

# Baptist Progress

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## Anatomy of a Sick Church – 10 Symptoms to Watch

By **DR. THOM RAINER**

There are certain metrics and issues physicians check when we go to the doctor. They want to check our blood pressure and temperature. They do blood tests to see if there are any warning signs. They are looking for symptoms that might indicate real problems exist.

After working with churches for thirty years, I too look for symptoms that might point to greater concerns. The symptoms are not necessarily the problem; they simply provide warnings or cautions of potential issues.

While there are many potential symptoms of a sick church, I have found ten to be consistently common. These ten are not listed in any particular order:

**Declining worship attendance.** Surprisingly, the majority of church leaders do not monitor worship attendance. I advise leaders to compare each month's average worship attendance to the same month of previous years.

**Decline in frequency of attendance of church members.** This symptom is the number one explanation for attendance decline in most churches. Members are not as committed as they once were. Their waning love for their church is reflected in their declining frequency in worship attendance.

**Lack of joy and vibrancy in the worship service.** Obviously, this symptom is subjective. It is still, however, very important. Most people can sense when a worship service is vibrant, lukewarm, or dead.

**Little evangelistic fruit.** As a general rule, a healthy church will reach at least one non-Christian for every 20 in worship attendance. A church with a worship attendance of 200, for example, should see at least ten new Christians a year.

**Low community impact.** In my consultations, I attempt to find clear indicators that a church is making a difference in its respective community. I ask both church leaders and community members for clear examples and indicators.



▲ photo credit: *Come in and take a pew via photopin (license)*

**More meetings than ministry.** A sick church will meet about what they should do rather than do it. Some churches have more committees than conversions.

**Acrimonious business meetings.** Christians can and do disagree. Sick churches have meetings where the disagreements reflect obvious bitterness and anger.

**Very few guests in worship services.** A vibrant church will attract guests. A sick church will not.

**Worship wars.** Yes, they still exist in many churches. Those wars are indicators of an inward focus by the members.

**Unrealistic expectations of pastoral care.** Sick churches view pastors and other staff as hired hands to do all of the work of ministry. Healthy churches view pastors as equippers for the members to do most of the ministry.

None of these symptoms are good, but churches do go through periods where they demonstrate a few of them. The key is to recognize the symptoms and respond early and quickly.

Here is my own subjective health analysis according to the number of symptoms:

**1 to 2 symptoms.** Normal for most churches for a short period of time. Not an indicator of poor health, but the symptoms should be

addressed promptly.

**3 to 4 symptoms.** The church is sick and needs immediate attention.

**5 to 6 symptoms.** The church is very sick. If significant changes are not made, the congregation is in danger of moving into the phase of terminal illness.

**7 to 10 symptoms.** The church is in danger of dying in the next five to ten years. While it is possible for a church to recover from this level of sickness, it is rare. Intervention must be quick, intense, and dramatic. The amount of change necessary is often more than most leaders and members are willing to bear.

Give an honest assessment of your own church by these symptom indicators. What do you see? What should you do if there are a number of symptoms? Let me hear from you.

*Thom S. Rainer serves as president and CEO of LifeWay Christian Resources. Among his greatest joys are his family: his wife Nellie Jo; three sons, Sam, Art, and Jess; and seven grandchildren. Dr. Rainer can be found on Twitter @ThomRainer and at facebook.com/Thom.S.Rainer.*



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# From the Editor

## Mission accomplished

By **JERRY FULTON**

In early 2011, I received a phone call from my old friend, Dan Anthony, informing me that Anthony Drive, Ennis was once again without a pastor. I served the church as interim pastor for seven or eight months in 2004. After filling the pulpit for a couple of Sundays, the church once more elected me as their interim pastor. Sunday school attendance was averaging in the 30s and worship attendance was somewhere in the low 50s. The congregation was discouraged, and to be honest, I wasn't sure that the congregation hadn't seen its better days.

Then, something happened. Slowly, but surely, the Lord began to bring back members who had left, young couples began attending, the youth and children groups started growing, people became excited, and the Lord brought forth the increase.

All of the sudden, the church approached me about becoming their pastor. At first, I didn't think it would be possible for me to serve as editor of *Baptist Progress* and pastor of the church simultaneously, and I knew that my work as editor of the *Baptist Progress* was not yet completed. But the Lord had a plan. I received approval from the *Baptist Progress* Trustees and the BMA of Texas administrative committee, trusted God and forged ahead.

I made an arrangement with the church to serve as their teaching pastor. It would be my responsibility to preach on Sundays and Wednesdays, develop leaders and cast a vision for the church. In turn, members of the church would perform the day-to-day ministry including congregational care, outreach and all the rest. Ministry teams were formed, the teams got busy, and lo and behold, it worked!

The church now averages 60-something in Sunday school and above 100 in worship. Numerous souls have been saved, and the Lord has brought seasoned Christians to help with the work of ministry. He also blessed the church and me with a great staff (paid and volunteer) who have done a fabulous job in helping to lead the congregation.

My agreement with the church also meant that more funds were used for ministry and less for the pastor's salary at ADBC. In addition, much of what the church paid me to serve as their pastor provided more income for *Baptist Progress*. It has been a win-win endeavor.

In making plans for the new church year, which begins in September, the Lord placed it on my heart that my mission with Anthony Drive, Ennis has been accomplished. The church has grown to the point of needing a full-time pastor—someone who can be on the field leading the church to minister to the community every day. His plan for the church and for me was revealed quickly, but then when we pray without ceasing and stay in tune with God, we know our Shepherd's voice when He makes His will known.

Furthermore, the Lord showed me that I need to come away and rest for a while. Aiding my father for months in caring for my mother during her terminal illness and death, then being shocked with my father's death one month and three days later, as well as all of the business that has to be taken care of following such events has drained my energy. I realized that Anthony Drive, Ennis is in need of a pastor who can devote a lot of energy to leading the church—energy I just do not have, at the moment.

And so, I have resigned as teaching pastor of one of the sweetest congregations on earth. I have nothing but a heart full of love and appreciation for the members of the church. They have been incredibly supportive, loving and understanding. The congregation allowed me to use my spiritual gifts, and expected nothing more of me. Cassie and I will miss them terribly, but as I hear one friend say often, "Wisdom is knowing what time it is." It's time! Mission accomplished!



▲ Jerry Fulton

#### What's next?

Some have asked about what is next for me. My plans are to take a long awaited vacation this summer, then carry-on as editor of *Baptist Progress*. Will there be another church that I can serve in a similar manner as I did Anthony Drive, Ennis in the future? Maybe. Only the Lord can answer that question. I am determined to simply be faithful. In the meantime, please pray for Anthony Drive, Ennis and me as we each take our next steps of faith.

#### \$103 for 103 years of ministry

Thank you to all the churches, groups and individuals who have given *Baptist Progress* \$103 for 103 years of ministry. Your contributions will go a long way in helping us to meet our budget for the year. A list of churches, groups and individuals who gave will be included in the next issue of *Baptist Progress*. If your church or you have not given, and would like to, please send your offering to *Baptist Progress*, P.O. Box 2085, Waxahachie, Texas 75165.



