

# Baptist Progress

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HERITAGE

## BMA OF AMERICA ANNUAL MESSAGE: HOW DID *Jesus* SEE PEOPLE?

By **DONNY PARRISH**

*Executive Director, Lifeword Media Ministries*

**H**ave you ever heard the old saying, “Ministry would be a great if it weren’t for people”? Have any of you ever said that?

I heard the story about a lady who went in one Sunday morning to wake up her husband and tell him it was time to get ready for church, to which he replied, “I’m not going.”

“Why not?” she asked.

“I’ll give you two good reasons,” he said. “One, they don’t like me; and two, I don’t like them.”

His wife replied, “I’ll give you two good reasons why you should go to church — one, you’re 54 years old; and two, you’re their pastor!”

People can drive you crazy, can’t they?

I want us to take a few minutes, as people who have been in the ministry a long time (which is most of us) and ask ourselves this question: “Do you still love people?”

How do you see people? Aren’t they beautiful? Aren’t they precious? Isn’t it wonderful to see how God has made each person different all around the world?

Sometimes I think we see people from our own backyard differently than we do people from foreign countries. Maybe it’s because we don’t feel like the people over there have had enough opportunity to hear the Gospel; so our hearts are broken for them and their actions, their lifestyles can be tolerated and even excused. We don’t tend to put them in boxes and give them labels. We can even see their sin differently.

But, for people in America, for people in our own back yard, I think we see them differently. I think we have a problem with seeing them with as much compassion as we do people from another part of the world.

I am sold out to missions, and I believe we need to take the Gospel of Jesus Christ to every tongue, tribe and nation of the world. But I don’t think pastors in America see themselves as missionaries. I think we say that we do, but we see our ministries as different from missionaries on the other side of the world. I think we give lip service to being missionaries right here in America, but I don’t think we act on that. I think we’d rather be pastors than missionaries — but we have to

be both! We can’t neglect being a pastor, but for too long, we’ve neglected being missionaries.

Somewhere down the line, those who do ministry here in the United States are going to have to start thinking of themselves as missionaries because we are — whether we want to be or not! We have a country that has changed, and we have to become missionaries! We cannot do things the way we’ve always done them because people are not like they used to be.

We have a country that is dying and going to Hell tonight. Leonard Ravenhill said it this way: “The church used to be a lifeboat rescuing the perishing. Now she is a cruise ship recruiting the promising.”

For us to begin to see ourselves as missionaries, we are going to have to begin to see the people around us differently. We are going to have to see them like Jesus saw His own countrymen, His own people.

Our text tonight is Matt. 14:13-20:

*“When Jesus heard of it, he departed thence by ship into a desert place apart: and when the people had heard thereof, they followed him on foot out of the cities. And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick. And when it was evening, his disciples came to him, saying, This is a desert place, and the time is now past; send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages, and buy themselves victuals. But Jesus said unto them, They need not depart; give ye them to eat. And they say unto him, We have here but five loaves, and two fishes. He said, Bring them hither to me. And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass, and took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed, and brake, and gave the loaves to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude. And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full.”*

The setting here is that John the Baptist had just been murdered. When Jesus heard about it, He went off by Himself. I get it! I would’ve been upset, too. Jesus loved John and was related to him. If I had been Jesus, I would probably have been thinking, “If they came after John, I’m sure they’re going to be coming after me soon.” It is understandable that He wanted to be by Himself, but word got out about where He was, and it

wasn’t long before a throng of people had gathered.

I’m sure Jesus was hurt and tired, and it may have been that Jesus just wanted to be by Himself; but, instead, Jesus chose to really look at the people who were following Him.

There were over 5,000 men, according to Matthew 21. But when you add in the women and children, there could have been over 15,000 to 20,000 people coming to find Jesus!

He was hurt, tired and wanted to be by Himself, but Jesus chose to take a good look at this huge crowd of people. What did He see?

What do you think He saw when He looked at those people? What do you think we, as people who are trying to win people to Jesus, need to see when we look at people?

### HE LOOKED DEEPER THAN JUST THE SURFACE

Verse 14 says that he saw a great crowd. This had to be more than just a cursory look. This had to be more than just people sitting in the pew.

Jesus didn’t see them for what they possessed, for what they could give, how they might build the church and what position they might fill. He looked deeper than how they were living their lives. He looked not for what was going on in their lives, but why. The Bible says that He saw three things about them:

- He saw that they were sick (vs 14). How do you perceive lost people? They are not our enemy, who we’re fighting against; they’re just lost! They are who your church was planted for. They are sin sick. Daniel Tyler, Deliver Hope said: “Don’t blame the dark for being dark. Blame the light for not shining in dark places.”

- He saw that they were in a desolate place. Verse



▲ Donny Parrish

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# making progress

## \$105 for 105 years of ministry

By **JERRY FULTON**

*Baptist Progress* was established as the official publication of the Baptist Missionary Association of Texas in 1912. The purpose of *Baptist Progress* is to promote interest in missions, evangelism, benevolence and Christian education among the churches of the BMA of Texas.

This year, *Baptist Progress*, will celebrate 105 years of ministry. In order to meet our budget for the year, we are asking churches, classes, groups and individuals to give \$105 for 105 years of ministry to *Baptist Progress*. Our goal is to receive a total of

\$15,000. A list of those who give will be published in our July issue. Offerings may be mailed to *Baptist Progress*, P.O. Box 2085, Waxahachie, Texas 75168.

**CONGRATULATIONS TO 2017 GRADUATE**

A graduate's name was emailed to us in time to make the list of 2017 graduates listed in our May issue, but the name was left off the list. We apologize for the oversight and congratulate Shelby Smith, a member of Mt. Pisgah, Mineola.

## BMA OF AMERICA ANNUAL MESSAGE: HOW DID *Jesus* SEE PEOPLE CONT.

13 says that Jesus went to a desolate place. In Verse 15, the disciples said that they were in a desolate place — that's where He found desolate people!

The definition of desolate is "barren or laid waste, devastated, solitary, lonely, in a desolate place, having the feeling of being abandoned by friends or by hope, forlorn, dreary, dismal, gloomy, with desolate prospects." That's where Jesus went!

Pastor, where are you looking for people to minister to? Are we going to the desolate places? Are we going to the desolate places where we'll find people who are lost?

Do we just want to "swap" with some other church — people who got mad over there and will probably get mad at your church, too? Do we want just the "good" people?

Jesus went to the desolate place to find these folks. Maybe we need to begin looking for them beyond our comfortable areas and stop waiting for them to come to us.

We need to go where people are lost, hurting and lonely — people we may be afraid of. That's why we were put here! We are the Baptist Missionary Association! Does that mean we just send missionaries? I think that means we are missionaries!

Jesus went to the desolate places, and that's where we need to go because that's where people are hopeless! People are living in desolate times.

• He saw that they were hungry (vs. 15). Jesus was interested in meeting needs.

People in America are spiritually hungry and they don't even know it. They are being fed a continuous diet of lies. Let's feed them the truth. Let's feed them God's Word, and let's answer their questions. Let's preach messages that answer their questions. I don't want to spend my life preaching messages that answer questions that nobody is asking.

**HE HAD COMPASSION ON THEM**

Definition of compassion is "a feeling of deep sympathy and sorrow for another who is stricken by misfortune, accompanied by a strong desire to alleviate the suffering." Why did the people come to Jesus, and why did Jesus have a compassionate connection with these people?

It could have been because they were looking for answers. The Scripture

doesn't say that these folks were followers of John, but they might have been. Maybe they had heard John declare that Jesus was "the Lamb of God that takes away the sins." Maybe some of them were there the day Jesus was baptized, and they heard the thundering voice of God say, "This is my beloved Son..." Maybe they were confused. Maybe they were hurt over John's execution. Maybe they were disillusioned. Maybe they were just scared. Maybe they needed a new leader.

I don't know why they came, and I don't know why they were following after Jesus. But there is one thing that I've learned in over 40 years of ministry — people behave the way they do for a reason. For some, it could be that they're just crazy. Do you have any crazy people in your church? Swing those cameras around, please!

Some people behave the way they do because they are just plain mean and they want to cause problems.

But for most people, there's a reason that they act the way they do. Something has hurt them in their past, and they are angry. Somebody has hurt them or disillusioned them.

But, instead of Jesus seeing those people coming and getting mad at them, instead of avoiding them, lashing out at them, being aggravated that they had followed Him or judging the motives they had for following Him — Jesus had compassion on them and loved them.

I am all for education. I so love Central Baptist College, Jacksonville College and Southeastern Baptist College; and I am sold out to BMA Theological Seminary. But no matter how much education and training you have, if you don't love people and if you can't have compassion for them, you don't need to be working in church ministry.

If you don't love people, please go find something else to do.

If it's just about building your own kingdom, please go find another kingdom to build.

If it's just about getting people to behave and toe the line, go be a high school principal.

If it's just about being an entrepreneur, please go find a business to start.

Although we must impart wisdom from God's Word every Sunday, if it's

**ANNUAL MESSAGE** continued on p. 7

# Church health

## Sifting does occur

By LARRY BARKER

We must expect trials and tribulations to come our way. We have already discussed the importance of learning to read the Bible honestly. Jesus told Peter in Luke 22:31-32, “Simon, Simon, look out! Satan has asked to sift you like wheat. But I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. And you, when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.” Leaders should especially be ready for the attacks that will come our way. There is a bull’s-eye on our backs and the devil has us in his crosshairs.

