wonder how many times we have seen something happen and quickly drawn negative conclusions about a person. But when the apostle shook off the snake, and suffered no violent reaction, the Maltese citizens assumed Paul was a god, and began to exalt him.

Acts 28:7. It took time for Paul to overcome this exalted image of the islanders. How did he do it? Publius, the Roman governor took the shipwrecked visitors into his estate for three days while other arrangements could be made. Scripture does not say why the leading official of the island invited Paul and Luke, at least to his place. Perhaps, Paul came to Publius' notice because of the snakebite incident.

Acts 28:8. Publius has a father who is very sick during this time, Paul ministered healing to the ailing father. People took notice (verse 9). The men stayed on Malta for three months while they waited for better sailing weather. Paul provided spiritual service to the islanders, praying for them and using God-sent miracles to heal them. He served them not as God, but in the name of God. Paul never missed an opportunity to share his faith. The people came to appreciate Paul as a servant of God, and a sinner who had been

saved by God's wonderful grace. Paul surely encouraged these people not to focus on him but on the one who deserves our worship and adoration.

Acts 28:10. Paul was getting to Rome, but God arranged this "divine detour." The sojourn at Melita was without doubt a divine appointment. Note God's provision for Paul and his team:

After the shipwreck, they arrived alive on shore. Ministry on the island gained them great favor. They lost everything in the shipwreck, so islanders provided what they needed, or God did! God provided another grain ship, sailed for Syracuse.

Wherever the gospel goes the good deeds of the natives on this island of Malta will be remembered for their kindness and hospitality for ministering to Paul and the rest of the men on the ship

Ministry can be really messy. Sometimes we won't serve because the plan or the logistics don't suit our fancy. God has His plan, and quite often it does not suit ours. Paul would have preferred to be back in Jerusalem preaching to the Jews! And yet here he was on Malta, cold and wet, with a snake imbedded in his hand!

A key to effective service to Christ is to be alert to the needs of others, and be generous in meeting those needs. Let's stay flexible, serve where we are and love the people we are with. Be eager to capitalize on opportunities as they arise.

New and Exciting

By GARY HOUSE

DATE: Aug. 31, 2014

TEXT: Acts 28: 15-31

LESSON IN BRIEF: God sometimes moves you out of your familiar place of service. Accept any new assignment from God. "As much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are in Rome also." Romans 1:15

Throughout the quarter, we have noted Paul's fervent desire to go to Rome. "I must also see Rome." Acts 19:21

He did not just want to tour the capital city of the empire, he wanted to share Jesus Christ with them. In Acts 23:11, God assured the Apostle that he would get to Rome. Three years later, Paul arrived to begin his missionary ministry.

Near the close of the third missionary journey, Paul, while at Corinth, penned the epistle to the romans, which is considered to be the most comprehensive explanation of the basics of salvation, and to explain the relationship between the Jew and the Gentile in God's overall plan of redemption. God was preparing Paul for his defense before Caesar. Strangely enough, we have no account of his appeal before the emperor. Paul's appeal to Caesar was the means of getting him to Rome. Now that he is

there, he simply begins to share the gospel with anyone and everyone that he can.

Paul arrives in Rome (Acts 28:15-16). Many of the believers from Rome traveled about 40 miles or so from the city of Rome to give Paul a hero's welcome. They traveled with him and "gave him something like a triumphal escort," in the words of one Bible scholar. This must have been very rewarding for Paul as he "thanked God and took courage (literally, found strength) for the task ahead of him. While he wanted no glory for himself, he was still human enough to appreciate the love and honor that these believers showed him as he neared their city. God knows what it takes to encourage us along the way.

His ministry in Rome was conducted under house arrest, because he had earned the trust of the soldiers assigned to guard him. This allowed many to come to hear Paul share the gospel.

Regardless of your ministry circumstances, minister wherever God takes you and puts you.