#### What Happens To Your Gift to the BMA Foundation?

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

# Family Matters

## No secrets in marriage

By DR. TRAVIS PLUMLEE

“For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.” Ephesians 5:31

Then Mark 10: 7, 8: “For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife and they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh.” Mark 10:7-8

What a great mystery God has performed. He took two humans and made them one. In the scripture above it states they are no longer two, but one. Married couples need to work on becoming totally one. Financially, spiritually, physically and every aspect of life; they should work on being one, as God intended. People cannot have true deep intimacy and a close, loving relationship when they are married and keep important things separate or secret.

Some Christians are very passionate about defending their rights to be single or secret in some aspects of their marriage. Our society raises people to be so self-centered and selfish that this spills over into the deepest human relationship a person can ever have on this earth. There are no other relationships on earth where God himself makes two people one. There are many reasons why marriage partners try to justify keeping things separate or secret. But in the

end, it just simply serves as a wedge between true transparency, intimacy and trust. And Satan loves to find Christian couples who refuse to completely merge their lives into one.

You may think you are supposed to be autonomous and independent in things. Society teaches that. God teaches that the husband and wife are one in a holy covenant and they don't even make decisions for themselves anymore. They have a covenant partner to consider when making decisions. If you don't want to share your life with someone; then you should not get married. Marriage is a giving away of your singleness to live with another, for another—God. The purpose of marriage is to give God glory.

Here are some common areas I see where couples are staying separate:

**Electronics and social media**—There is absolutely no reason for a spouse to have private emails or private text. There is no justifiable reason for you to say you don't want your spouse to have your email password or to see anything on your phone. You are hiding and that is a secret. That is the first unraveling of the marriage. A marriage is based upon trust, and openness. If you are on a second marriage and you have some personal issues with a past relationship,

then you need to work this out with your current spouse with a biblical counselor. Every social media account you have should be readily available for you or your spouse to share. What are you afraid for them to see? You may say nothing; I just like having some privacy. But you are married. You can have privacy in the bathroom sometimes, but you don't have privacy when you are interacting with other people and social media.

**Friends**—As Christians, all our friends should be Christian (2 Corinthians 6:14, 17). They should all be the same sex as you except you may have couple friends that both sets of couples have fun together. But there should not be a male female friendship that stands alone. And your spouse should know all of your friends. Your spouse should know every one that you know.

**Finances**—Wow, this is a powder keg for so many couples. Money is the number one cause of divorce. That is because most people put a higher priority on their money over their marriage. Again if it is a second marriage, people always want separate accounts. They say we just never combined all of our funds together. No married person should have their own stash of cash or account. This is blatantly deceitful and shows no trust or commitment to the marriage. There are some rare exceptions to the separate bank account such as having a spouse who has one account to take the child support out of, or someone who is a co-signer for their elderly parents account. But many couples divide bills up. She pays for this, he pays for that out of his money. I thought the two of you were one? You live under one roof. You share a house. Why do you not share a bank account? There isn't a need for his and her accounts. I can't tell any of you what to do. You have to pray about this. You have to let the Lord lead you. But all of these things I have mentioned above are what starts the eroding or the lack of true transparency and closeness in a marriage. You need to pray and talk and try to get every aspect of your life together as one.



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



# Church Health

## Living sent

By LARRY BARKER

“Live Sent” is a familiar phrase in today’s church vernacular. You have probably also heard, “It’s not about our seating capacity but our sending capacity.” Being mobile and ready to follow God’s direction in our lives is for every follower of Christ. He does say “follow me” and there should not be any limitations on the location or the address whether here in North America or on another mission field. Here is what living sent involves:

- Living surrendered to the leadership of the Holy Spirit!
- Living submitted to His guidance of where He wants you to serve Him!
- Living with a willingness to go!
- Living on mission in your zip code!
- Living determined to share the Gospel!

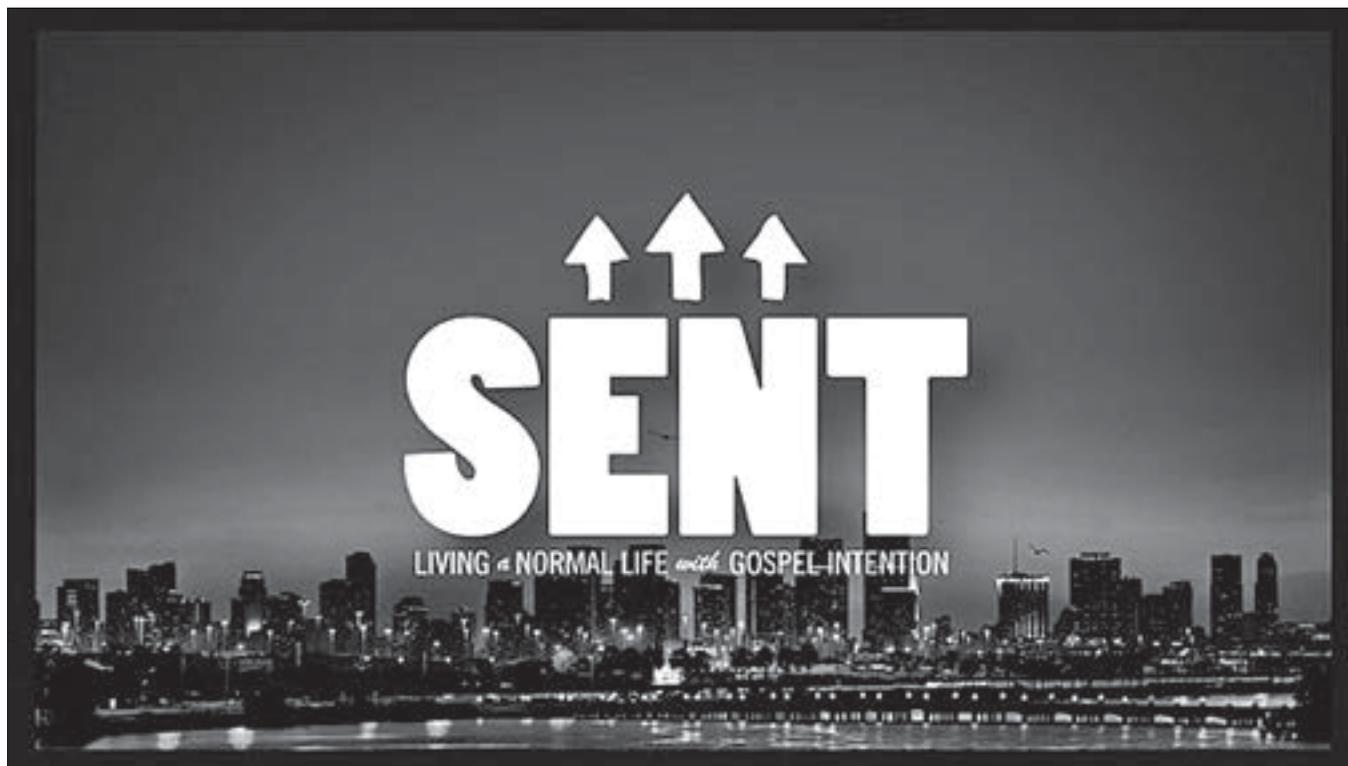
There are many testimonies of those who have not just talked about living sent but have lived it out in their lives. Families who have sold out, found jobs where God was calling, and helped a church planter by being a part of their launch team. Barnabas had Saul, Paul had Silas and church planters have those who are willing to live sent. They are willing to pull up their tent stakes, step away from the comfort of family, and begin representing Christ in a new zip code because He asked them to “follow Him.”