Here are some excellent questions from *Spiritual leadership* by J. Oswald Sanders: “How well do you handle criticism? When have you profited from it? The humble person can learn from petty criticism, even malicious criticism.” One rule of thumb in this area is to always be open to any kernel of truth there might be in the criticism whether it is constructive or not. Sanders then asks, “In what situations have you been a peacemaker? A leader must be able to reconcile with opponents and make peace where arguments have created hostility.”

Sifting can occur many different ways but it is never enjoyable. It is like discipline of which Hebrews 12:11 says, “No discipline seems enjoyable at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it yields the fruit of peace and righteousness to those who have been trained by it.” The sifting we go through produces a stronger and more vibrant faith. James tells us that the testing of our faith produces endurance and enables us to grow into spiritual maturity. Jesus told Peter, “And you, when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.”

Sanders also asks, “Can you accept opposition to your viewpoint or decision without taking offense? Leaders always face opposition.” He then adds, “Do you depend on the praise of others to keep you going? Can you hold steady in the face of disapproval and even temporary loss of confidence?” We may face health challenges, financial challenges, but the most difficult can be relational challenges. Especially when they come from those closest to us. This sifting can hurt the deepest and take the longest to overcome.

**First, we must make sure that we talk to people not about people.** Make Matthew 5:23-24 and Matthew 18:15-10 a value that you live by and

practice. Conflict resolution training is needed and must be implemented into your ministry. In *Irresistible Church* Wayne Cordeiro says, “The DNA of any conflict resolution involves bringing people together and getting them to talk and listen to each other.” Unfortunately, we worry far too much about pleasing people instead of producing results that will honor God. It is difficult to balance at times.

**Second, learn from your mistakes.** Make sure that you are not building up a standard so high that no one can live up to it. Wayne Cordeiro refers to this equation; “Experience plus reflection equals insight.” We can always learn from our experiences by stepping back and asking simple questions such as “how could I handle that better next time?” Also, seek other people’s opinions and “debrief” with them how you handled the situation. Listening to other people’s viewpoints ensures that you are not only looking through your lens, which can create tunnel vision.

**Third, realize that you will not be able to fix every situation.** There are times to lament a situation as found in the scriptures. What does that look like? When a person comes to you and it cannot be easily resolved, you point that person to Jesus and invite them to honestly pour out their heart to the Lord. We acknowledge that God is good and sovereign, yet life is not always as we would like it to be. We learn that our emotions are permitted, that it is right to express them, even when those emotions include anger and injustice when done correctly.

**Fourth, be good with a time of prayer and reflection if resolution does not occur immediately.** You may not ever have all the answers for people when they are struggling. Unfortunately, life is unfair and people do not always act the way God would have them act. So, we repent, we strive to improve, we listen to concerns, and we try to remain sensitive to the Holy Spirit. All of us are challenged to remain sensitive to the real pain and needs of people. We must learn to be patient with people who are wading through many difficult issues in their lives.

**Fifth, embrace the paradoxes of leadership.** Wayne Cordeiro continues, “The challenge is to stay balanced when criticized, to avoid taking the criticism personally, and yet not to become calloused



and cynical. In leadership we are called to a paradox of personalities: sensitive but not easily offended, empathetic but not weak, flexible and yet filled with convictions.” God desires to reconcile and heal unhealthy relationships and He will when it is what we truly desire. The question we must ask ourselves is, are we willing to yield to His principles for reconciliation?

Avoidance of a broken relationship should not be an option. Having right relationships is more important than having church according to Matthew 5:23-24. We must get together in order to work the issues out in a godly, Christ honoring fashion. If apologies need to be made then you must offer them. If rumors need to be cleared up then you must communicate the truth. Most importantly, everyone must be reminded of our goal to honor and glorify God in all we do. John 13:35, “By this all people will know you are My disciples, If you have love one for another.”

Larry Barker is the pastor of Cornerstone, Jacksonville. He also serves as the operations director for North American Missions. For more information or to contact him, visit [www.bmamissions.org](http://www.bmamissions.org).



# BMA of america



## BMA Seminary's Sixtieth Commencement

By **DR. PHILIP ATTEBERY**

*BMA Seminary Dean*

**T**wenty-three individuals received a degree from the Baptist Missionary Association Theological Seminary of Jacksonville, Texas during commencement exercises conducted Saturday, May 20, 2017. The seminary hosted the event in its Dorman Memorial Chapel on the main campus in Jacksonville, Texas.

Masoud Edrisameri of Jacksonville, Texas and Tony Tucker of Arp, Texas received the Associate of Divinity degree.

Angeleta Beekman of Jacksonville, Texas; Gary Dollarhide of Frankston, Texas; Oscar Jernegons, Jr. of Mt. Vernon, New York; James Hendricks of LaVerne, California; Dwight Lindsey of Fulton, Mississippi; Cristain Martinez Gonzalez of Mexico City, Mexico; Tracy McMillen of Mantachie, Mississippi; Ollie Fay Oliver of Tyler, Texas; David Parker of Lindale, Texas; Stuart Priest of New Albany, Mississippi; and Nina Smith of Atlanta, Texas received the Bachelor of Arts in Religion degree.

Jonathan Buczek of Conway, Arkansas received the Master of Arts (Pastoral Theology) degree. Andrew Comer of Conway, Arkansas; Serena Dice Logue of Ocean City, New Jersey; and Joseph Mbang of Lusaka, Zambia received the Master of Arts (Religion) degree. Electa Delaney of Conway, Arkansas also received the Master of Arts (Religion) posthumously.

Ryan Burchett of Carthage, Texas; Jerron L. Cole of Tyler, Texas; and Grady McDonald of Cedartown, Georgia received the Master of Arts in Church Ministries degree. Linda Lisulo of Lusaka, Zambia and Jake Steele of Conway, Arkansas received the Master of Divinity degree.

Dr. John M. Adams, Jr. of Mantachie, Mississippi presented

the commencement address. Adams, Senior Pastor of First Baptist Church, Mantachie, Mississippi, also serves as Executive Director of Moral Action of Mississippi and the national organization, Moral Action of Baptist Missionary Association. Adams earned the Bachelor of Arts degree from Southeastern Baptist College, Laurel, Mississippi; The Master of Education from Texas Tech University; and the Master of Divinity and Doctor of Ministry degrees from Luther Rice Seminary.

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



## Dr. Scott Carson elected Southeastern College President

By **DON BROWN**

*Mississippi Baptist Editor*

**T**he Trustees of Southeastern Baptist College elected Dr. Scott Carson as president of Southeastern Baptist College and that decision was affirmed by the BMA of Mississippi during its midyear meeting held May 23 at Midway First Baptist Church, Sumrall, Mississippi.



▲ **Bro. Pedro Etag**

Dr. Carson joined the staff of SBC in 2016 as Academic Dean after completing 30 years of service as a U.S. Army chaplain. He had served as interim president following the death of former president Danny Pitts.

Carson and his wife Linda reside in Laurel and were recently featured on the HGTV series "Our Home Town." The Carsons chose a home to renovate in Laurel's historic district. Erin and Ben Napier of Laurel star in the show and help new residents with choosing a home and its renovation.

Carson stated that he is able to use that notoriety to the advantage of Southeastern College. His employment brings many questions from Laurel residents and business owners.

He said he looked at this as a "God Thing" and has taken advantage of this opportunity.

## New Hope Baptist Church to celebrate 145 years

By **WANDA BLAKE**

*New Hope, St. Elmo*

**I**n 1868, a group of ladies led by Mariah Lee, wife of a school teacher in the area, began conducting prayer meetings in their homes. In 1872 J.M. Gambrell, a missionary, visited the community. Pastor Gambrell convinced the group to form a church. The church was formally organized under the name Little Hope Baptist with Gambrell as the pastor. The organization of the church took place under a large oak tree a few yards from the present location. The name Little Hope was later changed to New Hope Baptist Church.

Today we are as dedicated to sharing and spreading

the gospel as in the beginning. Sunday, Oct. 8, 2017 will be the celebration of 145 yrs. of the organization of New Hope Baptist Church of St. Elmo. Currently we are seeking former pastors, staff, members, and their families and everyone who has been associated with New Hope that would like to attend our celebration.

We invite you and anyone who knows someone with a former association to please contact our current pastor, Dr. Elton McCann, at 903-353-8863 or email him at [semduc@juno.com](mailto:semduc@juno.com) or contact Wanda Blake at 903-530-8812 or email her at [tomandwanda1@windstream.net](mailto:tomandwanda1@windstream.net).

## Church's GMA director retires after 39 years

By **TRESSA RUDD**

*New Harmony, Tyler*

Maudie Dudley has retired after 39 years as GMA director at New Harmony, Tyler. Thirteen former GMA young ladies attended our GMA Coronation on May 23, 2017, to honor their friend and counselor on her last coronation as director. She was presented with flowers and gift cards. Maudie announced that Angela Smith will be our new director. New Harmony Baptist Church would like to thank Mrs. Maudie for her love of the Lord and dedication to our girls.