Meeting with Jewish Leaders (Acts 28:20, 23, 24). Paul's real purpose for being in Rome was to present the gospel. He declared, "For the hope of Israel, I am bound with this chain." The

Jews came in large numbers to meet him and hear him. Wouldn't you like to have listened as he witnessed to them from morning till evening, explaining about the kingdom of God? Filled with his knowledge of Scripture, inspired by the Holy Spirit, and with a heart abounding in love for his brethren, Paul tried to persuade them about Jesus. Some were convinced . . . but others would not believe.

The group began to leave when Paul gave the warning that because the Jews had rejected the truth (Jesus Christ is the Messiah, The Promised One), God was turning to the Gentiles, who would listen and accept Christ.

Luke concludes this history of the early church with these powerful words: "He proclaimed the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance."

Paul's boldness to preach anytime anywhere demonstrates three truths:

The gospel must be shared See Acts 1:8. Paul states with all authority in verse 28: "Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that THEY WILL HEAR IT." The Jews may be both

blind and death to the gospel but we have full assurance that the Gentiles will hear it.

The gospel cannot be stopped by chains and bonds, persecution, storms and struggles, unbelief or opposition. Sometimes it has been added to and at other times it has been subtracted from, but is has never been stamped out. The Word of the glorious God and our Savior, Jesus Christ, marches on triumphantly, and will continue to march on in power and victory until He returns. The Acts of God are not done yet.

Only the gospel can save (See Acts 4:12; 8:4, 25, 35; 9:20; 13:5; 13:49; 14:7; 16:10, 31; 18:11, 28; 19:20; 21:20-21, 27). The saints of the Book of Acts believed it. We must not only believe it, we must also proclaim it!

Gary House is the writer of the Sunday school lessons for Baptist Progress. He serves as pastor of Tundra Baptist Church in Canton. Contact him at Tundraparson@aol.com.



Lifeword Sunday/Walk for the World Season Begins

By **HOLLY MERIWEATHER**

Lifeword Sunday/Walk for the World Coordinator

This fall Lifeword Media Ministries' flagship fundraiser will be held for the thirty-fifth time by BMA churches all over the United States. The first Walk was held in October of 1980 and was considerably longer (20 miles) than the current version (5K or 3.1 miles). One third of Lifeword's budget depends on Walk funds, but if having an actual Walk or other fundraiser is not possible, churches are encouraged to have an emphasis day, Lifeword Sunday on Oct. 26, to learn about, pray for and give to this unique ministry.

There are two new additions to the 2014 Walk. Both church coordinators and pastors will receive free short-sleeved t-shirts just for registering their churches, and t-shirts are available in long - and short-sleeved. Just go to Lifeword's website (lifeword.org/walk), email Holly Meriweather at holly@lifeword.org or call 501-205-1127 to register and/or purchase T-shirts.

There are two area walks already scheduled. The Central Arkansas Area 5K Walk/Run will be on Wednesday night Oct. 8 at the Conway High School football stadium. Bro. Paul Bearfield, son of former Harvest Gleaner Hour Executive Director Paul Bearfield and current pastor at Worden Baptist Church in Bald Knob, will be the honored guest at that event.

Also, there will be a Northwest Arkansas Regional Walk for the World. Dan Carson, associate pastor at Temple Baptist Church in Rogers, is coordinating that event, which is called Save the World Superhero 5K, at the Rogers Cross Country course on Lifeword Sunday Oct. 26. Walkers will begin at 4 p.m. and runners at 4:30 p.m. that afternoon. There will also be a costume contest and other activities. Donny Parrish, Chief Creative Office of the BMA, will represent Lifeword and participate in that event.



Pastors Oasis

September 29 - October 1, 2014
Hilton Convention Center, Branson, Missouri
To register go to discipleguide.org/pastorsoasis

 Jonathan Falwell	 Babbie Mason	 Acts of Renewal	 Sandi Patty	 Michael Jr.
 Scott Attebery	 Jason Aultman	 Henry Horton	 Travis Sellers	

DiscipleGuide
CHURCH RESOURCES