Recently while visiting a church plant I heard another story of “living sent” from a young lady who grew up in the church planters youth group. They shared with me how she willingly came to their area and found a job teaching in a public school just so she could help. When I asked her where she worked she told me of a town about 20-30 minutes away. I asked where she lived and she said, “Oh I live here and drive to work because I knew I needed to live near the people God sent me to reach.” That is living sent!

There are multiple stories of couples, families, and individuals who have moved to help church plants such as:

- Fusion Church in Fountain, Colorado
- The Summit in Richland, Washington
- The Refuge in Nixa, Missouri
- Jacob’s Well in Plano, Illinois
- The Bridge in Celina, Texas

These church plants were blessed with other followers of Christ who were willing to listen to His leadership in moving to a new location, finding a new job, and beginning a new exciting journey. Each one of them have exciting testimonies of how God provided them other people who stepped out in faith believing God had called them to live sent. Maybe God is calling you to live sent and has placed a burden on your heart to follow in their footsteps? Are you willing to follow Him wherever He is calling you?



What if God were to say to you, “How about Thornton, Colorado?” You are probably wondering where in the world did that come from? Brian and Piper Cleary are planting CrossRoots church in Thornton and they are faithfully praying that God would send them people to help them reach their zip code for Christ. They are looking for couples, families, or individuals who would move to Thornton to be salt and light. They are praying for disciple-makers who want to build relationships within their circles of influence as they develop!

Ed Stetzer and David Putman in *Breaking the Missional Code: You Can Become a Missionary in Your Community* say, “One of the defining issues that we have observed over the years is that leaders who break the code seldom if ever do it alone. Working with church planters, you never have a shortage of people with big dreams and visions. It is the nature of those who plant churches or desire to plant churches to want to be paradigm breakers. However, this thing of not doing it alone seems to be the decisive difference in those who want to do it and those who actually get it done.”

Let me ask it once again, “How about Thornton, Colorado?” Is God asking you to live sent and to help a church planting couple reach their community for Christ.

Living sent also requires:

- Living the Great Commission
- Focusing on people far from God
- Praying for your neighbors and co-workers
- Engaging in spiritual conversations
- Ability to share the Gospel

*In The Leadership Ladder: Developing Missional Leaders in the Church* Steven Ogne and Kenneth Priddy ask us to evaluate our missional living by asking: “Does it make a disciple? Having good missional activities leads to the making of disciples. Expressing God’s love through service is good. Expressing God’s love through relationship is better. Expressing God’s love by leading someone to faith in Jesus Christ, is best. The best missional activities put us in relationship with someone long enough that he or she can, through us, experience Christ and become His follower.”

Live sent!!!

Larry Barker is the operations director for North American Missions. For more information or to contact him, visit [www.bmamissions.org](http://www.bmamissions.org).



# Mission Life

By **JERRY BURNAMAN**

*State Missions Executive Director*

I'm sharing some thoughts about how BMA of Texas churches may become more excited about reaching Texas with the Gospel. In these last six months of my tenure as State Missions director, it is my prayer that our churches will become more mobilized concerning the VISION and be a strong catalyst for starting churches. How can this be a reality?

## Be Evangelistically Sensitive

The Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8) gives us the plan. Stan Tolar wrote, "Evangelism cannot be an optional plan, it must become a high priority of the local church."

Pastor, it is your responsibility to lead the church to have an evangelistic mindset. Teach evangelism, train people how to witness and just tell their story. Send people, the Bible's example is two by two, to talk with people in the community about the spiritual condition.

Ask yourself these questions:

- How are we going to reach the seniors in our area? Two thirds of all people who have ever lived to age 65 are alive today.
- How are we going to reach the Boomers? Those born 1946-1964.
- How are we going to reach the Busters? Those born 1965-1983.
- How are we going to reach the Gen X and Gen Y groups?

Just reaching this list the word "impossible" lingers in the mind, therefore it's essential to learn the demographics of your community. It's advantage to attend a workshop or have someone come to your church and teach about the generations to give more knowledge on the process of reaching these different groups. Then get to work reaching as many as you can. You may start with one or two of the most prominent groups in your area.

Those who study churches and the population have discovered five reasons why people say they don't go to church.

- Always ask for money.
- Don't like the music.
- Can't relate to the message.
- Services do not meet my needs.
- Pastors make me feel guilty.

By being evangelistically sensitive and building relationships with people the people in your community, these oppositions can be overcome. It takes teaching, involvement of the church members, time and persistence to develop and effective evangelistic culture.

## Prayer Is Essential

Here are some ideas about developing an inspiring prayer ministry in your church. These are just some starter thoughts and with your creativity, you can probably think of some more applicable ones for your church.

- Have a prayer plan for the Sunday school classes.

- Organize special prayer groups—think creatively.
- Have a special prayer time in the worship service. Ask God to give a burden for the unsaved people in your area. That's about 80 to 85 percent of the population.

Then as you visit people, you will discover people to pray for. Ask individuals of the church family to list six friends who are unbelievers, and put them in your prayer pipeline. You may be amazed at how soon people will have a personal experience of salvation and be baptized. The challenge is to follow-up with the new believers and disciple them to become mature Christians and reproduce.

If a large majority of our churches become more evangelistically sensitive, and saturate their efforts with prayer, their VISION will include Texas and the regions beyond. From the harvest God will call men to be church planters and our State Missions efforts will multiply.

This sounds exciting! However, it takes monumental effort, but there is nothing too hard for God. The Holy Spirit will empower us to be effective.

## Applications being accepted for State Missions director

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

A description of the responsibilities of the Director of Missions is posted on the BMA of Texas website. Resumes should be sent to Robbie Caldwell by Aug. 31, 2015 to be considered at the address below:

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

*Jerry Burnaman is the executive director of State Missions and the Baptist Missionary Loan Association. Contact him at [jerryburnaman@yahoo.com](mailto:jerryburnaman@yahoo.com) or 972-923-0757.*



## 113TH ANNIVERSARY

Cedar Creek Baptist Church  
Teague, Texas



Bro. Gaylan Henry, Evangelist

**JULY 19, 2015 • Anniversary Service • Sunday, 11 a.m.**  
**JULY 19-22, 2015 • Revival Services • Sunday-Wednesday, 7 p.m.**

## SCHEDULE FOR 115<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL SESSION OF THE BMA OF TEXAS November 10-11, 2015

Champion Forest Baptist Church  
15555 Stuebner Airline Road • Houston, Texas

Theme: "In All Judea—In All Texas"

*"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you;  
and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria,  
and to the end of the earth." Acts 1:8*

### Tuesday morning, November 10:

8:30 W.M.A. registration  
9:00 W.M.A. Annual State Meeting in chapel building (adjacent to worship center)  
9:00-11:00 Leadership Conference in choir rehearsal room  
Agenda – TBA