# SOAR of america



## DiscipleGuide CHURCH RESOURCES

### SOAR Serves

By **HOLLY MERIWEATHER**

*DiscipleGuide*

**S**OAR is a time each year when students from junior high through high school come together and worship their God and also get inspired to love those around them like Christ. Stories are common of students who, post-SOAR, take the mission they learned and serve people in their communities.

This year, on top of attending the sessions and hanging out in SOAR village, there will be three opportunities to serve Christ by going on mission in the Dallas area through SOAR Serves.

The first missions opportunity for SOAR Serves is with The Refuge Church on July 4, where students will help church planter Darren Lemons and his congregation serve residents during the Terrell Independence Day celebration. Teams will help run games, organize a corn hole tournament, pass out pop-ice and inform people about the church. This is a great opportunity for The Refuge Church as the city of Terrell has given them the privilege of participating in their annual city-wide celebration.

Mission Arlington will be on July 5, and teams will go to apartment complexes where Mission Arlington serves and work with the families and teach Bible studies to kids. When groups first arrive, Mission Arlington will give an orientation and have directions and information for each of the church groups going out to serve. Groups will go out in the morning and knock on doors, inviting families to come to the Bible study time that afternoon.

Students will also have the opportunity to serve The Bridge Church on July 6 by helping church planter Matt Prather conduct neighborhood canvassing. Teams will share brochures about The Bridge Church in various neighborhoods and invite people to a worship service. In addition, students will have an opportunity to perform city beautification projects on behalf of the church in order to build goodwill between the congregation and the townspeople. Don't miss this opportunity to help!

To sign up for one of these SOAR Serves opportunities, visit [gosoar.com/soarserves](http://gosoar.com/soarserves). For alerts on any SOAR updates and happenings, download the free SOAR Conference app!

### 2017 Christmas Shoeboxes



By **ANGELA RICE**

*BMA of America Missions*

**B**MA Missions is preparing for EVERLASTING SMILES CHRISTMAS SHOEBOXES. We call it "Christmas in July"! Last year, I had the privilege of traveling to Jordan and handing out the shoeboxes packed by BMA churches in 2016. I can not tell you what a blessing it is to see the children get the gifts. Another blessing is that people who do not usually attend church will come to the distribution to receive a "gift from the states."

I asked our missionaries how the shoeboxes help their ministry. Both missionaries receiving boxes last year told me that the Shoebox Ministry helps open many doors for them with people that would not typically come out for a service or to church. Shoeboxes allows them to begin relationships.

Be looking for Everlasting Smiles shoebox information that will be mailed to your church in the next couple of weeks. We are praying for many smiles from the children who receive the shoeboxes and open doors for our missionaries. Honduras and Guatemala will be receiving shoeboxes this year, and since both are Spanish-speaking countries, they will need Spanish Bibles.

Please plan on participating in our Everlasting Smiles shoebox ministry this year. You never know how many people will come to know Christ because of your willingness to help out in this ministry.

If you have any questions or if you do not receive your packet, call the office at 501-455-4977 and ask for Angela.

### Check-in for hotel and conference

By **HOLLY MERIWEATHER**

*DiscipleGuide*

**W**e want to make your SOAR experience better and more enjoyable as a leader. With this in mind, our team has been working with the Gaylord Texan Resort to make your hotel check-in and conference check-in as easy for you as possible.

This year at SOAR, you will be able to check in with the hotel and receive your room keys in the same place you check in your group for the conference. For groups coming in on July 5, the Gaylord Texan and SOAR staff will be ready to help you check in as fast and easy as possible.

But wait! We aren't going to stop there. We want to do

something even better. For every group checking in between 4 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. on July 5, your conference t-shirts will be delivered to your room at no extra charge.

If your group is checking in to the hotel before 4 p.m. on July 5, don't worry. Just come by the conference check-in table between 4 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. to get your registration packets, and we will have your shirts delivered to your hotel room as well.

As always, if we can help make your SOAR experience any better, we would love to hear from you. Contact us any time at 501-358-3530 or [conferences@discipleguide.org](mailto:conferences@discipleguide.org). See you at SOAR 2017!

# News of America

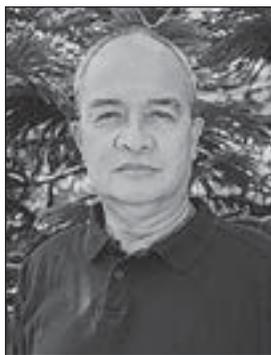


## Lifeword Visionary Leaders around the World—Part One

By **HOLLY MERIWEATHER**

*Lifeword Media Ministries*

As Lifeword begins year number 38 of fundraising through walks, other events or Lifeword Sunday offerings, the ministry looks forward to exciting new innovations made possible through advancements in technology. Development of the Lifeword Cloud or Lifeword Network is in the brainstorming and discussion stage and will allow listeners, affiliates and producers to access a repository of programs and multi-language discipleship materials at [lifeword.org](http://lifeword.org).



▲ Bro. Pedro Etabag

Even as this endeavor is in the works, low power, low wattage (Lifeword Community Radio or LCR) stations are enabling highly populated but difficult-to-access areas of the world to hear the gospel, sometimes for the first time. These local stations run by indigenous leaders, pastors and church planters are growing in number thanks to the relentless work of visionary leaders around the world.

Lifeword calls these men who are dedicated to searching (often in very rough terrain) for unreached people groups “visionary leaders,” and we would like to highlight their efforts in three areas of the world: Central/South America, Europe/Africa and the Philippines.

Appropriately, the first visionary leader and region we would like to highlight is Bro. Pedro Etabag in the Asia-Pacific/Philippines area. He was a visionary leader at Lifeword before the term even existed, and for four decades he has been Lifeword’s Ilonggo speaker and regional coordinator. When Lifeword Community Radio was first introduced, he immediately understood what LCR could mean to a local church’s ministry and passed it on to the church he pastors in Bacolod. He and his team, which includes his son-in-law Jhun Santos, helped establish ten other stations in strategic, and often remote, areas, and they use the internet to share broadcasts on LCR’s very first network.

Pastor Pete, as he is called locally (even by his family), has trained many broadcasters and stations managers to effectively use LCR, often troubleshooting and fixing problems with incredible resourcefulness. Please pray for Bro. Pete Etabag as he tirelessly expands his ministry in the Philippines and beyond. For more information about how you and your church can focus on Lifeword Oct. 22 (Lifeword Sunday) or any other day, please send an email to [info@lifeword.org](mailto:info@lifeword.org) or go to [lifeword.org/lifewordsunday](http://lifeword.org/lifewordsunday).

## Liberty Association hosts Baptist Medical Missions rally

By **CHARLES JOHNSON**

*Pastor of Rosewood, Gilmer*

Liberty Baptist Association recently sponsored a rally for Baptist Medical Missions International on May 18. The meeting was held at Macedonia Baptist Church near Pittsburg. Macedonia Pastor Randy Stracener welcomed the association and read Scripture from the Gospel of John.

Association moderator Leon Ross presided over the business meeting. There were 60 present from 12 churches. An offering of \$3,340 was received from the churches for BMMI.

Dr. John Ladd, M.D., associate director of BMMI, and his wife Shirley were present to represent this medical outreach ministry. Dr. Ladd showed an informational video of the work of BMMI around the world. He

challenged the audience to seek God’s direction and leading to go on a medical mission trip.

Shirley Ladd, who coordinates the optometric work at clinics, shared how BMMI uses \$1 pairs of reading glasses, obtained at dollar discount stores, to present the Gospel by having vision impaired individuals read selected Scriptures which cover the plan of salvation.

Following the service, the Macedonia congregation treated the messengers and guests to a delicious buffet meal with various homemade desserts.

The next meeting of Liberty Association will be on Aug. 17, 7 p.m., at Olde Tyme Baptist Church in White Oak. This will be a rally for LifeWord Media Ministries.

## Centro de Vida, Tyler dedicates building

By **JERRY FULTON**

*Baptist Progress Editor*

Centro de Vida, Tyler, a mission project of the East Texas Missions District, and also supported by BMA Texas Missions, dedicated their new building Saturday, May 20, 2017. The new building includes a beautiful sanctuary and fellowship hall. The fellowship hall was named in memory of John May, a member of The Master’s Builders, who passed away during the time the project was being completed. Bro. Kenneth Cline was the engineer of the project. It was noted that no one worked as hard and as long hours as he did. Cline designed the building, fought city hall and built much of the building, building the kitchen single handedly. Jamie Lingua is the pastor.



▲ Building Exterior



▲ John May Fellowship Hall

▼ Sanctuary



# BMA OF AMERICA ANNUAL MESSAGE: HOW DID *Jesus* SEE PEOPLE CONT.

only about imparting wisdom on Sunday morning, please go teach in a school.

If it's all about you, your name, your fame, your church — please, please go find another line of work!

“He must increase, but I must decrease” (John 3:30). He must become greater, and I must become less — that is an amazing declaration from a humble servant of Jesus. That mantra should be written on the wall of every pastor's study, and it should be the last thing that crosses our mind when we stand in the pulpit.

John and Jesus were both baptizing when John said that, and John's followers began to leave him and began to follow Jesus. John's disciples must have become worried, and maybe even a little jealous. But John knew His mission, and he wasn't it! It was all about Jesus, His glory and Him becoming more!