### Tuesday afternoon session (chapel building):

12:00-2:00 Registration for annual meeting  
2:00 Opening praise and worship directed by Jason Wofford, Northside Baptist Church-Conroe  
2:10 Call to order & introduction of theme  
2:15 Welcome & prayer by CFBC representative  
2:20 Seating of messengers/rules of order/appointment of parliamentarian  
1:25 Introduction of annual speaker and special music (TBA)  
2:30 Annual sermon by Bro. Eddie Marsh, president of Texas Baptist Home  
3:00 Baptist Progress report, Bro. Jerry Fulton, editor/business manager  
3:20 Administrative Committee Report  
3:25 Election of administrative committee representatives  
3:30 Nominating Committee Report  
3:40 State WMA Report  
3:45 Initial report of Enrollment/Finance Committee  
3:50 Presentation of constitutional changes  
3:55 Offering for associational expenses  
4:00 Closing prayer by BMAA Missions Department representative

### Tuesday evening (main worship center):

6:30 Combined worship service with Southern Baptists of Texas Convention  
Service will include: performance by Jacksonville College choir, report on the College by Dr. Mike Smith, president; report on Texas Baptist Home by Bro. Eddie Marsh, president; message by Bro. Andy Comer, pastor of Davis Street Baptist Church, Sulphur Springs; and message by SBTC speaker.

### Wednesday morning, November 11 (chapel):

9:00 Praise & worship led by Jason Wofford  
9:10 Opening prayer by representative from LifeWord Media Ministries  
9:15 Special music by Roy & Loretta Stephens, Rose Hill Baptist Church-Mineola  
9:20 President's message  
9:50 Texas Baptist Home report & recommendations, Eddie Marsh, president  
10:10 Jacksonville College report & recommendations, Dr. Mike Smith, president  
10:30 State Missions report, Bro. Jerry Burnaman, director  
10:50 BMAA Loan Association report, Bro. Jerry Burnaman, business manager  
11:10 Representative from DiscipleGuide Church Resources  
11:15 Master's Builders report  
11:20 Election of officers for 2015-2016  
11:25 Election of annual speaker/alternate for 2016  
11:30 Vote on constitutional changes  
11:35 Final report of Finance/Enrollment Committee  
11:40 Miscellaneous business  
11:45 Passing of the gavel  
11:50 Announcements  
11:55 Representative of BMAAT Seminary to lead closing prayer  
12:00 Adjournment



## Hotel/Motel Information for Baptist Missionary Association Of Texas Meeting November 10-11, 2015

Champion Forest Baptist Church  
15555 Stuebner Airline Rd. • Houston, Texas

### LAQUINTA INNS AND SUITES – Willowbrook

FM 1960 Rd. West • Houston, Texas 77070  
Phone: 832-617-5757  
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All rooms have interior entrances  
Cut-off date: Oct. 19, 2015

### Best Western Premier Ashton Suites

7495 W. Greens Rd. • Houston, Texas 77064  
Phone: 281-970-9696  
Association rate: \$129  
Cut-off date: Oct. 9, 2015

Reservations should be made directly with the above facilities. Be sure to mention you are with the BMA of Texas to receive the reduced rate. These hotels are approximately 5-6 miles from Champion Forest Baptist Church. These two hotels are in close proximity to each other. There are other hotels in the area which you may choose, but keep in mind, many of these have blocks of rooms reserved for the SBTC messengers.

You may avoid state sales taxes on your hotel room by going to the Texas state comptroller's website and downloading a sales tax exemption form. Note: The hotel will usually require you to provide your church's sales tax exemption number to qualify.



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## Update from missionaries to West Africa



By **DALE AND CELIA BROOM**

*BMAA Missionaries to Ghana, West Africa*

We pray that everyone is blessed and well. Celia and I are doing fine. We have been real busy lately but everything is going well. The Water for Christ team was here from May 31 through June 11. We worked with them in the North at the Wale Wale area and was able to drill three wells and repair some. There were crusades every night and Bro. Rodney Castleberry shared the gospel each night. There were a total of 1,081 professions of faith during the crusades. Praise the Lord!

It is very dry in the north and the people were starving for water. If they got a hint that water would be coming, people would begin to bring their pans to be filled. There were some complications with the drilling due to the lack of a compressor that is powerful enough to drill a deep well. Tim Tyler, the director of Water for Christ, is currently in search of a compressor and some hammer bits to send here to have more successful drilling. It was a blessing to be able to work with Tim Tyler and the Water for Christ team! If you would like to see pictures and things of their trip, you can follow them on the Water for Christ Facebook page.

In May before the Water for Christ team came, the BMA of Africa had their delegates conference. Bro. Phil Knott and Bro. Rick Russell came for this event. The meeting progressed well and the business of the BMA of Africa was taken care of in a Godly manner. After the meeting Bro. Rick and Bro. Hayford Jackson traveled to Liberia to accomplish work for Lifeword concerning the Low Power FM radios. They had a very productive trip as well.

The auditorium for the Bible Institute has been in progress for several months now and at the present the trusses have been completed by the welders and delivered. Work will begin soon to put them up. We are praying that the building will be ready in order to conduct the graduation services in September of this year. We are very excited about the graduation of our students. This year we will have graduation for our degree students as well as our certificate students. They have worked extremely hard in order to receive their education. We have five degree students and they are looking forward to their graduation.

The Women's Fellowship Center has been completed and the ladies are now making bread. Getting started has been a little slow, but they are progressing with it and have plans to continue making bread as well as other projects in order to help the women train others to provide income for their families. They will also begin to provide daycare for their children as they teach others a skill. We would like to say, "Thank You" to the following people:

Teresa Senn for sharing this project information that led to churches in TX giving to support this project and the churches that gave to the project

Carolyn Meade for giving funds for this project when she was unable to visit Ghana with her daughter Valarie Fish and Valarie also for giving funds as well

Cathy Tyler and Tim Tyler for giving funds for this project for whatever was needed and also to buy sewing machines to train women to sew

The Mississippi WMA for raising funds for this project as their state WMA project

Anyone else that has helped with this project

The Women's Fellowship and we appreciate everything that was done on behalf of this project.

There are other projects that are still in progress, like the aquaponics projects but they have been put on hold for a little while because of a lack of time to build them. However the one at the Bible Institute is progressing and we will be eating tilapia very soon! We have also had a crop of corn and butterbeans that was watered and fertilized from the water in the tanks. Thank you to everyone that has helped with these projects as well.

Lastly, Celia and I will be going home on furlough during the months of November 2015 through April 2016. We are now beginning to book places to go and share about the work taking place in Ghana. If you would like to have us speak at your church, organization, or event you can contact us through email or you can message us on Facebook. We would love to visit with you to share what is happening with the BMA of Africa and are looking forward to our visit in the states.

Casey Rivers

I LOVE  
America  
TOUR

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Dr. Philip Attebery

Special Guest:  
Jamie Lynn Flanakin  
Russ & Wait-A-Minute Man

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Marvin Hale - Pastor

# BMA of America News

## DiscipleGuide

CHURCH RESOURCES

## The lonely side of being a pastor

By **TODD WEST**

*DiscipleGuide Director of Church Solutions*

Being a pastor is something that can only be understood by those who have invested at least a portion of their lives being church pastors. I have tried in the past to “pour out my heart” to church leaders, family members, and other friends, and as much as they wanted to understand, they just couldn’t. Where do pastors turn?

I have at times found comfort from other pastors who were like a pastor to me, but honestly, there are some issues that we are simply not comfortable sharing even with close pastor friends. Yes, our marriages struggle, our kids struggle, we battle with the same temptations other believers face, and often yield to poor choices and find ourselves dealing with the consequences. Pastors are no different from anyone else in the church when it comes to temptations and struggles. As a matter of fact, it makes sense that pastors would be Satan’s favorite target, because we are the leaders of the local church.

Pastors today are not finding the support they need to finish well in the ministry. According to one study, “For every ten men who surrender to preach the gospel, only one will retire still in vocational ministry.” Pastors are leaving the ministry at an alarming rate, and churches are struggling to find anyone to replace them. It has been my observation that most BMA churches are going without pastors for two to three years before finding replacements, because the pool of pastors has decreased in the past decade. This is not a problem unique to the BMA, but rather common to all denominations in our nation.

Our director at DiscipleGuide, Scott Attebery, shared a burden with me some time back to establish a “Pastors Help Line” to minister to our BMA pastors at critical

moments in their lives and ministries. I recently traveled to Colorado Springs to see what Focus on the Family is doing with their new Pastors Hotline. I watched that day as phones were being answered by people in the “call center” who have spent years in vocational ministry. These trained coaches/counselors can listen with an understanding ear and provide coaching/counseling to move pastors forward. Pastors are calling Focus on the Family about issues ranging from dealing with a difficult church member, struggles with pornography, anxiety/depression, personal marriage issues, parenting a pastor’s kid, etc.

Association ministry in its best form is all about helping churches and their pastors to be healthy. At DiscipleGuide, we are excited to offer the BMA Pastors Help Line to our pastors in the very near future. This partnership with Focus on the Family is just another tool that will help the BMA pastor and his family stay healthy. There will be no cost to you or your church. Pastors, this is a gift to you from those supporting DiscipleGuide. Use it!

Within the next few weeks, you will see promotions for the BMA Pastors Help Line. Please don’t be afraid to reach out and get help. Pastors, we love you and want to help be a solution to the challenges you are facing.



▲ **Todd West**

## Blessings from National Galilean Camp – 2015



▲ **Boys who made professions of faith at National Galilean Camp**

By **KENNETH COLVERT**

*National Galilean Director*

National Galilean Camp 2015 is now a blessed memory, but the blessings from the Lord live on in our hearts and souls. Our theme, “Flood Zone” (Luke 6:45), with an emphasis on “Overflow” (John 10:10) was what we had longed and prayed for, for many months. It became a reality. God truly opened the windows of Heaven and poured out far more blessings than we could ask or think (Malachi 3:10).

The results to date include seven young men received Jesus Christ as personal Savior, six surrendered to the ministry including one young man who surrendered to the ministry at his home church as a direct result of camp and five young men rededicated their lives to the Lord’s service.

Many of us old timers at camp observed that we had never seen anything like it. It was truly an old fashioned revival sent from God. I am so thankful that our young men could see the power of God at work and know that our God is real. We are praying for overflow in our Galilean camps, Galilean groups, and local churches.

We pray that the revival will continue and spill over into our Arkansas Galilean Summer Camp coming up at Ponca Bible Camp July 24–26. The camp hosts our National Officer’s meeting where we will plan for National Galilean Camp 2016. Let’s all pray, “Lord, thank you for your many blessings and Lord, please do it again next year!”



▲ **2016 National Galilean elected officers. Not pictured, Phillip Christian, President, front row L-R, Logan Wilburn, Secretary; Tyler Sellers, Music Director; Back row L-R; Braden Martin, Historian; Jonathan Moore, 2nd Vice President; Logan Barker, 1st Vice President**

## Galileans Need Help

Dear Editor:

This week, I received the following appeal from National Galilean Director Kenneth Colvert: “Our contributions are very low this year, and we are asking all churches that are willing to support the Galileans to pray and meet this need.”

Galileans is a Godly, life-changing event in a young man’s life. Recently, National Galilean Camp at Daniel Springs Camp in Gary, Texas,

had an increase in attendance (see report on page 5 of this week’s *Trumpet*), which calls for extra funding through the National Galilean Fund.

Please do what you can to help. Offerings may be sent to Treasurer Dan Williams, 619 Mitchell St., Conway, Ark. 72632.

— *National Brotherhood Editor Pat Spriggs, 16827 Spring Club Dr., Hensley, AR 72065; dspriggs1107@comcast.net*

## Brooms Schedule Furlough

Dear Editor:

We will be coming home on furlough from November 2015 through April 2016, and are now beginning to schedule places to go and share about the work that is taking place in Ghana. If you would like to have us speak at your church, organization or event,

please contact us [brodale50@hushmail.com](mailto:brodale50@hushmail.com), [celia\\_broom@yahoo.com](mailto:celia_broom@yahoo.com) or message us on Facebook.

We are looking forward to our visit in the States, and would love to visit with you to tell you what is happening with the BMA of Africa.

— Missionaries Dale and Celia Broom

# Auxiliaries

## Surf into the Son

By SHARON COLE

The rainy weather during National GMA Retreat did not dampen the spirits of 313 campers from 34 churches this year. Girls and counselors “Dived into God’s Power” as they began Tuesday evening with Bro. Andy Comer, pastor of Davis Street, Sulphur Springs, who served as camp pastor. He blessed our hearts each worship session with challenges to be like Jesus and learn to hear His voice.

The girls “Dived into God’s Presence” on Queens Day, Wednesday. This day is especially reserved for those who have passed their Queen through Sovereign Queen Steps. Their meeting was held at First, Carthage, under the direction of Lane Flint and Addie Bender. Approximately 50 Queens participated in “Serving the Son” and attended sessions on “Witnessing,” “Fruit of the Spirit” and “Leaving Your Footprints on Social Media.” During this same time at the camp, girls who had passed Maiden through Princess steps attended classes on Forward Steps and Missions.

Wednesday evening is always an exciting time when all the Queens, dressed in beautiful gowns, are recognized for their efforts of learning scripture and studying and passing each of their Forward Steps. Approximately 70 girls participated in the coronation with the program theme: “My First Love.” It was directed by Lisa Christian. Each girl had a heart which they laid at the foot of a cross. Thursday afternoon during business the new project was selected: 90 percent JK Culture Center in China, 10 percent National GMA General Fund. Last year’s project brought over \$10,000 for Daniel Springs Encampment improvements.

A check was presented to and in honor of Bro. James Speer, former director of the camp. All project money should be sent to the treasurer, Ruby Poteet, 8303 Middle Warren Rd. Pine Bluff, AR 71603, 870-879-1378, rwp8303@aol.com.

The following officers were elected for 2015-2016: President-Hailey Hughes-AR; 1st Vice-McKenna Wilson-TX; 2nd Vice-Mary Rice-AR; Secretary-Rebekah Holmes-TX; Adult-Aimee Holmes-TX; Treasurer-Ruby Poteet; Asst.-Linda Dertinger-MS; Corres. Sec.Abigail Herring-AR; Adult-Teel Witt-TX; Song Leader-Ashley

Turner-AR; Adult-Rebecca Decker-AR; Adult Pianist-Robin Clark; Historian-Caitlyn Neill-AR; Adult-Mandi Dunlap-AR; Coronation Director-Lisa Christian; Asst.-Denise Phillips; Decorations Chairman-Lisa Payne; Asst.-Sheila Polk; Forward Step Coordinator-Becky Farmer; Asst. Peggy Bland; Evangelism Chairman-Valarie Fish; Asst.-Carolyn Meade; Queens Day Coordinator-Lisa Christian; Asst. Addie Bender; Recreation Director-Paige Henske; Craft Director-Marta Morgan; Superintendents-Kelsey Fagala and Kendra Verhelle.