Ministry can be heartbreaking, aggravating and exhausting. But if you're going to be a great pastor and leader, you must have compassion on people, love them and care about them.

Look, I know that it's all about God's glory and His fame! But I believe that God gets the most glory from my life and my ministry when I pour out my life into the lives of others — when I give up my rights because I love people.

If you're going to be a great pastor, a pastor God can use, you can't be guarded! You can't be afraid of being used, hurt or being made to look like a fool. You have to risk it all!

You love your God best when you are pouring your life into people! Will people hurt you? Yes! Will they use you? Yes! Will they walk away? Yes! Will they decide to join the church that's doing Six Flags Over Jesus down the road and you can't do that? They might! Will they get tired of you and want you to pack your stuff and leave? They could. There are no guarantees of worldly success — there is only one example:

Jesus saw these people and fell in love with them. They were sick. They were in a bad place, and all they wanted to do was eat. Their motives were wrong. They didn't even know that they had a problem. But that was enough, and He loved them anyway.

## JESUS PUT TOGETHER A PLAN TO MEET THEIR NEEDS

Do we always have to be planning? Can't we just preach and everything will be okay? Why do I have to be planning, strategizing and dreaming all the time? You don't — but you won't be as successful in meeting people's needs.

It amazes me that people can feel that way about church and ministry. You'd never feel that way about your personal finances or the future of your family. Good grief, you'll fire a football coach and hang him in effigy from the goalpost if he doesn't have a good game plan!

We will spend hours planning the most inconsequential, temporary things in this world. But to seek a game plan about how to reach people, disciple people, how to have more fervent worship, growing the Lord's Kingdom — to many, that is heresy. I say it is heresy if you don't do it!

This was Jesus plan to meet the needs of these people He loved:

- He said, “Bring them to me.” The answer to every need in human existence is Jesus Christ. It doesn't matter what program you put together, if Jesus isn't the answer then your program surely isn't going to be the answer.

- He used what He had been given. It didn't seem like much. It was small, and there just didn't seem like there was enough of it. But Jesus thanked God for what He had provided and put it to work.

We don't have everything we want in the BMA. I wish we did. I wish we were as big as some other groups. I wish we had the money other groups have. (I sure wish Lifeword had all the money they have.) I pray that God will give us all that we need to be all we can

become for His glory.

But wouldn't it be like God to take a small group of people like us — that doesn't have enough, and can only rely on His power — and use us to start a revival and a church-planting movement that would sweep across America? Wouldn't that be like God? Wouldn't it be like to God to take the least to make His name the most famous around the world? He did it over and over in His Word — He takes the smallest thing and the smallest people and uses them for big things. I think He wants to do that with us. I think He wants to do it with you and your church! Wouldn't that make Him more famous than any god?

- He was thankful for what He had. Your church may seem small. It may seem small and poor. It may not have all the resources of the church down the road. Don't let that stop you! Big things happen in little churches! How many of you were saved in a church running less than 100 in Sunday School? I did!

Does that mean we want to stay small? No. The best thing about a small church is that it has the opportunity to be a big church!

But we cannot sit around and say “We don't have what others have.” We have to be thankful for what we do have!

- He prayed for God to do amazing things. He blessed the food as He looked up to Heaven.

In Matthew 21, Jesus had just made His way into Jerusalem and had been declared King by the people that day. It was the climax, the crescendo of what had been going on for three and a half years. But instead of doing an interview with the Jerusalem Post or Hebrew CNN, he went to the temple and we have our first “come to Jesus meeting.” What a way to mess up a movement!

We might think: “Jesus, you had it all going your way. You have the momentum, Man. Why not parlay that into a movement?” Instead, He took a whip and turned over a few tables!

Do you remember why He did that? He said, “My house shall be called a house of prayer.” Does it ever startle you that the one time that we see Jesus have a “come to Jesus meeting” was in the temple, and that prayer seemed to be His reason for being angry!

What is prayer like at your church? Is it a time to get the musicians off the stage? Can we be honest for a minute? Is it something where we recite the same words? Or is it a time when we stop, call our people to the altar and say, “Let's talk to Jesus for a while”?

Jesus wants His house to be a “house of prayer,” but I think we've relegated it to a back burner in our services. Am I being too personal? I know it takes a lot of time, and we have a lot of stuff we have to do. We have prayer requests that last 15 minutes, but then we pray for about two minutes and ask Him to “bless all the people we just talked about.” We've made it an afterthought, but it's where our power is and God wants it to be the centerpiece of what happens in His house.

How do I figure out God's plan to reach the people of my community? God's plans are discovered, discerned and defined in God's presence! Do what Jesus did:

Bring people to Jesus

Recognize the resources God has given you.

Be thankful for them because they are just the right amount needed to do the job!

Pray that God will use what you have to build His Kingdom

Be a good steward.

Plan.

Prepare.

Do your best!

William Temple said, “The church is the only society that exists for the benefit of those who are not its members.” Sometimes we can feel that way about our association because there aren't many

of us. We don't have the resources that others have, but that's no excuse for us not to plan, prepare and do all we can with what we have. God has given us all we need to do His work, and we must use it to its full potential!

But, let me say this:

If there are systems in the BMA that have worked in the past but are now holding us back, we need to have the courage to change them.

If there are things that were once culturally relevant to the lives of people and worked in the past to reach people for Jesus, but are now outdated and dying, let's be brave enough to change those things!

If there are organizational methods that were once fruitful and helped us reach dying people in the past, but are now just part of a machine that is not resulting in fruit for the kingdom, let's be brave! Let's be courageous, and do what has to be done to reach this generation with the Gospel of Christ!

I love this work. I've given my life to help our churches, but this is not my association. These are not my churches. This isn't about what I'm comfortable with and it's not about my preferences. The church of the Lord Jesus Christ belongs to Him! This is not about me. This is all about Jesus, His glory and making disciples.

## JESUS MADE DISCIPLES

Not only did Jesus really look and see the people, have compassion on them and put together a plan to meet their needs; He did it all with a goal of making disciples

According to Wikipedia, the Great Commission is “the instruction of the resurrected Jesus Christ to His disciples to spread His teachings to all the nations of the world.”

Jesus said, “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations (make disciples), baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen” (Matt. 28:19-20).

He didn't say “convert all nations.” He asked us to make disciples of all nations, and that includes the United States of America.

In Matt. 14:19, it says Jesus broke the loaves, then gave it to the disciples and the disciples gave it to the crowds. Am I reading too much into this? Can you see where I'm going here?

Why wouldn't Jesus just Star Trek this thing and materialize food in front of everyone? This was going to be a great miracle anyway, so why not just make it all about Him? Just do something even more miraculous, Jesus could have just made all that food appear on everyone's plate! Bypass the disciples! He don't need them to make this happen! Why not do it that way? He could have.

Why did He give it to the disciples and let them pass out the food? But because Jesus was involved in a leadership multiplication effort and because He was building disciples while He was loving people. He was teaching us how to fulfill the Great Commission.

Making disciples isn't as easy as just making converts. It's going to take some discipleship planning in your church.

What is your plan to make disciples in your church? How will you measure whether you are being successful?

## CONCLUSION

Verse 20 says they all ate and were satisfied. There was enough for the people who were there, with some left over. But it all started when Jesus looked, loved, prayed, planned and executed His plan.

When God's leaders make disciples, disciples begin to do the work of ministry and lives get changed.

# BMA TEXAS

## MISSIONS

Your Church's Mission Movement in Texas

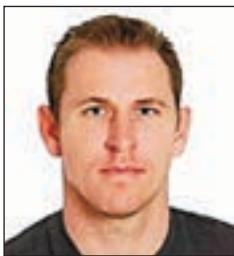


## A word from your Missionaries

By HEITH MITCHELL

### BRANDON DURHAM— REDEEMER'S LOVE MISSION, HOUSTON

May was a challenging month for Redeemer's Love Houston, from a mission standpoint. It was humbling to have key people depart for various reasons. But we understand that this is one of the many challenges inherent to church planting and the mission of "making disciples of all nations." We remain steadfast and rejoicing, knowing that Christ has promised to be with us always (Matthew 28:20). God has sent us a few more solid "workers for the harvest" and we're thankful to have an army of strong, Jesus-loving women in our church. We are praying and strategizing on how to more effectively reach out to men in our context. Thank you so much for your continued prayers on behalf of the Lord's work here in Southwest Houston!



▲ Brandon Durham



### MATTHEW PRATHER— THE BRIDGE MISSION, MIDLOTHIAN/WAXAHACHIE

It is hard to believe that summer is upon us! We are now about six weeks into the launch of our new church. The month of May has been busy following up and building relationships with new people that we have met this past month. It is exciting to see our teams hard work paying off. We appreciate your continued support and prayers. Summer is busy, and we have a lot of great things planned to reach our community. Please, pray for our Kids Camp that we will be hosting and that many kids will come to know Jesus Christ as their Savior.



▲ Matthew Prather

### CLIFF ROBERTSON— CARPENTER'S HOUSE MISSION - LAKE JACKSON/CLUTE

We had our End of School Party for the kids at the park, and it was a huge success. Over 100 people attended and we



were able to share our hearts and have a lot of fun with them. We started our Sunday afternoon kids program and had 12 kids. It went great! We are excited to see what God has in store for us next.