In Thursday morning worship the girls “Dived into God’s Plan” by listening to the Pastor Andy, who reminded them that they matter a lot to God. He encouraged them to decide who they are going to be before they decide what they want to do with their life.

Thursday evening is always the highlight of the week when the Miss and Jr. Miss GMA are selected, directed by Jayna Williams. The 2015-2016 Miss GMA is Amanda Hall of AR; Alternate Miss GMA is Alaina Verhelle of TX. Jr. Miss GMA is Lydia Dunlap of AR; Alternate Jr. Miss GMA is Kaitlynn Crudgington of TX. The National WMA President, Janet Widger, reminded the girls that they are all winners and that the National WMA are praying for them.

CBC representative Addie Bender presented a \$32,000 scholarship to Miss GMA. The directors of the evangelism booth praised the Lord for the 5 souls who were saved and 3 rededications. The National Sunbeam Promoters, Sherry Laminack and Sandra Kizer, along with Linda Dertinger, conducted a Sunbeam Workshop, Wednesday and Thursday. A total of \$5,552.00 was given to last year’s project: Shepherd Bag Ministry. This ministry was chosen again to be the project for 2015-2016. The Sunbeams now have a website: sunbeams—bma.net. Those attending were encouraged to teach God’s Word to our little ones with authority leaving an inheritance for their spiritual lives.

### Arabic Ministry in America

The Texas WMA has chosen to support Bro. Ashraf Sara ministry. The Living Word Arabic Church in Dallas is being blessed

by God with 13 people being saved and baptized in the last four months. The ministry is spreading throughout the Metroplex with five groups in different cities. Through the internet and satellite they reach thousands every week. They are also involved with leadership and apologetics training, community outreach and outdoor evangelism. They have organized Sunday school classes and have about 40 children every Sunday.

It has been very difficult for the Arabic women in America who are refugees or immigrants because of the culture and language barriers. Some come from abusive homes. They desire your prayers for new comers in America that the Lord will open their hearts to the Word. Also for the 9 million Arabic-speaking people in America.

Besides Dallas, Arabic work has been started in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, with about seven Arabic-speaking families. Also they are helping another work with an Arabic group in New Orleans, Louisiana.

Pray for the persecuted church and the body of Christ in the Middle East. Pray for partners to lift them in prayer and support the Arabic ministry so they can continue reaching Arabic speaking people. Pray for America and appreciate the freedom you have to worship and share your faith. The window of opportunity may one day close even for this country!

As of June 15, we have received \$3,667.89 for our project. We are behind in what we had received for our project this same time last year so PLEASE keep sending your offerings and donations so we can reach our goal of \$15,000. Send monies to: Corresponding Secretary, Jo Strong, 149 NW Suzanne Terrace, Burleson, TX 76028.

Sharon Cole is the editor for the Texas WMA. Contact her at [S9Co@aol.com](mailto:S9Co@aol.com). For more information on the Texas WMA, visit [www.texaswma.com](http://www.texaswma.com).



## Auxiliaries acquire new videos

By CAROLYN COLVERT

New videos developed to enhance the work of BMA auxiliaries include:

### WOMEN’S MISSIONARY AUXILIARY

Best Day Ever – is the keynote address given by Pat Quesnbury at the National Women’s Missionary Auxiliary meeting in Springfield, MO in April, 2015. It provides the viewer an opportunity to enjoy the national WMA worship service. More importantly, it is a vivid reminder that struggles in daily living can be invaluable lessons in faith. To access Best Day Ever, go to: [nationalwmaofbmaa.net](http://nationalwmaofbmaa.net) → national keynote address → click on link.

Making a Joyful Noise in the Philippines – is the National WMA project for 2015-2016. The video is an overview of academic programs offered by the Baptist Missionary Association Bible College (BMABC) in the Philippines, enrollment data and composition of student body. Since the project goal is to raise money for practice

studios/instruments, electrical wiring up-dates, water system and bathroom up-dates, and replacing windows, a justification for each need is presented. The intent is to motivate WMA’s to meet or exceed this year’s financial goals.

### SUNBEAMS

Missions in Cambodia – is designed to teach young children (ages 3 – 8) about Missionaries John and Louella Page and the Cambodian culture. While the video was designed for the Sunbeam Program, younger GMAs and Galileans would probably enjoy it as well. It would be too juvenile for teens. During the video, the viewer takes an imaginary tour into the village where the Pages work. While the tour is “make believe”, pictures are actual photos from the field. The trip culminates with a typical Cambodian meal. To access the video, go to: [sunbeams-bmaa.net](http://sunbeams-bmaa.net) → Mission Videos → Cambodia link.

Missions in Mexico – children spend an imaginary day playing with

Bro. Eric Johnson’s children. The day culminates with a traditional meal from Mexico. Viewers are introduced both the Eric and Grady Johnson families, the Ricky Williams family, and the Tommy Rose family. Viewers stop by Bro. Eric’s church to share a video with the children’s choir as well as an open air market to purchase a snack on their return trip to the airport. The video is age appropriate for older Sunbeams as well as younger GMAs and Galileans. To access the video, go to: [sunbeams-bmaa.net](http://sunbeams-bmaa.net) → Mission Videos → Mexico link.

### GALILEANS

National Galilean Camp 2015 – is a pictorial overview of the 2015 camp. It is designed for two purposes: to recap memories from the 2015 camp and to motivate camp participation. To access the video, go to: [galileans.com](http://galileans.com). → click on 2015 Camp Video → underneath where it says here is the link to the national camp picture video, click on 2015 Camp Video.

## EVENTS

### JULY 5, 2015

Revival  
@ Clover Hill, Quitman  
1816 FM 69  
Quitman, Texas  
July 5 (5:30 p.m.)  
July 6-8 (7 p.m.)  
Evangelist: Bro. Mike Murray  
from Haile Baptist Church in Haile, Louisiana

### JULY 19, 2015

113TH Anniversary  
@ Cedar Creek, Teague  
Sunday (11 a.m.)

### JULY 19-22, 2015

Revival  
Sunday-Wednesday (7 p.m.)  
Evangelist: Gaylan Henry  
Music: Billy Eubanks

### AUGUST 13, 2015

Liberty Association Lifeword Rally  
@ Cross Roads, Pittsburg

### AUGUST 9, 2015

60th Anniversary  
@ Anthony Drive, Ennis

### AUGUST 29, 2015

Texas Ladies Retreat  
Hosted by Texas WMA  
@ Farley Street, Waxahachie

### OCTOBER 11, 2015

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

### NOVEMBER 10-11, 2015

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

### APRIL 25-27, 2016

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

## PERSONNEL & POSITIONS

### AVAILABLE MINISTERS

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

### AVAILABLE POSITIONS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**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.