### WILL HUTCHINSON— RESONATE COMMUNITY MISSION, HUTTO

We are approaching summer, and everyone is excited for their summer trips and events. Pray with us as we have set a goal to reach new families this summer by reaching into our HOA's and kids camps to meet new families. This fall, we will be kicking off a teen ministry in Hutto. We will be needing some items for this ministry, the largest being a portable stage. If you or someone you know may have access to one we could use, please let us know. This is an amazing opportunity to be able to reach the youth of Hutto.



▲ Cliff Robertson



▲ Will Hutchinson

### GARY SOUTHARD— THE CHURCH AT VALLEY RANCH MISSION, NEW CANEY

On Sunday, May 21st we hosted a Baptism Celebration. The Lord blessed us with four young people being saved and requesting baptism. We met at one of our member's home who had a swimming pool. There were approximately 60 people in attendance with relatives and guests. Following the baptism, we had a BBQ meal and a great time of fellowship.



▲ Gary Southard

Since that special Sunday, we have had four more come forward, requesting to be baptized also. We will be planning another Baptism Celebration soon.

We are so grateful to the BMA of Texas and the many churches of the BMA that support this mission. Thank you for your prayers for Rhonda and I as we serve as your Missionary in Northeast Houston area.

### JOHN HARRIS— FOUNDATION COMMUNITY MISSION, BENBROOK

This is a time of transition for us, in a good way! God has brought us connected people from our community to show His love to. Our hope is that our relationships with those people will build into relationships with others to give us effective influence into our community. Pray that God gives us the right way to show love to each person that we meet. Thank you for loving and supporting us as your missionaries in Benbrook!



▲ John Harris

### CHRISTIAN MARTINEZ— RESIDENT/INTERN AT CORNERSTONE, JACKSONVILLE

"But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." In this verse, Peter uses very big words to describe believers. These are words that God used to describe His covenant people in the Old Testament and in this time was pleased to include the Church into this holy nation.



▲ Christian Martinez

There is still a difference between the Old covenant people and the people brought into the new covenant. In the Old Testament, individuals did not have the same access to the Holy God in the way that we have it now. God's people had to go to leaders that God anointed like the priests, kings, prophets or judges. In this time, God's people have direct access to the Holy God because Christ is our perfect mediator and we have received the Holy Spirit, something that the Old Testament people had not experienced.

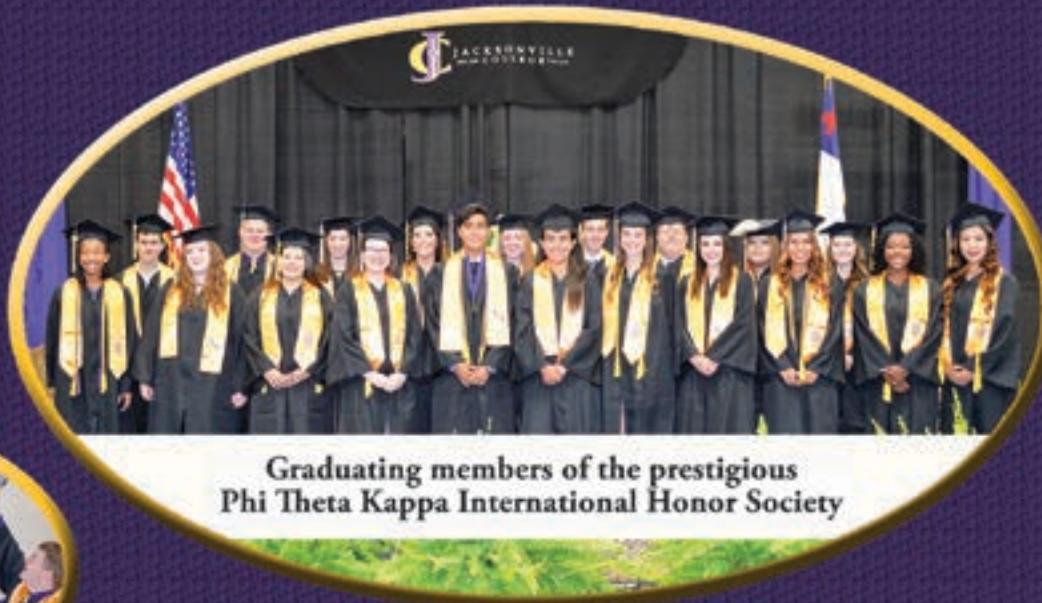
Because of the Holy Spirit in us and the direct access we have to God, every believer has a great responsibility and work to do for the Kingdom of God. Pastors, missionaries and leaders in the church are not the only anointed ones to pray, protect the health of the church, be a witness of Christ, make disciples, etc. This is something that every believer can and must do. Church leaders must explain this great privilege and responsibility to the church so that every believer will be active using the gifts that God has given him or her.

The church leaders are not the only ones lifting the weights while everyone else watches. Instead, the church leaders must give an example in how to lift the weights and equip every church members to do the same so that all the church will be strong for the glory of God.

BMA TEXAS MISSIONS continued on p.12



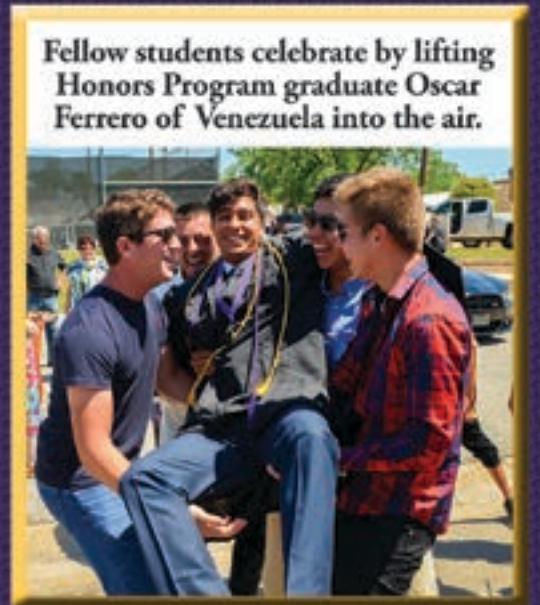
# JACKSONVILLE COLLEGE COMMENCEMENT 2017



Graduating members of the prestigious  
Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society



JC Vice President for  
Executive Affairs  
Dr. Blanton Feaster  
delivered the  
commencement address.



Fellow students celebrate by lifting  
Honors Program graduate Oscar  
Ferrero of Venezuela into the air.



JC alumnus and All-American college basketball  
player Second Chief Herbert Johnson, along with  
several members of the Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of  
Texas, celebrated the graduation of Chief's  
granddaughter, Camille Johnson.



Jacksonville College Choir singing the JC alma mater

## An expression of everlasting love

Many of our friends choose to honor or remember a family member, a friend or an associate with a gift for the children of the Baptist Home. Texas Baptist Home, in turn, notifies the appropriate person. Listed in capital letters are those honored or remembered from May 1, 2017 – May 31, 2017.

### ENDOWMENTS

**MYRA STOKES:** Mr. Bill Stokes

**E ANN PACE:** Karl & Martha Pace

### HONORARIUMS

**OUR LORD:** Earlene Crenshaw

**CHRISTOPHER REYNOLDS:** Berenda Mewborn

**XANDER REYNOLDS:** Berenda Mewborn

**WILLIAM & SUSAN ROBERTSON'S 50<sup>TH</sup> WEDDING**

**ANNIVERSARY:** Charles & Charlotte Johnson

### MEMORIALS

**WALTER BECKER:** Dennis & Ilona Myrice

**BETTY BLOTT:** Linnie & Lou Ann Sandel

**MARITA BOYD:** Lesa England

**MARK BURLESON:** Jerry & Terri Hudson

**LOUISE CHALKER:** Delores Adams

**HENRY CORBELL:** Ann Corbell

**JOHNNY LEE DUNN:** Annie Melton

**WILMER DUNN:** Annie Melton

**SHERRYL FORTENBURY:** Willing Workers SS @ FBC Red Oak

**THOMAS WILLIAM FOSTER:** Delores Adams

**ELLA "ANN" GIBSON:** Delores Adams

**JAMES RAY GRAFTON:** Jerry & Terri Hudson

**GLEN HALL:** George & Emily Taylor

**JOHN HASSELL:** Sheppard Drive Baptist Church, Euless

**FRANCES "FRANKIE" HILLMAN:** Henry & Moore Jewelry, Longview

**KENNETH HUGHES:** Charles & Charlotte Johnson

**STEVE ALLEN HURST:** Travis & Brenda Floyd

**JOHN IRVIN:** Sheppard Drive Baptist Church, Euless

**HALEY RENAE JOHNSON:** Leora Johnson

**SYLVIA JOHNSON:** Temple Baptist Church, Mexia

**WAYNE KEELING:** Ida Keeling

**ROSEDELL SNELL LOONEY:** George & Marilyn McClintock

**SHERRY MEERS:** Ann Corbell

**MIKE MILLER:** Nila Brown

**WAYNE MYERS:** Travis & Audrey Shipp; Jimmy & Carla Shipp

**JIM NORMAN:** Charles and Charlotte Johnson

**BILLY LEE ODOM:** Calvary Baptist Church, Midlothian

**BILLYE ORAND:** Jerry & Lucile Carter

**CARREL PORTERFIELD:** Mr. & Mrs. Larry Starnes

**RALPH PUTMAN:** Ladies & Mens SS Class @ FBC Blooming Grove

**JUDY SCHEFFLER:** Linwood & Jennetta Whitehead

**SHARLYN SWANN SMITH:** Charles & Charlotte Johnson

**MR. & MRS. EDWARD TALBOT:** Roy & Elizabeth Talbot

**WILLADENE VARADORE:** Nila Brown

**MARVIN WEATHERBY:** Sheppard Drive Baptist Church Euless

**SARAH BRUNS WHALEN:** Jed & Glenice Whitaker; Charles & Charlotte Johnson

## Help save a vital piece of our BMA heritage



### By DR. SCOTT ATTEBERY

BMA churches are in danger of losing one of our most valuable ministry tools. Over the years, Daniel Springs Camp has been used by God as a place where missionaries and pastors have surrendered to ministry and countless young souls have trusted Christ as Savior.