## PASTOR & STAFF CHANGES

**JERRY FULTON** has resigned as the teaching pastor of Anthony Drive, Ennis.

## OBITUARY

### PETE DUGGER

Funeral services for Bro. Pete Dugger, Sr., 80 of Gilmer were June 25, 2015, at Croley Funeral Home Chapel in Gilmer with Bro. Charles Johnson officiating. Bro. Dugger passed away on June 23, 2015, in Tyler. Pete Dugger was born on Oct. 8, 1934, in Upshur County to Addison Granville Dugger and Sodie Jones Dugger. He pastored churches in Wood, Upshur and Marion Counties. Bro. Dugger is survived by his wife, Barbara Dugger of Rosewood; children, Eddie Jo Dugger and wife, Karla of Ore City, Debbie Whitfield of Lindale, Robbie Dugger of Brownwood, Doyle Carter and wife, LuAnn of Holly Lake, Darryl Carter and wife Deena of Berryville, Pete Dugger, Jr. of Rosewood; 17 grandchildren and 28 great grandchildren.

### CHARLES BURDETT

Funeral services for Charles Lee Burdett, 69, of Lamesa were June 23, 2015, at 2 p.m. at Ashmore, Loop with Bert Cooper and Anthony Pennington officiating. Interment will follow in Hancock Cemetery under the direction of Branon Funeral Home. Bro. Burdett passed away June 17, 2015, in Lubbock. He was born Aug. 8, 1945, in Lamesa to Troy and Inez (Tolbert) Burdett. Charles married Joyce Groh on Jan. 27, 1966, in Fort Worth. They were married 49 years. He was a minister at Ashmore Baptist Church for 18 years. He was a missionary, church planter and coach for the BMA. He was the founder of Lyles Roberts Institute of Practical Ministry and of the Jade Jarrett Educational Foundation. He farmed in Dawson County and raised goats and registered puppies. Charles was a devoted husband, father, grandfather and minister. He is survived by his wife, Joyce Burdett of Lamesa; children, April Lea Killingsworth and husband, Charles of Wolforth, Tonya Moore of Lamesa, Carla Ann Jarrett of Abilene, and Miranda Gaede and husband, David of Lamesa; grandchildren, Andrew Moore, Troy Moore, Dalton Burdett, Angel Moore, J.T. Fielder; cousin, Inez Clayton and husband, Scott of O'Donnell; and several great-grandchildren. Charles is preceded in death by his parents; and grandson, Jade Jarrett. The family suggests memorials to Jade Jarrett Educational Foundation, 1503 CR 14, Lamesa, TX, 79331.



## CHURCHES IN REVIEW

### JUNE 14, 2015

Church	SS	Worship	Additions
Cedar Creek, Teague	17	18	
Farley Street, Waxahachie	461	517	1 By Profession
First, Blooming Grove	211		
First, Palmer	35	80	
Glade Creek, Gilmer	22	50	
Jackson, Joaquin	73	116	
Little Flock, Lufkin	8	15	
New Harmony, Tyler	282	326	
New Hope, Mineola	68	114	1 By Baptism
Pilgrim Rest #2, Golden	48	54	
Pine Forest, Huntington	15	25	
Rosewood, Gilmer	121	216	2 By Profession, 2 By Letter
Security Calvary, Cleveland	20	30	
Temple, Mexia	34	54	
Yellowpine Macedonia, Hemphill	18	21	

### JUNE 24, 2015

Church	SS	Worship	Additions
Anthony Drive, Ennis	62	114	
First, Crandall	65	102	
First, Omen	37	67	
First, Palmer	36	75	
Glade Creek, Gilmer	13	30	
Jackson, Joaquin	61	126	
Little Flock, Lufkin	6	10	
Long Creek, Sunnyvale	61	114	
Merriman Hills, Sherman	18	19	
New Harmony, Tyler	288	352	
Pilgrim Rest #2, Golden	35	53	
Pine Acres, Gilmer	31	65	
Pine Forest, Huntington	20	39	
Rosewood, Gilmer	121	201	
Security Calvary, Cleveland	14	44	2 By Baptism, 1 By Profession, 1 By Letter
Temple, Mexia	30	46	
Tundra, Canton	64		
Woodland, Splendora	31	55	

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

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# Sunday School Lessons

## Where he belongs

By PAUL GAUNTT

DATE: July 5, 2015

TEXT: Revelation 1:10-20

### THOUGHT PRIMER

Have a brief discussion in class today, of experiences in life where you felt uneasy. Then describe those places where you felt “at home” in a place. Was there a warm, welcoming, engaging attitude among the hosts?

The wording of the title of our lesson today is as good of a description of Christ and His relationship to the church as one could ever hear. The New Testament church is “where He belongs.” He should feel “at home” in His church. He established her: (Matthew 16:18) He died for her: (Ephesians 5:25) He filled and gifted her: (Ephesians 4:8-10), He commissioned her: (Matthew 28:20) He promised to always be with her: (Matthew 28:20) He is (or should be) “at home when He is with her.” (Ephesians 3:17) and He is coming to receive her: (John 14:3)

### STUDY

**1. John’s confrontation with the Savior:** (verse 10) He said in verse 10, that he was “in the Spirit on the Lord’s day.” Such is to always be the position of the child of God if we really want to hear from Him.

**2. The description of the Savior:** (verse 11) Jesus described Himself as the “Alpha and Omega”—the first and last letter of the Greek alphabet. This gives us a hint as to the power of His Word—His spoken Word—and His written Word. Isn’t it amazing how many billions of books, newspapers, articles and other publications have been written using only a small alphabet of 24 Greek letters—26 English. This also gives us the magnitude of His existence, presence, authority and power among us.

**3. The command of the Savior:** “What thou seest, write in a book.” This is of course the apocalypse—the book that describes future events—the end times. The destination of the letter? to the seven churches of Asia Minor—Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea. Five of these churches were in dire straits, spiritually—only two, Smyrna and Philadelphia, found favor with Christ. These were literal, local, New Testament Churches, and yet they

are a cross-section and representation of conditions of all New Testament churches throughout the church age.

**4. The picture of Christ and His Church:** (verse 12) Seven golden candlesticks is a symbol of the seven churches in Asia Minor, and in turn, a picture of His connection with them - and the church today.

**5. The authority of Christ over His Church:** (verse 13) Clothed in a garment down to his feet—signifying kingly authority, and a golden girdle, denoting His royalty.

**6. The description of Christ:** (verse 14-15) White like wool—symbol of His purity; Eyes as a flame of fire; possibly indicates “bright, sharp, penetrating, as if everything was light before them. . . penetrating into the thoughts of people.” (Barnes) Brass is a mixture of copper and zinc. The burning in the furnace signifies the purity of the metal, and in turn, the purity of the Savior. The voice of many waters (or a roaring sea) was John’s description of the magnitude and authority of Christ’s voice.

**7. The power of Christ:** (verse 16) He holds the seven stars (churches) in His right hand. His words—as a sharp two-edged sword (Hebrews 4:12) countenance, as the sun shineth in his strength—denotes His glory.