Currently, this BMA treasure is experiencing financial difficulties, and a line of credit has been established with a local bank. This financial strain is not a result of careless spending. Camp Director Jason Prewitt works on a tight budget and makes the most of every dollar.

The problem is simply one of income. Daniel Springs keeps registration fees low so that churches of every size can afford to bring their children and youth. In the past, church offerings helped cover the gap that camp registrations did not cover. However, over the past few years, costs have increased while total registrations have decreased, causing significant losses. If finances do not improve by the end of this summer, the camp trustees will be forced to make difficult decisions.

There are two ways that your church can help. First, take a group of students to camp. If you haven't been to Daniel Springs lately, you're in for a treat! Camp Director Jason Prewitt has worked diligently to create a camp that our churches can be proud of. Visit [danielspringscamp.com](http://danielspringscamp.com) and consider taking a group of kids this summer. You'll be pleased with the personal staff of college students, coordinated programming, and upgraded facilities.

The second way to help Daniel Springs is to prayerfully

consider how your church can support camp through regular giving. Over the years, church giving to the camp has declined. Yet the importance of camp ministry is at an all-time high. In a fast-paced, technology-driven world, students need a place to escape distractions and focus on Christ in a safe environment. For over fifty years, Daniel Springs has been that place for the BMA. Let's make sure it remains for the next fifty years.

Current projections indicate that the camp will need at least \$85,000 to finish the year in the black without any debt. That does not include any money for major improvements. The bottom line is, going forward, the ministry of Daniel Springs needs about \$100,000 more income per year to operate and maintain the camp. Based on past giving, this is not an impossible goal.

It's obvious that we have a problem. Will you and your church be part of the solution? Support for the camp may be sent to Daniel Springs Camp, PO BOX 1749, Conway, AR 72033.

*Dr. Scott Attebery is the executive director of DiscipleGuide Church Resources. Contact him by email at [scott@discipleguide.org](mailto:scott@discipleguide.org), on Facebook: Scott Attebery or Twitter @scottattebery. Visit [www.DiscipleGuide.org](http://www.DiscipleGuide.org).*



**NEED A PROJECT FOR VBS?**

**"REACHING THE NEXT GENERATION"**

With EIM's Shepherd Bags Ministry children can reach other children around the globe with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. For more information on how your children can be involved, contact Fonda Norris at 870-226-3626 or [fnorris@eimworldwide.org](mailto:fnorris@eimworldwide.org) Also visit our website at [www.eimworldwide.org](http://www.eimworldwide.org)



# insights for pastors

## Creating Vision

By **DR. ALLEN TILLEY**

According to researcher, Thom Rainer, most churches in America are either plateauing or declining. Over time, established churches lose their vision. They settle in and settle down, becoming mired in mediocracy. Newer churches not only grow, but grow faster because they possess a vibrant vision or expectancy for the future. Here's how you can recapture a vision for your church.

Pray God will make you spiritually hungry. Comfort, convenience, and security cause spiritual apathy. Ask God to make you uncomfortable spiritually, creating a holy thirst in your spirit for more than just the status quo. Pray for a rekindling of your passion for your church and community.

Dream big. If your vision is small, your church will be small. If you think God's view of your purpose is small, you've been deceived. God wants all of His churches to be strong and effective. As the Spirit moves, keep a list of all the ways you can impact your community with the gospel of Jesus Christ. When you dream big, you will always have room to grow.

Include others. Nehemiah, the King's cupbearer, dreamed big, but his dream only became a reality when he included others (Nehemiah 2:17-18). Tell your congregation of your hunger and dreams for your church. Invite them to join you in praying and dreaming. Because your people live and work in the community, they can often see what you cannot see.

Emphasize the Great Commission. Stress the importance of evangelism. Help the people in your congregation learn how to share their faith effectively with the unsaved. Urge them to take advantage of opportunities God gives them to share the Good News. Most of all, be a soul winner yourself. Winning souls is contagious. Let your people catch it by watching you.

Be optimistic and confident. Move forward, not out of obligation or fear but overwhelming joy, because God has promised to be with you. Eagerly anticipate what He will do when you take a step of faith, and celebrate the victories that the Father gives you.

Develop a plan. After you and your church reach a

consensus, map a strategy for fulfilling your vision. Move past good intentions by equipping your people to become the hands of God. Seek specific opportunities where you can show the love and grace of Jesus in tangible ways.

Repeat the vision often. Guard against slipping back into the visionless past by emphasizing often your church's vision. Print your vision in the Sunday bulletin, mail-outs, letters, website, and any other visible place. Preach about your church's vision regularly. Remember the old adage, "Out of sight is out of mind." Keep the devil from stealing your vision by keeping it on the minds of your people.

*Dr. Allen Tilley is pastor of First Baptist Church of Carthage, Texas. He has over 30 years of pastoral experience, and God has continually blessed his ministry with dynamic spiritual and numerical growth. Contact him at [allen@firstbaptistcarthage.com](mailto:allen@firstbaptistcarthage.com).*



## Master's Builders return to Jacksonville College

By **NELDA MALONE**

*Master's Builder's Reporter*

As students moved out, The Master's Builders moved in to the parking lot beside the girl's dorm at Jacksonville College, Jacksonville May 5. Texas. Dr. Mike Smith had asked the Builders to come help with several campus projects, with the main project being creating more campus housing. They worked in several of the college's houses around campus creating more rooms and bathrooms for the Fall 2017 enrollment. They also put a new ramp on the backside of the gym, worked on cabinet tops in the bookstore and worked on several other projects.

We always looked forward to going to Jacksonville, as we get to visit with all our friends there. Dr. Smith and all the staff treat us so well. A big thank you to our cafeteria friends. We had four students who worked alongside our men every day, that we truly enjoyed meeting and talking with. Most of these boys are from outside the US. Thank you to each of them!

The Master's Builders plan to return to Summers Baptist Church in Summers, Arkansas, to begin work on June the 5. Pray for our men as they work and pray for more workers, as our



group is getting smaller and smaller. Neh. 4:6

If you are interested in serving the Lord in this ministry or if your church has building needs, contact our office coordinator, John Mangum, at 318-202-5155 or cell 318-607-4100 or our

Field Coordinator, Eddie Sikes, at 903-725-6549 or cell 479-462-1675.

If you are on Facebook, you can keep up with us as we work. Like us at "The Master's Builders."



What did I just hear? I knew I should not be listening in on this private conversation between Mama and Daddy, but I couldn't move. My heart raced as I pulled back into the shadows to learn more. God was calling my daddy to a faraway place I had never heard of and Mama didn't sound happy about it. At least that's how it seemed to this eight year old. Looking back, I know better. Mama understood about God sending His people to do important jobs; she just needed more information. When daddy finished talking, this was her answer: if he was sure about the "call," she was ready to go. And so was I! While I had no idea what it meant to be "called of God," I could hardly wait to find out.

It didn't take long. From one sister at home (three siblings already grown), I inherited 48 new brothers and sisters--overnight! "The Byng Orphans Home" near Ada, Oklahoma, became our new home where we lived in the "big house," sleeping dormitory style and eating in the big dining hall. Mama assigned chores to all of us and even that was fun. When our work was complete, we had lots of friends to play with. What I loved most was going with Daddy to visit churches where he shared about the Home, and we presented a program mama had prepared. This is the part I connected to our "calling," and I was amazed to see so much love from God's people. They gave of themselves in many ways, sharing what they had, and doing what they could do. Because of this ministry, children who had no one to care for them felt loved, valued and safe.

While Daddy's ministry at this home eventually came to an end, his calling never did. Several years later, the churches of Oklahoma made it possible for him to once again make a home for children who needed love and care. When he was 90 years old Daddy came to live with our family, and his favorite stories always included the special children God had given him to love, nurture and train. The best part--many accepted Jesus as Savior while under his care.

Daddy was not a preacher but he was called by God to minister to children, and during his last years we had the privilege of sharing some of his rewards--notes, pictures and letters of gratitude from some of the children he loved and served. I'm thankful God called my daddy, Johnnie Kenmore, and for his faithful obedience. He made a difference in the hearts and lives of many children (including me) for now and for eternity! This month The Heart Connection honors all faithful men who are allowing God to order their steps and to lead the way--as God continues to call! (--from Proverbs 16:9)

Pat Quesenbury has been active in ladies' ministry for years. She is a pastor's wife, mother and active member of the Women's Missionary Auxiliary. Contact her at [pquesenbury@gmail.com](mailto:pquesenbury@gmail.com).



## BMA Texas Missions cont.



### A WORD FROM YOUR MISSION OFFICE:

Through your BMA of Texas Missions movement, you are currently supplying the salaries of 21 people in 14 locations across the state. Increasingly diverse people groups are being reached. Your contributions are providing salaries, training, coaching, encouragement, and accountability; all essential for a healthy church planting network. Your prayers are essential and are being answered in visible ways. Your encouragement and connectedness with the missions is spurring them on. They are appreciating your service alongside them. Many of you are helping with mission projects this summer. Thank you for all you are doing. God is blessing your efforts and disciples are being made in your "Judea and Samaria."

I was blessed this month to attend the Annual Hombre de Hombre Hispanic Men's Conference at Daniel Springs. There were nearly 60 men present from 9 Hispanic churches and missions. These men encouraged one another and enjoyed each other's company. They sang with loud enthusiasm,

prayed intently, and readily received the word. It was nearly 11 p.m. when the worship ended on Friday night, and it kicked back off Saturday morning at 5 a.m. Our Hispanic brothers are a joy to fellowship with and have a lot to share and contribute.

I have some open dates in the next few months and would love to share with your church about your Texas Mission Movement. Also feel free to contact us anytime with questions and concerns. Call me at the Missions Office or email me.

Heith Mitchell is the director of BMA of Texas Missions. Contact him at P.O. Box 73, Waxahachie, TX 75168, 972-923-0757 or [hmitchell@bmatexas.org](mailto:hmitchell@bmatexas.org). For more information, visit [www.bmatexasmissions.org](http://www.bmatexasmissions.org).



# CHANGE FOR CHILDREN

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# EVENTS

## SOAR

**DATE:** July 5-7, 2017

**PLACE:** Gaylord Texan Hotel, Grapevine, Texas

## SENIOR ADULT CONFERENCE

**DATE:** November 13-15, 2017

**PLACE:** Branson Hilton Convention Center, Branson, Missouri

## BAPTIST MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION 117TH ANNUAL SESSION

**DATE:** November 6-7, 2017

**PLACE:** New Harmony Baptist Church, Tyler, Texas

# Obituaries

## J.C. THOMAS

A funeral service for Junior "J.C." Thomas, age 83, of Jacksonville, was Sunday, June 11, 2017 at Autry Funeral Home Chapel in Jacksonville. Bro. Donny Saddler and Bro. Fred Morrow officiated. Thomas passed away Thursday, June 8, 2017 in Jacksonville. He was born April 29, 1934 in Alba, Texas.



He was a loving husband, father, and Papa. He drove a truck most of his life and was also a retired pastor. He was a member of Craft Baptist Church and enjoyed raising cattle.

He was preceded in death by his father, Roscoe Thomas; mother and stepfather, Plumer and Jesse Pearce; wife, Lanette Thomas; a son, Glenn Thomas; and brothers, Wayne Thomas, Jerry Pearce and Dorsey Pearce. Left to cherish his memory are his sons, Troy Thomas of Bentonville, Arkansas, Darell Thomas and wife Sherry of Jacksonville; daughter-in-law, Linda Thomas of Jacksonville; sisters, Edith Marcelina and husband Gerard of Garland, Glenda Mewbourn and husband Avery of Mineola, Patsy Williams and husband Mike of Greenville; brothers, Lyn Thomas and wife Laura of Houston, and Bobby Pearce of New Boston. He is also survived by his grandchildren, Brad Thomas and wife Mandy, Dalton Thomas, and Crystal Franklin; great-grandchildren, Avery Thomas and Grady Thomas; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Rather than customary condolences, memorials in memory of Junior Thomas may be directed to Craft Baptist Church, P.O. Box 1644, Jacksonville or Heart to Heart Hospice 7925 S. Broadway Ave. Suite 1140, Tyler, Texas 75703.

# PERSONNEL & POSITIONS

## AVAILABLE MINISTER

**JAMES SHINE** is available for pulpit supply or to serve as interim pastor. He is a member of Cornerstone, Jacksonville. Contact him at 2302 Briarwood Drive, Jacksonville, Texas 75766, jim.shine@bmat.com or 903-721-0199/903-586-1066. 7/17  
**SCOTT SCHULLE** is available to serve as a bivocational pastor. He is a member of First, Maydelle. Contact him at 903-948-0058 or 903-795-3886.

**EDDIE BALLARD** is available for pulpit supply. Contact him at 936-635-4195 or eballard-228@att.net.

**DR. BOBBY ADAMS** is available for pulpit supply or interim pastor. He may be reached in Belton at 972-342-3085.

**ROGER MANNING** was ordained as a Southern Baptist Pastor and has preached the Gospel for more than 10 years. He lives in the Dallas area and is available to fill the pulpit, as an interim pastor, or for permanent call as a Senior or Associate Pastor. 402-510-3019.

**SCOTT SCHULLE** is available to serve as a bivocational pastor. He is a member of First, Maydelle. Contact him at 903-948-0058 or 903-795-3886.

## AVAILABLE POSITIONS

**STUDENT PASTOR**—Soda, Livingston is seeking a fulltime pastor of students. Send resume to youthguywayne@yahoo.com.

**EXECUTIVE PASTOR**—Farley Street, Waxahachie is seeking an ordained minister to serve as executive pastor. Send resume to resume@farleystreet.com.

**OUTREACH DIRECTOR**—Farley Street, Waxahachie is seeking a bivocational outreach director. Send resume to resume@farleystreet.com.

**PASTOR**—Mt. Pisgah, Mineola is seeking a pastor. Send resume to the church at 4995 FM 49, Mineola, Texas 75773, or dmvaughn@peoplescom.net or call 903-967-3767 for more information.

**MUSIC**—First, DeSoto is seeking a bivocational music minister. Send resume to Dr. Kerry Moore at 221 West Beltline, DeSoto, Texas, fbcdesototxgmail.com or call 972-223-7441 for more information.

**WORSHIP PASTOR**—Farley Street, Waxahachie is seeking a Worship Pastor to lead an established choir, praise team including musicians for blended worship and oversee adult education programs. Must have major or minor degree in Music. Preferred 3-5 years of experience supervising choral/musical ministries. Salary TBD. Send resumes to resume@farleystreet.com.

**PASTOR**—Ashmore, Loop is seeking a pastor. Send resume to Tom Ingle, HCR 1, Box 23, Loop, Texas 79342, ingle@scoggindickey.com or call 806-928-8843. 7/17

**PASTOR**—Hill Creek, Whitehouse is seeking a pastor. Send resume and recorded sermon to Hill Creek Baptist Church, Pastor Search Committee, P.O. Box 1287, Whitehouse, Texas 75791.

# Church news

**ROSEWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH**, 8260 Arrowwood Road, Gilmer, TX, 75644, is again serving as a collection point of "Operation Everlasting Smiles" Christmas shoebox ministry of the Baptist Medical Missions International. The deadline for receiving shoeboxes is Sunday, August 27, as the boxes must be in the missions' warehouse in Conway, Arkansas, by Sept. 1. Shoeboxes will be distributed in Guatemala and Honduras by BMMI medical mission teams this year. For further information, you may contact Rosewood Baptist Church at 903 725-6366 or 903-790-1691,

# Churches in review

## MAY 21, 2017

| CHURCH                      | SS  | WORSHIP | ADDITIONS                    |
|-----------------------------|-----|---------|------------------------------|
| First, Omen                 | 32  | 71      |                              |
| First, Palmer               | 40  | 57      |                              |
| Jackson, Joaquin            | 57  | 105     |                              |
| Rosewood, Gilmer            | 133 | 246     | 1 by baptism,<br>2 by letter |
| Security Calvary, Cleveland | 25  | 45      | 1 by statement               |

## MAY 28, 2017

| CHURCH                         | SS  | WORSHIP | ADDITIONS |
|--------------------------------|-----|---------|-----------|
| Anthony Drive, Ennis           | 48  | 76      |           |
| First, Palmer                  | 42  | 75      |           |
| Jackson, Joaquin               | 57  | 87      |           |
| Little Flock, Lufkin           | 50  | 70      |           |
| New Harmony, Tyler             | 253 | 355     |           |
| Pilgrim Rest #2, Golden        | 37  | 45      |           |
| Rosewood, Gilmer               | 135 | 236     |           |
| Security Calvary, Cleveland    | 16  | 38      |           |
| Yellowpine Macedonia, Hemphill | 13  | 18      |           |

## JUNE 4, 2017

| CHURCH                      | SS  | WORSHIP | ADDITIONS    |
|-----------------------------|-----|---------|--------------|
| Anthony Drive, Ennis        | 48  | 104     |              |
| First, Blooming Grove       | 204 |         | 1 by baptism |
| First, Crandall             | 75  | 105     |              |
| First, Omen                 | 35  | 74      |              |
| First, Palmer               | 55  | 72      |              |
| Jackson, Joaquin            | 74  | 129     |              |
| Little Flock, Lufkin        |     | 70      |              |
| Merriman Hills, Sherman     | 16  | 36      |              |
| New Harmony, Tyler          | 254 | 324     |              |
| Pilgrim Rest #2, Golden     | 47  | 49      |              |
| Pine Brook, Tyler           | 33  | 55      |              |
| Rosewood, Gilmer            |     | 252     |              |
| Security Calvary, Cleveland | 26  | 46      |              |