**8. John’s response:** (verse 17) fell at His feet as dead—a breathless overwhelming at being in His presence.

**9. Promises of Christ—**(verse 18-20)

### APPLICATION

Today, we learn that the church belongs to Christ. He loves Her. In fact, He loves her so much, He took it personally when Saul was persecuting and killing church members. Acts 9:4) She is His extension on the earth today—she is His betrothed for whom He is coming soon. He is absolutely attentive to her in every aspect.

### CHALLENGE

When we approach the Savior, worshiping in the spirit, (genuine, heartfelt worship) we shall hear from Him. He will instruct us as to His will and purpose for our lives, and we can walk in His power and in His strength and claim His unfailing promises all the days of our lives.”

## Working but wanting

By PAUL GAUNTT

DATE: July 12, 2015

TEXT: Revelation 2:1-7

### THOUGHT PRIMER:

Capt. Herbert “R” Poorman, USN, commanding officer of the aircraft carrier aboard which I served for two years, always prefaced his announcements to the ship’s company with, “I have some good news, some bad news and some neutral news.” Looking back, I wonder if he had any idea his technique for breaking news was virtually the same as Jesus’ words to Ephesus.

Also, professional counselors, perhaps unbeknownst to them, utilize Jesus’ method of counsel. first, the commendation, followed by the reprimand, and closing out with a word of encouragement.

This is what was contained in the first of seven letters sent to the churches of Asia Minor. Today, we study His words to Ephesus.

### THE STUDY

**1. The recipient of the letter:** (verse 1) The letter was sent to the angel (pastor, spiritual leader) of the church. We are reminded as to the grave responsibility placed upon the shoulders of the pastor, and who answers to the “Chief Shepherd”—the One “who walks in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks.” (Hebrews 13:17)

**2. The commendation:** (verse 2-3) Ephesus had grown to a level of spiritual maturity. This can be attributed to strong, spiritual leadership in the past—Paul, who planted the church and remained there for about three years, delivering rich, rich teachings on doctrine and precepts on practical, holy living. (Read Ephesians) Ephesus had grown in the areas of good works, patience, a disdain for evil, great spiritual discernment (seeing through false prophecy) and perseverance (hast not fainted)

They were also commended for their hatred for the practice of the Nicolaitans. The word means, “to conquer and subdue the people.” Undoubtedly, the Ephesians had a strong belief that only Christ is the Head of the Church.

**3. The reprimand:** (verse 4) (“. . . Left thy first love. . .”) literally “you have ‘remitted’ or let down thy early love.” Barnes refers to it as “having lost your ‘ardor,’ (love, attraction to—feeling

of energy for) This sounds familiar—New converts cannot wait to share with friends and loved ones of their new found faith in Christ. Freshly planted new mission churches have a pioneering spirit—a fresh, alive spirit of conquest. But after awhile, the freshness segues into a mundane maintenance mode. Ephesus was still doing a lot of the right things—but spirits became lethargic and dry. Their works stood in lieu of being consumed as wood, hay and stubble at the Judgement Seat of Christ. They were headed straight toward the lukewarm condition of Laodicea.

**4. The command to “remember”** (verse 5) They were warned to return to the original relationship they had with Christ—to recapture that exuberance—that pioneering spirit—that love they once had for Him, or else their candlestick would be snuffed out. Many a church body in modern times finally closed their doors, not due to location, lack of building maintenance, or onslaught from the outside. They died because of indifference to Christ.

**5. The promise:** Verse 7 is not alluding to a works-based salvation—it is a word of reassurance that they, in fact have eternity with the Father in Heaven in their future. (See Romans 8:38; John 10:28; Ephesians 1:13-14.

### THE APPLICATION

Any New Testament Church today can, and many have fallen into the same condition of Ephesus. Struggles with the flesh, and the sometimes drudgery of life, coupled with the influence of a Godless culture, can cause church members to take their eyes off the real Priority—that is a relationship with Christ, and a fervor to remain close to Him.

### THE CHALLENGE

Church members, be vigilant to guard yourselves from lapsing into indifference or service with a wrong motive—and encourage one another in your faith, fellowship, worship and service.

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 [pop.gauntt@gmail.com](mailto:pop.gauntt@gmail.com).





## RENDER UNTO CAESAR THE THINGS THAT ARE CAESAR'S AND TO GOD THE THINGS THAT ARE GOD'S

By **DR. MIKE SMITH**

History records that at the November 1936 annual meeting of the Baptist Missionary Association of Texas a question was asked, "Must a teacher of the Bible have a master's degree?" Dr. John Gregson records in his book, *A Centennial History of Jacksonville College*, "The discussion grew warm, stirred up much interest, and lasted long" (Vol. I, 93). In 2014, some still debate the necessity of religious institutions abiding by the guidelines of secular organizations. However, membership in certain organizations often provides numerous benefits and still allows us to exercise our religious freedom.

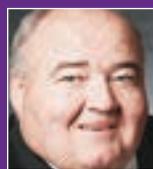
Jacksonville College follows all guidelines of the Texas Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Education, and is a member of the following organizations:

- Council for Higher Education Accreditation
- Independent Colleges and Universities of Texas
- National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities
- National Junior College Athletic Association
- Region XIV Athletic Conference
- Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges

Maintaining accreditation is both financially costly and time consuming, requiring hours of detailed reports. However, if we do not adhere to the standards of these organizations, we lose our accreditation. The loss of accreditation means that a student cannot transfer course credits earned at Jacksonville College to another college or university. We are currently in the process of submitting our Fifth-Year Interim Report for the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. Please pray for those involved in the process.

Jacksonville College's accreditation is vital to our ability to offer our students a solid education. However, being fully accredited does not mean we have to give up our freedom of teaching all subjects from a Christian, biblical worldview. So, we do as Jesus said, "Render therefore unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's" (Matthew 22:21, KJV).

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## REMEMBERING ALONZO SHERMAN

Jacksonville College will miss long-time supporter, Alonzo Sherman, who died on May 30, 2015. Four generations of his family have attended Jacksonville College. Alonzo's father, L.A. Sherman, founded a Sherman endowment that provided scholarships for students to attend the College, and Alonzo's mother Mattie Lee Edminston has been honored as Coming Home Royalty. Alonzo's three sons, Ricky, Randy, and Rusty, all attended Jacksonville College, as did some of their children. Alonzo's granddaughter, JC alumnus Amy Sherman, is currently an instructor in the JC Theater Department.



Alonzo played basketball for the Jaguars in 1949-1950, and as an alumnus, he continued being very active in the Jag Club and supporting the JC athletic program. Because of his love for the College, he helped form the Vernon Harton/Olan Peters Foundation, which assists the JC basketball program economically.

At Alonzo's funeral, Rev. Vernon Lee, pastor of First Baptist Church in Jacksonville, described Alonzo as a "Barnabas," an encourager and a giver—and give he did. We thank God for faithful supporters like Alonzo Sherman, and we remember his wife Billie and the rest of his family at this difficult time.



▲ On June 19, The Master's Builders of the BMAA began working to repair Jacksonville College's Ragsdale House, which is used for student housing. The house suffered significant damage during a severe storm on May 25.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Schedule for Summer II and Fall 2015:**

Summer II:  
July 8 to August 6

Fall: August 17 to November 24

Full course schedules are available at [www.jacksonville-college.edu](http://www.jacksonville-college.edu). Online application for admission is available for new students, and current students may register for classes online.