## JUNE 11, 2017

| CHURCH                         | SS  | WORSHIP | ADDITIONS    |
|--------------------------------|-----|---------|--------------|
| Anthony Drive, Ennis           | 57  | 109     | 2 by letter  |
| Calvary, Ennis                 | 12  | 21      |              |
| First, Blooming Grove          | 210 |         | 1 by letter  |
| First, Omen                    | 33  | 68      |              |
| First, Palmer                  | 44  | 63      |              |
| Glade Creek, Gilmer            | 17  | 42      |              |
| Jackson, Joaquin               | 63  | 100     |              |
| Little Flock, Lufkin           | 40  | 50      |              |
| New Harmony, Tyler             | 274 | 300     |              |
| Pilgrim Rest #2, Golden        | 33  | 42      |              |
| Rosewood, Gilmer               | 124 | 193     | 2 by baptism |
| Security Calvary, Cleveland    | 29  | 67      |              |
| Yellowpine Macedonia, Hemphill | 20  | 26      |              |

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# SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS

## God's graceful handiwork

By PAUL GAUNTT

DATE: July 2, 2017

TEXT: Ephesians 2:10

Ephesians 2:10 is just one of the myriad of scripture verses which reinforce the blessed doctrine of Salvation by grace, through faith "without any admixture of works." Coming off the heels of Paul's treatise on the work of salvation, he spells out in no uncertain terms that we have been saved "in order to" perform good works.

1. We are His handiwork: We are not the product of someone else's work -- neither is it by our own efforts, (works of the flesh) but we are the product of His workmanship. Through His steady work in and on our lives, we find ourselves being placed into

His crucible -- We are the "piece of raw granite" whereby the Sovereign Artist slowly, painstakingly chisels away all the parts that do not resemble Christ. We are the clay in the Potter's hands being shaped into the image of Christ. This is known as His work of sanctification.

2. We are created (born anew) in Christ Jesus. There can be no sanctifying work in one who is still dead in trespasses and sin. Only after we have experienced the spiritual birth can we be placed on the road to sanctification

3. We are created for the purpose of doing good works. What are good works? (1) They are demonstrations of the attributes of

God - Colossians 3:12-15; (2) They cause the Word to dwell in us; Colossians 3:16; (3) They are done in the name of Jesus Colossians 3:17. That means that any so-called works which exalt the flesh are works which will not stand the test of fire at the Bema Seat of Christ. 1 Corinthians 3: 15. (4) They are built upon the foundation of Christ; 1 Corinthians 3:11) If Christ is not the basis, then the works will be consumed with fire at the Judgement Seat of Christ.

When we perform good works for Christ, our motives will be godly. We will serve out of a spirit of joy and thanksgiving; We will never be the issue; We will leave the results to God, and we will not care who gets the credit.

## God's grace makes us one

By PAUL GAUNTT

DATE: July 9, 2017

TEXT: Ephesians 2:11-22

When Christ died on the cross 2000 years ago, the earth shook, grew as dark as midnight, and the 45 -foot veil separating the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies, was torn right down the middle - from top to bottom. That way, no man could have taken the credit — only a Holy God could perform such a feat.

The picture of that torn veil is stunning; it is such a clear analogy as to what Jesus' death on the cross meant to mankind; It was the breaking down of the "middle wall of partition between the Jews and Gentiles. The Amplified Bible terms it "the wall of hostility." (verse 14)

### CHRIST'S DEATH MADE US ONE BODY:

1. Bringing the gentiles, who were estranged from God, into a glorious new opportunity to share in the same promise of sonship that was extended to the Jews. (verse 11-12)

2. Bringing the Jew and the gentile into one body through His shed blood, thus ending the reason for hostility between the two, and creating oneness.(verse 16)

3. Nullifying the law, by abolishing the rite of circumcision, which was simply an act of the flesh. (verse 11) because under the new era of grace, circumcision is no longer an act of the flesh, but a matter of the heart. (Romans 2:29) "But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."

Ephesians 2 declares that Gentiles were alien from the commonwealth of Israel (verse 12) "afar off" from God (verse 13, 17); they were strangers and foreigners; (verse 19). But now, they are made nigh by the blood of Christ (verse 13) fellow citizens with the saints (verse 19) built

upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, and Jesus Christ as the Cornerstone, (verse 20)

Sadly, the Jews continued to seek to live by the law,

observing all the rituals, because they did not recognize Christ as the Messiah. Today, as a people, they still deny Him.



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# Sunday School Lessons

## The mystery of God's grace shown and shared

By PAUL GAUNTT

DATE: July 16, 2017

TEXT: Ephesians 3:1-13

Our text today contains perhaps one of the longest parenthetical statements known to man, beginning in verse 2 and concluding in verse 13.

Paul begins his statement in verse one, "For this cause, . ." which is in reference to the context of chapter 2; (1) The riches of God's grace; (2) Salvation by grace through faith; (3) God's sanctifying work in the believer; (4) the contrast between the walk of the unregenerate gentile and those reconciled through the blood of Christ; and (5) the work of grace which has abolished the wall of separation between the Jew and gentile.

Then comes the parenthetical statement (verses 3-13) Paul wants to reassure himself that the saints were well versed in the teaching thus far.

The statement was to delve a little deeper into the doctrine of the tearing down of the middle wall of partition between the Jew and the gentile, which occurred upon the penalty being paid on the cross of Calvary by Jesus

He referred to this doctrine of the gentiles becoming fellow heirs with God's chosen people, as having been a mystery to the saints in ages past (verse 5) Old Testament saints had no idea that one day Christ would come and tear down the wall of enmity between Jew and Gentile.

Paul considered himself blessed to be living in the age when he could proclaim this doctrine. He was thrilled to preach about Christ's unsearchable riches to the gentiles. Unlike Jonah who reluctantly went and preached repentance to the Ninevites, hoping they would perish, Paul was overjoyed for privilege to preach this good news to the gentiles. (verse 6-9) Preachers today should feel this overwhelming joy to preach the gospel of Salvation to a

lost world.

He then revealed that not only were the saints in the Jewish and gentile camps, a part of the audience of this mystery revealed, but also the New Testament church has a heavenly audience — the Holy angels (verse 10) to learn of God's multi-faceted wisdom through her. What a blessed privilege conferred upon the church — that God would use her as the object lesson to the angels in Heaven, of His wisdom.

Verses 11 and 12 reveal that we, the New Testament Church, are an integral part of God's eternal purpose, and we have been granted access to His throne, and He has given us the boldness and faith to approach Him, in the blessed name of Jesus.

Then in verse 14, Paul continues the original thought he began in verse one. That thought is the prayer He prays for the church in verses 14-21, as we shall study next time.

## The grace of God takes us to our knees

By PAUL GAUNTT

DATE: July 23, 2017

TEXT: Ephesians 3:14-21

As the Apostle Paul prays for the church, he is careful to identify the true and living God - the Father of the Savior of the world (verse 14) Then he gives us the stair steps which lead to spiritual maturity in Him.

1. Strengthen with might: verse 16. Physical strength has its merits, but Paul knew that the inner man, being strengthened with God's power was preeminent if the church was to bring glory to God. This thought is reinforced in 2 Corinthians 4:16 "For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." A powerful church is not one that operates on physical strength - but God's strength as it permeates the inner man.

2. The indwelling Christ: verse 17. The word dwell means "to be settled and at home." If one is saved, Christ lives in his or her heart, but when carnality prevails, Christ is not settled, nor does He feel at home in that heart.

3. Rooted and grounded in love: verse 17b. There are heavenly benefits to being rooted and grounded in God's love. Jeremiah 17:8 tells us a man whose hope is in the Lord is like a "tree planted by the waters." The parching heat and drought cannot affect the tree's fruit or greenness of leaf, Because the root system is deep into

the earth's crust, and flourishes off the moisture. A child of God, rooted and grounded in God's love, will stand firm when spiritual famine comes.

4. Being rooted and grounded in love will cause you to comprehend the vast magnitude of Christ's love

5. This spiritual comprehension of the love of Christ then leads to walking in, and being filled with all the fullness of God.

Each of these components are joined by a purpose clause (hina or ina) denoting that one component, when reaching fruition, leads to the next. Being strengthened with might results in Christ being settled; When Christ is settled in your heart, then the result is to be deeply rooted and grounded in love, which leads to a deep, supernatural comprehension of the love of Christ, which then leads to continually living in the fullness of God.

Then Paul concludes with a power-packed benediction. He says in verse 20, that Christ is not only able to do "what" we ask or think; not just "above" all we ask or think; not just "abundantly" above all we ask or think; but "exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think" — and it's all according to the power which does now, already work in us. The power which is a result of the stair steps to spiritual maturity which Paul addresses.

That's why we, as believers in Christ, have every reason to glory in Him (in the church) Verse 21.

Paul Gauntt is the pastor of First, Palmer. He served for a number of years as the 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).



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